



The countryside charity Rutland

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Press Release and Briefing Note – CPRE Rutland Supports Mallard Pass Protestors *Published on Monday December 20th 2021*

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CPRE Rutland To Support Campaign Against Scale of Mallard Pass Solar Farm

What is the Mallard Pass Solar Project?

Windel Energy and Canadian Solar are proposing a new solar farm near Essendine called Mallard Pass Solar Farm. The land to deliver this project falls partly in South Kesteven, Lincolnshire, and partly in Rutland. Mallard Pass Solar Farm will use ground mounted solar panels to supply the equivalent of around 92,000 homes with clean energy. Energy storage will be used to store the energy generated, which can then be fed directly into the National Grid when it is needed most. Mallard Pass Solar Farm is being promoted by Windel Energy and Canadian Solar, who, according to the companies, have strong track records in delivering renewable energy developments. Founded in 2018, Windel Energy is a privately held company that specialises in the development and asset management of renewable energy projects and low carbon technologies. Founded in Canada in 2001, Canadian Solar is one of the world's largest solar power companies. It is a leading manufacturer of solar photovoltaic modules and provider of solar energy solutions.

So, What is the Problem?

The proposed project is one of 2,175 acres – equivalent to over 1,400 football pitches (nearly the size of the City of Lincoln) - including a major area of agricultural land between the villages of Ryhall, Essendine, Carlby, Uffington, Belmesthorpe, Braceborough and Greatford. The social and environmental impact will be huge. As a nationally significant infrastructure project (NSIP) the planning approval process is very different to that of many other planning applications. The community has been given little time (until December 16th) to gather its individual and collective views before giving feedback directly in the first instance to Mallard Pass at info@mallardpassolar.co.uk and later to the Planning Inspectorate at the next stage of consultation. For more corporate information on the project see www.mallardpassolar.co.uk

So Why is CPRE Rutland Getting Involved?

CPRE is pro solar energy generation and supports the efforts of both government and local authorities to address the environmental challenges faced by our planet. This particular project, however, appears to be a step too far in one place given its huge size, social impact (during construction and operation) and the likely damage to the environmental balance and character of the affected countryside. Other troubling factors include that there appears to be no immediate electrical benefit for the local communities hosting the project as the generated power will be simply fed into the national grid. There is also a lack of clarity about who will be benefitting financially from the scheme.

Having considered the matter, The CPRE Rutland Board of Trustees have resolved to work with the impacted communities, local parish councils and the county's MP Alicia Kearns to seek major modification of the project or its relocation to a more suitable, preferably brownfield, site.

CPRE Rutland Chair Ron Simpson BEM is leading the countryside charity's support for the community campaign. See him and others involved being interviewed by BBC East Midlands at <https://twitter.com/tonyroe/status/1471867299703533581?s=21>

Enquiries

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Note to Editors

About CPRE The countryside charity

CPRE is the countryside charity that campaigns to promote, enhance and protect the countryside for everyone's benefit, wherever they live. With a local CPRE in every county, it works with communities, businesses and government to find positive and lasting ways to help the countryside thrive - today and for generations to come. Founded in 1926, CPRE President is Emma Bridgewater. Patron is Her Majesty The Queen. www.cpre.org.uk

CPRE Strategic Goals

Aim 1 Connect people and countryside - We will promote the value and benefits of the countryside so that far more people engage with, understand and enjoy it, particularly those who have not benefited before. This will help us to create a stronger voice to enhance and protect the countryside, including locally-valued landscapes.

Aim 2 Promote rural life - With communities and partners, we will develop and promote a sustainable vision for living in the countryside in the 21st century. We will bring together solutions for the rural economy, housing, farming, transport and the natural environment to achieve positive progress for our countryside and those who live in it.

Aim 3 Empower communities – We will empower our network to engage with communities to involve more people in improving their local environment through volunteering and local action.

Aim 4 Grow our capacity – We will bring together a larger and more diverse group of people who share our belief in a countryside for all. This will increase our resilience, income and capacity.

About CPRE Rutland

CPRE Rutland is the independent countryside charity for Rutland that campaigns to promote, enhance and protect the countryside in Rutland for everyone's benefit, wherever they live. Founded in 1970, its President is Sir Laurence Howard KCVO OBE. Current Chair is Ron Simpson BEM of Uppingham, Rutland. Ron is a former Regional Director of the Local Government Management Board and a government appointed Neighbourhood Planning Champion.