

For the purposes of the Beacon Fen application our home designates us as a 'sensitive landscape receptor'. We are both very concerned about the impact of the proposed solar farm on us and our home.

Having previously informed the applicant of our concerns regarding the close proximity of the panels to our home we have noticed their most recent plans still deploy panels within a short distance of our home. Whilst it appears there is no prescribed minimum distance in legislation, our admittedly simplistic research identifies recommendations ranging from 500metres to 2 kilometres, considerably farther away than is the case in relation to our home in [REDACTED]. We are 15m from the order limits, 65metres from the solar array and 1500m away from the substation and BSS.

The applicant does appear to recognise the negative impact their activity will have on those unfortunate 'receptors' that overlook the site and have included screening areas close to people's homes in their plans. We feel the size of the area in front of our home to be far too small. The planting in these areas intended to hide the expanse of panels and other infrastructure from view will take many years to mature, leaving us with an unobscured view of the site for many years to come. We are aware [REDACTED] NKDC Planning Department also has concerns regarding the applicant's 15-year planting growth projections. In the meantime, we feel the only thing that can mitigate the negative visual impact on us for the circa 15 years until the planting matures is distance.

The addition of the bespoke road route to the North and West of our home (with the panels to the East) will create noise disturbance and unwanted visual impact on three sides of our home. Whilst the applicant considers the overall noise impact as not significant, the assessment made at ML3 (which was approximately 50metres further way from the bespoke road than our home) identified an existing daytime level of 37dB with a predicted construction phase level of 64Db categorising noise disturbance of 'negligible effect'. Thus being only 1Db below the 65Db category that constitutes 'significant effect'. The assessment of our exposure (R11) to disturbance from vibration during construction has been estimated at 0.5mm/s-1. Although this constitutes a 'negligible change', these factors combined with the visual impact give us a cumulative cause for concern.

We are also concerned that living close to a large scale solar installation will have a negative impact on the value of our home. The applicant has suggested there will be little or no detrimental effect on property values associated with large scale solar arrays. However it is easy to find evidence to the contrary, particularly when a property is within close proximity to the site or the site is deployed in what was previously a rural landscape, both of which are applicable in our case.

The applicants proposals have brought us to the conclusion that we no longer wish to live in our home but we fear achieving a sale on the open market is unlikely as few would choose to live in a house that overlooks an industrialized landscape of 1000 acres of solar panels and associated structures.

Mindful that selling it would be unlikely in the current circumstances, we offered our home to the applicant for purchase.

Their representatives declined our request stating that this was not something they would consider. Anecdotally, we are aware that others in the village have had difficulty selling their homes due to the prospect of the solar farm, with a recent sale the other end of the village, with no visual contact with the site being negotiated down on the basis of the solar farm application.

Although the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero has stated: 'Where communities live near clean energy infrastructure, they should benefit directly from it', we have not seen any evidence of this. The applicant did engage with us, but this largely involved their informing us of their intentions. We were given the opportunity to express our concerns but we have seen little or no evidence of these concerns being handled sympathetically.

Rather than compensate those people identified as 'receptors' and by definition most likely to be adversely affected by the development, Low Carbon have suggested vague community benefits that lack any detail. This approach risks benefitting individuals that have suffered little or no detrimental effect from the development whilst offering no desirable change to those that will. In our case, one suggestion has been allowing public access to the planting area directly opposite our home. Whilst this suggestion may provide an inexpensive means of providing 'community benefit', allowing public access to this area risks increased disturbance to us and leave the area subject to potentially antisocial behaviour in the area adjacent to our home, serving only to compound the already negative impact on us. We are concerned any public access permissions or visitor encouragement will introduce further disturbance of the quiet rural lifestyle we once enjoyed. We feel this reveals the general lack of care or consideration for the people most affected by their plans.

We do not believe there are any benefits to those 'receptors' that overlook the site, there are only negatives.

We will have to endure noise pollution from construction and increased traffic during the up to 5-year construction. We will have to live overlooking a large scale industrialized landscape that we did not want for the remainder of our time living in the area. Whilst the applicant is required to provide factors to mitigate the negative impacts of their activity, these impacts will still exist. We expect to suffer a detrimental effect on the value of our home, loss of amenity, noise disturbance, traffic disruption and the effects of stress and anxiety associated with these factors. The effects of stress on mental and physical health are well known. Indeed, [REDACTED] the development of the site has not even started yet. In imposing these changes to our lifestyle, the applicant is posing a risk to our mental and physical health. We believe the applicant should have a duty of care to those negatively affected by their activity and accept a moral obligation to compensate those that are most negatively affected. When questioned on the subject of compensation, the applicant's representatives advised us that this was not something they would consider.

We would like to see significant increase in size to the 'set-back' area in-front our home and we would like to be compensated for our losses and the potential effects of stress and anxiety on our mental and potentially physical health.