

Dear sir or madam

Thank you for meeting with local residents and providing the opportunity for them to express their views regarding the Rosefield project.

Given the time constraints, I feel I was unable to convey in any degree of detail how the Rosefield project will affect the environment and wildlife I have observed and nurtured for the greater part of my life. I hope we are offered further opportunity to contribute.

As you are aware, I am deeply concerned about the loss of wildlife habitat that this project would bring to the area. My attachment to and connection with this landscape are particularly strong. I have lived and worked locally for the last 40 years, and have for the last 25 years, actively worked to improve conditions for wildlife on mine and neighbouring farms.

My knowledge comes from lived experience. I am not an expert on any particular subject, but my work on foot in the countryside here over years offers me unique opportunity to observe wildlife around me and allows me a slightly unique perspective. I'm not a bird watcher, or butterfly hunter, I'm just thrilled they're here and I take pleasure in making adjustments to my needs from the land to accommodate them. So in my daily work with sheep, tree production and honey bees I am in contact with everything wild around me and acutely aware of some of their habits and needs.

My land borders the proposed site to the south and with the support of neighbouring land owners I have been planting and adapting my business to wildlife needs with very rewarding results.

The planting of 3 km of new hedging over 130 acres has increased warbler and song bird numbers 2 fold, but through changes in management of permanent pasture, ditch and drainage, we have created overwintering habitats that has led to us being a bit of a hotspot for many birds in colder months, many of these species feed, nest, and shelter on the proposed development during the spring and summer, not just in hedges, but in fields!

These fields, considered of low habitat value by some, are in fact integral to the success of these and many other species.

We have seen encouraging increases in skylarks, meadow pipits, yellowhammers, wagtails reed buntings. Amongst others, with numbers of wintering meadow pipit between 60+ 80 typically but we have recorded 200 daily over a period from Oct to Jan on approx 30 acres in recent years.

Summer visitors include the cuckoo which has only just managed to persist in recent years and relies heavily on the success of meadow pipits to raise its young. I've only heard this bird calling over and adjacent to cultivated land of the proposed solar site.

The increases are due in part to thoughtful changes in farming practices but also because this area was already hugely rich and diverse. Changes adopted by a number of neighbouring landowners, some through stewardship some of their own initiative, helped deliver positive impacts but these increases will be seriously impacted by this solar development.

Bernwode farm delivered some very wide margins in places on the farm which further bolstered numbers of finches/buntings and became a summer hold for hares especially. The 3 species of deer locally are an important part of the mix in a diverse landscape.

Other important winter visitors that frequent the proposed site and would certainly be displaced completely are lapwing and golden plover, others such as snipe and woodcock would definitely struggle to maintain populations locally.

I now look forward to fully engaging in efforts to understand how placing this industrial scale solar into a wildlife-rich and, hugely varied ancient landscape could work out, and in doing so increase diversity by 50%. I believe it is important not just locally but at county or even national level that this extraordinary claim is scrutinised using the highest, independent means possible.

These are my reasons.

It is the unique effects of solar development at this scale in the context of a naturally rich and diverse landscape which I, and I'm sure most ecologists would consider unsuitable for development of this type. It's clear to me that the metrics currently employed to assess habitat value and BNG are fundamentally flawed when used for solar at this scale.

The panels effectively fragment the more highly valued hedgerows, grassland, and landscape features to such an extent that the whole area is unlikely to support much diversity at all.

The cumulative value of these interconnected habitats is far greater than the sum of their parts.

The true value of small agricultural fields with interconnecting hedgerows and grass buffers is hugely underestimated.

Mixed cropping of arable fields is important to many birds and other wildlife, and its value in my opinion is grossly underestimated generally but in the case of solar this is compounded by fragmentation.

. In addition, shading and rain-shadow effects, significantly reduce a plant's ability to produce nectar, seed, and sugars, by 80-90% — an important point that even some sheep farmers have yet to fully appreciate.

It is my belief that we still have much to learn about the true ecological impacts of solar developments of this kind. I would concede that in parts of the country where intensive agriculture has already largely stripped the landscape of wildlife, there may be less to lose beyond food production. The claydons are quite clearly at the other end of this spectrum.

Why the claydons are of such value wildlife wise.

The Claydons represent an important area for wildlife, characterised by a diverse range of farming practices and a mosaic of small arable fields with mixed crops, permanent pasture, copses, woodland, ponds, wet ditches, rutted tracks, hedgerows and areas of rough ground, farm buildings and yards. This combination is what makes the area so wildlife-rich. The proposed solar farm would render a large area unsuitable for the vast majority of species currently present. There are very few species missing from this landscape, and it should seriously be considered for protection rather than large scale development.

Further concerns regarding biodiversity net gain.

I believe the way in which BNG is presented could give the impression that this solar development will protect wildlife and the mention of 50% net gain may lead many to the conclusion that species populations would increase. This is simply not the case of course, but I think it may be the perception amongst locals and the wider community.

I have brought up this subject with a few ecologists and they agree, but say the metrics are accepted measurement.

What I'm saying is while the metric considers the value of individual features it fails to consider the value of their interrelation in the biome.

I sincerely hope that a full team of ecologists will be consulted on this matter. It is the combination of all these elements that creates such richness, and while I support the principle behind the use of ecological metrics, I believe there is a real danger of losing sight of the bigger picture. I consider there to be a strong case for challenging the current methods used to evaluate sites for large scale solar development.

A solar development in this area would have a devastating effect on wildlife and flora. There is an abundance here and no amount of mitigation is likely to compensate the detrimental affect to this diverse ecosystem, as the surrounding land is already an integral part of the local ecological network.

North Buckinghamshire is so rich in wildlife, and this area is at its heart.

The landscapes layout here is largely unchanged in the past 300 years, small fields, ancient trees, many protected by claydon estates over generations, and small scale tenanted farms which by their nature are often undeveloped and more suited to traditional farm practices which are naturally more gentle on the land rather than highly commercial modern enterprises which often leave a heavier footprint. In addition we are home to the source of the rivers ouse,ray, and thame with the addition of calvert lakes, claydon lakes and many ancient field,farm and settlement ponds. Ancient woodland and copses pre dating 17th c are also a strong generator of diverse habitat.

Finally, I hope it clear that I am not opposed to solar or wind power—quite the opposite. My previous business operated solely using both technologies for 20 years until 2015. At Hogshaw, I have explored the possibility of hosting a full-scale wind turbine on my land, though thwarted by government policy changes at the time.

Other concerns about the proposals are the negative effect on farms due to loss of land which for some is acute, especially where more land is required, not less,

Farm livelihoods will be lost.

Farm business which rely on tourism are important local employers and are hamperd continually by longterm road closures and a general downturn in visitors prepared to traverse our failing, limited road network.

Visitor numbers generally have been reducing steadily do to the gradual winding down of claydon estates retail and events programme.

Cyclist numbers have reduced dramatically since HS2 start due to closures and awful road conditions.

This community feels besieged already by large scale infrastructure projects and I really do fear the knock on effects of further disruption to what is becoming a more fragile local economy, it's peoples general feeling of wellbeing, their livelihoods and way of life.

Summery of my objections

- damage to the environment, and wildlife.
- Proposed scale of development not suitable in this landscape.
- Choice of technology most damaging to wildlife.
- Choice of technology most damaging to local farm business
- To short a period of wildlife surveying
- Claims of BNG that are misleading
- Claims of BNG that fail to provide a realistic appraisal.

I feel a period of reassessment of the overall suitability of the rosefield solar site should take place, reconsidering, scale, technology type , and encompassing a full independent impact assessment, of wildlife people and business and the impacts on them. The wildlife surveying should include a thorough understanding of species present on adjoining and nearby land.

Yours sincerely
Robert Turner