

WIXFORD PARISH COUNCIL

A member of the Warwickshire and West Midlands Association of Local Council

these assets would be greatly harmed by the proposed solar farm. In addition , this is Shakespeare country with many of the villages affected by this proposal appearing in his writings . This makes the area very attractive for tourism which would be negatively impacted by fields covered in panels

(3) The proposal will increase the flood risk for the villages close to the scheme . Many villages in this area already have a significant flood risk and some have had serious flooding in recent years . Recent research has shown that solar farms can increase run-off and downstream flood risk through compaction during construction and the altered hydrology due to the presence of panels

(4) The proposal requires a substantial battery storage system (BESS) for viability . The location of this BESS has not yet been finalized . However , the BESS ,wherever it is sited ,represents a major fire hazard due to the possibility of a Lithium-Ion thermal runaway . A proper emergency response plan will be required which against the background of reducing rural fire brigade capability will present a challenge

(5) Due to the dispersed nature of the proposal more than ten separate villages and towns will be involved in either the installation or operation of the scheme or both . Residents of these villages will suffer considerable disruption in both the installation phase which could last for a significant period and when the scheme is in operation . Other than the fact that the village will be supporting the move to green energy , these residents will see no direct benefit . Indeed on the contrary they will see negative movements in house prices , loss of visual attractiveness of the area , footpaths taken out of use and general industrialisation of their green and pleasant land . The developer is offering a Community Benefit Fund but this would be of little compensation to residents who will see their whole environment change significantly and in some cases will be unable to sell their houses due to planning blight.

SUMMARY

This proposal has so many negatives that it is difficult to believe that it has been developed against a strategic framework . It is using valuable agricultural land with no evidence that any alternatives have been examined , it will harm heritage assets and damage tourism . It will increase the flood risk for villages in the area and present a fire hazard which may be outside the capability of the local fire brigades . Finally it will cause at least four years of disruption in many of the local villages with no obvious long term gain for those residents . This proposal resembles a “force-fit” to a major land owner’s requirements rather than a proposal that matches the communities needs.

Submitted on behalf of Wixford Parish Council