

CAPEL PARISH COUNCIL
BEARE GREEN, CAPEL AND COLDHARBOUR

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Clerk to the Council

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August 8th 2014

Head of Planning
MVDC
Pippbrook, Dorking
Surrey RH4 1SJ

Case Officer: Aidan Gardner

Dear Mr Gardner,

Planning Application no: MO/2014/1092/PLAMAJ

Applicant: TGC Renewables Ltd

Location: Land adjacent to A24, Horsham Road, Beare Green

Proposal: Construction of a 12.6 hectare solar farm and associated works

**Proposed Solar Development at Cracker Barrel Farm,
on land at A24 to west of Beare Green, Surrey – Application MO/2014/1092**

Capel Parish Council OBJECTS to proposed development. It will have a significant adverse impact on the landscape in this important 'gateway' location'. In gateway terms it would be located at the confluence of the A 24 and A 29 roads in the context of both access to the countryside to the south, an important area of transition between the Green Belt and the countryside beyond and to the north its impact would be visible and detrimental to the Surrey Hills AONB and its surrounding high quality landscape environment.

The Minister has made it very clear the Government will "crack down" on solar farms sited in inappropriate parts of the countryside. The Minister has 'recognised and is very aware' about the impact of inappropriate developments. This is very specific in relation to solar PVG schemes such as is being proposed at Cracker Barrel Farm. This position has been endorsed by The Minister and by The Secretary of State for Communities Eric Pickles.

The question to be addressed is where does this proposal stand in relation to Government Policy and the NPPF? In simple terms it fails on all fronts.

In relation to The Green Belt it will impact upon its openness and permanence in this location. Furthermore it fails in the fundamental test of safeguarding the countryside.

Paragraph 89 is more specific having regard to exceptions which could be applied in justifying the development. The proposal fails to meet any of the 'exceptional' tests. Even having regard to the sustainability agenda, very special circumstances have not been demonstrated.

Turning to the matter of the Surrey Hills AONB (Leith Hill and South East) we have undertaken visibility tests to support our contention in relation to the adverse impact.

In addition to the gateway to the countryside, its location would have a severe impact upon the village of Capel, the village of Ockley and of course Beare Green. The villages of Capel and Ockley have important Conservation Areas which would be compromised by such development in the strategic location proposed. We should also add that the development would be in close proximity to dwellings and would therefore compromise the quality of residential environment which they enjoy, in particular around the village green (The Beare Green) close to the A 24, A29, and Beare Green Roundabout junctions.

The Parish Council attended the public exhibition held in Beare Green by the applicants. Far reaching questions were raised with the applicant's agents, not least alternative sites planning policy and visibility considerations.

The Parish Council has significant and legitimate concerns regarding visibility. Not only is the site elevated (see Photo 5a/b 7) but the solar panels units will be raised a further 3 metres above ground level. The impact would be evident if a photo montage were to be added to the photoviews.

In relation to Photoview 6a the prevailing landscape character will be destroyed. The impact is evidenced by an examination of photo montages of the same view, and photo montage comparisons of other significant site locations.

The Wardell Armitage Landscape Appraisal states at Paragraph 5.2.8 that ***“views of the solar farm from other properties within Beare Green would be screened by intervening vegetation, topography and built development.”*** Mole Valley District Council is at present considering alternative sites for housing in the Green Belt. While the outcome of the proposals will depend upon the determination of the Local Plan Inspector in 2015/1016 as one of the sites being promoted (Site BG09) should that site be allocated for housing the proposals now being considered combined with the prospect of new housing would devastate Beare Green.

A guiding principle for solar schemes is that they must be appropriately sited. The siting of these proposals is inappropriate and will erode the landscape in a sensitive location.

In summary the Parish Council objects on the following grounds:-

- Landscape impact
- Visual impact

- Green Belt
- Impact on the Surrey Hills AONB
- Impact upon the character of the countryside
- Impact upon the local villagers and residents
- Inappropriate siting

The Secretary of State has continued to refuse planning permission for solar panels due to the adverse impact upon the landscape. We support the view of the Secretary of State that the generation of renewable electricity is important.

In relation to the application site the proposals would have a major to moderate impact upon the landscape; it would impact upon users of public footpaths and the occupiers of dwellings in the community, in particular, residents who live in close proximity to the site.

The application is 'driven' solely by the commercial interests of the landowner.

Close scrutiny of the proposals shows in clear and absolute terms that Planning Permission must be refused.

The photographs submitted are an integral part of this letter and are to be fully taken into account by Members in determining the application.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Jackie Coke,
Clerk to the Council



Source: Esri, Digital
Community



0 250 500 1,000 Metres

Scale: 1:10

Date: 20 Ju

Existing



Proposed



Photomontages Provided By TGC

Photomontage Parameters Grid Ref: 517183HE 142432mN Elevation: 105m AOD Viewing Direction: 135° Distance to Development: 0m Camera Details: Canon EOS 450 D Camera Height: 1.6m Time and Date of Image Capture: 18:06 03/02/2014		Horizontal Scale: 4:1 mm per Horizontal Field of View: 90° Vertical Field of View: 28° Viewing Distance: 350mm @ A2 Weather and Lighting Conditions:	Viewpoint Description View east across the site from the south-west site boundary. For viewpoint location plan please see WA drawing number: N111636-Fig 3 Photograph used in a composite panoramic image. Please refer to main document appendix for methodology statement.	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Drawn By: AF</td> <td>Checked By: DM</td> <td>Date: July 2014</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Designed By: AF</td> <td>Approved By: HK</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Drawn By: AF	Checked By: DM	Date: July 2014	Designed By: AF	Approved By: HK		<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Client: TGC Renewables</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Project: Land at A24, Beare Green</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Figure 29 Photomontage - VP2b - 5 Years After Construction</td> </tr> </table>	Client: TGC Renewables	Project: Land at A24, Beare Green	Figure 29 Photomontage - VP2b - 5 Years After Construction
Drawn By: AF	Checked By: DM	Date: July 2014												
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Client: TGC Renewables														
Project: Land at A24, Beare Green														
Figure 29 Photomontage - VP2b - 5 Years After Construction														

Existing



Proposed



Photomontages Provided By TGC

<p>Photomontage Parameters</p> <p>Grid Ref: 517183HE 142432mN Elevation: 105m AOD Viewing Direction: 135° Distance to Development: 0m Camera Details: Canon EOS 450 D Camera Height: 1.6m Time and Date of Image Capture: 16.06.03/02/2014</p>	<p>Horizontal Scale: 6:1 mm per - Horizontal Field of View: 90° Vertical Field of View: 28° Viewing Distance: 350mm @ A2 Weather and Lighting Conditions:</p>	<p>Viewpoint Description View east across the site from the south-west site boundary</p> <p>For viewpoint location plan please see WA drawing number NT11636-Fig 3 Photograph used is a composite panoramic image Please refer to main document appendix for methodology statement</p>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Drawn By: AF</td> <td>Checked By: DM</td> <td>Approved By: HK</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Project No: NT11636-Figure 2b</td> <td>Date: July 2014</td> <td>Client: TGC Renewables</td> </tr> </table> <p>wardell armstrong your earth our world</p>	Drawn By: AF	Checked By: DM	Approved By: HK	Project No: NT11636-Figure 2b	Date: July 2014	Client: TGC Renewables	<p>Client: TGC Renewables</p> <p>Site: Land at A24, Beare Green</p> <p>Figure 2b Photomontage - VP2b - 1 Day After Construction</p>
Drawn By: AF	Checked By: DM	Approved By: HK								
Project No: NT11636-Figure 2b	Date: July 2014	Client: TGC Renewables								

Existing



Proposed



Photomontages Provided By TGC

Photomontage Parameters

Grid Ref: 517467NE 142778NH
 Elevation: 966AOD
 Viewing Direction: 225°
 Distance to Development: 0m
 Camera Details: Canon EOS 450 D
 Camera Height: 1.6m
 Time and Date of Image Capture: 15:41:03 02/02/2014

Horizontal Scale: 4:1 mm per ...
 Horizontal Field of View: 30°
 Vertical Field of View: 28°
 Viewing Distance: 350mm @ A2
 Weather and Lighting Conditions:

Viewpoint Description

View south across the north-eastern section of the site from the northern site boundary (indicated).

For viewpoint location plan please see WA drawing number: NT11636-Fig 3
 Photograph used is a composite panoramic image
 Please refer to main document appendix for methodology statement

Drawn By: ID	Checked By: NT11636-Figure 27	Date: July 2014
Drawn By: AF	Checked By: DM	Approved By: HK

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Client: TGC Renewables
Project: Land at A24, Beare Green
Drawing Title: Figure 27 Photomontage - VP1b - 5 Years After Construction

Existing



Proposed



Photomontages Provided By TGC

<p>Photomontage Parameters</p> <p>Grid Ref: 517467AE 142778mN Elevation: 98m AOD Viewing Direction: 135° Distance to Development: 0m Camera Details: Canon EOS 450 D Camera Height: 1.6m Time and Date of Image Capture: 15:40 03/02/2014</p>	<p>Horizontal Scale: 6.1 mm per 50'</p> <p>Horizontal Field of View: 50°</p> <p>Vertical Field of View: 23°</p> <p>Viewing Distance: 350mm @ A2</p> <p>Weather and Lighting Conditions:</p>	<p>Viewpoint Description View south-east across the north-western section of the site from the northern site boundary (indicated).</p> <p>For viewpoint location plan please see WA drawing number: NT11636-Fig 3 Photograph used in a composite panoramic image. Please refer to main document appendix for methodology statement.</p>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>PROJECT: 1A</td> <td>NT11636-Figure 24</td> <td>DATE: July 2014</td> </tr> <tr> <td>DRAWN BY: AF</td> <td>DM</td> <td>APPROVED BY: HK</td> </tr> </table> <p>wardell armstrong your earth our world</p>	PROJECT: 1A	NT11636-Figure 24	DATE: July 2014	DRAWN BY: AF	DM	APPROVED BY: HK	<p>TGC Renewables</p> <p>Land at A24, Beere Green</p> <p>FIGURE TITLE: Figure 24 Photomontage - VP1a - 1 Day After Construction</p>
PROJECT: 1A	NT11636-Figure 24	DATE: July 2014								
DRAWN BY: AF	DM	APPROVED BY: HK								

VP 5a

Existing



Proposed



Photomontages Provided By TGC

Photomontage Parameters Grid Ref: 517467mE 142776mN Elevation: 98m AOD Viewing Direction: 225° Distance to Development: 0m Camera Details: Canon EOS 450 D Camera Height: 1.6m Time and Date of Image Capture: 15:41 03/02/2014		Horizontal Scale: 2.1 mm per Horizontal Field of View: 90° Vertical Field of View: 28° Viewing Distance: 350mm @ A2 Weather and Lighting Conditions:	Viewpoint Description View south across the north-eastern section of the site from the northern site boundary (hedge/row). For viewpoint location plan please see WA drawing number: NT11636-Fig 3 Photomontage used is a composite panoramic image. Please refer to main document appendix for methodology statement.	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Drawn By: AF</td> <td>Checked By: DM</td> <td>Approved By: HK</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Date: NT11636-Figure 26</td> <td>Date: July 2014</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Drawn By: AF	Checked By: DM	Approved By: HK	Date: NT11636-Figure 26	Date: July 2014		TGC Renewables Land at A24, Beare Green Figure 26 Photomontage - VP1b - 1 Day After Construction
Drawn By: AF	Checked By: DM	Approved By: HK									
Date: NT11636-Figure 26	Date: July 2014										

VP 56



Photomontages Provided By TGC

Photomontage Parameters Grid Ref: 517324E 1421176N Elevation: 85mAOD Viewing Direction: 0° Distance to Development: 0m Camera Details: Canon EOS 430 D Camera Height: 1.6m Time and Date of Image Capture: 16:53 03/02/2014		Horizontal Scale: 2:1 mm per Horizontal Field of View: 90° Vertical Field of View: 28° Viewing Distance: 350mm @ A2 Weather and Lighting Conditions:		Viewpoint Description View looking north across the site from the south-western site boundary. The south-eastern section is visible in the foreground to middle distance and the north-western section is visible in the far distance. For viewpoint location plan please see WA drawing number: NT11636/fig 3 Photograph used is a composite panoramic image. Please refer to main document appendix for methodology statement.		PROJECT: NT11636 Figure 32 DATE: July 2014 DRAWN BY: DM CHECKED BY: etc TGC Renewables	
				PROJECT: Land at A24, Beare Green			
				PROJECT: Figure 32 Photomontage - VP6a - 1 Day & 5 Years After Construction			

© NT11636/03/05/06/07/08/09/10/11/12/13/14/15/16/17/18/19/20/21/22/23/24/25/26/27/28/29/30/31/32/33/34/35/36/37/38/39/40/41/42/43/44/45/46/47/48/49/50/51/52/53/54/55/56/57/58/59/60/61/62/63/64/65/66/67/68/69/70/71/72/73/74/75/76/77/78/79/80/81/82/83/84/85/86/87/88/89/90/91/92/93/94/95/96/97/98/99/100

V.P6a