# Community News Radford Semele

October 2024

## Solar Farm proposals

# Community Meeting

Wednesday, 16th October 8pm

> **Radford Semele Community Hall**

Given the Solar Farm developer is expected to submit its planning application very soon (in the next couple of weeks), I'm hosting a public meeting this coming week. It will be chaired by FORGE and will be a chance for residents to express their views and I will also update you on what I've been doing on this (summarised overleaf).

Please RSVP via the QR code below or at bit.ly/3ZYJBBI to confirm attendance.



Please note that only those who have RSVP'd will be able to attend due to security reasons.



In June I held a meeting to introduce myself to the Radford Semele community. It was quite clear that many - though not all - had concerns about proposals that had come forward for a large solar farm adjacent to the village. At that meeting, I promised to hold a follow-up meeting to specifically address residents' concerns. I hope to see vou

Thanks and best wither



### my update...



#### June 2024

I visited the site to see first-hand the land that the proposed solar farm would be on and the vast scale of its potential impact.

#### June 2024

I hosted a community meeting to hear directly from residents about issues including their concerns about the proposed solar farm.

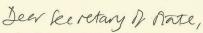




Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government

September 2024

**Matt Western MP** 



am writing to you to express my profound concerns and opposition to the proposed solar farm at Radford

As you may be aware, a 242-acre solar farm has been proposed by Novergy and Recurrent Energy. It would sit to the south-east of the village of Radford Semele. I am concerned that the site chosen by the developers is inappropriate. The site is currently open and underdeveloped agricultural land.

Novergy claims – misleadingly – that the fields are mainly Grade 3b quality. However, the Neighbourhood Plan for the local area states that it is predominantly Grade 2 and 3a, deemed 'Best and Most Versatile'. As you are aware, planning policies state that Grades 1, 2, and 3a should be protected from development. I am concerned about the confusion being sown over this matter, which works in the developer's interests.

The land is also used by local residents for recreational purposes. It is therefore an important local amenity, For local residents, in particular, this proposal will fundamentally change the village's rural and tranquil character. The proposal, for example, has areas for battery storage, security fencing, locked gates, and substations. This constitutes a complete change of use of the land.

I was also troubled to learn that the proposal is 0.1 MW short of being recognised as a 'nationally significant infrastructure' (50MW), it does not need to be approved by the Secretary of State. It appears, therefore, as if the developer has sought to evade scrutiny as well as future obligations towards national energy security. This surely needs reviewing.

Due to all the reasons provided above, I would appreciate you and your team looking into this application. I understand that you do not have the power to call in the application, but given my and local residents concerns about the nature of the development, I believe this warrants further ministerial investigation

Finally, let me say that I am absolutely pro-renewables but we must prioritise wind power (there are NO wind farms currently in Warwickshire) and solar on grey-field and poor value/quality agricultural land. Food resilience – like energy - is also essential.

I look forward to hearing from you soon

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Town Hall, Parade, Leamington Spa, CV32 4AT Tel: 01926 882006

#### September 2024

I wrote to the Secretary of State to stress my opposition to the proposals. I raised concerns around the developers stated grades of the fields - claiming Grade 3b vs the Grade 2 and 3a in the neighbourhood plan meaning they should be protected from development.



#### October 2024

I raised the issue in Parliament this past week. Whilst we all want to accelerate the switch to renewable energy, I believe developments should not impact directly and immediately on a community's amenity.