

Skylarks.

There is no doubt that the damage that is potentially to be done to the skylarks habitat cannot ever be undone. So they will no longer live and breed in that area where the solar panels will take their place . Whatever mitigation is proposed, this does not change that rather bleak fact , they will no longer be there .

Skylarks are the quintessential experience of walkers from near and far through this widely valued landscape. For the people of Wysall where I have lived for over 25 years , there will no longer be hearing that sweet sound of summer on our midshires way walks.

Skylarks are shy, territorial, ground-nesting songbirds who live in constant fear of predation by larger birds. Skylarks avoid predation points such as trees and high fences. Open fields with few or no trees are chosen for nesting. The Skylark set aside field\* located east of field 6 and 10 alongside Bradmore road , has at least 12 large trees enclosing it. There could also be many fence posts and CCTV posts located to the western end of this small, enclosed, set-aside location.

A long term resident of Wysall has walked in this area for over 20 years but has never seen a sky lark in flight or song, whilst walking past that particular location. In contrast many have have been delighted to hear skylarks singing in their preferred larger, safer, wide-open fields, such as fields 1,2 3 4 5 & 7 .

An inescapable conclusion was the area allocated by the appellant to mitigate for their loss of skylark territory was inadequate. A view backed by the Heaton Ecologist in her report for RBC.

23 hectares of arable land ½ mile away from the proposed solar site appeared only last week as an alternative . According to the Appellants Ecologist who documented dated 25.02.26- regarding this new 23 hectares of land ‘ was within the control of the Appellant has potentially become available for use as additional mitigation land’. There is an Eastern and Western part to the 23 hectares. The Appellant it is reported to have carried out breeding bird surveys from May to July 2024 and recorded 1-2 skylark breeding sites on the Eastern side . I was unable to find these to verify.

The sudden appearance of 23 hectares changed the focus of RBC completely . So it is important that we know the exact position of the Appellant with this area of land and when this became available. As they appear to have evaluated the area in 2024

Although the Appellants Ecologist proposes the whole site could be suitable. However, I suspect neither of the two Ecologists representing RBC and the Appellants, in the rush to get this agreement before the Hearing date, have visited this site. If so, they would not have been aware of the main road between Nottingham and Loughborough that is adjacent Could this be the reason why skylarks were only

found on the Eastern side of the 23 hectares – ie the furthest that you can be away for this road.

Now I understand there is to be a legally binding document as to how this land is managed now and in the future .Who is going to be responsible for checking all is how it should be and who will they report to ie it must of course be someone independent of Exagen.

Nobody can know or predict whether the old or new sky larks will occupy this 23 ha or whether they simply move elsewhere. What is possible is the skylarks that lived in our area will disappear altogether, having had their habitat destroyed .To everyone who uses this area , it will be countryside essentially changed forever. For a small bird, the sky lark has certainly had significant stature at this hearing. There should be preservation of the skylark habitats on this site. The appellants appeal should be dismissed.