

This paper is written to seek a compromise between Reach Parish Council's decision to agree the 75:25 split in favour of Burwell suggested at the EDF Community Liaison meeting and Burwell Parish Council's decision to request an 80:20 split, in favour of Burwell. At their meeting before the most recent EDF Community Liaison meeting, Reach Parish Council agreed to propose a 77.5:22.5 split in favour of Burwell. At that Community Liaison meeting Burwell agreed to consider the proposal for a 77.5:22.5 split of the Community Fund and asked Reach PC to provide a paper to support this proposal.

We agree with Burwell Parish Council that Reach is a much smaller village than Burwell. And the traffic for construction has come through Burwell, because Reach roads are unsuitable for heavy traffic. However, the solar farm will have a significant long-term effect on Reach as a whole, and we suggest that a greater proportion of Reach residents are affected to a greater extent by the EDF development.

Reach is a physically small settlement with very little vegetative screening on its edges. Its layout is notable because it results in a very high proportion of homes looking out onto open country. A significant proportion of these homes overlook Burwell Fen, an outlook that is adversely affected by the EDF solar farm. As Burwell PC have previously pointed out, more homes in Burwell overlook the solar farm. But apart from the multi-story Ash Grove complex, most homes in Burwell are screened from Burwell Fen by the trees of Weirs Drove.

We estimate that all houses in the village of Reach lie within 1.5 km of the solar farm. A fair proportion but far from all houses in Burwell lie within the same radius.

A far higher proportion of the recreational areas of Reach (Reach Lode banks, the 24 Acres wood, manège, orchard and cricket pitch, northern end of the Devils Dyke) are adversely visually impacted by the development.

The site is highly visible from the key road route from Reach to Burwell, Newmarket, Soham, Ely and Bury. In practice this means that a very high percentage of Reach residents will view the site at least twice a day as they commute to work, travel to the doctors or dentists, go shopping or to sport and recreation facilities.

A high percentage of Reach residents feel passionately about Burwell Fen as a recreational resource. In the residents' survey of 2020, 93 per cent of respondents valued the open fenland that surrounds the village. More generally the great majority of respondents expressed a love of the tranquility and openness of our neighbourhood. Some residents said that they moved to Reach expressly to enjoy access to the open fenland around the village.

Deciding on a fair split is never going to be an exact science. In the end it's about the two Parish Councils agreeing between us or leaving the decision to EDF. The important thing is to move forward to ensure that the £20,000 a year, index linked, is used to the benefit of our residents whether they be from Reach or Burwell.