

MRS HEATHER WHEELER OBE MP
SOUTH DERBYSHIRE



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

HW32758/HK

16 May 2024

Dear Mr Mills,

As we have corresponded on this topic before, I am writing to inform you of the recent announcement from Claire Coutinho MP, Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero, regarding solar farms and agricultural land.

Our energy security must not come at the expense of our food security, and there are concerns about the increasing number of solar farms proposed on good-quality farmland instead of brownfield land and on rooftops.

The Department for Energy Security and Net Zero has made clear that:

1. Applications prioritise previously developed, brownfield land.
2. Developers avoid the best quality farmland.
3. The overall impact of lots of applications in the same area is considered.

This is effective immediately and applies to all current and future applications.

We do, however, want to see more solar panels installed where appropriate, so the Government has also made it easier and cheaper to install solar on top of warehouses, farm buildings, factories and car parks.

Read the full statement here: <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-statements/detail/2024-05-15/hcws466>

I hope you are reassured by this announcement and should you have any concerns about this or any other issue then please do not hesitate to be in touch.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs. Heather Wheeler
Member of Parliament for South Derbyshire