For individuals the current format is difficult to understand as we have no experience of this unlike the applicant. The very timing of this makes it difficult to attend or participate in and the fact that there are 4 applications very close to each other exacerbates the situation.

I strongly object to the Gate Burton solar farm proposal. It is just 1 of 4 Solar, Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) within a few miles of each other and together these would create the largest solar farm complex in Europe, amounting to some 10,000 acres in total. We must look at all 4 of the proposals together rather than independently given the scale of the projects.

The Gate Burton Solar proposal, at over 3,500 acres, combined with the other 3 proposals have a cumulative effect of 10,000 acres of farmland lost and the industrialisation of the area as a whole. Food security is now a big issue and the government is changing its stance, wanting more productive farmland, not less (see the Government Food Strategy document June 2022). Over the previous 40 years we have gone from producing 78% of our own food down to 64% and the cost of importing food is increasing all the time. To lose 10,000 acres (in total) of good arable land is ridiculous. Rishi Sunak says those fields should be bulging with â€œfantastic produceâ€• and we must â€œnot lose swathes of our best farmland to solar farmsâ€•. Jeremy Hunt is pushing to speed up planning permission for nuclear power plants and offshore wind to boost growth and bring down energy bills. In the UK, solar panels produce on average around 11% of their rated output â€" and they produce most of that power on sunny, summer days when we least need it. When demand is at its highest, on winter evenings, they produce nothing at all.

The government has just approved Sizewell C . Nuclear is the only form of reliable, low carbon electricity generation which has been proven at scale and returns more than 100 times as much power as a solar site of the same size. This will increase civil nuclear power to up to 24GW by 2050 â€" 3 times more than now and representing up to 25% of projected electricity demand.

Solar farms should be located on brownfield sites, not greenfield, and solar panels be compulsory on all new build commercial and residential buildings.

Solar farms will destroy agricultural jobs, skills and livelihoods and create very few new skilled jobs or replace livelihoods. Most of the equipment is likely to be manufactured in China and non-local labour used in construction. It is likely there will be a likely net reduction in employment, in an area with relatively few opportunities. There will not be any economic benefit to the communities affected.

No matter what precautions and assurances, it will not be possible to deliver and install millions of solar panels, pour thousands of tonnes of concrete, as well as containers with batteries and switchgear, all surrounded by miles of fencing, without damaging habitat. And this construction would take up to 4 years to complete. In a recent article in the Sunday Times it was noted that not only is the lifespan of a solar panel 15-20 years (so these would need to be replaced at least once) but that recycling of these is almost non-existent and so will result in a huge amount of non-recyclable waste.

Much of the construction traffic will still be using single track country lanes which are already in a poor condition. It also raises concerns over the risks to pedestrians, cyclists, horses, wildlife and other traffic.

The cumulative scale of the development is unprecedented, and the impact of such a development would change the character and nature of the area for 50 years or more, such a change has the potential to have a significant detrimental impact on the general health and wellbeing of residents.

On this site alone there would be 3,500 acres of solar panels which would change the landscape totally and would destroy the scenic beauty of the area.

I strongly urge that this proposal be rejected.