

RESPONSE TO GATE BURTON SOLAR PROJECT. 7/8/23

From:- Jeffrey John Summers. GABE-IP038

Ref:- EN010131

Good morning chairman.

Who am i.

Born to a farming family near Gainsborough in 1949. I schooled and worked on the farm up to the age of 22 years. On leaving the farm I worked for Agricultural retail and technical businesses advising farmers on the production of livestock and arable crops with some time managing farms. During these years I gained national qualifications in agriculture. From 2002 to 2023 I also worked as a district councillor for WLDC, acting as the council leader for 6 of those years.

Mr. chairman, my reason for being hear today is to vehemently object to the preposterous proposal to place solar panels of this scale on productive arable land. Land which produces sustainability to the human race.

These type of applications apply substantial weight to their justification by claiming grade 3b soils are of low productivity. I FLATLY REFUTE THAT CLAIM!

To begin, I will broadly give you a brief understanding of agricultural systems and food production and how soils are so flexible.

GRADE 3 b soils contain a lower % of coarse sand particles and higher % of clay and organic particles.

Which means they are tougher to till but retain higher levels of organic material and considerably higher levels of moisture in a dry period. Artificial and organic natural fertilizers are stored more efficiently. Thus producing higher levels of productivity than lower grade soils. (ie). Grades 4 and 5.

In the past prior to the development of sophisticated machinery for soil cultivation and tillage, farmers grew the crops most suitable to the soil type because they did not have the physical and technical tools to do the job. With horses they created mixed farms where crops and livestock were produced which most suited there soil type. MIXED FARMING. ROTATIONAL FARMING. A very profitable style of farming which helped establish the very productive soils we have today. This technique is still the best way to farm.

To give you an example of flexibility in agriculture today; years ago sand soils produced very little because they contained low nutrient levels and were very prone to drought and crop failure. They are poor at retaining nutrients.

Today, due to modern fertilizers and irrigation they produce vast amounts of superior quality carrots and potatoes for the crisping market, plus significant amounts of Bacon through outdoor pig production, not forgetting the valued production of Linseed. All in a rotation. This is SUSTAINABLE FARMING.

Incidentally I am at present helping a friendly farmer with his soil cultivations preparing a seed bed for the next crop on grade 3 b soil. This month he harvested last years crop of wheat which has produced in excess of 4 Tonnes per acre. The national average being 3 Tonnes per acre

THE CHARACTER OF THE AREA.

Quite simply I characterise this area of land as a rural idyllic in which people can thrive and enjoy it's beauty whilst being part of a business culture which plays a significant role in feeding our nation. Huge areas in many countries around the world are burning up and unable to continue supplying the UK with the goods we once enjoyed. As an example the Spanish olive harvest was almost none existent last year due to drought. A number of times this year supermarket shelves laid bare due to lack of availability of vegetables and fruit.

VISUAL AMENITY.

The rural beauty of this area can be best appreciated from the Lincoln Cliff, from Lincoln to Kirton in Lindsey. Stretching Fifteen miles to the North of Lincoln. This beautiful vista is enjoyed by thousands of local people and visitors alike. Views stretching as far as South Yorkshire some 50 to 60 miles.

ABSOLUTLY NO ONE WANTS TO SEE THIS AREA DISTURBED BY THOUSANDS OF ACRES OF BLACK BLUE OR GREY SOLAR PANELS. NOR DO THEY WANT TO LIVE AMONGST THEM.

Unless you are a speculator or a Landlord who is blinded by the prospect of receiving a fat cheque annually there is no future for anyone else. If landlords have no interest in tilling the land themselves, then let it to the young men and women leaving this college. After all we are but temporary custodians of the land and our role is to make appropriate use of it, preserve it for the reason it is there. FOOD PRODUCTIVITY.

THE BEST AND MOST VERSATILE SOILS AND AGRICULTURAL USE.

Whilst the ICE AGE retreated back to the north pole it deposited rocks, stones, skeletons and numerous natural artifacts of

pre-historic life. One vital component of this gigantic phase of the Earth's formation as we know it today was the spasmodic and random deposition of the soils we work today.

Because this was a random phenomena we find any where from 1 to 5 different grades of soil in one field. A single grade is rare but 2 or 3 grades are common per field. Such fields do produce excellent crops. This is the norm for this part of Lincolnshire.

Recently modern thinkers are talking about vertical farming. At present eight large companies around the world have either gone bankrupt or about to go into Financial Liquidation. Stacking trays of plants high in a factory I don't think so. Sounds like "pie in the sky to me!"

MANAGEMENT OF OUR ISLAND.

The fact we have thousands of proven agricultural businesses across Lincolnshire is testament to the significant contribution we make to food production in the UK. How British agriculture contributes to the national balance of payments.

Thousands of people employed delivering from field to fork.

If we consider how our local farmers are producing between 3.6 and 4.8 tonnes of wheat per acre;

In countries like the USA, CANADA and AUSTRALIA, THERE YIELDS ARE AROUND 1.0 TO 2.0. tonnes /ac.

Over the last 40 years successive governments have failed to plan for the future. Now out of desperation the drive for green energy has turned it's light on agriculture. Offering large payments to agricultural land owners for the purpose of producing energy. Local feelings are running high because they feel landlords just want the easy buck! With no consideration for the tenants or communities.

Ironically you have chosen to hold your meeting in this new beautiful Agricultural College where the next generation of farmers are being moulded.

GOVERNMENT DEBATE.

On Wednesday July 19th a government debate took place in Westminster Hall titled "Ban the use of Agricultural land for Solar Farms." Specifically Sir Edward Leigh MP. West Lindsey. Sir John Hayes MP Sth Lincolnshire and Alicia Kearns MP Rutland all spoke convincingly against Solar Panels of this scale on Agricultural Soils.

Typical statements were;

100,000 acres of farmland being lost each year to development.

30% of UK vegetables produced in Lincolnshire.

18% of UK poultry produced in Lincolnshire.

12% of the countries TOTAL food production in Lincolnshire.

Grade 3b land is very productive. Almost all fields contain a mixture of land grades. Very rarely do you find a field which is a single grade yet the mixed grades do collectively produce very high yielding crops.

600,000 acres of industrial roof space unused for Solar Panels. Think of the benefits this would produce without affecting food production and the social aspects of our communities.

If the Planning System works as is claimed, why in 4 different areas mentioned by Alicia Kearns MP are they on 90 to 100% BMV farmland?

SUMMARY.

The three most important elements for survival are OXYGEN, FOOD AND WATER.

WHY DEplete OUR ABILITY TO PRODUCE OUR OWN FOOD.

ONE CAN ALWAYS WEAR AN EXTRA SWEATER TO KEEP WARM.

THE MORE GOODS WE IMPORT THE MORE WE BECOME OPEN TO RANSOM WITH SUPPLIES AND PRICING. we've all felt the pricing pain with oil, gass and electricity this last year. All directly related to decades of poor planning and governance of UK Plc.

A Mini NEUCLEAR REACTOR sited at West Burton, Cottom and High Marnham would provide a constant energy supply 24 HOURS per day compared to Solar Panels covering thousands of acres of productive farm land and destroying communities.

Power stations generate 24 hours per day.

Solar panels perform in sunny conditions. Production is reduced by 2/3's on cloudy days with nothing being produced at night during the period of greatest demand during winter.

I IMPLORÉ THOSE MAKING THE DECISION REF. THIS APPLICATION TO SEE THE LIGHT. RECOGNISE THE TRUE LEVEL OF EFFICIENCY FROM SOLAR PANELS AND WHAT VALUE WILL BE LOST IF APPROVED.

UNDERSTAND HOW THIS WILL DISRUPT AND DESTROY SO MANY LIVES.

TENNANT FARMERS BEING PUT OUT OF BUSINESS.

A FURTHER INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF DAYS SUPERMARKET SHELVES ARE BARE.

HIGHER FOOD PRICES.

FURTHER INCREASES IN ENERGY COSTS TO THE END USER DUE TO ECCESSIVE RENTS PAID TO LANDLORDS.

WATCH OUR POORER PEOPLE IN THE UK SUFFER INCREASED
HARDSHIP.

THERE IS NO ECONOMIC OR SOCIAL CASE FOR THIS PLAN.

Justification

Where is the proven need for this proposal.

There have been no electricity power cuts for many years therefore our production levels of electricity must be adequate to meet our national needs.

Will there be an environmental impact? Yes>

Obviously this will be very significant. No one can predict the devastation that may be caused to flora and fauna.

Will there be an impact on local communities? Yes.

A significant impact will be incurred upon all local communities due to the amount of traffic increase, noise, potential disturbance of drainage systems and general disturbance over many many months and even years!

Will there be a visual impact for the district. Yes.

The construction of several thousand acres of obscure unnatural structures creating glare and reflection across the area will be a total assault upon our natural surrounds. Beautiful vistas will be destroyed! The visitor economy destroyed.

Will there be a detrimental impact upon the local economy. Yes!

Most tenant farmers are likely to be put out of business plus any associated businesses which rely on agricultural support will be seriously impacted, creating redundancies.

Do local communities support the application. No!!!!

All communities fear the end result whereby the economy and rural idyll will be disrupted to such an extent it would be hardly recognisable.

Does WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL support the application. NO.

Does our MP. Sir Edward Leigh support the application. NO.

Who is in support of this application.?

Only those who are presenting the application and the landlords who are offering the land for unacceptably high rent. So much so that the business operating the established solar farms will have purchased the land 6 7 or even eight times during the 50 year lease through the annual rents.

Are there more efficient and less disruptive alternatives to generate electricity. YES!

Nuclear fusion, Wind, Coastal Barage and SOLAR PANELS ON INDUSTRIAL ROOFS AND HOUSE ROOFS. Let businesses and private house holds enjoy the benefits of solar panels rather than fill the pockets of those who are already wealthy with even greater riches.

Therefore Mr. Chairman I conclude this application does not have any support apart from those with a financial interest and justification cannot be proven.

A need is not proven.

Community support is not there.

Commercial impact is negative.

Environmental impact will be negative.

Employment opportunities not proven. Just potential promises with no guarantees.

There will be no social benefits to communities.

The mental and psychological effect on local residents is not understood either, nor does it appear to be a consideration.

Therefore Mr. Chairman I implore you to refuse this outrageous, unpredictable, flight of fantasy which has no social, environmental, physical all financial benefit to the district.

Thank you.

L. J. Summers.