

I attended the open hearing on Tuesday 22nd August. I stated as follows:

I represent a fourth generation family farming grade 3 land at Willingham by Stow. We make our living and our lives on this land. We enjoy the quiet rural life and see first hand the importance of the environment and all the flora and fauna within it. This existence is under a sudden and unprecedented attack from four massive projects of solar industrialisation of the countryside.

Land is a finite resource and is under attack like never before from misplaced ideas and greed. The demands of food production, energy production, rewilding and new housing just some of what is draining the environment, the nature and the people that inhabit it.

We are getting close to the snapping point and I would say that preservation of the environment and food production should take priority. There are other options for the rest.

Let's be clear, this is not green energy. This is about profiteering off the backs of local, rural communities. When the carbon footprint is added up it would in no way justify this onslaught of industrialisation. There are so many negative aspects of this whole policy which scream out to me that it is entirely wrong.

Further comments on points the applicants made:

Power plants are the other side of the River Trent so this area is very peaceful and rural.

Hedges to screen the ugly landscape of solar panels and security fencing will take a generation to grow and create tunnels of narrow lanes. Not the open landscape we are used to. This land would be industrialised for ever once it was covered over. A complete waste of good land and the environment.

Aerial views for birds would be very confusing. I imagine it would look like water to them. Views from the cliff road would be depressing. The tourist industry would take a battering especially as we already have asylum seekers being dumped on our back doors at Scampton.

Battery storage plans are a huge worry. The chemicals used are dangerous and the fire risk immense. I was involved in a small field fire last summer which spread very quickly and was heading towards a remote property. It was only the skill of three fire tenders and local farmers that managed to put it out. How are these large scale industrial fires going to be dealt with?

We are by no means the only rural area threatened by these horrendous projects. The applications seem to be going in thick and fast across the county and the country. Again I repeat this is profiteering not a realistic energy plan. It is being encouraged by a knee jerk reaction from a stricken and inept government.

Solar has its place in a joined up energy plan which successive governments have failed to address. Its place is on brownfield sites, warehouses and new buildings NOT in our countryside!