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**From:** Sue Bingham [REDACTED] >

**Sent:** Monday, January 29, 2024 3:22 PM

**To:** West Burton Solar Project <WestBurtonSolarProject@planninginspectorate.gov.uk>

**Subject:** West Burton solar application response from open floor hearing Wednesday 24th January 2024

Dear Sir/Madam

I attended the open floor hearing on the above date and was very angry and distressed at the lack of feedback and ability to question any information with the Applicant always having the last word. It seems like a David and Goliath struggle and we the rural communities do not have an advocate against the armies of the Applicants.

I was extremely despondent on Thursday but having thought deeply about it all over the weekend, this is my further response.

I still cannot see that any sane person could think these schemes will provide sufficient power against the balance sheet of the cost to the environment from the import of coal manufactured goods, the construction process, the loss of and impact on the local environment and wildlife and the damage to local communities. If I had any doubt that it could help to save our precious planet I would not be protesting. As I have repeatedly stated, this is about profit not clean energy.

The Prime Minister has been quoted this weekend as saying 'I will not let Lincolnshire be covered in solar panels'. In which case, what are we doing here?

The Working Ministerial Statement of 25th March 2015 still applies I believe? As I'm sure you know the content of this I won't repeat it all except to quote 'protecting the global environment is not an excuse to trash the local environment'.

I would further dispute that it is even protecting the global environment, merely exporting the problem, as China uses a coal powered manufacturing base.

Cleve Hill in Kent is I believe, currently the largest solar industrial plant in the country at around 1000 acres. These four projects within a 10km radius will be over 10,000 acres! That is entirely unreasonable to inflict upon a rural area and quiet communities. They have been cynically split into four to bamboozle any local opposition and to make it quite impossible for any normal person to keep track of.

Professor Sir David Melville CBE, who works for NASA, has said that the Battery and safety management plan at Cleve Hill is totally inadequate.

There is a battery storage area planned very close to our village of Willingham by Stow. I would have thought that a reservoir would be needed for the amount of water necessary in the event of a thermal

runaway fire . I know from farming experience how dangerous field fires can be and how quickly they spread. What provision and manpower is being considered for this situation?

Mr Philips, solicitor for several of the Applicants, stated that we should hang our heads in shame for purchasing goods from China when it suits us. It most certainly does not suit us now but has been allowed to happen by our government being complicit in destroying our own manufacturing bases . Why are Chinese goods cheaper I wonder! We need a National conversation about our further links with an increasingly belligerent country.

Mr Philips also mentioned golf courses as taking up the same amount of land as solar will do soon. The difference being that golf courses still allow wildlife and flora to flourish and allow many people the benefit of open green spaces to enjoy.

A few more of Mr Philips' misconceptions:

Lincolnshire is historically a food producing region not power - that is the other side of the River Trent in Nottinghamshire.

Farmers do indeed receive subsidies for environmental protection areas on which they do not produce food. These are necessary because of the increasing pressure on land as a finite resource which is causing decline in flora and fauna around the globe. It does not damage the land and it can be returned quickly to agriculture if necessary unlike an industrial landscape of solar panels.

These suppositions show that a London lawyer knows nothing of our rural environments and communities.

Solar has a place in an energy plan; that place is on rooftops, new buildings, warehouse and brownfield sites. Not here in Lincolnshire on top of quiet rural areas and communities.

I truly hope that the Planning Inspectorate will be our advocate. We desperately deserve and need one.

Yours faithfully

Sue Bingham

Willingham by Stow

**[REDACTED]**

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