

My name is William Rose.

I have farmed at Fillingham for the past fifty-six years; I have lived there all my life. Along with most other people here, I can think of better places to be, than in front of this microphone. But I felt I must stand up to these monstrous proposals. I will never be able to look my children or Grandchildren in the eye if I haven't tried to do something to stop this.

The applicants will say they are following Government policy, they may well be, but it doesn't make it right.

The whole strategy of looking for solar to generate 70Gigawatts of electricity by 2035 is flawed. This scale of output will need the sacrifice of at least 70,000 hectares of farmland.

This is a shocking figure which I suppose the applicants, from their ivory towers, will pass off as a drop in the ocean. How can it be sensible policy to take this huge area from the finest food producing county.

I have spent my whole life trying to follow the old dictum, of leaving my land in a better state than when I took it over. I

have planted woods, miles of hedgerows, created ponds, all to enhance the environment around me.

I am absolutely appalled that these proposals are being put forward.

You, as adjudicator over these events must look at the bigger picture, we are not faced with this one project, but many. Our rural landscape will be changed for generations to come.

Solar on roof tops as part of the mix of renewable energy is not a problem.

The problem is the condemning of vast areas of farmland to become an industrial landscape. This is an ill-thought-out government policy which doesn't care about the long-term effects which it surely will have.

The cumulative visual effect of such a large area of solar panels on our rural landscape is hard to comprehend. This has never been done before. There can be no doubt that our outlook will be blighted as far as the eye can see.

You will be destroying the landscape, which generations of our forebearers have toiled to create. All for the sake of profit for some faceless multinational company.

The sheer scale of this project is immense; it will have a huge effect in many areas –

Agriculture –

The land under proposal is Grade 3, it is penny pinching to say 'A' or 'B' and is currently used for food production.

As farmers we are being encouraged by the same Government which has dictated that solar farms are the way forward, to become more environmentally friendly, this will result in many acres of good land being set aside to grow not food, but flowers and herbal leys.

We have a war in Europe with problems of supply. We should be focusing on growing more food in the UK, not less.

The landscape will be changed for 60 years and may never be returned to farmland again.

Environment –

The machinery and manpower needed to construct these farms will destroy indigenous species of wildlife, insects, birds, trees, and plants. Miles of hedgerows will be ripped out.

As for public access, I'm not sure I want to walk through thousands of solar panels.

Public health –

The effect to the community's mental and physical health will be immense, People have lived in these communities for many generations. Currently, it is a peaceful, quiet, rural area. As a solar 'farm' it will become a vast industrial site with no access to footpaths, the countryside as we know it, will disappear.

Just the planning process of these proposals has caused a huge amount of stress, worry and depression. That's just the planning process!

Battery storage –

The scale of land required for this is huge.

The implications of living near this facility will affect the mental health and general lives of people living in the area. There must be environmental problems just in the manufacture of these batteries, let alone their disposal.

Transport Issues-

These are vast schemes, requiring vast logistical issues. The road infrastructure just isn't capable of coping with the amount of heavy traffic which these schemes will generate. The small villages in our area will be blighted by the procession of heavy goods vehicles.

The impact on the community will be life changing.

The advent of mini nuclear power stations will render schemes like these obsolete. In fact, by reserving grid connection for solar it might hold up their development.

If these schemes are allowed to go ahead, you consign a vast area of rural England to an industrial, soul less wilderness, you will have changed our countryside forever.

I would urge you to halt these proposals, it will be your legacy to the people who live in this area if you allow these proposals to go ahead.