

My name is Dr Rodney May. I am a local resident having lived in [REDACTED]. As such I am an interested party.

I object to the proposed installation of the Tillbridge solar farm. My analysis indicates that such a development is not in my or the UK's national interest. The basis of my objection is:-

1. my concerns regarding the industrialization of a such a large rural landscape and its affect on health and lifestyle.
2. becoming aware of and sharing National concerns about any reduction in the UK's independence of food production.
3. my detailed knowledge of the effectiveness of producing energy from solar panels in the West Lindsey district.
4. my skill as a Consultant Engineer in performing assessments and lecturing in the UK and internationally on critical systems.

Studying the proposal in layman's terms, each individual solar panel installation is the size of a small bungalow (including its height). Imagine about seven square miles of bungalows packed cheek by jowl for just one of the four proposed solar farm developments (Tillbridge). From the B1398 Middle Street north of Glentworth it will look like the industrialization of all the land across to Gainsborough. Horrendous! No longer will [REDACTED] along with friends keep fit and enjoy life by walking from our front door on our normal routes!

Another key concern looking forward is the elimination of such a large food source from so much quality agricultural land. In this troubled world and with climate change I understood the UK was striving for food independence as far as practical. The totality of the local solar schemes will have a dramatic impact on achieving this objective. See for example the work by Sarah Bridle, Professor of Food, Climate and Society at York University and Professor Aled Jones, lead author of a study , Director of the Global Sustainability Institute at Anglian Ruskin University*. Importantly, in this respect, I would judge the importance of the food source from the records of local farmers, not by some arbitrary classification of the land made many decades ago.

However, as a [REDACTED], my main concern is the energy produced will be at its maximum when the demand for it will be at its lowest. I say this from personal experience. I have solar panels fitted on my roof pointing South. Examining my latest records my Winter generation was only 18% of my Summer generation. I would expect this to be a major factor in the decision making process. In particular, the need to couple solar generation with long term energy storage, for it to be viable.

This all needs to be considered in the context of all the solar farms proposed for this part of Lincolnshire; Cottam, West Burton, Gate Burton together with Tillbridge. They will significantly reduce food production and have an dramatic impact on the quality of life for people living in this part of West Lindsey with very questionable benefit.

Summarising:

- 1) I judge the return on the proposed investment is poor when considered in the context of when the energy will be produced against the loss of a valuable food source. Also the negative impact on industrializing such a large rural landscape.
- 2) I judge that money would be better spent through investing in the improved energy efficiency of individual houses. Regarding this last point, I understand that UK housing in 2022 used about 35% of the energy produced in the UK.
- 3) If the schemes go ahead as proposed at UK government level it strikes me as a “tick box” approach. “Look, the UK is meeting its target for green energy production” even though such energy will be produced when least required and have a huge negative impact on food production and rural life. Importantly, the UK target should be usable green energy not just green energy.

* The Times. Tuesday 17th October 2023