

I find myself sitting here, once again at a hearing attempting to make you hear my community and the impact yet another solar project will have on this area. It has been stated that this is not a political field however, successive governments have made it policy to decarbonise, but without considering how this will be delivered, or without linking planning and policy. Had they done so, it would inevitably point out that ground mounted solar on this scale is flawed. Alternatives could have and should have been deployed before we reached the scenario where mile upon mile of farmland is being covered in solar panels in the name of the environment.

As a planning inspectorate, you are now presiding over something that should never have become a discussion. You are now listening to companies, with no interest in this area, whose primary goal is profit. During the examination, they always have the last word and present a body of information that shows only a partial picture that is not fit to be used as the basis of a planning decision, in a system that is weighted to economy not to environmental issues and to companies who have the ability to lobby for their agenda within the government. This is not an objective or fair process. The Applicant's aim is to lead you to understand that the only option is ground mounted solar, and it starts with their information booklets, which fail to show the scale of development or size of the panels. Instead, they show rooftop solar, small solar installations against crops or trees, panels glinting in the sun with a child's hand... anything but the monstrous reality of what they propose for our region. My community have been misled, misheard, or ignored whilst being told that the process is listening to them.

Skidmore, and others have stated that infrastructure such as this should not be imposed on local communities. And yet, that is exactly what is happening in this corner of West Lindsey. The combination of misleading, glossy brochures and an overwhelming volume of detailed documents buried away in lists, on websites, leaves people excluded from this process. Many people still do not know the extent of development that is heading to this region – the scale of which the country has never seen.

I feel the need to state the obvious. My community can't contribute to food production from our roof tops, any more than the rooftops of expanding towns and cities. No-one can accommodate reservoirs on roofs, nor grow trees, which we are told needs to happen to assist with decarbonisation. I can however have solar on my roof and have since 2008. There is enough roof space in the UK to accommodate all the required solar and yet companies still persist in pushing for ground mounted solar... Why? Simply because of profit. If it were truly in the name of decarbonisation and sustainability, it would be placed on rooftops, with minimal impact and where power is generated at the point of use. On rooftops it can benefit the consumer directly and reduce costs, which ground mounted solar at this scale cannot do, with such extensive installation, disruption, miles of high voltage transmission lines, backed up with juicy "contracts for difference" to help feed the profits back to their foreign investors.

I despair at the fact that 2 schemes have already been passed by the Secretary of State. Our communities will never be the same. Food production, animal feed and bio fuels in this rural area stand to be impacted beyond belief. Do not now allow us to pay a further

price for the short sightedness of planning and policy. We are a small island, where land is precious. We need to consider carefully its use before we act, and we need so much more than solar to rectify the damage that humans have done to this earth and our climate. Let us not preside over more damage. If you allow this you will trap, devastate and destroy my community, who will be no longer living in the rural setting they chose but in a solar wilderness, that will not provide opportunities or jobs, nor the electricity it purports to offer. This is a rural environment, where we work, walk, cycle and enjoy the benefits of open fields, wildlife and peace, where we produce food for the nation, and where we are custodians of the landscape.

And when these companies are long gone, for they will sell on and evolve, move to the next big project, and when their legacy is debated in years to come, when solar should have been placed on roof tops as a policy before we were in crisis, when there is no one left accountable for their actions... what will our legacy be? How will we justify this to our grandchildren and great grandchildren... I personally can say I tried to protect agriculture, a way of life, my community, I tried to protect wildlife and habitats... because this development is wasteful and unnecessary.

Solar should not be covering land with so much roof space being already available.

This isn't me saying "not in my back yard"... I don't need it in my back yard, because I've already got it on my roof...

And, I'm saying it should not just be on my roof, it should be on yours... and everyone here – and everyone who's not...