

Tillbridge Solar Issue Specific Hearing. 15th January 2025

Within the Planning Application, chapter 11 is The Environmental Statement. Paragraph 11.3.3 states that the effects on human health during construction, operation and decommissioning phases are based on a range of related assessments and relevant environmental studies.

I would suggest that due to the unique nature of this development, these are meaningless. Any solar development of this scale in the world that I can find are in arid desert locations away from populated areas. Uniquely, Tillbridge solar, alongside the other 3 adjoining solar developments, will either surround or sit alongside 30 villages...30 communities, who's residents will be expected to live, and die, next to these monstrosities for up to 60 years. Therefore, I would question how any research can have been done to show the effects on human health, when no such situation has existed before.

The impact of just reading the Environmental statement alone, on myself, was awful, I literally just wanted to scream. To see page after page stating that throughout the construction, operation and decommissioning phases, the impact on human health across every area listed, such as air quality, on landscape & visual amenity, noise and vibration, transport & access, is totally dismissed as being 'minor/negligible' or 'not significant'.

How can it be possible that we now bend over backwards to recognise the 'hurt caused' or the 'effects on mental health' from things like a hurtful comment or tweet, or the misuse of a pro-noun, yet suggest that taking away people's land and homes, silencing them by accusing them of being NIMBY's if they dare to object, exposing them to long term construction activity over 3 –5 years, taking people who've lived for generations in a rural and open setting, and surrounding them with industrial development for the rest of their lives in many cases, will have 'negligible or not significant' impact on them?

We are being used as guinea pigs, and by changing planning regulations, the government has taken away our rights to protect the things that are so

important to us. These are not just fields, they are the landscape where our communities live. Across the world, wars have been fought for as long as man has been around by those trying to protect their homes and land from those trying to take it or destroy it, because people care about where they live. And this project will destroy our land, yet we're just expected to sit by and watch it happen and not feel anything, not suffer any consequences? People meet and socialise by getting out and walking and cycling, and meeting people from neighbouring villages who are doing the same. It's so important for the cohesion of a community. If there's nowhere to walk or cycle safely, that cohesion will suffer. People won't want to go for a walk down a permissive corridor through the middle of solar panels...where's the pleasure in that... and that community spirit, and knowing your neighbours, will suffer. People will become more isolated, needing to drive more to get out and about rather than walking and meeting people, and that will impact on both their physical and mental health.

Personally, the impact of these solar projects is already massive. The emotional stress and anxiety I feel are huge and constant, and every time I hear people talking about it on the TV and radio, it just triggers this anxiety and I feel panicky. Rarely do I get a good night's sleep, lying awake thinking about the horror of what's about to come, trying to think of all the arguments against it. Waking up with headaches more often than not, and having a constant knot in my stomach because I'm so angry and frustrated at the utter madness of covering farmland with solar panels, and knowing that there is no process by which we can do anything to stop it. It literally makes you ill....

You could ask everyone in this room if they want cleaner and cheaper energy, every hand will go up. If you ask 'do you want to sacrifice vast areas of food producing farmland for solar, an energy system that's unreliable, inefficient and highly vulnerable to damage', not one hand would go up. Clearly, the answer you get very much depends on how you phrase the question. So, despite warnings from the energy industry that the intermittent power causes problems for the grid, when I hear Ed Miliband telling us that everyone is in agreement that he is doing the right thing approving all these solar farms, it's a lie. Who are these people and what

questions are they asked? And yet we can do nothing when one man who seems to think he personally owns the land, can fundamentally change and damage it's landscape forever, then just walk away when voted out of office? It tears me apart and takes away hope, which I'm struggling to deal with.