

I attended the evening hearing on 14 January. I would like to make the following comments.

Whilst people was asked not to applaud the speakers this occurred and continued during the meeting. Culminating in someone shouting down the final speaker when trying to address the individual concerns people had expressed. Conduct of this nature is appalling.

I support the Solar Farm Development I am an interested party as I farm some of the land.

I see the Solar as a form of diversification within the realms of farming knowing that it is not a permanent situation but lending the land for a period of years to produce a much needed power source which is clean and quiet and carbon neutral once installed.

I believe as a farmer global warming and climate change are already being felt with much greater extremes of weather. Prolonged periods of wet weather and prolonged periods of dry weather have a massive impact on crop yields which are pushed down. Presently it is difficult to produce crops that cover the cost of production.

At this point organic matter in this soil is very low, resistant grass weeds are becoming a major issue, thus increasing the use of chemicals and cultivations thereby increasing Co2 emissions.

The consequence of low yields depressed prices and inflated costs have led us to take up the DEFRA Sustainable Farming Incentive scheme. In harvest 24 only 2.3% of our farmed area grew a crop that directly went into the food chain. This was malting barley to produce alcohol.

If the solar farm goes ahead farm traffic will be reduced massively.

As an example liquid digestate which we use on the planned area within the red line as a fertiliser and transport to each field by tractor and tanker can create up to 1300 traffic movements every year if applied at 40 cubic metres per hectare.

Other farming operations are ongoing all year round such as spraying cultivations seeding and movements of produce.

The solar farm is a massive investment for the area and a wonderful opportunity for creating jobs and careers. Whilst agriculture jobs are diminishing and will continue to do so. Job creation has got to be good for the area.

The local economy during construction and beyond can only benefit by having greater employment.

The wildlife, biodiversity and the environment generally will benefit the entire area as a consequence of very little disturbance of the soil not subject to continuous agriculture practice.

We as farmers need electricity to process and store the crops we produce and to get it from the field to the point of consumption.

I fully support this proposal for Tillbridge Solar Development.