

We attended the "consultation meeting" given by Boom in Howden's Shire Hall in June 2023. It was evident at this meeting that the scheme faces overwhelming local opposition.

Whilst we support the use of renewable energy, including having our own domestic solar installation, we cannot support this proposal for the East Yorkshire solar farm in an area of peaceful countryside of considerable natural beauty. If the scheme were for a brown-field site or the roofs of the massive warehouses being constructed all around the country, we would welcome it.

During the construction of the solar farm, a great deal of heavy transport can be expected to use the narrow country lanes in the area. This will bring disruption to the lives of local residents and anyone wishing to travel through the country lanes, which currently provide ideal routes for cyclists and walkers to enjoy without the dangers of speeding vehicles.

As we live in [REDACTED], our immediate locality would not be directly affected. However, it is a very different situation for people living in the five East Yorkshire villages adjacent to the proposed solar farm, who would find themselves surrounded by large solar panels instead of fields and countryside.

We are concerned about the potential impact upon the physical and mental well-being of residents. One of us, [REDACTED], ran a mental health charity for twenty-seven years. People could avoid going out due to the disruption and the greatly changed landscape, leading to physical inactivity and resulting in obesity and general ill-health. Staying at home instead of walking through their village, residents face the possible onset of anxiety and depression, social phobia, and/or agoraphobia.

In our opinion it is wrong to cover such a large area of open food-producing arable and cattle-grazing land surrounding the villages with solar panels. A pleasant area would be turned into an industrial zone for the foreseeable future. Having seen the lifespan of other projects modified or extended once they are commissioned, we would suggest that the decommissioning of this solar farm after forty years of operation is in considerable doubt.

In our opinion the suggestion that wildlife somehow would be protected during the installation of a solar farm and even improved by the scheme is nonsense. The installation of fencing of 2.2 metres height is designed to exclude the larger animals from the areas where they have existed for many centuries. The birdlife in the area will be under threat with loss of habitat, food and disruption to nesting during the construction period, and it is unlikely that they will return when the solar farm is established. The proposal to allow sheep grazing under the panels seems unrealistic - if there were money to be made for farmers by changing from arable to sheep farming, it would have taken place already. Additionally, we feel that keeping deer out while allowing sheep in to graze would be ridiculous.

Nowhere in the document is an assessment given on the effects of the glare from the solar panels on aviation in this area, with a major centre for historic aircraft and the training of pilots, Brighton, being situated on the edge of one of the proposed areas. In addition, there is a possibility of archaeological disturbance – the Howdenshire Archaeological Society is currently undertaking an excavation at Spaldington and there may well be other sites within the area which could be destroyed should this project go ahead.

For all these reasons we would urge the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero to decline approval of this massive solar farm scheme.