

From Paul Taylor, [REDACTED]

12 months ago, my wife and I were quietly going about our business looking forward to our retirement after 30 years hard work building up our own business employing 25 people in a rural area when this proposal came along and shattered our lives

This scheme is wrong in so many ways even allowing for the doubtful economics behind the feasibility of solar energy in this country and the need to preserve as much land for food production. If you were to draw a line around the circumference of the various fields in the plan it would cover an area of 10,500 acres.

The field choices are bizarre and follow in the plan no logic or practicality. It would appear it has been based around a clique of landowners who saw an opportunity to offer land rather than the developer choosing that which was the most suitable to make a more economic and efficient development. There is plenty of land in the area that would be suitable without the need to encroach on and ruin the residential amenity of five whole villages. It would appear Boom have simply taken the easy way out rather than approach other landowners for more suitable land.

Despite the government rhetoric the planning system is totally loaded against the little man, there are many reasons we could object to the development, but we were advised the weakest point of the proposal were the landscape issues. We do not have the knowledge, money or time to put forward our own objection so have had to spend money into 5 figures to employ experts in this field.

Our property would be an island in the middle of a solar array if this proposal were to go ahead and our expert has addressed many of the landscape issues surrounding this. The house and home we have cherished and loved for the last 22 years will become a hell hole during construction and then could lose half its value or be unsellable after completion. One of our main worries is the construction which will involve months and months of pile driving and traffic. I understand the piles can be screwed in rather than driven and if this development were to go ahead, I would appeal to the Inspector to make screwing compulsory and insist the developers work within the confines of BS5228 Part 1 and 2 which is the code of practice for noise and vibration control on construction and open sites. We are also concerned that as our house is of Georgian era there are no foundations, and that constant vibration may cause damage to our home. The developers should pay for a survey before and after construction and be prepared to pay compensation if any damage is done. This is apart from denying us the use and enjoyment of our garden and equine facility due to the noise and dust. We would also ask for sound level meters around our property and all noise to be kept below an acceptable and realistic level. We would also ask that work hours are limited from 8am to 5pm Monday to Friday and 9am to 1pm on a Saturday with no work at all on Sundays.

Traffic also concerns us as we run a business from the property that involves our workers getting to and from work as well as deliveries and collections throughout the day and would ask the developer to guarantee that we always have access to our property with no road closures or obstructions.

I also do not think enough consideration has been given to the flood risk in the area. This is twofold. Firstly, the displacement caused by thousands and thousands of concrete posts. The land is predominantly clay and does not absorb the water very well as we saw last winter. Secondly many underground drains could be smashed by the concrete posts. Many of the fields around here were drained by Italian PoWs after the war and nobody really knows exactly where these drains are. A combination of these two could easily see the land and properties around here flooded.

I am convinced that if these were separate applications for each field one of them at least would be dismissed because of the cumulative effect.

In other parts of the UK where solar farms have been completed there has been an increase in crime which is also extremely worrying for my family because we will live so close to this development. If criminal gangs come into the area seeking out copper and other materials from the solar panels what's to say they won't also target people's homes, farms, and businesses? It will make residents extremely vulnerable.

There is insufficient knowledge or research into the mental and physical affect such as radiation and the electro-magnetic field caused by a high density of solar panels and we will be surrounded by these things. We do not want to be the guinea pigs that find out the damage they can do when it is too late.

It also saddens us that despite the huge disruption to the neighbourhood and the huge amounts of money that both the developers and landowners stand to make that not a penny has been offered in the way of compensation to the people worst affected or towards a community fund. Nor have they offered to improve the roads as the wind farm developers did. All our utilities run along the C88 and we already suffer problems with phones and broadband and next it will be power and water that are disrupted.

This area has done more than its fair share to support the green agenda with an AD plant and wind turbines already within 2000 metres of our property.

I would urge the Inspector to reject this application on the following grounds:

- 1) Wrong choice of fields. There are many other fields that would cause less disruption and harm to existing residential settlements
- 2) Distance to grid connection
- 3) Lack of information on panels to be used (Slave labour may be involved)
- 4) Destroying valuable food producing land
- 5) Destroying the natural habitats of many species of birds and animals
- 6) Lack of knowledge and research into health affects of large solar farms
- 7) Disruption of local services and road access
- 8) Poor environmental assessments
- 9) Sheer scale of the development and cumulative affect

If, however, the Inspector is mindful to grant planning I would urge the following conditions

- 1) Increase of buffer zones on all private properties
- 2) Strict conditions on working hours
- 3) Screw drilling instead of pile driving
- 4) Strict condition on noise
- 5) Pay for the improvement of local roads

- 6) Survey and compensate any premises damaged in the process
- 7) Create a local community fund
- 8) Offer cheaper electricity to all neighbouring properties
- 9) Strict time limit on the construction of the site