

My husband and I moved to Chippenham in 2009, we moved to Chippenham as we wanted to live in a rural area, with the countryside on our doorstep. We did not expect that one day this would change and a large solar farm would be built close to where we live. There will be heavy construction traffic daily around the village for a number of years whilst the plant is being built which will affect our daily lives with increased traffic , noise levels and possibly roads blocked due to the size of the vehicles and narrowness of the country lanes. The farmland will be given over to concrete, solar panels of minerals and steel that will be shipped from thousands of miles away whilst food crops and local livestock will be banished, all at a time when we are in a cost of living crisis and should be growing more crops locally.

The visual impact on the landscape surrounding the village of Chippenham and other villages in the area is going to be huge. We regularly go walking and cycling in these areas for the views that they offer and these will be greatly impacted by the building of the Sunnica plant. The storage battery installations alone are going to be 10 metres high which will obscure the views that we have enjoyed since we moved to the village.

I am told the solar panels have a life of approximately 40 years, I am concerned about what will happen to the land then. How will the panels, batteries and other machinery be disposed of.

I am anxious about the fire risks associated with the battery storage units. There are many recorded instances of fires breaking out within these units.

I am in favour of renewable energy as I understand the need to reduce our usage of fossil fuels, but I do not agree with the construction of such a large solar installation on good quality arable farm land and so close to villages as it will have such an impact on the quality of life of the people that live in them. I do not believe that this is being done for the right reasons, and that the company behind the proposal have not addressed the concerns of the residents of the villages involved. These installations should be built on more suitable sites that are not used to grow crops and house livestock.