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To: [Tillbridge Solar Project](#)
Subject: Submission re recent hearings - once again getting a blocked message on the website when I try to submit it
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IP20049910

I was not able to attend the recent Open Floor Hearing or the Issue Specific hearing on Health and Wellbeing as I was working, but I have listened to the recordings of those hearings and would like to record my support for the points made by local residents and representatives who spoke against the development at the Open Floor Hearing, especially Springthorpe Parish Council, 7000 Acres, Wendy Rose and Peter O'Grady.

There are many local residents spending time trying to show the Examiner why the location and scale of the Tillbridge Solar project and its related infrastructure, (and the multitude of negative impacts of its construction process on the local communities), make it a short-sighted and erroneous proposal. Sadly I fear there are legitimate concerns that the examination process may be a waste of such time, due to the well publicised attitude towards industrial scale solar projects of the government and particularly the Secretary of State - who will make the final decision.

I was very disappointed to learn that the applicant's 'expert' who put together the desktop assessment relating to the impact on health and wellbeing was not in attendance at the SI hearing. I hope that the examiner will consider scheduling a further SI hearing on health to enable both sides to fully address all the related issues.

There are so many aspects to 'health and wellbeing' – physical, mental, emotional, financial ... and these will all be affected in different ways throughout the examination, construction, operation and decommissioning phases of the four connected local projects.

Since I began writing this, we have now heard that the West Burton project has been approved, so we now have three projects confirmed as going ahead in our area of Lincolnshire.

As some of the IPs have already said – the combined area in Lincolnshire, including Tillbridge Solar, is larger than any other industrial solar plant in the world, and what sets it apart even more is the fact that it is in the midst of villages and communities – not in a desert or on wasteland.

I'm a self-employed therapist working from home in a village in the middle of the 4 projects.

I will list just some of the anticipated impacts (current, inevitable, likely and potential) on the health and well-being of me, my clients, my neighbours, families

During construction :-

Mental health and financial health

Once construction starts, my clients – whichever direction they enter the village from – will have their journeys affected by road closures, 'traffic management', an increase in traffic due to construction related vehicles and worker movements and people trying to avoid closed roads, yet more potholes and mud on the back roads... how do I know that my clients will be willing to leave home earlier, have longer journeys and get home later, incur more costs in petrol/ childcare/ longer away from work, for the same length treatment? How can I be sure that my income won't suffer and make it harder to pay the bills for my home - which will undoubtedly lose capital value as it is less than half a mile from Cottam project's major BESS? Whilst we are told that reduction in value of affected property is not something that is taken into consideration in planning applications, the effects on mental health/ stress levels of the value of, and equity in, our homes cannot be ignored.

The disruption to the local road network will also affect the postal service, delivery companies (Amazon, Evri & other couriers, also grocery and other deliveries), school runs, commutes, service buses, personal and business journey times causing more mental and financial stresses to the local population. Whether you are trying to get to the doctors' surgeries (the Ingham, Willingham and Saxilby GP practice buildings are all located on or close to construction routes), work or other appointments, the published working hours of the combined construction projects (weekdays and Saturdays) will affect all our journey times – more stress.

The number of construction workers to be housed locally will affect the availability of bed & breakfasts, AirBNBs, hotels etc – causing added stress when organising weddings, funerals, other social occasions that require accommodation for guests.

These are just a few examples of how the everyday lives of our local communities will be disrupted. The mental health of many cannot fail to be affected. Has the applicant – especially in preparing any reports or assessments of the cumulative effects of the 4 projects – given any thought to the catastrophic impact that having 4 major solar projects bring built at the same time in this rural area for years (not months) will have on our mental and financial health?

Physical health

I currently regularly run/ walk/ cycle over many miles of local tracks and rural roads. Every route out of the village I live in will be affected by solar project construction works. The roads will be busier – both with construction traffic, and also locals trying to avoid the latest road closures, mud and potholes. This will make walking, running, cycling, horse riding more dangerous as more traffic will be using a reduced number of routes – drivers who don't usually use the roads, running late. The scenario is obvious. This will inevitably lead to fewer people taking exercise locally.

During Operation

Financial health

How does the policy of agricultural land being built on by solar panels, other related structures, BESSs and the miles of cabling connecting them to the National Grid, work alongside the much talked about changes to IHT legislation? Consider where a farmer/ owner of agricultural land dies and part, or all, of their land – which ‘houses’ solar panels or other structures/ cabling related to a solar project- must be sold to pay IHT. How will the land be valued for the purposes of probate? Whilst there will be the guaranteed annual rental income from whoever the project applicant has assigned their lease to, what other factors will affect its value? Presumably the length of any remaining term will be part of the calculation? Whether there have been any incidents (e.g., storm damage to panels, splintering, weathering, vandalism, BESS fire, watercourse pollution etc) that have resulted in contamination of the land that will affect its future productivity or value? Whether there is any development on adjacent land that might make it easier for buyers to apply for a change of use from agricultural once the solar project is decommissioned? How can it be valued on the same basis as similar grade land in the vicinity that is not part of a solar project? More financial worry...

Having found the best way to value the land – who will buy it? And will there be any way of guaranteeing that, as the applicants for each of the projects keep assuring us, the land will be returned to agricultural use once the project is decommissioned?

Whilst such questions are in the minds of some landowners – there is also the more widespread issue of reduction in value of local houses, especially if the recent levels of flooding get worse, or there is a fire at a BESS, or the area just becomes generally blighted due to the proximity of all the panels and related infrastructure. Again – if that cannot be taken into consideration by the Examiner – surely the resulting mental health stress should be.

Mental Health

MIND and Mental Health Foundation have published research showing the benefits on mental health of connecting with nature. Just walking alongside fields and hedgerows, enjoying the open spaces, the wildlife, the plants and taking in the views of the countryside are shown to improve mental health. When we are surrounded by thousands of acres of solar panels rather than thousands of acres of farmland, hedges and copses, what does the desktop expert say will be the effect on our mental health?

In order to assess how the communities’ physical and mental health will be affected, who have they consulted locally?

GP practices?

Registered local Mental health practitioners?

Cycling clubs & running groups?

Local walking for health initiatives?

Local charities who provide mental health support?

Has anyone on the applicant's paid consultancy team actually assessed the local issues, having visited and spoken to community representatives, asked them questions about how locals will be affected – rather than just pulling together statistics from other reports that have no real life comparison with what we are going to be subjected to.

If the applicant is certain that any health or wellbeing issue will be insignificant – how about the 4 projects all agreeing to contribute to a fund that will cover any physical, mental or financial health impact of the construction, operation and decommissioning of the projects? If they stand by their assessments that any impact is negligible presumably they will have no problem in putting money behind that assertion? There is talk of a community fund for the benefit of community projects that will be provided by the applicant and administered locally – but no mention of any compensation fund for any of the negative impacts on our physical, mental and financial health that we keep reading they have assessed as negligible or insignificant. Will they put their money where their platitudes are?

Clare Ella