

Hello, my name is John Gee. I farm Denmans's Farm, which is a family farm, and has a pylon line running through it, just north of Cumnor, which the solar farm wants to use. I've allowed 200 acres to go into this solar farm, and it is on particularly difficult land, which is clay land. Last year we went to drill it in October, but we couldn't get onto it as it was so wet. We had had about five inches of rain overnight at the end of September, and so we had to delay drilling till November.

We got onto the land in November, but then it continued to rain and the crop failed. Seed rotted out and so we drilled it again in the spring with spring barley, which is at a lower price, and it's now struggling for rain. So it's difficult land to farm anyway.

If things were different, like they were in the 70s where we had got lower yields, but with the cost of inflation, I think wheat prices would now be £600 a tonne, but they're not £600 a ton. They're £160 to £180 a ton. If prices were like that we wouldn't even be looking at solar farms. We have to look other ways of making an income. We don't want to go back and the extra income people spend, they don't want to spend it on food. They want to spend it on central heating, foreign holidays two car families, etc., etc. A solar farm on our land would produce a regular income for the farm, and we could then plough some of that money back into our farm infrastructure. The wildlife benefits would be great – by sticking underneath the solar farm grass or floral mix, that would help the insects. We can all remember the days when we used to go out driving in our cars, and the screen used to be covered with insects on the front. Those days seems to have gone, and with it the birds and everything else which rely on it. I don't think there's any shortage of wheat in the world. You can bring wheat now from Canada or the Black Sea into Liverpool docks as cheaply as you can transfer that wheat into lorries and take it to Manchester. And it's not forever. The ground is getting degraded - most of Oxfordshire is grade three land. There's talk of solar on roofs. I've got a friend in Cumnor who wanted to put solar on his roof, and he's just been turned down. It's in a conservation area, which would be the same with most Cotswold villages including Woodstock. It's not really practical. We want to keep the countryside open. People can walk in it, and I don't think the solar farm will impact on that. We have a Cumnor clean up twice a year and we have to pick up bottles which the runners drink and then just discard, and pick up fly tipping and everything else but those people that come and help are salt of the earth people. They think the farmers ought to be allowed to do what they want with their own land.

In response to questions about the waterlogged land – that was ploughed up in the forties, and has been drained and improved – it's clay land however and does suffer in the wet. I do think it is becoming warmer and wetter generally. [REDACTED] says it's the one thing that scares him, this global warming – it's definitely getting wetter and warmer.