

Due to work commitments I could only attend in person for one day of hearings but have taken the time to review all the other recordings from May and July and the submissions for Deadline 1 & 2 since my last statement.

On review I still object to Application EN010149 by Springwell Energy Farm Limited for an order granting development consent for the 'Springwell Solar Farm'.

Though the proposed development will provide a renewable energy contribution (though of varying reliability), strategically, large scale solar farms do not represent an efficient or essential use of finite arable land resources. The process of Environmental Impact Assessment requires an examination of alternatives. National planning policy aligns better with a renewable energy strategy that embraces roof mounted solar and redeveloping 'brownfield land'/upgrading of existing infrastructure rather than loss of countryside/nature. The benefits of the proposed development do not acceptably outweigh the magnitude of adverse effects. It is desirable for the scheme to be refused planning consent to maintain the countryside and available farm land to grow crops.

I note site inspection did not include areas of walks surrounding Ashby de la Launde. What was apparent in the hearing I attended and from some of the recordings was the need to keep referring to the requirements of the UK's net zero target by 2050 as means of justifying the development and the purported expediency of ease of connection to the national grid. Local damage to the countryside and crop production should not be ignored just because it is convenient, easy and politically expedient to improve French government relations.

For these reasons, it is respectfully urged that planning permission be refused.