

Comment on REP6-079

I continue to be concerned about the mental health impact of Lime Down Solar Project and the potential for the increased need for mental health provision in the local area.

REP6-079 from the ICB requests an independent PHIA which evaluates the broad range of social, economic and environmental determinants affecting the local population as it is concerned that insufficient evidence has been provided by the applicant on the cumulative effects over the lifetime of the development.

I am especially concerned by IGP's apparent lack of community engagement.

IGP was directed to Suffolk County Council's community engagement and wellbeing supplementary guidance by both Public Health Wiltshire and the Planning Inspectorate but it appears to me that almost all of this has been ignored or dismissed by IGP.

I was dismayed when listening to ISH8 hearings that I repeatedly heard of residents who had had no contact from IGP, no follow up or very last minute consultation just before the hearing. This may have actively worsened the mental health of some of those residents.

I haven't yet seen the TOR of the Community Liaison Group, but it was clear at ISH8 that IGP wished for this to be an information giving forum only and were extremely resistant to any collaboration or genuine opportunities to influence outcomes from the local community.

I note that "solarenergyuk.org" good practice guidance 2024 states that "for developers working on NSIP scale projects, going above and beyond statutory requirements is recommended to build trusted relationships with the community". I don't feel IGP has fulfilled this.

There has been a concentration by Public Health Wiltshire on the role of the CLG which will only be active for the construction, replacement and demolition periods. This is a very limited provision for a 60 year development. The CLG won't address the cumulative psychological effects of large scale and long-term landscape change, loss of a tranquil environment or loss of community resilience and the effect this will have on mental health. It will not address the impact on older people (we have an older population) carers and those vulnerable to social isolation who rely on the local environment to maintain their wellbeing. (we have a population with a significantly higher rate of emergency admissions relating to self-harm than the national population)

Public Health England guidelines state that mental health and wellbeing must be given equivalent weight as physical health. IGP seems to have dismissed mental health by offering standard links to local GP's and counselling services (that I fear will be overwhelmed.)