

I am usually in full support of all things “green.” However, after researching and reading about the proposed solar panels and battery-storage facilities planned very close to my home in Tivetshall, I find that these proposals are far removed from anything genuinely environmentally friendly.

Firstly, the countryside and farming areas will be turned into an industrial zone—concrete, fencing, barbed wire, enormous solar panels, unsightly battery-storage units, widening of small country lanes, and even the compulsory purchase of homes and land, including listed buildings and ancient trees. This is in addition to the disruption of wildlife habitats, and increased noise and light pollution. How can any of this be seen as green?

I would hazard a guess that many of these products, manufactured in China, involve high energy consumption, high emissions, non-sustainable practices, and heavy reliance on fossil fuels—followed by transportation across the world. I have also heard that if battery-storage facilities catch fire, the fire brigade has no effective way of extinguishing them. The planned water sources will not be sufficient. Toxic smoke could drift into people’s homes, contaminate the local water supply, and damage the soil beneath. What research has been carried out on the impact this could have on people’s health and on the countryside?

Noise pollution—particularly low-frequency noise from the panel inverters and battery-cooling fans—will harm our peace and wellbeing.

Light pollution will mean the dark skies of our area become a thing of the past.

Local residents and volunteers worked tirelessly to install underground cabling to provide the village and surrounding areas with fibre broadband. I work from home full-time and rely on this fibre connection. The proposed solar, battery, and cabling works are set to cut through areas where this fibre infrastructure was laid in the fields, and this seems not to have been considered at all.

Our area floods regularly. We have had water reach our back door and have been fortunate that it has not yet entered the house. Covering fields with concrete will increase rain run-off towards our home and will almost certainly lead to flooding.

The existing drainage systems are already inadequate.

Station Road, at the top of our small lane, is planned to be widened to allow enormous 40-metre by 5-metre trucks to pass through. There appears to be no consideration for ancient trees or wildlife corridors.

Norfolk is known as the “Breadbasket of the UK.” Farmers here grow a vast array of food for national consumption. Where will this food come from when these fields are destroyed? We will end up importing even more from distant countries—adding shipping emissions, air miles, and increasing our dependence on external food supplies.

There are better ways of doing solar power: installing panels on covered car parks, industrial buildings, and ensuring all new-build homes include solar panels, alongside other green measures such as rainwater harvesting and ground-source heating. Countries like Germany and Sweden are even experimenting with solar roads and solar panels mounted along motorways.

It won’t be long before this type of solar technology becomes obsolete. What will then happen to the land? I fear it will be designated as brownfield and later developed into housing or industrial estates, further damaging the landscape.

I am deeply disappointed that these projects are even being considered. It feels like pure greed from large corporations that have no regard for the countryside they intend to butcher, exploit and destroy.