



James Gray MP

Member of Parliament for North
Wiltshire

Solar

Dear Constituent,

It is an easy truism to say that if you are worried about Climate Change (as am I), you must therefore support every application that comes along for solar energy production.

Wiltshire already makes a huge contribution. Of the 10 largest solar parks in England, 8 are in our beloved County (Lyneham, Wroughton, Minety, Forest Gate, Leigh Delamere, Kemble, Studley, Snarlton); and there are a great many more just slightly smaller. The Council's 2030 carbon neutral target for solar renewables is 590MW, which has already been exceeded (827MW – enough to power 500,000 homes in production or planning.) We have 42 Operational Solar Farms with a further 12 under planning or construction, nearly all in the north of the County. They cover 3000 acres which is more than any other county in England.

Yet despite our generous contribution to fighting climate change through solar, there are now a whole series of new applications- at Minety (already engulfed with solar panels and batteries, with more applications pending), Christian Malford; and at Kington St Michael where 250 acres of prime farmland would be converted to solar, dwarfing the village, needing 2000 HGV construction vehicles and 26 hideous battery storage solutions. These 'batteries' are largely untested and very possibly hazardous technology which is anyhow likely to be out of date within a few years.

And now we have an absolutely outrageous application for vast new solar parks under the misleadingly rustic title 'Lime Down Solar Park'. It will be 2000 acres of vanity mirrors stretching from Luckington to Malmesbury, from Sherston to Hullavington, from the M4 to Corston. It will require dozens of hideous battery storage units, and miles and miles of road disruption to get the electricity to Melksham and thence into the Grid (which may or may not have the capacity to receive it!)

What is proposed is an absolutely monstrous destruction of some of the most lovely landscapes in North Wiltshire; it will wholly destroy the area's natural beauty, it will require industrial scale development, and it will make poor little Wiltshire by far the biggest contributor to solar energy in the UK. Not only all of that, but especially at a time like this I am firmly of the view that our highly productive farms should be producing food not sacrificed on the altar of climate change.

So I think we have had enough, that this proposal is scandalous and must be stopped. I pledge myself to use every energy to do so; and to campaign vigorously against it in every way. My constituents will know- and should perhaps forewarn these speculative solar developers- that when I get my teeth into something I am a pretty relentless campaigner; and this one really has got my goat. So I call on all of my constituents (and let's hear from the Labour and Liberal Parties locally too) who love our rural landscape; who are concerned about food security, who despise the creeping urbanisation and industrialisation which all of this would imply, to rise up and see this unwanted development off. It's a matter which will be decided not by the local Council but by the Secretary of State advised by the Planning Inspectorate in Bristol; and perhaps especially in this election year, people power really does count.

Enough is enough. We have done our bit for Renewables. Let us not destroy the very things which we all love by our enthusiasm for the latest green craze. Lime Down Solar Farm must be sent back to the clever Wall St financiers who lie behind it.

James Gray MP

- Member, Mr Speaker's Panel of Chairmen*
- Chairman, All-Party Parliamentary Group for the Armed Forces*
- Chairman, Armed Forces Parliamentary Trust*
- Chairman, All-Party Parliamentary Group for Polar Regions*
- Convenor, Antarctic Parliamentarians Assembly 2019, 2021*
- Member, Commons Procedure Committee*
- Member, Environmental Audit Committee*
- Commander, Order of St John*
- Freeman of the City of London*
- Younger Brother, Trinity House*
- Veteran Member, Honourable Artillery Company*
- Member, Royal Wootton Bassett Royal British Legion*
- Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society*
- Patron, Operation Christmas Box*
- President, Chippenham Constitutional Club*
- Author, Poles Apart (2014); Who Takes Britain to War (2016); Full English Brexit (2018) and Wiltshire to Westminster (2020)*

Advice Surgeries

Saturday 16th March
10am-11.30am Cricklade Jenner Hall, Parish Hall, Bath Rd, Cricklade SN6 6AX
12pm-1pm Malmesbury Town Hall, Cross Hayes, Malmesbury, SN16 9BZ

Saturday 13th April
10am-11:30am The Corn Exchange, Calne Town Hall, The Strand, Calne, SN11 0EN
12pm-1pm The Church Croft, High Street, Royal Wootton Bassett, SN4 7BJ

No appointment is necessary - just turn up.

Political Supper Club

Every month I hold an informal Supper Club in North Wiltshire. The aim is to discuss political issues and for me to get feedback from constituents.
For further details, please contact Peter Gantlett via northwitssupperclub@gmail.com



I am happy to give you the chance to tell me whether you still wish to receive updates on my work as your Member of Parliament. I send weekly updates on the basis of democratic engagement in the public interest of my constituents. You will always have an option to unsubscribe from further communications in the future.

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My postal address is:

