Mr Griffiths,

You will have noticed that the government has announced it is to build a 170 KM undersea cable to transmit renewable wind energy from Scottish waters in the North Sea to reach electricity customers in England.

This is great news because it demonstrates that it is now possible to transmit electricity over great distances under the sea without losing too much voltage. So, for example, a wind farm on the dogger bank in the North Sea would be able to efficiently supply customers in a great length of the eastern seaboard of England.

Now let's consider the situation where the proposers of a solar farm want to use fertile farmland in this Eastern seaboard. The use of fertile farmland for solar generation obviously depletes acres which would no longer be able to produce food - and we already have a serious deficiency in the UK causing food insecurity. This deficiency exists now in 2024, not 40 years hence.

When the proposers of solar farms claim that there is no alternative to using fertile farmland in East Anglia, they do not consider a very large alternative - that of the North Sea. We now know that any electricity requirement in East Anglia could be efficiently supplied from North Sea wind turbines, whatever the distance. In addition, we know that just one wind turbine on the dogger bank can generate the same quantity of electricity as one 200 acre solar farm on land. So, renewable solar energy at Brent Pelham could be supplied, if nessessary, by renewable wind energy transmitted to Brent Pelham from the North Sea, using undersea cables and the national grid.

Similarly, for any solar farm proposal in East Anglia there is a prime alternative of one additional wind turbine in the North Sea - thereby avoiding the use of fertile farmland (whatever the quantity) on land. The proposers of solar farms should choose to propose wind energy instead. The existence of battery storage at Brent Pelham should not be used as justification for the loss of 200 acres of fertile farmland for 40 years.

Corollary:

There is absolutely no need whatsoever to build any more solar farms which use fertile farmland - for ever. Alternatives are available - wind farms on and off shore/floating wind farms/ installation of roof solar panels on every industrial building/ installation of roof solar panels on every new domestic home built/open wasteland no longer required. These alternatives should be chosen rather than desecrate our much needed prime agricultural land to avoid food insecurity, to protect our scheduled monuments, to protect our historic listed buildings and adherance to the "open countryside' National Policies. All of these protected sights are visible from the Berden Hall Solar Farm whichever way an onlooker views the surrounding area.

Peter Patrick
22nd March 2024
Berden