# Reform UK’s green energy opposition threatens £1bn investment and 12,000 jobs in Lincolnshire



## Reform UK's Opposition to Green Energy Poses Significant Economic Risks for Lincolnshire

Reform UK's aggressive stance against green energy initiatives in Lincolnshire threatens to undermine nearly £1 billion in local investment and jeopardise over 12,000 jobs, according to recent analyses. The party's deputy leader, Richard Tice, has made it clear that councils and mayors controlled by Reform UK will actively obstruct renewable energy projects, which he dismissively referred to as “net stupid zero” infrastructure. This includes solar farms, pylon networks, and battery storage systems.

The Energy and Climate Intelligence Unit (ECIU) highlights that net zero industries currently contribute about £980 million to Lincolnshire's economy, underpinning a significant number of local jobs. Tice's rhetoric, characterised by a commitment to "attack, hinder, delay, and obstruct" green projects, raises critical concerns about the potential erosion of economic stability in a region already grappling with environmental challenges.

Local political leaders express alarm over the implications of Reform UK's policies. Melanie Onn, Labour MP for Great Grimsby and Cleethorpes, has condemned Reform’s approach as detrimental not just to the environment but to the livelihoods of local residents. Her concerns mirror those of many in the community who see a direct connection between the push for renewable energy and economic growth. Onn stated, “Reform’s war on the green economy is actually a war on jobs and investment,” emphasising the urgent need for transparent communication from Reform about its actual intentions regarding local economic welfare.

The complexities of the planning landscape complicate matters further. While larger solar projects exceeding 100MW fall under the auspices of nationally significant infrastructure projects (NSIPs), smaller initiatives are governed by the Town and Country Planning Act (TCPA). This dual framework can lead to delays and heightened costs associated with local approvals, particularly as smaller developers might struggle against potential local opposition.

Remarkably, even though Reform UK has captured control of several councils and mayoral positions through the recent elections, the broader public seems to support climate action. Polling by the ECIU indicates that most Reform voters are in favour of new wind and solar farms, which starkly contrasts the party’s official stance. This disconnect raises poignant questions about the legitimacy and long-term viability of Reform UK's anti-green policies.

The potential environmental ramifications cannot be overstated. Climate change is already impacting Lincolnshire, with the region being identified as the most vulnerable in England to environmental damage, exacerbated by recent severe flooding that crippled local farms. As the Met Office warns that such flooding events are becoming increasingly probable due to climate breakdown, the call for sustainable infrastructure becomes increasingly critical.

While Richard Tice's campaign rhetoric resonates with certain voter segments, experts argue that such policies could ultimately inflame energy costs and increase reliance on fossil fuels. Shaun Spiers, executive director of Green Alliance, pointed out that the quest for local support in renewable projects is crucial for developers. “What is really odd is Richard Tice’s apparent determination to drive up energy costs and increase our dependence on imported fossil fuels,” he remarked.

Adding to this discourse, the judicial review process presents yet another obstacle for green energy projects. The current legal landscape allows for inexpensive challenges to planning decisions, which can considerably inflate project costs and timelines. This aspect of governance is already under scrutiny, with campaigners like Sam Richards of Britain Remade calling for reforms to prevent vexatious complaints that hinder essential infrastructure development.

In an unprecedented move, North Lincolnshire Council is proposing a Green Growth Zone aimed at cultivating thousands of green engineering jobs. This initiative demonstrates a proactive approach to securing the region’s renewable energy potential, capitalising on existing assets like offshore wind and manufacturing capabilities. However, this is in stark contrast to the obstructionist policies currently championed by Reform UK.

The stakes are exceptionally high as the government positions itself firmly against Reform's agenda. Keir Starmer’s spokesperson stated that central authorities would always advocate for builders and not blockers, reaffirming a commitment to lower energy bills and job creation. The imminent clash over energy policy in Lincolnshire poses challenges not only for local governance but for the larger narrative on how the UK will approach its energy future amidst mounting climate challenges.

In conclusion, the unfolding debate in Lincolnshire serves as a microcosm of the larger national discourse on energy policy. The opposition to green initiatives put forth by Reform UK risks isolating their supporters from a broader consensus that increasingly favours sustainable development. Should this trend continue, the long-term consequences for local economies, environmental stability, and national integrity may be profound and far-reaching.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2025/may/07/reform-uk-green-energy-assault-lincolnshire-jobs-risk), [[2]](https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2025/may/07/reform-uk-green-energy-assault-lincolnshire-jobs-risk)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2025/may/07/reform-uk-green-energy-assault-lincolnshire-jobs-risk)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2025/may/07/reform-uk-green-energy-assault-lincolnshire-jobs-risk), [[2]](https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2025/may/07/reform-uk-green-energy-assault-lincolnshire-jobs-risk)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2025/may/07/reform-uk-green-energy-assault-lincolnshire-jobs-risk)
* Paragraph 5 – [[3]](https://www.ft.com/content/c3b25079-f394-4a40-84af-2c11fa0f6338), [[4]](https://www.ft.com/content/3bd83698-8a0a-42e4-a055-b39f27456269)
* Paragraph 6 – [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2025/may/07/reform-uk-green-energy-assault-lincolnshire-jobs-risk), [[6]](https://www.northlincs.gov.uk/news/ambitious-green-growth-zone-proposal-will-create-conditions-for-thousands-of-new-jobs/)
* Paragraph 7 – [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2025/may/07/reform-uk-green-energy-assault-lincolnshire-jobs-risk), [[3]](https://www.ft.com/content/c3b25079-f394-4a40-84af-2c11fa0f6338)
* Paragraph 8 – [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2025/may/07/reform-uk-green-energy-assault-lincolnshire-jobs-risk), [[5]](https://www.ft.com/content/03d637fc-9a90-4a98-b169-77e306440264)
* Paragraph 9 – [[5]](https://www.ft.com/content/03d637fc-9a90-4a98-b169-77e306440264)
* Paragraph 10 – [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2025/may/07/reform-uk-green-energy-assault-lincolnshire-jobs-risk), [[2]](https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2025/may/07/reform-uk-green-energy-assault-lincolnshire-jobs-risk)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2025/may/07/reform-uk-green-energy-assault-lincolnshire-jobs-risk> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2025/may/07/reform-uk-green-energy-assault-lincolnshire-jobs-risk> - Reform UK's plans to obstruct green energy projects in Lincolnshire could jeopardize nearly £1 billion in local investment and over 12,000 jobs. Deputy leader Richard Tice stated that Reform-controlled councils and mayors would block 'net zero' infrastructure, including solar farms, pylons, and battery storage systems. Analysis by the Energy and Climate Intelligence Unit (ECIU) indicates that net zero industries contribute approximately £980 million to the local economy, supporting 12,209 jobs. Tice's aggressive stance raises concerns about the potential economic impact on the region.
3. <https://www.ft.com/content/c3b25079-f394-4a40-84af-2c11fa0f6338> - Reform UK, led by Nigel Farage, has gained control of ten English councils and two metro mayor positions in the 2025 local elections. The party's national platform includes anti-immigration, anti-net zero, and anti-'woke' policies. Economically, it advocates for a small-state model, proposing cuts to corporation taxes for SMEs, scrapping inheritance tax, and opposing expanded workers' rights. Despite traditionally supporting free-market policies, recent campaigns have seen Reform endorse nationalizing failing utilities and supporting striking workers, while remaining staunchly opposed to net zero.
4. <https://www.ft.com/content/3bd83698-8a0a-42e4-a055-b39f27456269> - At a Reform UK conference in Birmingham, leader Nigel Farage criticized the Conservative party as 'bust and broken' and pledged to oppose net zero policies in the next general election. Farage announced a reorganization of the party, establishing a new corporate structure owned by members. Deputy leader Richard Tice highlighted a strategy focusing on areas vulnerable to Labour, criticizing green policies for harming industries and jobs. The conference featured right-wing rhetoric, with MPs targeting London's mayor and discussing British identity.
5. <https://www.ft.com/content/03d637fc-9a90-4a98-b169-77e306440264> - Resolute 1850, a think-tank linked to Reform UK, has secured over £1 million in funding and initiated staff recruitment to bolster the party's policy platform. Modeled after American party-affiliated think-tanks, Resolute 1850 aims to support Reform with policy development while maintaining a degree of independence. CEO Jonathan Brown emphasized its intent to attract multiple clients and denied its exclusivity to Reform UK. The think-tank plans to host an annual event and cultivate a broader support ecosystem, reflecting Reform's strategic effort to professionalize and enhance its electoral appeal.
6. <https://www.northlincs.gov.uk/news/ambitious-green-growth-zone-proposal-will-create-conditions-for-thousands-of-new-jobs/> - North Lincolnshire Council is proposing a Green Growth Zone aimed at creating thousands of green engineering jobs. The initiative focuses on enhancing the renewable energy sector, fast-tracking advanced manufacturing, and driving innovation to secure the region's long-term prosperity. The plan leverages North Lincolnshire's strategic assets, including major renewable resources like offshore wind, an established industrial base, and strong international market links via major ports. Council leader Rob Waltham emphasized the importance of the proposal for the future of the region, aiming to deliver high-quality jobs and drive innovation.
7. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/business/2024/09/25/milibands-net-zero-plans-risk-jobs-catastrophe-warns-gmb/> - Gary Smith, general secretary of the GMB union, warned that Britain's shift to green energy could lead to a jobs catastrophe if it relies on imports from China. He criticized the UK's progress in cutting carbon emissions, arguing that it has been achieved by decimating manufacturing industries like steelmaking, creating 'huge social and economic scars.' Smith accused successive governments of failing to deliver the promised tens of thousands of jobs from the expansion of wind and solar, and called for a carbon border tax to address the issue.