# Egremont community rejects £700,000 solar farm offer to protect Dent Fell landscape



In the picturesque market town of Egremont, nestled within Cumbria's undulating hills, the quiet reverence for Dent Fell—a majestic backdrop for morning services, special proposals, and cherished memorials—has ignited fierce community resistance against plans for a solar farm. This proposed development, spearheaded by local farmer Terry Dixon, involves a sprawling 200-acre site that threatens to disrupt the very landscape that residents hold dear. Despite an offer of nearly £700,000 intended for community initiatives, the locals have resolutely expressed their disdain, exemplified by Post-it notes that cried, “Just f\*\*\* off,” at a recent town meeting.

The discord surrounding Dixon's solar ambitions mirrors larger, national trends affecting the rural and agricultural communities across the UK. Over the past four years, there has been a remarkable surge in solar farm applications, with 3,644 submissions covering an area exceeding 162 square miles—a staggering increase from just 343 applications in the preceding four years. This boom has triggered tension between farmers seeking new revenue streams, the rising demand for renewable energy, and communities eager to protect their scenic environments.

For Dixon, who has spent half a century cultivating dairy cows, the proposed solar farm represents not merely a financial opportunity, but a vision for sustainability. He estimates potential earnings of £200,000 annually, a substantial boost that he argues is critical for the viability of his farming operations. However, for residents like Ian McIntyre and Fiona Emerson from nearby Cote Close farm, the prospect of solar panels overshadowing their rural retreat evokes profound anxiety. Emerson articulated her concerns, stating, “It would destroy my life,” underscoring the deep personal impact of potential developments.

Further complicating matters, the planning landscape for such renewable projects has shifted considerably. As new government policies seek to expedite the approval of solar farms, many local councils find themselves constrained, unable to fight back against proposals that they once could easily oppose. This predicament has led to a growing number of communities aligning against solar developments, echoing sentiments seen in places like upstate New York and Northern Michigan, where residents have similarly rallied against large-scale solar projects, fearing detrimental impacts on their local economies and environments.

At the heart of these clashes is a perceived imbalance between the need for renewable energy and the preservation of local landscapes. Critics argue that while solar energy is essential for combating climate change, the deployment strategies must consider community sentiments. Reports show that many locals feel burdened by the renewable energy initiatives as rural areas are often seen as the default sites for energy generation to meet urban demands, without sufficient local benefits offered in return. A survey indicated that as many as 42% of residents in parts of New York are opposed to utility-scale solar facilities, highlighting the necessity for developers to engage more constructively with communities before moving forward.

As the plan for Dent Fell unfolds, Dixon’s vision clashes starkly with the emotional stakes for Egremont residents, who cherish their connection to the landscape. Despite company claims of ecological enhancements, like wildflower meadows and habitat management, community opposition remains robust. At a recent consultation, many were vocal about their dissatisfaction, labelling the financial offers as mere bribes, suggesting that the aesthetic and emotional value of their environment outweighs potential economic benefits.

The situation in Egremont is emblematic of a wider national dialogue about renewable energy's role in mitigating climate change versus the intrinsic value of the land. As community opposition continues to mount, it remains to be seen if Dixon's plans will progress or if local sentiment will compel a rethink of how solar energy developments are approached in sensitive landscapes. In navigating these turbulent waters, it is clear that any future initiatives will require a delicate balancing act—valuing both environmental sustainability and community integrity.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.thetimes.com/uk/environment/article/the-town-that-said-no-to-a-700000-offer-from-a-solar-farm-firm-7svphpgvn), [[4]](https://www.wosu.org/politics-government/2024/05/22/proposed-marion-county-solar-farm-withdraws-state-application-amid-fierce-community-opposition)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.thetimes.com/uk/environment/article/the-town-that-said-no-to-a-700000-offer-from-a-solar-farm-firm-7svphpgvn), [[2]](https://www.timesunion.com/news/article/Influx-of-solar-farms-leads-to-backlash-among-15001548.php)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.thetimes.com/uk/environment/article/the-town-that-said-no-to-a-700000-offer-from-a-solar-farm-firm-7svphpgvn), [[6]](https://www.post-journal.com/news/new-york-news-apwire/2023/05/lack-of-local-benefits-fuels-upstate-opposition-to-solar-farms/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[5]](https://wrjn.com/news/2024/11/29/st-croix-county-solar-opposition), [[7]](https://www.lockportjournal.com/news/local_news/town-residents-state-their-case-against-a-solar-panel-farm/article_c2b41c2a-a3e3-11eb-bc58-ab52802312d2.html)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.thetimes.com/uk/environment/article/the-town-that-said-no-to-a-700000-offer-from-a-solar-farm-firm-7svphpgvn), [[3]](https://www.9and10news.com/2025/01/06/northern-michigan-lawmakers-upset-about-proposed-solar-energy-farms-on-state-land/)
* Paragraph 6 – [[2]](https://www.timesunion.com/news/article/Influx-of-solar-farms-leads-to-backlash-among-15001548.php), [[6]](https://www.post-journal.com/news/new-york-news-apwire/2023/05/lack-of-local-benefits-fuels-upstate-opposition-to-solar-farms/)
* Paragraph 7 – [[1]](https://www.thetimes.com/uk/environment/article/the-town-that-said-no-to-a-700000-offer-from-a-solar-farm-firm-7svphpgvn), [[2]](https://www.timesunion.com/news/article/Influx-of-solar-farms-leads-to-backlash-among-15001548.php)
* Paragraph 8 – [[1]](https://www.thetimes.com/uk/environment/article/the-town-that-said-no-to-a-700000-offer-from-a-solar-farm-firm-7svphpgvn), [[6]](https://www.post-journal.com/news/new-york-news-apwire/2023/05/lack-of-local-benefits-fuels-upstate-opposition-to-solar-farms/)
* Paragraph 9 – [[1]](https://www.thetimes.com/uk/environment/article/the-town-that-said-no-to-a-700000-offer-from-a-solar-farm-firm-7svphpgvn), [[5]](https://wrjn.com/news/2024/11/29/st-croix-county-solar-opposition)
* Paragraph 10 – [[1]](https://www.thetimes.com/uk/environment/article/the-town-that-said-no-to-a-700000-offer-from-a-solar-farm-firm-7svphpgvn), [[2]](https://www.timesunion.com/news/article/Influx-of-solar-farms-leads-to-backlash-among-15001548.php)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.thetimes.com/uk/environment/article/the-town-that-said-no-to-a-700000-offer-from-a-solar-farm-firm-7svphpgvn> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.timesunion.com/news/article/Influx-of-solar-farms-leads-to-backlash-among-15001548.php> - This article discusses the backlash against the proliferation of solar farms in upstate New York. Residents in areas like Coxsackie and Duanesburg have expressed concerns over the impact of large-scale solar projects on tourism, property values, and local environments. The piece highlights the tension between state-driven renewable energy initiatives and local community interests, emphasizing the challenges in balancing environmental goals with community well-being.
3. <https://www.9and10news.com/2025/01/06/northern-michigan-lawmakers-upset-about-proposed-solar-energy-farms-on-state-land/> - Northern Michigan lawmakers have expressed strong opposition to proposed solar energy farms on state land, particularly near Gaylord in Otsego County. Legislators like State Senator Michele Hoitenga criticized the lack of transparency and potential environmental impacts, arguing that the projects could disrupt recreational activities and harm the environment. The article underscores the conflict between state energy development plans and local community concerns.
4. <https://www.wosu.org/politics-government/2024/05/22/proposed-marion-county-solar-farm-withdraws-state-application-amid-fierce-community-opposition> - Chestnut Solar LLC withdrew its application for a 400-acre solar project in Marion County, Ohio, following significant community opposition. Residents and local officials raised concerns about aesthetics, noise, property values, and the loss of farmland. The article highlights the influence of local sentiment on energy project developments and the challenges developers face in gaining community acceptance.
5. <https://wrjn.com/news/2024/11/29/st-croix-county-solar-opposition> - Residents in St. Croix County, Wisconsin, have voiced opposition to a proposed 5,000-acre solar energy project by Xcel Energy. Concerns include potential negative impacts on local farming, wildlife, and the environment. The article reflects the broader trend of community resistance to large-scale solar developments, emphasizing the need for developers to address local apprehensions.
6. <https://www.post-journal.com/news/new-york-news-apwire/2023/05/lack-of-local-benefits-fuels-upstate-opposition-to-solar-farms/> - A survey in upstate New York reveals that 42% of residents oppose utility-scale solar facilities in their communities, citing a perceived burden on rural areas to meet urban energy demands without adequate compensation. The study highlights the importance of addressing local concerns and ensuring that communities benefit from renewable energy projects.
7. <https://www.lockportjournal.com/news/local_news/town-residents-state-their-case-against-a-solar-panel-farm/article_c2b41c2a-a3e3-11eb-bc58-ab52802312d2.html> - Residents in Hartland and Newfane, New York, have expressed strong opposition to a proposed solar panel farm, citing concerns over environmental impacts, property values, and the disruption of the rural landscape. The article underscores the complexities of siting renewable energy projects in communities with deep agricultural and cultural ties to the land.