

Submission ID: 17247

The Gate Burton Energy Park (GBEP) is the first of four solar proposals in our locality to enter examination.

The procedure of the examination is fundamentally flawed!

Why has the city of Lincoln been chosen for the meetings and not somewhere closer to the 4 proposals such as the Lincolnshire Showground, with easier access and free parking?

Why are the deadlines for the Examination during summer school holiday periods when most people are unable to attend or submit material to the Examining Authority?

The scale and number of these schemes in a short space of time will get extremely bewildering for the general public to participate in effectively.

Why can't these applications be examined as one, as it is quite clearly one huge solar complex, with shared legal teams and proposed cable routes etc..

Two of the schemes have been proposed by the same developer, Island Green Power, even using the same project management?

The above aspects are confusing in their own right, but it is made worse by their names.

One of the projects being named West Burton Solar Project and another developer branding their proposal as Gate Burton Energy Park.

At the moment: Gate Burton is in examination

Cottam is in pre-examination

West Burton has just finished RR stage, and

Tillbridge is in Statutory Consultation

These 4 huge proposals are not the only ones in Lincolnshire (there are many more proposed for in this county). But these particular four are all within a few miles of each other!

This current examination format would be very difficult for people to follow and participate in and so I feel we are being unfairly treated and ultimately discriminated against.

Solar proposals (Known) in Lincolnshire, 9 NSIPs, covering around 20,000 acres:-

Cottam solar project NSIP
West Burton solar project NSIP
Gate Burton energy park NSIP
Tillbridge solar NSIP

Mallard Pass solar farm NSIP

Beacon Fen energy park NSIP
Heckington Fen solar park NSIP
Springwell solar farm NSIP
Fosse green Energy NSIP

Stow park, (non NSIP) which is in effect a West Burton 3 extension as the land is connected..

Hatton solar farm (non NSIP)

Little Crow solar NSIP in Scunthorpe has just applied for life extension to 45 years.

This is a complete opportunistic and unregulated land grab, the system is flawed and this unprecedented amount of land to be developed in one area should not have gone unchecked. The consequences being an overwhelmed Planning Inspectorate and the potential mindless ruination of an already disadvantaged area.

Therefore GBEP with its front loaded application should not have been encouraged.

With the upfront costs to developers of several million pounds and the preliminary meetings with PINS which steer the Developers down the path to success seems very much one sided and indeed wrong!

I fully understand the reasons behind the NSIP concept. But as in West Lindsey's case, with an unprecedented 4 proposals within a 6 mile radius, there has to be a point where someone steps in and takes an holistic overview of all these applications and the potential devastating effects of scale.

When does human compassion and dare I say common sense come into it? Is 4 NSIP projects acceptable but 5 is not? Where does it all stop? Or can the whole country be potentially covered in solar panels and batteries as long as the Developers have got all the right reports done and have therefore already invested heavily in the process.

I am extremely concerned and beginning to think that these are done deals.

The process due to the amount of money involved could easily be seen as is paying for planning permission!

Please do not take this the wrong way, but if the NSIP process has such a high success rate for controversial and high impact developments, of which we have 4, covering 10,000 acres. Then these questions will inevitably be asked.