

Glentworth Parish Council is opposed to this application as we believe on its own and taken with the other proposed solar farm developments that are coming forward at the same time (West Burton, Cottam and Tillbridge) the overall, cumulative development impact is seriously detrimental. There are specific issues that we believe the Inspector should take into account:

1. the 4 schemes collectively will impact on 10,000 acres of current farmland, affecting 31 villages and the lives of all those who live in the area. These schemes cannot nor should they be considered in isolation, the cumulative impact is a fundamental and material consideration in planning terms and we would urge the Inspector to review them as a set. We would add that it is clear that whilst being promoted by separate companies, there is cooperation between those companies, who clearly regard the schemes as being interlinked.

2. The scale of development proposed is inappropriate for a rural area. It amounts to the industrialisation of the countryside on a scale that would not be considered if what was proposed was housing or industrial/commercial buildings. Whilst there are claims about the environmental benefits of the scheme in terms of supporting the UK's need to develop alternate energy production using renewables, any such claims need to be properly assessed and measured against the environmental impacts arising from the loss of habitats, destruction of green space, environmental impact of bringing construction materials, the panels themselves and the supporting infrastructure to the UK. Glentworth Parish Council is not opposed to the development of renewable energy, but we challenge and question the scale of these proposals in the context of the setting.

3. Building on point 2, the loss of productive farmland is of serious concern. Much is made in the application that the land in question is of low grade but however low that agricultural grade might be, once consent is granted for extensive solar panel construction the land will not produce any food, whether for human or animal consumption or for use as biomass. At a time when, as well as energy security, the UK is concerned with food security and the cost and environmental impact of importing significant amounts of food, there is a balance to be struck between the development of solar farms and the use of that farmland for food production. We believe there needs to be a proper examination of the relative benefits and a testing of any assumptions that the claimed CO2 reduction benefits of the solar farm offset the impacts of lost local food production, the CO2 absorption of land being used for agriculture and the loss of farm land.

4. The development of the solar farms would have a significant impact on the views west from along the Lincolnshire Edge, and the views from the villages looking up towards the Edge. These are classified as an Area of Great Landscape Value, awarded not for the benefit of the land, but the benefit of the people to enjoy those views... It's not the land in itself that's protected, it's the views. Added to this will be a loss of habitats, impacts on wildlife and the wider ecosystem. Little to nothing will grow in the fields covered by the panels, this will in turn affect insects and the animals that feed on them, including birdlife.

| Element  | Statement:  |
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| 1 We agree with the need to act on climate change  | <p><b>We agree:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That climate change calls for urgent action to decarbonise our economy.</li> <li>• Solar is a proven technology, that can be deployed competitively, now.</li> </ul>   |
| 2 We are concerned that the benefit the schemes can bring is limited                     | <p><b>The role solar can play in decarbonisation is very limited:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the UK, solar panels produce on average around 11% of their rated output – and they <i>produce most of that power on sunny, summer days when we least need it. When demand is at its highest, on winter evenings, they produce nothing at all.</i></li> <li>• To keep the lights on, something else must produce power when solar is not producing, so for much of the year, that means relying on alternative sources, e.g. which may be low carbon (e.g. wind, hydro, nuclear), but may as easily be fossil-based (e.g. gas, oil, diesel).</li> <li>• The proposed solar projects make no material attempt to match when power is produced to when it is needed. They take up a huge amount of space for the limited contribution they can make to the electricity system, and therefore represent an extremely inefficient use of land.</li> </ul> <p><b>Batteries don't solve the problem:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Batteries help, but they can only store a few hours of electricity; they are not capable of storing volumes of solar power from the summer to be used in the winter.</li> </ul> |
| 3 We are concerned that development on this scale will have serious adverse consequences | <p><b>Covering the countryside with solar panels has adverse consequences:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Food &amp; Farming:</b> Using arable land for solar will displace the production of existing crops, food, animal feed and energy crops. It makes no sense, from an environmental perspective or from a security of food supply perspective, to cease farming here and import more crops.</li> <li>• <b>Employment:</b> Solar farms will destroy agricultural jobs, skills and livelihoods and create very few new skilled jobs or replace livelihoods. It is likely, there will be a likely net reduction in employment, in an area with relatively few opportunities. There will not be any economic benefit to the communities affected.</li> <li>• <b>Wildlife &amp; Habitat:</b> No matter what precautions and assurances, it will not be possible to deliver and install millions of solar panels, pour thousands of tonnes of concrete, as well as containers with batteries and switchgear, all surrounded by miles of fencing, without damaging habitat.</li> <li>• <b>Visual:</b> The cumulative scale of the development is unprecedented, and the impact of such a development would</li> </ul>            |

| Element |                 | Statement:   |
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|         |                 | <p>change the character and nature of the area for 50 years or more, such a change has the potential to have a significant detrimental impact on the general health and wellbeing of residents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Disturbance during construction:</b> The impact of traffic during construction and decommissioning phases, in terms of road safety, noise, disruption, damage to roads is of great concern to residents owing to the volume and potential size of material being moved, particularly on the local small, inadequate road infrastructure.</li> </ul>  |
| 4       | Our position    | <b>We are against the proposed large-scale solar developments, because of their limited contribution to decarbonisation and the adverse consequences arising from using farmland in this way.</b>  |
| 5       | What we propose | <p><b><i>We are in favour of good solar development:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solar should be deployed where there is little else that can be done with the space – such as rooftops (in the UK only around 3% of households have solar panels)</li> <li>• To make that happen, planning should require solar on new-build commercial warehouses and domestic properties as an immediate priority, and a framework should be provided to support retrofitting of solar to existing buildings.</li> <li>• Where a solar development is considered at scale, it should be decided upon locally, not nationally – and any development must consider sustainability in its widest sense, including the impacts on sustainability of food production, sustainability of communities, impact on health and wellbeing.</li> </ul> |