

Gate Burton Energy Park

Post Hearings Comments

I was unable to attend the hearings last week regarding the above proposal, but I would still like to make the following comments:

The following statement was made by Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP, Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government in a letter dated 16 August 2021 to Sir Oliver Heald QC MP : “we place great importance upon our agriculture and food production, and this is reflected in the National Planning Policy Framework. The Framework requires local planning authorities to take into account all the benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land. Where significant development of agricultural land is shown to be necessary, planning authorities should seek to use poorer quality land in preference to that of a higher quality. They should also consider the needs of the food production industry and any barriers to investment that planning can resolve”.

Therefore, if local planning authorities are asked to encourage re-use of brownfield land, provided that it is not of high environmental value, in order to recognise the character and beauty of the countryside, then so should the Planning Inspectorate in determining this application.

In a speech to a large scale solar conference 25th April 2013, Greg Barker, Minister for Energy and Climate Change stated “not at any cost...not in any place...not if it rides roughshod over the views of local communities. As we take solar to the next level, we must be thoughtful, sensitive to public opinion, and mindful of the wider environmental and visual impacts”.

Solar farms are hugely inefficient and are not environmentally friendly.

- Solar panels dramatically alter views of the countryside and the key features that punctuate it and the character of heritage assets and our appreciation of them can be significantly harmed.
- The amenity of neighbouring property can be seriously harmed by secured boundaries and intrusive CCTV.
- It is highly unlikely that the land could return to agriculture in 40 years time.

This countryside will be industrialised by this proposed large-scale development.

We need our best land to be productive. 60% of our food is imported– is this environmentally sustainable?

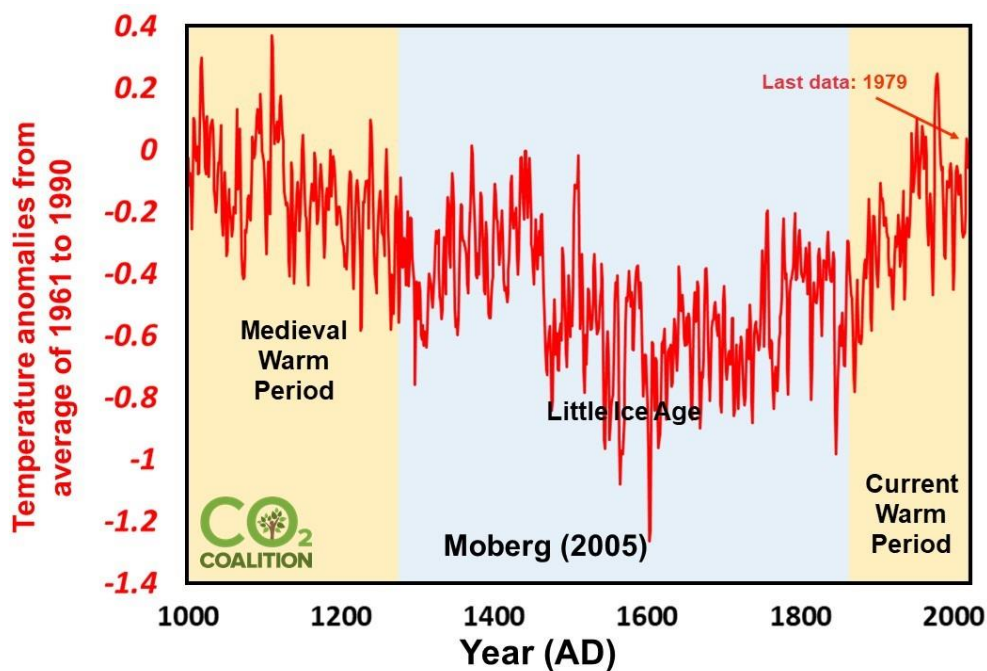
With regard to Wildlife and Biodiversity :

- Transitory animals have their traditional routes blocked. Deer are often diverted onto roads.
- Bird and bat deaths are common as they mistake the glass for water.

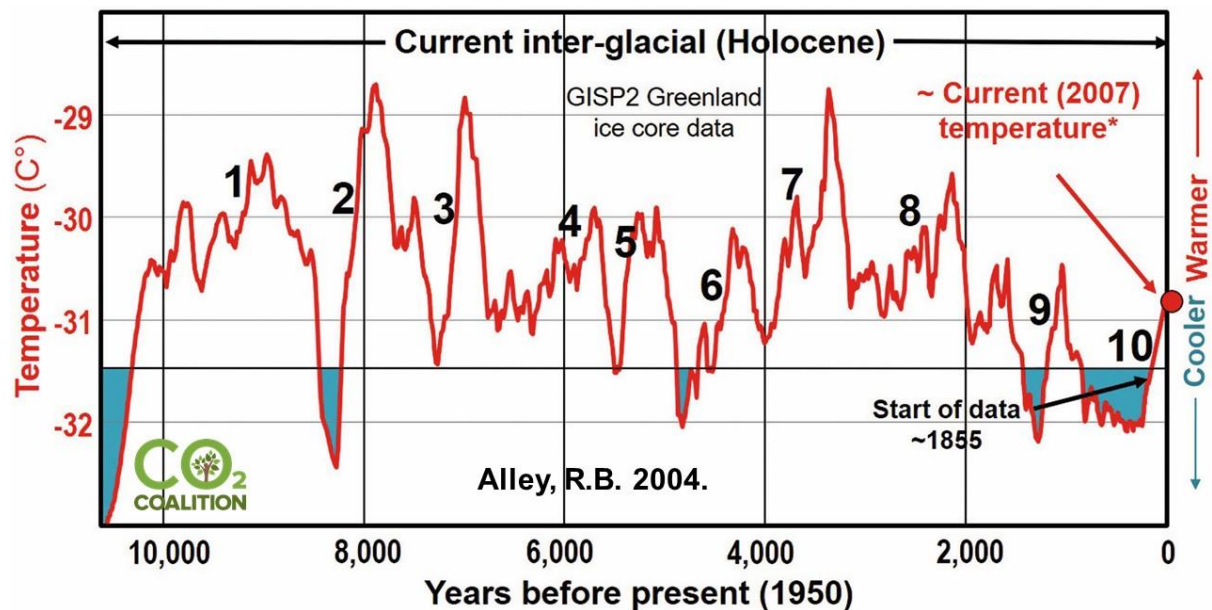
- The land is degraded with little potential for biodiversity as half of it will be in permanent shadow and rain water run-off creates set channels without proper dispersal.
- Topsoil is removed and cleaning materials can contaminate the soil.
- There is the possibility of toxic chemicals leaching out from the panels.
- Lithium-ion battery storage represents a huge fire risk.

There are alternatives : The use of roof tops on industrial, commercial, recreational and residential buildings. The use of Small Modular Reactors.

UK Government has set ambitious targets to reach net zero by 2050. The recently published Energy Strategy detailed the aim to increase the UK's solar capacity five-fold by 2035 - equivalent to around 70 gigawatts (GW) total generation capacity. Gate Burton Energy Park claims that it would “deliver a significant level of renewable energy generation and make a vital contribution to supporting our transition to a low carbon energy system while securing the energy needs of Great Britain”. The reason behind the Net Zero target is to mitigate the effect of Global Warming. However this is based on the increase in temperature since records began in about 1880 and the average global annual temperature hovered around 13.7 °C (56.7 °F) from the 1880s through the 1910s. During the 1920s to 1940s, temperatures climbed about 0.1 °C (0.18 °F) each decade. Mean global temperatures then stabilized at roughly 14.0°C (57.2 °F) until the 1980s. Global temperature records start around 1880 because observations did not sufficiently cover enough of the planet prior to that time. The problem with comparing the current temperature rises with the temperature at 1880 was that this was a particularly cold period with a fall in temperatures almost to the level of the Little Ice Age in the 1600’s. (see graph below)



The graph also shows a “Medieval Warm Period” around 1100 AD which could not have been caused by industrialisation or the burning of fossil fuels. In other words the current rise in temperature is natural and also cyclical. (see graph below)



As this temperature graph shows, it has been much warmer in the past than it is now, so why are we so concerned? We should be more concerned about a possible drop in temperature as this is now overdue.

If this happens how will we cope without fossil fuels? Can wind and solar keep us warm in the next ice age? According to Professor Valentina Zharkova of Northumbria University, Global Warming should be the last thing on our minds! She presents a very strong case that the IPCC have based their projections on an error, and that CO₂ cannot cause an increase in temperature. It is all due to the variable intensity of the sun and that the main problem over the next 30 years will be the Grand Solar Minimum. When it is snowing more than usual and no food can be grown, it will be more difficult to survive.

The reason natural CO₂ cannot be the cause of Climate Change is that it represents only 0.04% of the atmosphere and of that only 0.004% is due to fossil fuels.

Climate change is a reality but CO₂ is not responsible, therefore we do not need to persue Net Zero and consequently we do not need this Solar Energy Park.

Please reject this application, direct solar panels to roof tops, and save our farmland.