

This area is drowning in NSIP proposals for Solar Farms that are being inspected individually but with tight timelines and significant overlaps. It is pretty much impossible, as an individual who has no prior experience of this procedure, to keep track of the different proposals, their status and what we are supposed to comment upon at any given time.

These proposals are based upon productive farmland in a rural environment. If they are given permission to go ahead, they will remove that farmland from productive use and turn the landscape from rural to industrial. The country needs to resolve its food production deficit and that requires working farmland. Solar panels could be placed on industrial buildings and brownfield sites. How is the inspectorate evaluating this?

The proposals claim that there are no other valid sites - that may be because the companies have determined that the cost of putting the infrastructure in place to make other options viable will cost more. How will the inspectorate take that into account?

At least one new industrial building in Lincolnshire requested that Solar Panels be fitted to its roof but were told that it wasn't possible because the infrastructure wasn't present to take the power into the grid. Does the inspectorate consider these examples to be proof that other sites aren't viable or that the proposers are not taking such investment opportunities seriously enough?

Is the standing of all companies involved in these schemes examined by the inspectorate with respect to modern slavery, financial due diligence etc?

West Burton involves a significant battery installation and that is essentially the money making aspect of the scheme because solar farms generate power at times when it is least viable from a commercial perspective. One could argue that the batteries are the main commercial element and the solar panels are merely there to charge them. How will the inspectorate evaluate the legality of the proposal balance between solar panels and battery installation from a commercial perspective? Also how can the inspectorate ensure that the proposed technologies are safe for local residents in the event of fire? We have recently seen two examples of major fires sweeping through cars that include batteries and they weren't able to be dealt with adequately - how will these battery installations be different?

How does the inspectorate take into account the dramatic changes to the local environment and population that would be brought about by these proposed industrial schemes in a rural setting? Any approved projects would last for a generation.

All of these schemes claim to be good for the environment but what research is there to show that this is true? There appears to be little or no academic research that supports these claims and yet the developers claim it nonetheless. Does the inspectorate challenge these claims and ask for evidence to support them? How does the inspectorate evaluate the quality of any evidence brought before it?