

WBSP Deadline 4 submissions of Hearings w/c 22 Jan 2024.

WBSP OFH2

The use of a Grid connection at the West Burton 400kv substation is a negative and restrictive move in the quest for more power needed to decarbonise the UK.

The UK could require **4x more power** in the coming decades.

When put into context this solar scheme's additional electrical output is so small that it would be lost as a mere 'rounding up' error within these enormous generation figures and will do very little but selfishly displace many thousands of acres of much needed farmland.

As stated, the West Burton Solar Project would inefficiently use one of four Grid connections, utilising only about **10%** of its capacity. This would be a retrograde step that must not be understated. It is a waste of important national infrastructure at a time when generation levels need to increase at a rate never seen before.

These valuable high-capacity Grid connections need to be used effectively.

Nuclear energy for example would reliably offer the large quantities of low carbon electricity we seek and would use brownfield sites or only cover a small footprint of land. I agree with the Atomic Energy Authority's comments regarding this matter.

The predicted **24GW** of installed nuclear power would provide **3x** more electrical generation than the predicted **70 GW** of installed solar power and 70GW of solar would cover an eye watering **350,000 acres of land!**

Promoting solar on farmland and using up all spare Grid connections is threatening the country's future ability to produce sustainable and reliable energy and of course food.

All forecasts clearly state **more power, not less!**

Solar power plants engulfing vast areas of farmland really are the "Emperor's new clothes." But we see reality through all the solar lobbying.

If we continue on this reckless path of solar on farmland, because Brownfields and rooftops are less financially attractive, then we will totally bypass the government's requirement for a "**rooftop revolution**". It makes perfect sense to put solar panels on your roof at home and not in your garden. So why are we displacing hundreds of thousands of acres of farmland for solar when we have enough rooftops to give this important secondary function to.

Using finite farmland for solar is "Robbing Peter to pay Paul". This is a shortsighted strategy and the only people who think this is a good idea, is the Developers and those that do not know the full facts. The scale and size of these behemoths being forced on our countryside is unjustified, unnecessary and there is certainly no national urgency for a paltry **0.15%** of extra electrical generation.

Solar is such a low yielding and poor performer it simply cannot be given the green light to waste all this farmland and industrialise the British countryside.

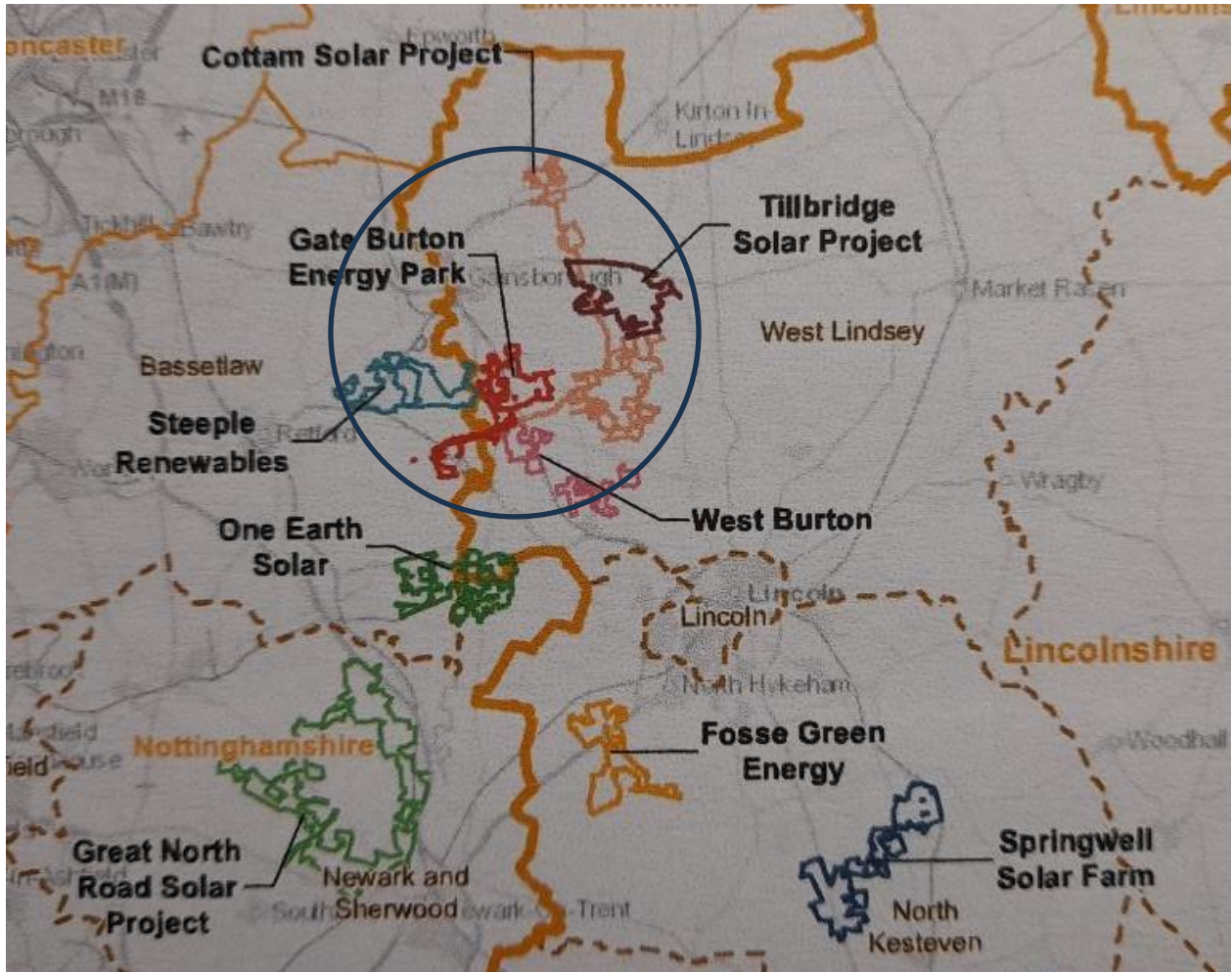
An informed and bold decision needs to be made to slow down this planning free-for-all and give due consideration to the citizens of this country and **not** to the tiny electrical and the decarbonising contribution of ground mounted solar in the UK.

The local opposition group (7000 acres) has a membership with over 300 years of power industry experience. Please listen to their experts, who are without a financial agenda.

If at the end of this process the many harms remain unseen. Then in the national interest please seriously consider the following 5 points.

- **We do not create high impact 'Solar Industrialised Zones' in the UK countryside. Such as the disproportional 5 NSIPs covering over 13,000 acres proposed around Gainsborough. West Burton. Cottam. Gate Burton. Tillbridge and Steeple Renewables. They all fall within a 10km radius! With a sixth NSIP falling just outside, One Earth solar.**
- **We do not foolishly use up all the high-power Grid connections with this rush of solar applications.**
- **We do not allow IGPs damaging 4.5m/15ft high solar panels into our landscape.**
- **We introduce fair exclusion zones around all residential property.**
- **And that BESS, which is a totally separate entity. Shall be located safely and sensibly on brownfield sites or adjacent to the Grid connection from where it will be charged.**

Please see the map below, showing the Solar Industrialised Zone of 5 NSIPs falling within a 10km radius near Gainsborough.



I would like to also respond to the Applicants rebuttal at the end of the OFH2.

Despite what the Developer says in their specialist's reports, the cumulative effect of the mass industrialisation of our countryside by 13,000 acres of solar development will destroy the area. This is clear to see by anyone without an agenda.

The use of giant 4.5m infrastructure proposed for the Cottam and West Burton schemes could never be mitigated. The Sunnica scheme is causing concern for the SoS with panels of just half this size and the area has just one NSIP proposal, not five!

The Gainsborough countryside would be getting the equivalent of 13 Longfield solar farms within a 10km radius!

The hired Specialist are undeniably wrong in their assessments and are clearly playing down the harms!

The Applicant mentioned "set aside". There is not 13,000 acres of "set aside" in this small area, and "set aside" is not set aside for 60 years as an industrial folly, it can return to agriculture at any time.

Of the 13,000 acres of farmland being promoted for solar development, not one brownfield site or rooftop is being considered and nor will it be if the Developers are allowed to disregard planning legislation and take the easy option. Meaningful agriculture will cease to continue over much of this arable landscape.

Regarding the Applicants response to my statement about solar on farmland being thought of as a good idea because people do not know the facts... Well, I doubt the general public or indeed most politicians know the truth about, in particular, ground mounted solar.

Do they know for example that the electrical generation is only around 11% of the installed capacity? Specifying that a site would provide 500MW of power is misleading. This refers to the peak power delivered under optimum conditions of the sun and at midday in the summer. Probably never to be achieved! The power output or yield will be very much less than this for most of the time and of course falls to a guaranteed zero output during the hours of darkness.

Do they know that about 2,500 acres are required for a 500MW (55MW) ground mounted solar scheme?

Do they know the physical size of the solar panels being promoted here and the proximity to people's homes. This scale of industrialisation is never shown in promotional photographs.

Do they know the land footprint of other generating technologies and their associated power outputs, for comparison?

For example,

Solar (ground mounted) 11% generation yield - 5 acres per 1MW installed.

Offshore wind 50% (5x more) generation yield - no loss of farmland.

Onshore wind 40% (4x more) generation yield – less than 1 acre per 3MW turbine. Meaningful agriculture can continue on the rest of the site.

Nuclear 90% (9x more) generation yield – Sizewell C, 170 acres for 3,200MW

and other clean thermal power plants of scale, having 80% energy yields and average footprints of just a few hundred acres.

In summary, solar is a poor performer at a national level compared to other generation methods, but it does have a role to play in that its simple technology can be utilised on rooftops with relative ease, with most of the power produced going directly to the consumer and thus lowering Grid demand. An ideal situation of which I am absolutely sure is the preferred way to deploy this technology in the UK.

Solar simply uses too much land for too little gain.

Let us save the land for something that really needs it. Starting with feeding the nation?

Thank you.

ISH3

Item 3.

There is no Developer desire for rooftop solar generation, all is being promoted on farmland. Planning policy states brownfield must be prioritized. The Applicant is cherry picking policy.

Renewable energies do not all offer equal benefit and should not override all other planning considerations. Which definitely do not condone a density of 13,000 acres of insensitive solar developments within a 6 mile radius.

A multiple and fragmented site design is far more visually harmful than a single site. For example, visual impact could be in all directions on a fragmented site whereas a single site is more likely to only impact one direction and possibly only impact once while travelling through the area instead of passing many separate sites. All other solar NSIPs are on one contiguous site.

The land parcels that make up these multi-site schemes, are not site selection. It clearly shows what was offered by landowners at the time. 4.5m panels are not considerate to the landscape or the community and are not used in populated areas.

Future Solar technology advancements should be used as a means of physical size reduction of the scheme and the easing of local visual impact etc...

Community benefit fund is an acknowledgment community harm.

Item 4.

Panel failure. No panel will last 60 years. 20-25 years is a normal life span due to severely depleted efficiency after this time. So, in practice, with failures some panels could be replaced twice in 60 years. All panels will need to be replaced at least once over 60 years.

As a result of panel failures and replacements over the multiple schemes in the area the cumulative impact on waste would be untenable.

The Applicant continually states that any breach to a DCO is a criminal offence. I do not doubt this, but what deterrent is there for a large faceless company and on a site so big that no one will notice. If the penalty is a warning, a fine or a "slap on the wrist" then cutting a few corners will happen. It is not like there is life imprisonment for cutting a hedge too low?

I hope you can see the very real policing issues on rural sites of this size and where hedges etc. are the only mitigation for these industrial eyesores.

The power output of 11% of the installed capacity is best case scenario with no failures and perfect performing panels etc... It is likely to be much lower than this with predicted failures. Maintenance will be in a cost-effective manner and the loss of daytime generation is likely to be minimized by night time working, causing continued and further impacts on the community.

The Applicant is constantly telling us what we want to hear. I.e. 50/50 China/Europe equipment sourcing. Should we be fueling the Chinese economy at all, when they are the world's biggest carbon emitters. Hypocrisy?

As stated before, the Developer seems to support rooftop solar but evidently there is just no desire for it, just lip service paid. Not until every usable rooftop is used. Should we be turning to farmland, there is demonstrably very little need for massive ground mounted schemes. Solar output is so low that ground mounted should be in addition to rooftops not the other way round, but solar on farmland is the only type being promoted.

Heckington Fen solar farm reduced their panels from the unheard of 4.5m to reasonable height during consultation, they clearly listened to residents. Power from solar can be achieved in many, more acceptable and low impact ways, rather than terrorizing rural communities with infrastructure designed for deserts and wastelands.

BESS. Batteries cycled daily would only last about 10 years, with the Applicant stating 12 to 20 years. This means the BESS could be replaced 4-5 times during the life of the current scheme. This is totally unfair on the community.

Item 6.

Much of the crop growing land around here is almost never ploughed, just harrowed. The Applicant has little local knowledge of farming practices.

The Applicant promotes the grass beneath the panels as a miracle cure for flooding, basically saying grass prevents flooding. An arable crop will take up water from Autumn drilling to the next Summer's

harvest. Any living vegetation will absorb water and improve soil permeability. Not just grass beneath a solar panel. The experts agenda based narrative is blatant and misleading.

The heavy and wet land in this area, as stated by the soil expert, would not be conducive to sheep welfare, areas for livestock need to be chosen carefully in this region, requiring frequent rotation. Hence this being an arable landscape, famed for growing cereals. Lincolnshire is after all "the Breadbasket of the UK." It is madness even to contemplate using arable land for sheep grazing. We already have enough grassland on poor, free draining soils in this country.

Any meaningful agricultural practice would obviously cease on the WBSP. There is no requirement for an additional 2,500 or cumulative 13,000 acres of extra poor quality sheep grazing in this area.

The notion of serious sheep farming should not be given weight here and using sheep as a tool to keep the brambles at bay is not a sheep farming enterprise.

Land lost to solar here and across the country will be of catastrophic proportions, solar plants are not an appropriate use of land. The 3a BMV threshold is stated in planning policy and given serious consideration, but so is Brownfield site use and this seems to be given very little consideration? High quality 3b land is being ridden over roughshod. The loss of any arable land puts undeniable pressure on what remains.

With around half the UK's agricultural land located on flood plains which may be lost to permanent or intermittent flooding either by extreme weather events or by rising sea levels. It seems hypocritical to be wasting good farmland on solar and at the same time exacerbating local flooding issues with solar panels covering the size of a city. The solar panels would be like a metropolis of un-guttered rooftops with the concentrated rainwater falling straight to the ground. The flash flood risk would be compounded many times over, despite the Applicant stating that there would be gaps in the panels to reduce this risk. I see no securing of this extraordinary gap in the DCO.

Claiming that after 60 years the land could return to agriculture is nonsense. I doubt after six decades there will be a renewed need for agriculture. This will be classed as previously developed land with a Grid connection. I think we all know this land will be used for industry in perpetuity, in essence a very large brownfield site.

ISH 4.

Item 3.

A Responsible Developer would not jeopardize any cultural heritage.

Item4.

Transport issues are again played down by the Applicant. Stating that X number of extra vehicles will have no material effect is arrogant and just wrong. In the context of cumulative effect of several other

projects in the area, when they all have X number of vehicles this issue could be compounded to an intolerable level. The applicant seemed to fail to grasp this basic concept. Mrs. Warren was correct.

Operational noise was a similar issue, and the cumulative effect could be significant. The Applicants response failed to answer cumulative noise concerns.

Bearing in mind 4.5m tilting panels are not used in the UK and only abroad in desert like locations. Where I doubt noise from their operation, both mechanical and wind noise would be an issue there. Plus, the final equipment has not been chosen yet so how can the Applicant know the noise output of their development?

Item5.

A Planner at Lanpro commenting on health issues is surely a joke.

I failed to understand the direction of his argument which seemed to be that there would be no health impact of having your home and standard of living devalued due to industrialised development and a land use and landscape change on a scale never seen before. The health impact would, in reality be enormous!

A cumulative 13,000 acres of solar within a 6 mile radius would make this scheme part of the Largest solar complex in the developed world. Other developments of this size are in uninhabited parts of the world. British citizens are being terrorized by Net Zero fueled and opportunistic solar Developers and their Government lobbyists.

Shameful. Would they like to live within one of the largest solar complexes in the world? No, they would not!

Socio-economic decline of the area is a given, due to low skilled and low paid work, being all that is offered by these proposals. Transient and imported labour during construction has no link to sustainable local benefit, it will more likely cause harm due to the overwhelming of local services etc... West Burton power station employed nearly 1000 full time staff for 60 years with high paid and skill careers. Agricultural jobs, over a cumulative 13,000 acres would be lost forever. Solar schemes have low permanent employment, and these low skilled jobs would clearly be shared across the many schemes in this Solar Industrialised Zone. See previous map.

Thank you.