

**7000acres Comments on the Applicant's Deadline 4 Supporting Video – dated
5 March 2024**

Reference: Rep 4-099

Deadline 5 – April 2024

Introduction

7000Acres has repeatedly raised concerns over how the Applicant has attempted to downplay the impact of this scheme, and the cumulative impact of the growing number of solar NSIPs in the region.

This footage using Google Earth is yet another attempt to conceal the true impact of this industrial scheme (Deadline 4 Rep 4-099 using Google Earth Data) .

Google Earth “Flyover”

Google Earth imagery of rural locations is frequently several years out of date, so can the Applicant confirm this imagery is current? Imagery currently available on Google Earth Pro for the region shown states it was updated in July 2020, 4 years ago. Commercial satellite data is readily available and would be a valid source of terrain imagery.

The “Flyover” does not display any means for the viewer to orientate themselves, such as a compass heading. The lack of orientation, combined with the random and meandering nature of the “flythrough”, varying speeds and heights makes it hard for a viewer to assess the scale of the multiple solar industrial NSIPs.

Furthermore, the current imagery lacks the Steeple Solar, One Earth and Stow Park schemes, all of which have a significant cumulative effect on the visual impact in the region.

Industrial Nature of the Scheme

The Applicant has made no attempt to show the industrial nature of their scheme. In particular, none of the solar panels are shown and neither is the BESS. By overlaying the current rural landscape with some pastel colours and field numbers downplays the visual impact the solar industrial scheme will actually have on the region. The use of pastel colouring, through which the furrows, crops and tracks in the field are still visible, is not a valid representation of the industrial nature of these solar projects. As a minimum, the solar panels and BESS must be shown.

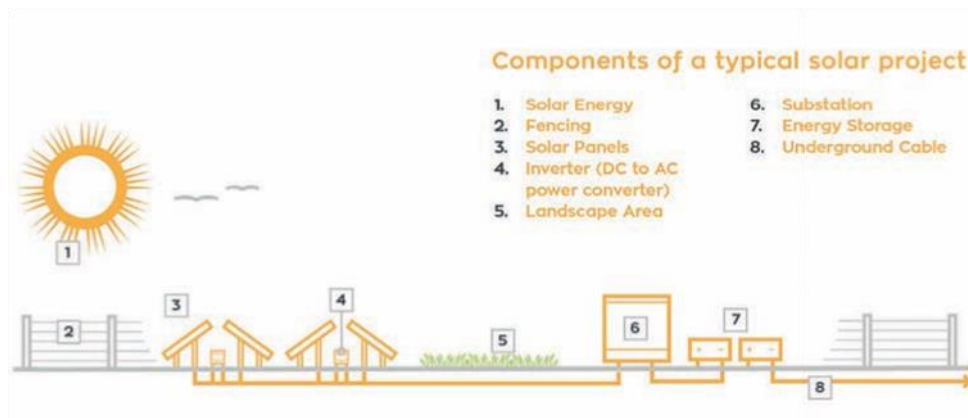
By merely colouring in some fields the Applicant has made no attempt to show the vertical extent of their scheme. Furthermore, the pale colours used are not representative of the brutalist architecture being imposed on a rural area.

Visual Impact

Even though the “flythrough” is incomplete and flawed, it starts to show the monumental impact that West Burton and the multiple other schemes will have on this farming region.

Further Examples of the Applicant Providing False Imagery

The video is consistent with earlier material used by Island Green Power during the Public Consultation for the Cottam and West Burton schemes. This diagram clearly shows the solar panels being no higher than the security fencing, i.e. 2.5m high. Nowhere in the document sent to local residents, or on any of the material provided during the public meetings was it shown that the Applicant intended to use unprecedented 4.5m high tracking panels. Local residents had to interrogate the PEIR to find out the Applicant’s true intent.



Cottam and West Burton Phase 1 Consultation Leaflet (IGP, 2022)

Summary

In summary, the Applicant has a long track record of providing inaccurate and misleading imagery. This deliberately downplays the considerable impact from this scheme, and the cumulative impacts from the numerous solar NSIPs in the local area.

The Google Earth “flythrough” does not give a true impression of the various schemes, because:

- it is incomplete and does not show all the relevant schemes, such as Steeple Solar;
- it does not show the industrial nature of the schemes, merely colouring parts of the rural landscape;
- it does not show the vertical extent of the solar panels, BESS and other industrial features;
- it is difficult to gain a true impression of the impact due to the lack of orientation cues, the meandering way the flythrough occurs, along with varying heights and speeds.

Even taking into account the flaws detailed above, the “flythrough” has started to show the monumental impact this and the other solar NSIPs in the immediate area will have on the farming landscape.

This dissembling use of Google Earth is consistent with the other tactics the Applicant has employed to downplay the major impact that using 4.5m high sun tracking solar panels will have on this rural landscape. The Applicant has consistently failed to apply a reasonable worst-case assessment when assessing the impact on the landscape, instead they have made over reliance on “professional judgement”.

To assist the ExA, we have submitted a copy of a map showing the latest update on the vast acreage covered by the solar NSIPs and sub NSIPs in the local area.

A note of caution, this map might shortly be out of date as we are aware of other solar NSIPs being launched in the coming months!