

## WEST BURTON SOLAR - DEADLINE 5 – 11 APRIL 2024

I concur and support fully with the Interested Parties who have either spoken so compellingly against the West Burton Solar Project at Open Floor Hearings and / or submitted relevant representations to the Examining Authority opposing this scheme and the cumulative effects of Cottam Solar, Gate Burton Solar and Tillbridge Solar projects and believe their statements are factual and honest.

### AERIAL FOOTAGE OF WEST BURTON SOLAR, COTTAM SOLAR, GATE BURTON SOLAR AND TILLBRIDGE SOLAR SITES

These four (now six projects) are all within a 10 kilometre radius (6 miles). The scale of the impact on the quality food producing fertile farmland and countryside seen from the aerial footage of these four monstrous schemes is overwhelming and beyond harrowing. Stow Park Luminous Energy adjacent to West Burton 3 and Steeples Renewables are expressly within the scope of the aerial footage but even as the cumulative effects of these two projects increase the land grab to 13,000 acres, they have been excluded from the image. The aerial footage, predictably, has also failed to illustrate any of the predominantly 4.5m high tracking and non-tracking panels in situ, 7,000,000 from the four schemes, the BESS batteries, the associated infrastructure and the names of all the 30+ villages that will be affected and as such is not an authentic account. The aerial footage is misleading the public yet again and as also shown in the images below.

### THE MISLED GENERAL PUBLIC – THE MISLED 30+ COMMUNITIES

*The images A B & C below may be from 2021 onwards but they illustrate importantly how we were being misled and are still being misled in 2024 !*

Images A and B below misled the public as to the scale of West Burton and Cottam Solar projects and bore no resemblance to the thousands of acres of highly productive farmland and countryside that cumulatively these two projects, notwithstanding Gate Burton Solar and Tillbridge Solar, would seek to destroy. Island Green Power's terminology of hectares (not acres) in their descriptions added further to the public's confusion and it is clear to see why then, and throughout the Examination Process, the 30+ affected communities place no trust in the company nor its representatives. *See Image 'C' on page 2 of this submission.*

Image A is taken from Island Green Power's West Burton and Cottam Solar Project Phases One and Two Consultation Leaflets produced in November 2021 and April 2022. *Both leaflets on page 3 illustrate the 5MW Trethosa Solar project in Cornwall, an Island Green Power project – no reference to the acreage in the leaflets but an internet search I undertook at the time described the site as 25 acres.* Why exclude the acreage next to the image at the time ?

Image B is from Island Green Power's West Burton and Cottam Solar Project Phase Two Consultation Leaflet dated June 2022, illustrating the same 5MW Trethosa Solar project but showing a different panel image in close up ! There is wasted space at the top of the page, the image is pushed to the bottom of the page and reproduced at such an angle the panels appear almost flat !! These Consultation Leaflets were A5 in size (21cm x 15cm / 6" x 8") very small thus further reducing the visual impression and impact of not only Trethosa Solar but as stated above the impact of the West Burton Solar and Cottam Solar Projects.

Although the above information contained on pages 1 and 2 may not be considered relevant at this stage of the Examination by the Examining Authority's Inspectorate I believe it demonstrates from the outset the difficulties the residents of the affected communities have experienced in participating in the process and therefore it should form part of this submission along with the further information contained herein.

Persistent and excessive over use of the words 'may', 'anticipated' and 'could' throughout all aspects of the Applicant's literature and documentation submitted to the Planning Inspectorate, even at this stage in the examination process, continues to denote that the Applicant, Island Green Power's mitigation statements, cannot be wholly relied upon. The Applicant has been particularly reticent and economic with its responses to so many aspects of this proposed solar scheme and Cottam Solar when questions have either not been answered or answers have been vague / inaccurate and / or misleading from the outset.

IMAGE A

### About us

Cottam and West Burton Solar Projects are being developed by Island Green Power, who are a leading international developer of renewable energy projects, established in 2013.

Island Green Power has delivered 26 solar projects worldwide totalling more than 1GW of capacity. This includes 14 solar projects in the UK and Republic of Ireland. Their mission is to increase solar energy usage, making more renewable energy possible and saving thousands of tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> in the process.

Island Green Power is committed to responsible land use and believe that the development and delivery of large-scale solar farms can be achieved in harmony with their surroundings.



Island Green Power solar project in Trethosa, Cornwall

IMAGE B

Both the Cottam Solar Project and West Burton Solar Project are classified as Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects, because of the amount of renewable energy they will generate. This means we have to submit two separate Development Consent Order (DCOs) planning applications, one for each project. Although we will be submitting two DCOs applications, we recognise how close the projects are together and are developing the proposals in parallel. This consultation is for both projects to provide a joint opportunity to give feedback on either one or both projects, so you don't have to submit feedback twice.

Copies of this leaflet, our feedback form, and the PEIR for each project are all available on our project websites: [www.westburtonsolar.co.uk](http://www.westburtonsolar.co.uk) and [www.cottamsolar.co.uk](http://www.cottamsolar.co.uk), and at the Community Access Points listed at the back of this leaflet.

Please don't hesitate to get in contact with us if you have any questions about our phase two consultation, including to request copies of the consultation materials. You can reach us by using the contact details on the back page of this leaflet, including by email, phone or post.



An example of an Island Green Power solar project in Cornwall

*Image C below is the same 5MW (five megawatts) Trethosa Solar project on the same 25 acres but shown on another website and the glint and glare can quite clearly be seen in this image yet the reproduced images in the Island Green Power Consultation Leaflets above of this submission have been cut down even further in size to disguise the glint and glare from the solar panels. Multiply the panels in this image below 10 times for a 250 acre solar site. Multiply the panels in this image 100 times for a 2,500 acres solar site. Multiply the panels in this image 500 times for 12,500 acres of solar site and then include the associated hardware BESS batteries, cctv, sub-stations and even more paraphernalia.*

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Energysmart secured lease option with landowner and grid offer from Western Power along with planning permission. Shovel ready project was then sold to Island Green Energy who built the farm.

IMAGE C





Image D illustrates the landscape of a large scale solar ‘farm’ in China. Although the entire scheme wasn’t visible from the image available to display here it can be seen this is still on a colossal scale. *However, it states in the narrative that it is equally inefficient as while a Chinese solar farm may be billed as having a capacity of, for eg 200 megawatts, less than a sixth of that on average actually gets used. The reasons for a low capacity factor can include things over which they have no control, such as the weather but it also states there are other problems for this where power is lost along the huge transmission lines, many kilometres long, that connect distant solar farms to places that need electricity.*



IMAGE D

Image E below illustrates Kamuthi 648 MW Solar Plant, Tamil Nadu, India. The complete solar scheme wasn’t visible from the image available to display here but again it can be seen this is on another monstrous scale and similar in MWs to West Burton Solar and Cottam Solar, albeit they are on parcels of land 1, 2 and 3 the effect from six cumulative solar plants, on 13,000 acres of farmland around the 30+ affected communities where tourism and agriculture lie at the heart of Lincoln and Lincolnshire’s economy, will be nothing short of catastrophic.



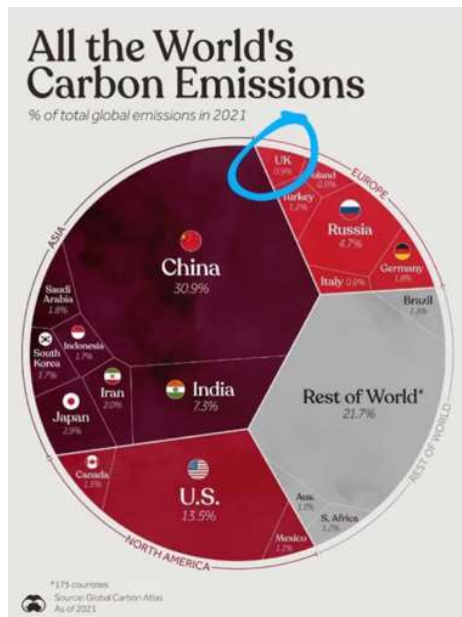
IMAGE E

These above two solar plants are in countries with enormous land mass compared to the UK:-

India has 2,042,403 sq miles (3,286,927 sq kms), China 5,793,638 sq miles (9,323,957 sq kms),  
**And the whole of the UK is 150,679 sq miles (242,495 sq kms). We are a tiny island in comparison to the**

**other areas of the world where large scale solar of the type shown on page 3 and what is proposed in England is located.**

- Compare the carbon emissions of the UK to the rest of the world in 2021 and see from the circled area on the chart below we produce a tiny fraction - 0.9% !



- West Burton Solar 1, 2 and 3 does not offer a sustainable future. It is oversized, incompatible with its surroundings and of little local community benefit. Lincoln / Lincolnshire and its communities are set to be devastated by the industrialisation of the landscape from this / these projects for financial gain when there are clearly better energy alternatives is difficult to comprehend and invokes scepticism / suspicion on this / these project's statement of purpose. Alternatives are available given the reported performance of UK offshore wind (and the potential of onshore wind) in line with current strategic planning policy, combined with the current growth rate in rooftop solar means that the UK is projected to be self-sufficient and actually able to export energy by the year 2030. Therefore there is no sound or science based planning reason for this project to be approved and this alone challenges the need to cover farmland and greenfield sites with huge solar installations. The risks of Island Green Power's proposals very much outweigh the hypothesised/speculated benefits put forward by them – we do not wish to lose the beauty and tranquillity of the Countryside.
- Over a 40 - 60 year period there would be intolerable, constant disruption to the 30+ villages affecting the residents, the wildlife, the bio-diversity and the roads when the solar panels required replacing (every 20 years ?) and BESS batteries (every 10 years ?) from any one or all of these six schemes.
- There are innumerable places for solar schemes such as motorway central reservations, supermarket car parks, brownfield land (Ministry of Defence bases) and then there are floating solar schemes and hydro-power schemes – we are an island surrounded by water. We do not have finite land yet we have a growing population.
- I am supportive of the West Burton fusion project – it will bring infrastructure to the area and provide jobs for the future generations for years and only take up a miniscule amount of land in comparison to these calamitous solar projects ....these industrial scale solar schemes will not provide long term jobs for local people. In fact, it/they will be taking away farmland when many of our local residents are farmers.

- Food security is important. We are at risk of endangering swathes of valuable agricultural land at a time when severe economic hardship and a war in Europe highlight the value of home grown food. The loss of agricultural land is insupportable and the loss of food production. It is expected that the Inspectorate will not support the loss of farms and green space at such a critical time for the food supply chain. Such a decision would defy logic.
- Foreign investment seems to be a significant force in the market with little evidence of long term commitment to the UK. The community benefit offered to supporting communities touted by some of these investors does not stand up to scrutiny and is frequently not transparent. There is, therefore, considerable and understandable public opposition to such a massive proposal. Most of those consulted have taken the view that this is not a potentially valuable nor viable contribution to the country's future energy needs but in fact a 'get rich quick' project for foreign investors. ***The Inspectorate must be aware of this as there are 13 NSIP solar schemes coming forward or are already under examination in Lincolnshire amounting to 26,000 acres of agricultural land.***
- Any purported community benefits 'dangled like a carrot' by Island Green Power, Low Carbon and Tillbridge Solar will be of little use to the residents as these won't even cover the decrease in property values in the area.
- Flooding across England's farmland during the Autumn and Winter of 2023 and January 2024 where crops have been ruined with the resultant shortage of food that will occur in 2024 is further warning of the importance of protecting grades 3, 3a and 3b fertile agricultural land from industrial scale solar schemes of this nature.

### BRANSBY HORSES HOME - FLOODING



Location of Bransby Horses Home Charity and its fields above and to the right of this image..



West Burton 2 solar project above left and left. The River Till, designated a main river, clearly illustrated in the images running the perimeter of this site then onwards towards and through the Cottam Solar scheme where flooding also occurs on a large scale across fields.

This Charity's land is also on the flood plain around West Burton 2 solar where the River Till runs along the perimeter of the West Burton 2 site and the charity was severely affected when a number of fields belonging to it were under flood water in November 2019. They had to move 100 of the 450 animals to an alternative site, a number of planned fundraising events were cancelled and they suffered losses of about £200,000.



The flood water rendered these field unable to support grazing for the horses.

Below are a few images of the flooding at Bransby Horses Home in 2019.



Fields around local horses home flooded November 7, 8 and 9 2019.

As can be seen from the following extract of the Bransby Horses Home Spring/Summer 2024 issue newsletter to supporters the serious matter of flooding again of their grazing land during the latter part of 2023 and early 2024 is a grave concern. On page 5 of this submission the Bransby Horses Home grazing land is in the same area of the West Burton 2 Solar project and in the fields on the **East side of** the B1241 Sturton by Stow to Saxilby 4.5m high tracking solar panels are proposed which during prolonged periods of persistent heavy rain would worsen flooding issues.

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## WHEN THE FLOOD GATES OPENED

Unprecedented storms and rain brought added pressures to the day to day running of Bransby Horses during the last few months of 2023 and start of 2024. At the height of the floods, over 40 per cent of our vital grazing land was under water – the equivalent of more than 250 football pitches. It began on the morning of October 20th when we received a two-hour warning from the Environment Agency to say they would need to deliberately flood some of our grazing land to prevent further flooding in Lincoln. We immediately removed more than 70 horses from the fields that would be affected and another 30 were moved to safety over the weekend after the floodgates were opened. We understand the Environment Agency's need to reduce flooding in Lincoln by using our grazing land as flood plains, but sadly we receive no funding or compensation for this. The impact of the flooding has brought additional costs at an already difficult economic time. We have however, been overwhelmed by the kindness and compassion of our wonderful supporters like you, who have offered to help or donated to the charity. Both of our Lincolnshire sites received further flood warnings throughout the winter months, whilst the equines we'd displaced in October were still living in temporary accommodation. Having exhausted our winter grazing, we had to use fields originally being saved for the summer months. With the loss of some of our summer fields in December and repeat floods earlier this year, there has been a significant impact on our summer grazing with all remaining fields now being used for our newly affected equines. Waterlogged and saturated fields, combined with continued rainfall, has meant a very wet start to the year. The extent of additional costs incurred is likely to be thousands of pounds. Until the fields can be assessed following a prolonged period of dry weather, we won't know the full effect of this stormy start to 2024.

Exclusive drone footage by @canoninthecountry shows how badly our fields were affected in the village of Bransby

Find out more about the flooding on our website: [BransbyHorses.co.uk/efc23](https://BransbyHorses.co.uk/efc23)

There is the emotional distress when a home is flooded, the wildlife lost, the River Till, fields, hedges and roads no longer visible as they become part of the flood plain as the River Till and dykes fail to cope with the volume of water.

The West Burton Scheme proposal will detrimentally affect Mental Health and Wellbeing, will detrimentally affect Biodiversity and Biodiversity Net Gain, it will detrimentally affect Landscape and Visual Effects, it proposes to infringe the use of Public Footpaths/Public Rights of Ways (PRoW's) and so much more.

People are moved by nature, they are moved by flora and fauna, the clouds changing and the weather. It changes their whole feeling and they can feel immense happiness and also immense melancholy but it fills them with hope and gives them a spring in their step. People go for answers when walking in the wide open countryside – we do not want to have to drive to find the wonder of the countryside elsewhere when we have this beautiful and uplifting land already surrounding our 30 villages *because the area becomes industrialised through mammoth solar developments*.

There is so much wildlife in this area – local residents have photographed / witnessed - Barn Owls, Tawny Owls, Long tailed Tits, Kestrels, Great Tits, Red Kites, Chiffchaff, Linnet, Brown Hares, Long-eared bats, Pipistrelles, Hedgehogs, Roe Deer, Muntjac Deer, Butterflies, Dragonflies, Moths, Common Toads, Frogs, Lizards, Grass snakes, resident Swans, Canadian Geese, Badgers, Fox the list is never ending. The fields and hedgerows are their homes on the proposed West Burton and Cottam solar project sites. **WHY** destroy the habitat and wildlife already there ?

We must protect and regenerate this existing habitat for the wildlife to prosper into the future not remove and replant which would lead to a bio-diversity net loss not net gain. Hedgerows are the 'reservoirs of life'.

The communities of 30 villages will be affected, (including mine which will be completely surrounded and overwhelmed North, South, East and West for miles) whichever road I travel daily and also along the narrow, inter-twining country lanes between these villages. It is unimaginable having to consider living with this level of industrialisation of 10,000 acres of countryside for 365 days of the year for up to 60 years. No escape, encircled, imprisoned by four solar projects of this enormity a few miles from each other with all the horrendous hardware, whichever direction we look - Cottam, West Burton, Gate Burton and Tillbridge solar.