

Comments on the open floor hearing for Cottam project.

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1. Summary of open floor submission

Although initially it was not my intention to speak at the open floor meeting I felt I should at least register my objection to this destructive scheme.

I maintain that the examination process is unfair, as the applicants of this project and the other three Solar PV NSIP projects are represented by the same legal team, all applicants have under this legal guidance and strategic advice been able to prepare in concert for the examination and in all probability using a methodology and experience gained from earlier NSIP hearings.

The Applicants & Legal team have in camera, had years to prepare, for this and the other nearby NSIP project hearings.

The timings of which have, in probability been carefully coordinated, seemingly engineered, to overwhelm any local opposition by attrition, in the knowledge that we residents have been subjected to consultation(s) that was not conducted in good faith. Important information withheld with overuse of the "Rochdale Envelope".

Promises of unattainable energy output, of actual carbon saving and the real cost of this renewable energy.

There are volumes of documents, with developers (x3 to date) and governmental publications that in the short time available as impacted parties, we have had to try to read, understand, cross reference and digest as best we can.

All this without the requisite standards of IT equipment, slow Internet speeds, no legal representation or counsel that is unaffordable and no available pro bono publico offered.

Residents are, as individuals, attempting to challenge these multinational companies, who have access to huge sums of overseas funding, assisted by battalions of employed advisors, both legal & technical, each on salaries that would be the envy of most inhabitants of this rural enclave and nearby town.

We have to continue to work, care for our ill, elderly, children or grandchildren, maintain homes & gardens, while attempting to find time to study, research & understand the complexities & jargon of the task, author a credible but heart felt objection to the wholesale destruction of the landscapes, communities, even jobs & businesses where we collectively live. Yet, this is undertaken as a novice, untutored on the he intricacies of planning process, law etc. certainly not as a remunerated employee, but an onerous extracurricular activity to our everyday lives.

One scheme following the other scheme in quick succession. The pace and intensity is disheartening and bewildering, people may fearful of speaking in public, or speaking before appointed officials, many struggling to convey the message of how important it is to us all as residents to maintain the farmlands, wildlife, rural views and villages.

The impact of these projects will be immense, there can be no amount of mitigation that can assuage the loss of so much rural and fertile farmland and the irreparable damage to roads, fields, loss of crops, employment, property values, community, mental & physical health. None of which can be mitigated and no compensation offered, although most prefer the status quo.

So in summary on this point, the ExA. may well deem it “not fair” to the applicant, if the beleaguered public show support or appreciation to valid points made in defence of corporate profit seeking attacks on the areas we live in, with some spontaneous mild mannered applause, for someone who has been bold enough to speak earnestly and scrupled to publicly address and oppose this scheme.

However the applicant has not acted in any degree of fairness, this process has not been a level playing field, this game (and others) has been in play for 86 Minutes before the home team were even told there was a match to play.

2. Comments on other open floor representations.

I consider that all who spoke at the open floor meeting did so with genuine conviction, and indicated their individual and communities opposition to the Cottam Solar scheme and other schemes in the immediate area totalling circa 10,000 acres.

I would like to add comment on some of the enlightening statements made.

A) Simon Skelton, informed us that Cottam Solar project would demand an almost equal amount of acreage as would the total number of required nuclear or gas turbine power stations needed to power the UK, yet it

would at best only produce 0.17% of the required UK energy need and then invariably at the wrong time of day & year.

B) Mr. Summers gave a very good insight into the loss of GDP from UK produced crops and revenue for HMRC.

Also the immoral use of fertile farmland for Solar, when it should be used for growing crops. We only produce 55% of UK food currently & depend on imports from a very unstable world.

C) others raised impact upon mental & physical health. The destruction of existing hedgerows, trees, wildlife & habitats whilst claiming biodiversity net gains. But no indication where the datum line for measurement of gain begins, or details of species, (flora or fauna) gain, nor net loss of existing species.

Along with these 4 NSIP solar schemes, comes the announcement this week of yet another NSIP solar project, this one by One Earth, situated within a couple of kilometres from other projects. This amplifies mention of the cumulative impact on the area, and residents here. Alongside the timings of back to back hearings. There seems to be no let up in the increasing pressures of Solar industrialisation on the area.

This and the other planned schemes is in essence a high profit making endeavour, the firms have no allegiance to the area or communities. The hidden costs to all consumers via Contract for Difference and Levelised Cost of Energy, will be a huge burden to users, add to this the wholesale industrialisation of the area, the costs (monetarily, physical, mental) will be exponentially high, and despite the empty promises made, the Solar industries rely heavily upon fossil fuel generation to supply base load, dull days & nighttime, they even rely upon it to charge the unstable Battery Storage systems (BESS) Sotheby's can practice arbitrage by discharging the (fossil fuelled generated charge) back to the grid for exponentially high profit.

All this system equipment will need to be replaced several times over the planned lifetime of the site. This will increase the burden of LCOE on the consumer.

If this and other schemes are allowed to proliferate, then on days when the weather is favourable to produce energy to the grid and at a time of day when demand is low, these companies will in all probability seek compensation subsidies (as do wind farms) from the tax payer via the exchequer. This available, presumably for the planned life span of the site.

This has the the potential to make renewables the most expensive energy option and stifle alternative and more dense and productive generation mediums like nuclear.

Request to be heard.

May I request to be heard at the next open floor hearing.