

Feedback to the Applicants response to my RR and to the Applicants response to oral representations made at the OFH1.

“Voluntary consultation with individual property owners was undertaken throughout the duration of the Scheme development and the preparation of the ES including discussion over bespoke mitigation relevant to individual properties. A number of meetings and visits to North Farm . The residents of North Farm were then visited by Lanpro on 13 June 2022 to retain engagement and prepare the detailed assessment relating to North Farm, which is set out at C6.3.8.3 ES Appendix 8.3 Assessment of Potential Visual Effects [APP-075]. This detailed assessment concludes that the visibility of the panels is mainly focussed from first floor windows of the main farmhouse to the south overlooking Willingham Road. To the south, the panels are offset by at least 240m within a landscape that supports a good network of hedgerows and tree cover, which assist with their integration. Visibility to the north towards the panels is curtailed by existing woodland and to east, the panels are distanced at 870m, with the panels distanced at approximately 380m to the west.”

The IGP response to my RR concerns I find incorrect and unsympathetic. Home visits were indeed made, and many more emails followed, but IGP did not keep mitigation promises as explained in my WR.

The infrastructure to the south would begin on the other side of the lane to my property on highly visible elevated farmland, all our views would consist of a solar landscape.

The infrastructure to the North would be only 50m from my property, the woodland mentioned is my own and is an important and well used area, not mitigation for an industrial development.

The panels to the East would be an acceptable distance away but the ones to the West would have no screening and would dominate the landscape, new planting would take an unacceptable length of time to mature and have limited or negative effects at such as view blocking and loss of character.

As stated in my WR, we are reasonable people that have been treated unfairly by the solar developer. This poorly planned scheme would totally surround us with its undeniable visual blight.

I wish to remain living in the countryside and in the family home that I built, not in a house isolated by solar panels in all directions... who would? This shows corporate disregard for residents, even those willing to cooperate.

I look forward to the site visit, to show the overwhelming nature of the proposal.

“Deliver a large amount of renewable generation capacity (35,590,658 MWh over the estimated 40-year assessed lifetime.”

The CSP has an installed capacity of 600MW, as stated by many and backed up by (DUKES), electrical output is on average just 10% of 600MW. So, it averages out over the year as a 60MW generator, more on summer days, less on winter days and nothing at night, but nevertheless it would average out at 60MW over a yearly cycle, generating a contextually small 0.52TWh per year, which is only 0.17% of the current UK annual needs of 300TWh.

Simple multiplication would show that over the quoted 40 year lifetime the maximum possible generation by the CSP would be 21TWh not 35TWh, as stated by the Applicant.

In any case, neither figures are large amounts of renewable generation.

National demand is expected to rise significantly in future years, possibly up to 4x! This huge increase along with summer curtailment forecasts, means that solar's net contribution would diminish even further. It is clear we need bulk power not tiny percentages wasting vast amounts of land, of which we would soon run out.

“Table 7.1 of C7.11 Statement of Need [APP-350] shows the electricity generated per hectare by different low-carbon technologies. At the UK's average solar load factor (11%), solar generation produces much more energy per hectare than biogas, and generates a similar amount of energy as onshore wind.”

UK's average load factor for solar fluctuates between 9 and 11% (DUKES) therefore for calculating purposes it is 10%.

Onshore wind load factor is around 30%, 3x higher than solar and the land beneath would continue to yield crops for the nation. This is a windy island not a sunny one.

Nuclear, gas and wind power stations only displace a few hundred acres and provide reliable power in significant quantities.

“Grazing is viable in solar farms as demonstrated by existing solar farms being grazed by sheep. Please see BRE (2014) 'Agricultural Good Practice Guidance for Solar Farms.' Ed J Scurlock. A solar farm of this scale also presents an opportunity to establish a new sheep grazing enterprise even if an existing enterprise is not already present in the vicinity.”

There should be no weight given to any form of continued agriculture on the CSP.

The token gesture of any sheep grazing, as seen at many other solar farm applications is just planning propaganda and a photo shoot opportunity.

It has been documented that sheep grazing on solar farms can bring many negative concerns to the operator and farmer, and many operators have indeed halted this practice after planning approval has been granted.

Cable and panel damage, rounding up difficulties and other husbandry issues being the main reasons for the cessation of this limited secondary function.

The heavy and often wet land in the area is not conducive to sheep welfare. Hence this being an arable landscape, famed for growing cereals. Lincolnshire is after all "the Breadbasket of the UK."

Another small issue is the obvious lack of sheep in this area. With the site likely to be sown with biodiversity mixes, not of forage yielding quality that would offer only poor grazing. This Agri-proposal is purely an empty option of no weight. The Applicant of the Gate Burton Energy Park has already acknowledged this fact. I am sure that the UK does not require hundreds of thousands of acres of additional sheep grazing on solar complexes, but I am sure that it will need the land for many other projects in the future.

Consideration should also be given to the fact that the landowners new and multiplied income stream moves him away from any need or drive to invest in any marginal farming enterprises.

I ask. Why the Applicant with such high climate morals would be promoting the expansion of livestock production that would exacerbate climate change?

"One sheep can produce about 30 litres of methane each day.

According to the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, methane has 28 to 34 times the impact of carbon dioxide in a 100-year period and over the first 20 years after it reaches the atmosphere, it's 84 to 86 times more potent."

"The photomontage work has followed recognised best practice ' Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition (GLVIA3) by the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment. This guidance states at paragraph 8.12 that: "It is important to show as realistically as possible how the development will appear both in relation to the surrounding landscape and from specific viewpoints from which it will be seen by particular groups of people". Then at paragraph 8.18 that "Its main advantage is that it can illustrate the development within the 'real' landscape and from known viewpoints."

I find this statement quite unbelievable. "It is important to show as realistically as possible how the development will appear both in relation to the surrounding landscape and from specific viewpoints from which it will be seen by particular groups of people".

Many, if not all the photomontages show tracking panels which would be 4.5m high, but they are not scaled to the landscape accurately and subsequently do not show this worst-case scenario of 4.5m and therefore are not realistic and do not represent the sheer industrial nature of this type and size of infrastructure in a countryside setting.

I provide photo evidence in my WR.

“The Scheme has a grid connection offer of 600MW, which caps the rate at which energy can be exported to the National Grid. The Scheme is designed to be overplanted by up to 30% (the concept of overplanting is referred to in Section 7.7 of C7.11 Statement of Need [APP-350]) to maximise the lifetime generation from the Scheme.. As such, the installed capacity of the Scheme may be as high as approximately 780MWp, although this figure is provided as an illustration only and the Applicant is not proposing a limit to the capacity of the Scheme.”

On finding out about this overplanting, I feel there is even more evidence of why there is no need to encircle my home by this proposal, and I would expect room for maneuver on this critical life changing issue for my family.

The scheme’s overall land use efficiency is further reduced if the theoretical output is 780MW but is constrained to 600MW Grid connection. This unnecessary industrialisation of the countryside takes the misuse and waste of farmland to another level. The many thousands more panels being used than required is unacceptable and was certainly not mentioned during consultation.

This overplanting of panels is at the expense of greater visual impact of the scheme and detriment to communities.

This spare capacity should be used as a means of physical size reduction and improving mitigation. There needs to be some compromises made here, with 4 schemes, all over planting means the cumulative effect would be of another giant solar farm. We would in theory now have 5!

“Existing hedges would also be allowed to grow out and will be managed to a height of 5m. Hedgerow trees will be encouraged to grow out to add further thickening and growth to the field boundaries.”

With solar panels of 4.5m in height, a 5m hedge would only provide summertime screening on a totally flat landscape and from flat viewpoints, many areas on this scheme including the land around my property are largely sloping. The hedges in these areas would need to be at a ridiculous and unachievable height using native species such as Hawthorne and Blackthorne and would serve only to block views and spoil the open character of the area.

Hedgerows will not be able to thicken up into field boundaries as stated, as the space between the steel security fencing and hedgerow is too narrow to accommodate any significant increase in growth and still leave room for large hedge cutting machinery. I fear hedge row mitigation is not enough.

For 6 months of the year the proposed mitigation would be useless with miles of solar arrays visible during the stark winter months. This would make for a very depressing landscape, especially in the knowledge that the solar arrays would be contributing almost nothing to our energy needs at this time! 50% Mitigation at the very best, is not acceptable.

I finish on an issue raised by many in their RRs. This is site selection.

IGP have stated during meetings and consultation that the reason Lincolnshire had been targeted for these giant solar schemes, is that there was no suitable land in Nottinghamshire close to the old power stations.

There has recently been an announcement of another giant solar farm "Steeple Solar". This proposal is adjacent to West Burton power station. Arguably in a more practical location?

This news seems to question the site selection narrative and is another area where unfortunately the Applicants trust has been lost.

It appears that it is not really "site selection". It is purely areas offered by large landowners exchanging agriculture for an easier and elevated revenue stream. The distance from the Grid is considerable on this project, with criteria produced to suit the case.

Thank you.