

7000 Acres

Summary of Oral Submissions – ISH 3, Socio Economic

Cottam Solar Project

Deadline 3, 19th December 2023

Issue Specific Hearing 3 – Socio Economic

7000Acres raised points within the ISH that:

- The breadth of area chosen for Impact Assessment is too wide and misses Gainsborough within the socio-economic study, area with some of the most deprived areas within the country. This should be considered to be a failing of the study.
- The Applicant responded that they had covered the point within their ES, but the document does not reference the specific difficulties of Gainsborough, so the ES remains deficient in this regard.
- The document for skills is presented as being part of a solution for deprivation for the region, but the net effect of the development remains a reduction in employment, in terms of agriculture and tourism, which is not improved overall by direct employment arising from the development.
- It is not clear what jobs are available in the immediate region
- The nature of roles provided within the area are likely to be lower-skilled, less rewarding jobs than roles in agriculture, which are a vocation and part of a way of life.
- For the breadth of the impact area (Bassetlaw and West Lindsey), it would not be financially viable for people at the edge of this area to undertake many of the roles available, i.e. security and cleaning – so these roles are most likely to be those available within the area, therefore proportionally, the nature of roles within the area will be biased towards the lower skilled roles
- The overall net positive GVA impact on the region described in the ES, is largely as a result of payments to a few landowners, so equating this to a value per worker is disingenuous.
- In terms of green amenity, these may be typically parks or accessible areas, however within the immediate region, the network of small roads, links together footpaths and bridleways provide this amenity.
- Deprivation in the area includes health, and the proposed development would adversely impact green amenity and employment – therefore making a net negative contribution to health and wellbeing.
- Applicant referred to the standard review of public rights of way, being footpaths and bridleways, and has failed to acknowledge the role that the network of small roads plays in the provision of green amenity within the region – and that this will be impacted in two ways, one with the uplift in traffic during construction, and secondly with regard to the overall attractiveness of experiencing landscape that has shifted from traditional farmland to an industrialised expanse of solar panels, fencing and grid infrastructure.
- Omission of Gainsborough from the study, but inclusion of £27/head arising from GVA is spurious and partial evidence.