

ExA's Second Written Questions

I concur fully with Interested Parties (IPs) and their written summaries of oral submissions made at Hearings held during the week of 4th December who spoke against the Cottam Solar Project.

Page 24 : **Major Accidents and Disasters:** 2.13.14

Applicant : Will the BESS containers be stacked? If so, please explain how the risk to fire loading, potential fire spread and restrictions on access would be satisfactorily addressed.

Q: **Health and Safety** : In the case of a BESS fire or solar panel fire will there be a site manager / fire safety representative on site (day shift and night shift) seven days a week ?

If not how does the Applicant propose to monitor the site and take the appropriate safety action should a BESS or solar panel fire occur at any time, as such an occurrence would affect air quality and require immediate and urgent action and, a process in place for residents to be informed / moved ?

Page 7 : 2.1.11 Applicant Requirement 12 (**Archaeology**) ISH5 [REP3-050] (see paragraph 31).

The 'Digging for Britain' programme shown in early January 2024 which filmed several archaeological areas on the outskirts of Lincoln and across to the Lincolnshire Wolds confirmed the artefacts found were re-writing history. Archaeology is supremely important to understanding Britain during these times (Roman, Medieval and 'The Dark Ages' in Lincolnshire) and I continue to have significant concerns over the probability of the Cottam solar project causing considerable harm to the historic environment and the county's heritage assets below ground throughout the entire construction period which will be irrevocable.

Page 7 : 2.1.14 Applicant Requirement 21 (**Decommissioning and Restoration**) Please comment on WLDC's suggested trigger mechanisms (as set out in its Written Summary of Oral Submissions at ISH5 [REP3-057]).

I agree with the statements contained in ISH5 (REP3-057) made by WLDC on the length of timescale of the operation of the development. At the Consultation phase in 2021/2022 it was made clear to attendees by the Applicant that the Cottam and West Burton schemes would be operational for a maximum of 40 years and even that was considered too long by the communities present in light of much smaller scale operational solar projects across the UK of 50 – 200 acres having been granted for a period of 20/25 years. A 60-year timescale was never raised as an option by the Applicant. If a 40 year operational period is considered temporary then seeking to increase this by a further third to 60 years cannot be considered temporary.

I judge LCC / WLDC should seek a Bond equal to the full cost of site restoration and safe disposal of all the solar panels (without landfill) and infrastructure to ensure the land is restored once it is decommissioned. Such Bond should be mandatory for these NSIPs despite no such Bond having been required on any made solar DCO to date but no solar project on this/these gargantuan scales has been constructed before in the UK with all the associated risks and the nature of the scheme(s) is not temporary.

P Mitchell

January 2024