

Cottam aerial footage of all four proposals - REP4-104
IP number 20037015

Local group 7000 Acres are doing an excellent job of keeping us informed about the proposals and the examination process, which is hugely time consuming to be involved in and with four proposals in this area running concurrently, it is extremely confusing and bombarding with the amount of documents to view and refer to. I would not be able to keep track of all the deadlines for the four projects if it was not for their regular emails and updates. 7000 Acres have brought this aerial footage of Cottam, Gate Burton, West Burton, and Tillbridge to my attention. The impact this will have on our local communities is life changing, yet there are so many people I speak to who don't know the details behind these projects, which gives the developer a distinct advantage. This is a highly ineffective and inefficient use of our productive farmland and I strongly object to this project and the three other large scale projects planned for the area, totalling approximately 10,000 acres. Since Brexit and Covid we should have learned lessons of the importance of food security. We still seem to be struggling to fill the shelves in supermarkets at times. The amount of land proposed for this project is vast, literally stretching from one village to the next. This project engulfs some houses and the visual impact will be enormous. There are promises to plant new hedgerows, which will take years to grow, but this will not block out thousands of acres of glass, you will be able to see this from all angles. And the destruction of older established hedgerows is shocking to me. Hedgerows are also a crucial feature of our countryside. They provide vital resources for wildlife. They connect populations that would otherwise be isolated and vulnerable. The government is supporting hedgerows in the UK <https://defra.farming.blog.gov.uk/2023/04/05/how-were-supporting-hedgerow-planting/> and has announced a target to create or restore 30,000 miles of hedgerows by 2037, and 45,000-miles of hedgerows by 2050, under the new Environmental Improvement Plan 2023. The CPRE is also fully in support of this.

Solar is fully dependent on weather and light and at night time they become redundant. A solar farm in winter can only work on potential daylight for an average of 8 hours. My feeling is that the government's attempt to achieve net zero on our tiny island will make minimal difference to global climate change overall. There are bigger producers of CO2 who are not as committed to the goal of net zero and the ambitious timescale. Encouraging the use of electric vehicles puts further pressure on electricity supply and forces us down the route of renewable energy, playing into the hands of the solar developers who are only looking to make money from these schemes.

I have seen far more innovative installations of solar panels. For example, the full length of motorway central reservations with a roof of solar panels covering a cycle path underneath, also canals having solar panels built over the top of them, reducing evaporation. Enlil turbines harvest the energy from the natural wind, as well as created by passing vehicles. The French government has passed a law which will require all car parks with more than 80 spaces to install solar canopies over at least half the area they cover. Some companies have already begun installing the canopies. The French energy company Engie has built a solar carport at a Stellantis factory in Sochaux in eastern France, which makes larger Peugeot models. With 64,000 solar panels over 22 hectares, it will supply around a third of the plant's electricity needs. Disneyland Paris is installing a 17MW solar carport over 17 hectares of its parking area. It will supply energy to the theme park. All using existing land and with dual purpose as they will also provide shade, rather than decimating more and more green space. Disused MOD sites could be used as these large sites are often abandoned with no plans for alternative use and already have public restrictions, fences, security in place with could be upgraded to suit.

Solar panels should be added to transportation such as cars, buses, lorries, trains so they effectively will power themselves meaning charging points would not need to be used as much and electric trains for example would take less power from the grid. All business with roof space such as warehouses, supermarkets, commercial retail parks and industrial trading estates should have solar panels enforced as part of the planning process. The government could put a law in place to make solar on new builds mandatory. They could also provide help for homeowners to install solar panels as they do for new boilers and cavity wall insulation.



The Peugeot plant in Sochaux has France's biggest solar-canopied car park

Not this





Do this



Do this



Image credit: South Korea's Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport

South Korea has a 5.5-mile bike path in the middle of a highway that is covered by solar panels. The path offers cyclists shade and a place to exercise while the country also generates clean energy.