IWG Final submission of the Cottam Solar Project.

With so many huge solar applications in this area, I ask, surely all cannot be approved?
The whole region would become a sea of solar panels wherever you look and wherever you go.
Producing very little electrical power but possibly contributing to empty grocer's shelves.
Cumulative impact is non-existent according to the Developers. There reports are obviously quite wrong.

Thousands of acres of solar panels being imposed on the area has already started to ruin lives. Other forms of electrical generation cover far less land and provide a larger and higher quality electrical contribution.
To generate the same amount of power as a new 3.2 GW nuclear power station that occupies 200 acres. A solar farm would need to cover 140,000 acres of land.

The necessity to back up solar with another energy technology is extremely expensive, increasing costs to the end user. This standby plant requirement and excessive peak curtailment will not be tolerated in future energy price reductions and ground mounted solar as the least effective energy source will fall out of favour first.

With currently only around 2 to 3GWh of BESS in the UK and only about 50GWh worldwide, means that batteries cannot be the answer to Solar's many shortcomings.
As an example, the UK alone would currently need up to 50GWh of batteries just to satisfy one hour of peak demand power and around 1000GWh to provide 24hrs of backup. This is never going to happen in this country or globally.
Batteries charged from the Grid are a totally separate business to the PV sites.

I cannot see any justification in this mad dash for large ground mounted solar. This huge amount of installed capacity is an extremely inefficient use of land, bearing in mind the electrical yield and inflexible generation curve over only the daylight hours.
Conventional power plants such as nuclear and gas cover just 5% of the land required by solar and generate 9x more electricity. Agriculture can continue in a meaningful way with onshore wind, providing 3-4x more electrical generation.

The increasing UK population will require more housing and food, our farmland is at risk from increased flooding, and the rewilding and carbon sequestering projects all mean that the inefficient use of land by the worst performing electrical generator is hardly compelling. All other forms of electricity generation return more benefit than these sprawling monsters, littering the countryside, idly doing nothing, or close to that for most of the year.

Hedge planting as mitigation is promoted as if it would somehow instantly hide 4.5m high solar panels. In the real world this will not happen, the Developers are playing us for fools. I have grave reservations over the success of new planting.

I am sure you are aware of this Ministerial Statement.
“Protecting the global environment is not an excuse to trash the local environment.”
The 5 solar NSIP schemes covering 13,000 acres of farmland, all within a 10km radius means exactly this. Over 20% of our farmland would be lost to solar in this area, with the visual impact being significant and widespread, cumulatively and independently these proposals result in destructive visual and landscape harms.

The designated and draft NPS state that there is an urgent need for renewable electricity. But all are not equal. The Proposed development would indeed support the growth of renewable energy, but in a perverse way, bypassing efficient rooftop and brownfield development.
I consider that the poor electrical output and excessive use of land means that overall, the CSP would not make a meaningful contribution to the UK’s transition to low carbon energy generation.

The Proposed Development would result in negative benefits to employment and the local economy. The low skilled and shared maintenance work offered by these proposals are modest. The recent loss of many hundreds of full-time and skilled careers the power stations provided for two generations are not in the slightest way compensated for by this and other schemes.
There is no coexistence with farming practices on this proposal and any meaningful agriculture would cease to exist with a large portion of local farming knowledge lost forever, over many thousands of acres of mainly arable land. Detrimental and unnecessary harm to agriculture would be promoted by development on this scale. Resulting in significant socio-economic harm in the area.

Taking the above points into account, I am confident that the harms identified during the examination clearly outweigh the benefit from this form of highly inefficient and troublesome energy generation. With so much competition for UK land, we can ill afford ground mounted solar schemes of this magnitude and at this density.
There is no justification.