

The Sunnica energy farm in Cambridgeshire has now had the DCO decision delayed twice. The SoS delayed her decision on the 28<sup>th</sup> of June 2023 until the 7<sup>th</sup> of December 2023 and then delayed again until the 7<sup>th</sup> of March 2024. Visual impact understandably appears to be one of her main concerns. With a 9 month delay, whatever the outcome may be, it is clear that decisions concerning developments of such incredible size are delicate matters indeed. The scheme inefficiencies, that would have immediately disregarded it a few years ago are now having to be considered due to pressure from Solar Energy UK and others, who have unbalanced the process with selective and often inaccurate facts and net zero alarmism. Sunnica is a single proposal. We have five!

It is quite evident that this new wave of solar schemes is both unpopular and harmful due to their size and undeniable visual impact across thousands of acres of farmland. I do not believe they are in the Government's or the public's best interests.

Solar power in the UK can only ever be an augmentation to more effective primary producers. To use up hundreds of times more land than all other national infrastructure combined is mindless. This unproportional land usage versus power output is appalling and in plain view. 600MW might seem like a big number but averaged at 11% over the year, it clearly is not. The loss of so much land for so little power is a criminal mismanagement of our land resource. We are currently at the tip of the iceberg, with time to change direction.

The Cottam solar project is of deep concern, due in part to its visibility from the B1398 and the undulating nature of the land chosen, the area especially around Cottam 1 is quite stunning and is an excellent wildlife and bird watching area which I visit often, frequently turning up rare and unusual bird species.

Biodiversity would be severely impacted due the loss of open fields and the variety provided by the changing seasons on the agricultural landscape, as well as the hundreds of miles of steel security fencing that would restrict mammal and game bird movements. Quail numbers here have just started recovering after generations of decline.

In an area with a substantial population of Deer and Brown Hare, the developers humble planting proposals would not stand a chance.

Fencing large areas of countryside and excluding browsing animals would intensify grazing, therefore woodland, hedging, and new planting would be severely damaged.

The proposed solar panel height is preposterous in open countryside. I cannot see how the visual impact of panels 15 feet high could ever be reduced. This is almost eaves height on a two-story house. A foul and dystopian landscape would be created!

Surely one area cannot have all this industrialisation forced upon it?

It is hard to comprehend and indeed explain to others the enormity of these proposals.

We must have faith that you have considered all the facts and understand the crushing and unfair consequences on local communities.

The fact remains that solar energy output is nominally very low and requires much land, it gives you little in Winter and nothing at night and agriculture is unlikely to continue in any meaningful way.

To lose all this farmland in one area would be catastrophic for our agricultural heritage and a horrifying prospect for residents.

I hope the Examiners understand the limitations of ground mounted solar in this country and realise that 13,000 acres of solar farms is both opportunism and industrialisation in the extreme.

It must not happen.