

Reference interested party reference No 20047746

Please find below my presentation from the open floor hearing 1 Wednesday 24th July 2024

1.) Northumbrian Water Ltd are laying a new drinking water pipeline from Lartington in Upper Teesdale across to Long Newton to the East of Darlington. This new pipeline will require a construction corridor the width of the A1 motorway and will be close to the proposed Byers Gill Solar Farm site. NWL plan to start work on this new pipeline in 2025 and it will cause mayhem, impacting on long existing rights of way and bridleways that run through the wide construction area. So, if Byers Gill Solar Farm is approved and construction starts, the public will have little to no access to the area, with many well-used public footpaths and bridleways closed or diverted, not to mention the major effect this will have on the local wildlife of the area.

I have shared some links which include photos of the wide construction corridors needed to lay this pipeline and details from NWL that shows a map for the route that is very close to some of the Byers Gill Solar Farm fields, along with timescales of the work to be completed, construction starting early 2025 to completion in 2028, so 3 whole years of a large construction corridor through the area.

<https://www.farrans.com/project/northumbrian-water-tees-valley-pipeline/>

https://www.nwg.co.uk/globalassets/corporate/project-pipeline/bauext0014-digital-tees--central-update_4pp_a5_ab_v3_.pdf

2.) The UK is now one of the most nature-depleted countries on Earth, with 1 in 6 species at risk of being lost from Great Britain, therefore we need to protect important habitats such as the proposed vast area for Byers Gill Solar Farm.

I have shared some links to the state of nature in the UK.

<https://stateofnature.org.uk/>

https://stateofnature.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/TP25999-State-of-Nature-main-report_2023_FULL-DOC-v12.pdf

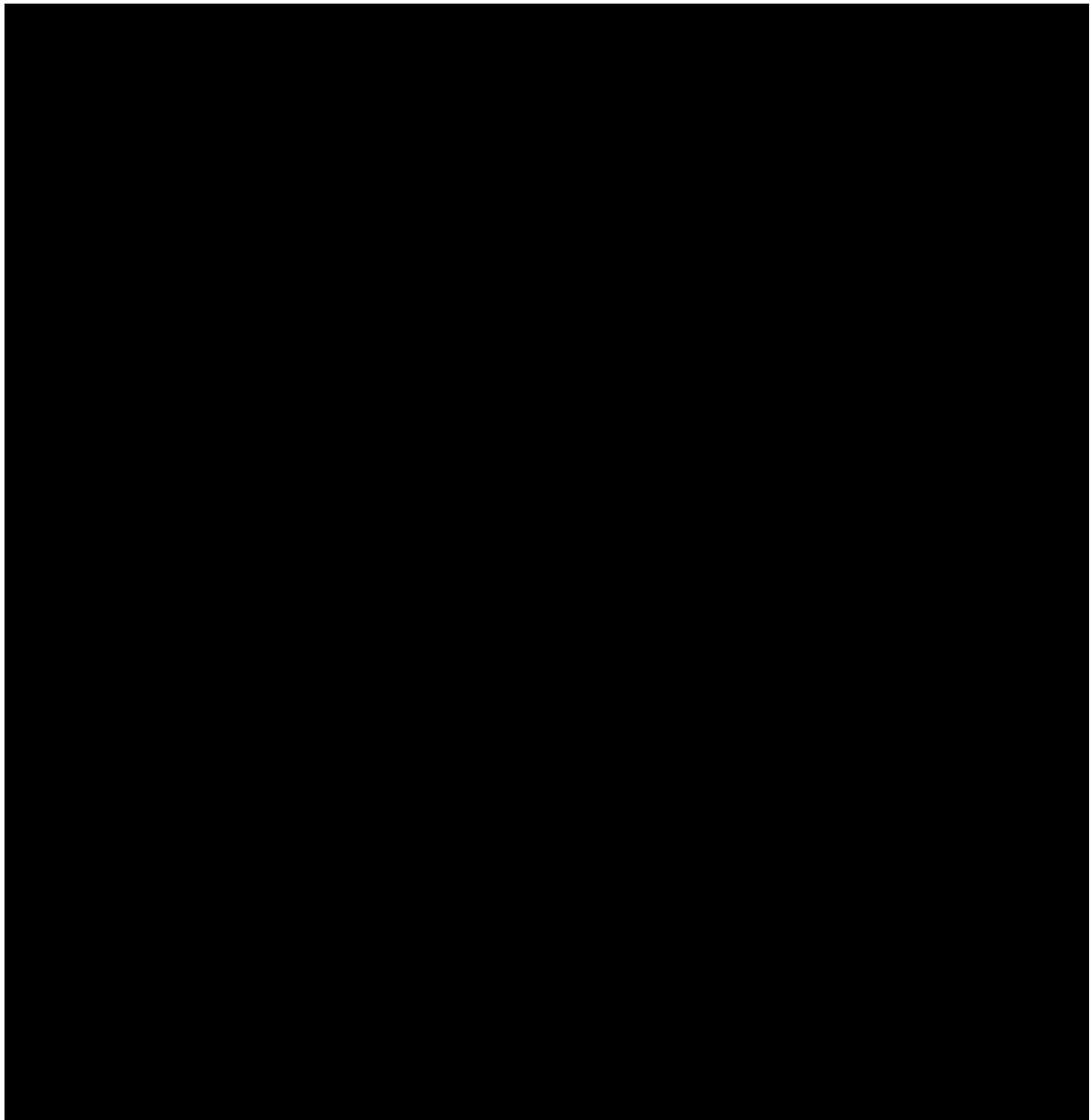
3.) Food security is a real concern. As a country, we only produce around 50% of the food we consume each year, with the rest having to be imported. With war in Europe which could escalate at any time, we need to become more self-sufficient. Fencing off and taking out such a large area of good food-growing farmlands for 40 years plus is not a good future food security plan.

4.) Wind turbines are much more efficient than solar farms and they produce less CO2 into the atmosphere. It's said that the most efficient solar panels can convert approximately 20-22% of energy from sunlight into electricity. The area for the proposed large Byers Gill Solar Farm is in a known area for low sunlight compared to other parts of the country. On the other hand, wind turbines can convert between 30% and 45% of energy into usable electricity. This can increase to approximately 50% during peak wind periods.

Close to the proposed site there are 6 wind turbines at Moor House Farm, behind Barmpton Village. These 6 turbines produce 12 MW of electricity yearly, so 2 MW per turbine. So, if 25 to 30 wind turbines were to be built on the large area of the proposed Byers Gill Solar Farm, they could produce the same if not more electricity. But the difference would be farmers could still farm around wind turbines, the local wildlife could continue to roam freely around them and the public would still have access to the beautiful landscape and many well-used public footpaths and bridleways.

It's also said that one wind turbine may generate the same amount of electricity as seven football fields of solar panels.

5.) I have walked around the area of this proposed large solar farm for most of my life, so I know the beauty of it and the vast array of wildlife that calls it home. The public footpaths and bridleways in the area are well used. I see a lot of walkers, mountain bike and horse riders while out walking the area. In fact, one of the walks featured in a book called *The Best Walks in Britain*, please find photos below.



6.) My answer to Mr Andre Pinto's question regarding what is Ketton Country:

The large swathes of farmlands North of the River Skerne that run through the area is known locally as Ketton Country and is well known for its good quality food growing farmlands which I am led to believe have been downgraded in quality by the developer. Ketton Country has a long and proud history from the biggest ever find of prehistoric flint arrow and spear heads and other hunting items to the world famous Ketton Ox, bred at Ketton Hall by the Colling Brothers in the late 17th Century.

I have shared below a link to Historic England's records for the flint finds, a link to the Ketton Ox article and a link to a Brafferton Loop walk that tells the area's varied history.

https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=25837&resourceID=19191

<https://www.darlingtonandstocktontimes.co.uk/news/1361096.200-years-since-the-sad-demise-of-the-legend-that-was-the-durham-ox/>

<https://www.alanhutchinson.co.uk/zsupport/3Brafferton.pdf>

In my and many other residents' opinion, this is the wrong space for this type of large renewable energy solar farm. The area already has 12 solar farms approved so we believe we have already taken enough farmlands out of production and lost enough accessible beautiful countryside to seas of black glass solar panels and high security fencing, with their watching CCTV for the next 40 years. If this juggernaut of a solar farm were approved, it would totally ruin the area and have a huge effect on our physical and mental health, plus kill or chase off a lot of our already struggling to survive local wildlife.

We are all pleading for you to make the right the decision on this massive solar farm on our doorsteps and refuse it. Thank you for your time to listen to me and read my submission.

Regards

David Clark

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