

This submission is in relation to Issue Specific Hearing 4 (ISH4), item 4 on the agenda, Development Consent Order (DCO) regarding:

Darlington Borough Council's Local Impact Report (LIR) [REP1-023]

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council LIR [REP1-026]

Durham County Council LIR [REP1-025]

In section 3.3 to 3.7 of REP1-023 Darlington Borough Council outline all of the local projects that they feel will contribute to the cumulative effect in the area, these are the four existing solar farms all within 4km of Byers Gill.

In REP1-025 in section 3.3 Durham County Council outline the one solar farm within Byers Gills site, Whinefield Solar Farm and establish that this will contribute to the cumulative effect of solar farms near Byers Gill.

In REP1-026 section 7.7 of Stockton-on-Tees County Council's LIR, they say that 'all cumulative effects have been fully considered' with no details at all regarding their current solar farms that lie within the Byers Gill site.

In the Preliminary Environmental Information Report; Volume 2 - Technical Appendices; Table 1-1 Long List of Existing and/or Approved Development, Byers Gill outline all of the local projects ('site' refers to Byers Gill):

16 - Gateley Moor Solar Farm. 49.99mw. Within the site. Darlington Council.

18 - California Farms. 49.99mw. Directly adjacent to the site. Stockton-on-Tees Council.

21 - Whinfield. 31mw. Within the site. Durham Council.

26 - High Meadow 2. 10.8mw. 400m north of the site. Stockton-on-Tees Council.

28 - Middlefield Farm. 15mw. 80m north of the site. Stockton-on-Tees Council.

36 - Burtree Lane Solar. 49.99mw. 2km south west of the site. Darlington Council.

40 - Hell Hole Farm. 32mw. 2km N of site. Stockton-on-Tees.

41 - Long Pasture Solar Farm. 49.99mw. 700m south of the site. Darlington Council.

42 - Cowley House Farm. 49.99mw. 3.6km north of the site. Durham County Council.

Not deemed to contribute to cumulative effect by RWE:

43 - High Meadow. 4mw. Within the site. Stockton-on-Tees.

46 - School Aycliffe. 2.9km from the site. Darlington Council.

47 - Eaglescliffe Solar Farm. 4.8km from the site. Stockton-on-Tees Council.

All of the above solar farms have either been passed, are under construction or are already operational. They are also all within a 5km radius of the Byers Gill site with 8 of them being within 2km of the Byers Gill site.

The issue I am raising here is that Darlington and Durham Council have flagged all of the solar farms in their counties as contributing factors to the overall cumulative effect but Stockton-on-Tees Council haven't flagged their solar farms up as contributing to the cumulative effect with five out of six of their existing solar farms being within the site itself or within 2km of it. I understand that there won't be any physical solar PV panels in Stockton-on-Tees county but all of the cabling will still run through from the panels in Darlington and Durham County across to the Norton Substation. Irrespective of there being no physical PV panels within Stockton-on-Tees county, the fact that existing solar farms and ones that have just been passed by Stockton-on-Tees lie extremely close to Byers Gill proposed development, this would surely mean they will add to the cumulative effect to the overall Byers Gill site. Why has Stockton-on-Tees council said they won't add to the overall cumulative effect yet RWE says that they will.

To summarise the above list of current solar farms within a 5km radius of Byers Gill:

601ha of land taken up by solar panels

343mw output

All passed within 31 months (11/12/20 - 10/08/23)

All within 5km radius of Byers Gill proposed development

The total output for solar in the UK predicted to be 17.6gw by end of 2024, if this happens then if Byers Gill Solar Farm is passed that means within this 5km radius we will be producing 3% of the total solar output for the whole of the UK across all solar panels on residential, industrial land and farm land.

I have attached a map of all of the solar farms in the list above, the area shown is that 5km radius.

Thank you.

