

Byers Gill Solar Farm.

I am a resident of Bishopton village and am strongly against the proposal of the Byers Gill Solar Farm.

CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

The size of this proposal is vast and will completely change the surrounding landscapes of Bishopton and Great and Little Stainton villages. The lanes approaching the villages will no longer hold views of undulating fields but will be filled with huge solar panels which will industrialise the countryside.

Driving from Bishopton to access the A1 to travel either north or south residents will be surrounded by Solar panels at nearly every part of the journey which will no longer be an enjoyable experience. The applicant says that this has no significant effect on the road users I disagree how can this be? The whole experience will change from a peaceful, tranquil journey to one where the views will be taken up with huge metal and glass structures. The applicant has suggested screening to be put in place along these roads to literally "screen" the solar panels from view. Whilst this may well screen the solar panels it will also "screen" the open views residents now enjoy. This is not a solution.

I believe this will make the villages undesirable to live in and will have a detrimental effect upon the mental health and well being of many of the residents in these areas who chose to live in Bishopton as it offered a rural way of life for themselves and their families. Residents can walk, ride on horses, cycle or drive through the villages and along lanes which give far reaching views of green fields and farm land. All this will be replaced with a landscape of metal and plastic which will not offer the "Green Space" so recommended for peoples's well being. We will be surrounded by solar farms. I do not understand why we are being asked to have so many solar farms in such a small area.

From our house we can see Wind turbines and when these were proposed our family did not object as we understood the need for renewable energy and felt that our area would be contributing in some way. However with this new proposal I feel it is unfair to ask our small group of villages to have so many solar farms and their thousands of solar panels surrounding us. Surely other areas could accommodate this industrial type of landscape better. Teeside has areas of industrial waste land where such a development would not affect residential properties and residents. We seem to be being asked to have a high proportion of the Solar Farms of Stockton, Darlington and Durham surrounding our villages. This cannot be fair. Many of the houses in Bishopton date from the 1800s and do not have modern foundations. I am concerned that any heavy vehicles associated with this proposal will cause heavy vibrations and damage these houses in this conservation village.

The area surrounding Bishopton is rural and is home to many species of wildlife including foxes, badgers, deer, toads to name but a few. This proposal will decimate their habitats and will force them to find more suitable homes or try to survive in their new alien environment. At a time when nature is being threatened in so many ways and mostly by our hands should we not be protecting these rural areas and habitats rather than destroying them?

The applicant has suggested that the land between the solar panels could be used to graze sheep or produce hay. This is surely not possible as any ground will have very limited access to sunlight as the panels will be as tightly packed as possible to produce maximum energy and therefore hardly any vegetation will grow therefore affording limited food for sheep or the possibility of the growth and production of hay.

The area of land being proposed to be used for these solar panels will take valuable agricultural land that could be used in the production of food. When food security is vital this land should be being farmed rather than industrialised.

Within Bishopton village is the Hill Fort an ancient historical site. Surely such a site should be protected rather than be surrounded by Solar Farms. The applicant says that their proposal will have no significant effect upon this site. Once again how can this be? Any man made structure will have an effect on the character of the Hill Fort and its surrounding area so huge Solar panels which would be in view will of course have an effect, a detrimental effect.

There must be an alternative area or areas as this is such a large proposal where this could be sited? Industrial works can be built in other places but our rural areas which have taken hundreds of years to evolve and become the beautiful landscapes cannot be moved. They must be preserved not industrialised.

Sent from my iPhone