

Tillbridge solar OFH1.

Mr. Simon Skelton. Retired Power station engineer of 37 years.

The Tillbridge solar project is in fact one of 5 NSIP solar proposals that fall within a 6 mile radius and would remove around 13,000 acres of croppable farmland.

Gate Burton.
Cottam.
West Burton.
Tillbridge.
Steeple.

In the UK, the average yield from solar generation is around 10% of its rated capacity according to the Digest of UK Energy Statistics (DUKES).
The average output from a 500 MW solar farm is therefore only 50 MW and would generate annually **less than half a Terra Watt hour.**

The current UK annual electricity demand is **more than 300 Terra Watt hours.**

Simple mathematics shows that this would only offer a paltry **0.14%** contribution to our national needs and is arguably delivered at the wrong time of day and indeed year. Nationally this is not a significant amount of electricity.

Three thousand acres of land lost to this disproportionate **0.14%** energy contribution is not a fair trade off.

Breaking this down further shows us that 5 acres of farmland will be lost to provide 1MW of installed capacity or an average 100KW of generation.

This land would be much better used, either growing food or nationally important biofuels that have the flexibility to be used when and where required.

Land is needed for a multitude of projects affecting Net Zero, and the current rush for low yielding ground mounted solar must not be allowed to engulf all this land.

Sensible and efficient land use is represented by the new Sizewell C Nuclear Power Station, it will have a generation capacity of 3.2 GW. This amounts to **7%** of the UK's electricity need and the site will cover just a couple of hundred acres.

The energy produced will be reliable and consistent.

In contrast, solar energy is intermittent and unreliable, producing very little in winter when we need it the most.

The UK could lose 600,000 acres of land to solar (twice the size of Greater Manchester). This represents 4% of the nation's croppable farmland. Ironically, we have 600,000 acres of unused industrial rooftops in the UK, much of which is suitable for solar panels.

This scheme connecting to the substation at Cottam but would only provide 3% of the former power stations generation capacity but cover 6 times more land. This is insanity and a retrograde step.

These solar farms are using up all available Grid connections that should be used for more useful and capable electricity generators, the woefully low power output of solar will not help the electrification goals of the nation. We will need many more times the capacity we have today. Not less.

Electricity generation in the UK is responsible for only 20% of the national CO2 emissions, therefore carbon reductions by the Tillbridge Solar Project would be negligible due to the small amounts of electricity produced by the scheme and its long carbon payback period. This does not align with any climate emergency timeframes. The UK's annual carbon emissions are 400million tonnes out of a Global 35 billion tonnes, carbon saving figures claimed by these giant solar farms would become mere rounding up errors within these colossal numbers.

Solar on farmland, from an energy and Net Zero perspective has largely gone without scrutiny, but it is clearly flawed.

The magnitude of land being given over to Solar for such little in return is not in the nation's best interests. It is driven by years of unchallenged government lobbying and an ideology that will cause much national harm.

Will anyone in a position to speak out dare to do so?... I very much doubt it.

In the case of large scale solar on farmland, I think that the foolish will continue to admire the emperor's new clothes.

QUESTION ON CUMULATIVE IMPACT.

I asked a question at the end of the OFH on cumulative impact. I have submitted below in writing to try and clarify the point.

The cumulative, landscape and visual impact of the current 4 West Lindsey solar scheme's, Gate Burton, Cottam, West Burton and Tillbridge is based on the worst-case scenario that all 4 could be granted their DCO's.

Therefore, if for example the first examination concluded that there is no significant harm due to cumulative visual impact, then how could the subsequent scheme's possibly say the opposite, as they are all considering each other, with examinations running back-to-back?

To further highlight the point, at one of the Cottam Hearings it seemed to be agreed that if one scheme was rejected due to cumulative impact concerns then the other 3 schemes would be rejected also. This would of course also work vice versa. In essence, removing cumulative impact issues as a reason for rejection.

This is the very reason why so many residents objected to these 4 solar farms being examined separately as the cumulative issues are so great and are unprecedented in NSIP history.

There should have been at least one element of true cumulative discussion, even if that meant all 4 reports sitting with the SoS to assess together when all examinations were complete.

In fact, this was suggested by the Planning Inspectorate but seemed to change with the new Government.

After all, this cumulative "solar mass" is a development the size of a city!

All the facts and statements contained in this submission have been presented to the other ExAs for the other schemes, but they have been given very little weight.

There is a delusional drive in this country for vast amounts of ground mounted solar, as it is now listed as a "**critical national priority**"

Overriding all other planning considerations and common sense will ensure that Solar on farmland will likely become a **critical national disaster**.

Thank you.

Simon Skelton.

