

Deadline 7

Response to EPE REP4-048

CL-D5-02 the applicant response states that the site selection had to be balanced with the fixed grid connection, agricultural land quality, landscape, heritage, ecology etc. Why therefore has a site consisting of nearly 75% BMV land been selected? The Applicant has never shown the alternative site options that could have been considered simply said that there were none suitable.

CL-D5-03 despite requests from many interested parties the Applicant is still not prepared to confirm the plant stock or size that will be selected. At this stage of the process such decisions should already have been made.

SW-D5-08 The Applicant disputes Mr Woodward's response to the Applicant's calculation of a five person crew replacing approximately 420 panels per day and claims that their assumption is based on the Applicant's experience of a co-ordinated production-line operation. Could the Applicant please provide more details on that production-line operation? Where, what type of production, which company etc.

SW-D5-10 & 11 – it is concerning that the Applicant has still not finalised water supply arrangements.

The applicant has not responded to my request for confirmation at which maximum temperature the panels can safely function.

My main points of contention that I do not feel have been satisfactorily answered by the Applicant are:

The loss of BMV land. Successive governments have said that wherever possible best and most versatile agricultural land should not be used for ground solar installations. 74% of the EPE proposal is on BMV farmland and this project should therefore not even be considered for approval.

The reality of the amount of power that the solar panels will actually generate. It has been proved that the theoretical power generation is substantially higher than the actual power generation. The proposed loss of such good quality land for such a poor return is criminal and must not be allowed.

The impact of the development on local transport routes has been vastly underestimated by the developer. The local roads are small, winding and not able to take the volume of traffic that this development will require without there being highly significant disruption and risk of accidents. The B645 is a well known accident black spot and in places simply not wide enough for the size of the transport vehicles to travel without impeding oncoming and following traffic.

The developer continues to maintain that the visual impact of the development will be negligible after the screening is in place. It is obvious to anyone who walks the site that this is not true. The impact will be huge in the most negative way imaginable. To walk/ride through tunnels of wire fencing in no way compares to that of going across vast swathes of open countryside. To imply that the effect of losing this amenity is insignificant is offensive in the least to those of us who live and benefit from having access to this open space.

The lack of assured and protected funds to decommission the scheme at the end of its life is extremely worrying. There is no doubt that I will not be on this earth when this happens but I fear for all those generations that follow. The thought of this enormous metal eyesore being left to just "rot" and not even decompose is horrifying and I beg the Inspector that approval is not considered until this matter has been satisfactorily addressed.

There have been several wildfires recently some of which were caused by damage to the solar-panel wiring. Can the Applicant give assurance that all wiring/cablings will adequately be protected from the risk of damage from wildlife (squirrels, rats etc are well known for chewing through cables). The predicted dry summers already increase the risk of wildfires, without the additional electrical fire risk.

There are many issues that the Applicant continues to reply "will be answered at a later stage" but at this late stage in the process I maintain any competent party should be in a better position to provide more detailed answers.

Procedural issues

The VSI Digital Survey submissions from the applicant published late July early August but in respect of Deadline 4 are still not wholly viewable from the documents section. Not only has a fisheye lens been used giving a totally distorted image of the affected land/views but the video does not synchronise and the image moves in very short bursts if at all. It is still therefore not possible from the document library to view the Applicant's VSI submissions. I must once again ask the ExA to ensure that they visit all the sites and see for themselves the impact that this applicant will have on the landscape.

Viewable submissions must be made available for all interested parties to be able to comment.

As of 29th August the Examination library is only showing as last updated on 6th August. However the Documents section includes publications up to and including 27th August. As the only way to find a document by its reference number is via the Examination Library this is making the process of reviewing and commenting on submissions extremely difficult and I submit therefore not a fair process. Again I must ask the ExA to make changes to ensure that a fair process is available to all parties.