

At this very late stage in the Examination of the East Park Energy Scheme, very significant concerns remain unresolved.

1. Site Selection

The proposed scheme is within the East of England, a vitally important agricultural area growing a third of the nation's potatoes and almost a quarter of the nation's oilseed rape and barley. If the last two summers, with multiple 35 degree heatwaves and widespread and prolonged drought, have demonstrated anything it is that our very best farmland should receive a high level of protection from speculative development.

In this context EPE proposes to take 1900 acres of agricultural land out of food production This is even more significant when factoring in that 74% of this scheme is classified as Best Most Valuable which goes against all guidelines, recommendations and the government's own planning policies !

However EPE's site selection did not consider any of these vital points. It was instead led by offers of land from interested landowners and the Applicant has failed to prove that they made a rigorous examination of alternative land. The Applicant relied instead on the Brownfield Register, which is incomplete, inaccurate and full of duplications failing to even take soil samples outside their target sites.

2. Unresolved Traffic Management

The Applicant has continued to avoid engagement with evidence which clearly demonstrates

- Errors in the calculation of the number of HGV movements
- The implications of a non mandatory, single point of site entry for HGV and staff vehicles (if EPE are confident this will work, why are there multiple entry points off narrow rural lanes marked on site plans?)
- Doubt over the effectiveness of carsharing /minibus use as a voluntary method of reducing workforce traffic ( if EPE are confident this will work, why are car parking areas marked at every site ?)

3. Failure of Applicant to inform the Examination process of material changes to the application

- BESS issues – failure to obtain a guaranteed Gate 2 connection has meant that the BESS can only be used for solar storage. There is therefore a discrepancy between the scheme as presented in the Application, and the scheme now under Examination. This undermines the value and functionality of the whole scheme and questions its status as an NSIP

- Late notification of radical changes to the replacement schedule, from complete replacement once in the lifetime of the scheme to a 20% replacement timescale. A single 20% solar panel replacement cycle would involve around 140,000 panels which would create a huge increase in the level of ongoing activity after the construction phase.

"The Applicant does not dispute that a planned replacement campaign involving 20% of the solar panels would constitute a major operational activity in its own right, or that the associated works would be capable of generating environmental effects across a range of receptors."

Yet at the Consultation stage prior to the application being made, EPE consistently played down traffic and noise disruption post initial construction, claiming it would be "negligible"!!!! Since then, they have time and time again given absolute assurances that NO HGV traffic would be routed through Pertenhall or Great Staughton

An access route across the 6 miles of the scheme is proposed, ostensibly to keep heavy traffic off local roads during the construction phase of the project.

However if this is then covered in solar panels how will traffic access the site post construction to replace 140,000 solar panel during each cycle ??

This is a radically different scheme and not the one that was presented to residents, local authorities, national agencies and other "interested parties". It means that interested parties have been deprived of vital information as to the Applicant's true intentions

I would respectfully request that the Inspectorate refuse permission for the EPE scheme on the grounds of inappropriate location and scale, procedural and evidential irregularities, and late-stage changes to the application which materially alter the very nature of the proposal.