

Craig Walker - Summary of my oral submission given at the Open Floor Hearing 1 on the 08/07/2025

I am a resident of North Clifton, living in one of the most impacted residential properties by this scheme. I am submitting this representation to formally raise a number of serious concerns regarding the conduct of One Earth during the NSIP process and the potential impacts of the proposed development.

Loss of Trust in the Developer

One of the main issues my family and I have faced throughout this process is a significant breakdown in trust with the developer, One Earth. We have been repeatedly provided with information that has later turned out to be false, inconsistent, or changed without notice. This includes assurances that were later rescinded and vague commitments that dissolved under scrutiny.

In my interactions with another NSIP developer operating in this region, I experienced a far more transparent and reliable consultation process. By contrast, One Earth's approach has been poor at best and misleading at worst. The removal of items from plans when questioned, and the refusal to commit to key details, has caused unnecessary emotional distress for my family. Much of this could have been avoided with honest engagement.

Contradictory Statements on Glint and Glare

Despite repeated assurances — including directly from the project manager, Daniel Boyd — that there would be no glint or glare from solar panels, I was surprised to find that a report on glint and glare *has* been submitted to the Planning Inspectorate. This contradicts what I was told multiple times. It raises further concerns about the reliability of information we are receiving from One Earth and reinforces the lack of trust mentioned above.

Noise Impact – An Underplayed Risk

Noise from the planned infrastructure, especially the inverters is a major concern. One Earth has likened the noise to that of a telephone exchange. I strongly refute this. The *type* of noise, especially the frequency, is very different and more intrusive. One Earth appears focused solely on decibel levels, ignoring the qualitative impact of low-frequency noise, especially when transmitted through sandy subsoil like that surrounding my home.

I have raised this issue several times, explaining how vibration travels through the ground and is amplified within our property, but it has been brushed aside. With approximately 200 inverters proposed, and likely double-digit figures within a mile of our home, this is not an issue that can be handled reactively. It must be proactively mitigated before installation.

If 300 meters, as referenced in the applicants Consultation documentation, is the anticipated impact range of the noise, then placing inverters beyond that distance should be standard, especially since relocation after installation is unlikely. This scheme should be designed with no room for error.

Environmental Risk – BESS and Water Catchment Area

Part of this scheme, including the Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), is proposed within a *protected water catchment area*. This is deeply concerning. We are potentially looking at:

1. Oil-filled high-voltage transformers
2. Coolant-based cooling systems in up to 200 inverters
3. A BESS comprising 100 shipping containers with lithium batteries
4. The potential use of firefighting chemical foams, which cannot be used in water protected catchment areas

Is the Environment Agency seriously letting One Earth to essentially "mark their own homework" on environmental safety in such a sensitive area? These are precisely the types of configurations that are rejected in other European countries for good reason. Why is this scheme even under consideration in this context?

Grid Connection – A Speculative Proposal?

According to the most recent data on the TEC register, One Earth has shifted both of its grid connections to the proposed, but *not yet approved*, 400kV substation at High Marnham. Previously, one was allocated to the existing 275kV site and the other registered under Tranquillity Energy.

Is it not highly speculative to apply for a solar farm of this scale without secured, consented grid capacity? This suggests the scheme is not sufficiently mature or ready for delivery.

Personal Impact – A Missed Opportunity for Sensible Mitigation

From a personal perspective, it is deeply disheartening that despite apparent millions of pounds allocated to mitigation around our property, One Earth and Ørsted still plan to install solar panels just 40 meters from our boundary. These 3.6-3.8m high panels will be visible from every window in our home.

We are the *only* residential property within more than a mile, and yet the developer refuses to consider a reasonable buyout, which we have previously proposed. This option would allow us to leave peacefully while they could then use our land to provide mitigation to other impacted homes.

Instead, we are being engulfed by panels on land that was easier to acquire from a small number of large landowners, rather than more equitably designed. I personally know of adjacent landowners who were *never approached* for inclusion in the scheme, despite their land offering a logical alternative that could reduce impact on households like mine.

This speaks volumes about the developer's priorities and their lack of willingness to explore alternative, more community-sensitive options.

Final Thoughts

This proposal is, at present, ill-considered, speculative, and inconsiderate of the people who will be most impacted. I strongly urge the Planning Inspectorate to scrutinize this application with full consideration of:

1. The developer's inconsistent and sometimes misleading consultation process
2. The unaddressed and potentially severe impacts of noise, environmental contamination, and visual intrusion
3. The speculative nature of the grid connection
4. The failure to provide equitable and meaningful mitigation to directly affected residents

This scheme, in its current form, is not fit for approval.

Sincerely,

Craig Walker

Resident of North Clifton