

Andrew Coverdale – Say No to One Earth Solar Farm Action Group

Risk Assessments for related businesses due to BESS and infrastructure fire risks

Introduction

Writing as a concerned resident of South Clifton and member of the Say No To One Earth Solar Action Group

I had hoped that a representative from our local action group, who was taking part in the open hearings on the 6th of November 2025, could present these concerns on my behalf. However, due to time constraints and the complexity of the issues involved, it has not been possible to do so. Therefore, as requested and agreed to on the day, we are submitting this statement **in writing** to ensure that our objections are formally recorded for the Planning Inspectorate's consideration.

This representation highlights our significant concerns regarding the proposed development, particularly the risks to the **Drinking Water Protected Area**, potential contamination from BESS and inverter fires, the absence of clear engagement from the fire services, and the proximity of intensive livestock operations, which may be affected by toxic smoke, heat, and particulate fallout. We respectfully request that this submission be treated with the same weight as an oral representation and considered in the decision-making process.

Proximity to Poultry Farms and Potential Risks

It is not clear to our communities from the application or associated documentation whether the proximity of nearby poultry operations has been fully considered in the risk and impact assessments. There are approximately **500,000 birds housed across three commercial poultry farms** to the north-east of North Clifton, close to the proposed Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) site. Of particular concern, **one of these poultry farms lies approximately 150 metres from the BESS compound**, placing it within the potential hazard zone for **toxic smoke, particulate fallout, and heat radiation** in the event of a fire or thermal runaway.

Large-scale lithium-ion battery fires are known to release highly toxic gases — including **hydrogen fluoride (HF), hydrogen chloride (HCl), carbon monoxide (CO)** — as well as **particulate PFAS compounds**, all of which can pose acute health risks to poultry due to their high respiratory sensitivity. Heat radiation from large battery fires can also cause severe distress or fatalities in livestock housed nearby.

Given these known hazards, it is **concerning that the application does not make clear whether the closest poultry farm has been adequately considered in fire, smoke, or contamination modelling**, or whether the operators have been fully consulted regarding potential impacts. Without this information, it is impossible to assess the adequacy of mitigation measures or the suitability of the proposed development in this location.

We respectfully request that the planning authority ensures that:

1. The proximity of the closest poultry farm is formally considered in any risk and impact assessments, and who would compensate the poultry farm for any losses.
2. Consultation occurs with the affected poultry operators regarding potential fire, smoke, and contamination risks.
3. Independent modelling of worst-case fire scenarios, including **toxic gas dispersion, heat flux, and particulate fallout**, is undertaken to determine the potential impacts on poultry and surrounding agricultural activities.

Until such information and mitigation measures are clearly provided, the risk to animal welfare and livestock operations remains **uncertain and potentially unacceptable**.