

#### ExQ1 1.1.9 Planning Benefits

Renewable Energy - arguments have been well rehearsed regarding the geographical position of GNR being too far North to be suitable for efficient solar energy generation. It is quite possible that there will be no net benefit if manufacture, transportation, site construction and subsequent disposal of panels are taken into account.

Biodiversity Net Gain - in relation to Ossington parish it is highly unlikely that there will be an overall BNG. According to the surveys performed by professional bodies on behalf of Elements Green, an astonishing amount of biodiversity was recorded. Ossington has a unique combination of a larger than average area of woodland and mature trees (ex parkland), a lake and wild areas left as a result of the abandonment of much of the former airfield's infrastructure and the original gardens of Ossington Hall. This has resulted in very healthy populations of most British mammals (e.g. all species of deer, most raptors, Red List ground nesting birds, 10 species of bat including the extremely rare Barbastelle, etc), as well as field and woodland plant species. Many of these would be displaced if the solar development is allowed due to disturbance, lack of range and ability to hunt and/or feel safe. Loss of arable farmland would mean that the soil would not be regularly disturbed, which allows foraging by birds and animals and seeds to germinate and grow. As a result, BNG is likely to decline rather than improve.

Soil compaction is likely to result from contractors' vehicles travelling over land multiple times each year to service and clean panels and equipment, and also to find the projected sheep flocks corralled within the panelled areas. Ossington is situated on the Mercia Mudstone clay soil, which requires regular cultivation to prevent soil compaction. Compacted soil becomes more susceptible to run off, which is both damaging to soil structure and fertility as well as to any nearby human infrastructure. A visit to the Egmanton Solar development hosted by EG showed that there was very little biodiversity to be seen - indeed there would have been far more when the area was an arable field. Soil compaction and damage could be seen - a lack of any vegetation under many of the panels, due to shading from sunlight and the huddling/trampling of sheep in certain places.

Economic Benefits - for other areas of concern (wildlife, landscape etc) professional bodies have been consulted by EG. Why has there been no consultation with agricultural professional organisations with regard to economic benefits or otherwise? This should be addressed by the applicant for a balanced view.

Enhanced landscape - in view of the above comments, and the planned destruction of certain areas (part of the mature woodland between Ossington lake and Moorhouse Road for cable laying for example), it is again very unlikely that anyone would conclude that the local landscape will be enhanced.

Public Access - will be constrained by the closure of much of the open areas in the parish, the erection of security fencing and surveillance cameras. Existing footpaths will be extinguished, and therefore will be unlikely to be reinstated at the end of 40 years. Public access will certainly not be enhanced.

Ex1 11.1.12 Cumulative landscape and visual assessment - I am fully in agreement with the Joint Parishes Action Group and others regarding cumulative impact. Because of the huge proliferation of potential solar developments in this and neighbouring areas, consideration of the cumulative effect must be given serious consideration. Not only will residents find themselves living in an industrialised area, they will have to travel through it on a daily basis with resultant effect on their mental health. Ossington is an extremely rural parish (until relatively recently most inhabitants worked either for Ossington Estate or on local farms), and has never been a part of any industrialised landscape. Therefore to live in such altered circumstances would be totally alien and is bound to have an effect on mental health. Local resident Richard Allarton, together with Rosamund Nicholson, details local journeys in his submission, demonstrating the sequential cumulative impact of travelling in any direction from Ossington. It will be impossible to leave the village in any direction without a view of GNR panels or those planned for Bathley Hill and beyond. As most of the properties in Ossington are tenanted, they would then become harder to let causing an already small village (c.100 inhabitants) to contract still further.

Ex1 13.1.6 Sustainable Drainage System Design - Whilst I have no specialist knowledge of this subject, I have been involved in farming all my adult life, most of it on clay soil. It is imperative that there should be design and planning for drainage. The impermeability of clay, particularly the local heavy Mercia Mudstone, very soon results in run off after heavy rain. Farmers locally regularly perform mole drainage in their fields. This involves a bullet shaped metal 'mole' being pulled through the soil by a tractor, particularly heavy clay, to improve drainage and aeration, prevent waterlogging and help crops to grow by channeling excess surface water to ditches or existing piped field drains. Clay soil that lays undisturbed for 40 years is at a much greater risk of compaction and therefore excessive run off, resulting in a greater flood risk in the area.

Another aspect of the scheme to consider is the likely damage and compaction of roadside verges due to the increase in volume and size of traffic. This compaction will add to surface water problems and may well compromise any of the utilities (water, electricity, fibre) that lie beneath. This additional risk should be examined and assessed, and a strategy developed. Particularly busy 'pinch points' and access areas should be reconsidered with this in mind. In Ossington examples would include access onto the former airfield site on Moorhouse Road, and gateways along Ossington Lane (from Sutton) that are already subject to damage and subsidence by use as passing places. Local roads are mostly very narrow lanes, unsuitable for the amount and width of traffic now, never mind the potential 5000% increase mentioned within the application.