

ISLAND GREEN POWER – LIME DOWN SOLAR PLANNING INQUIRY

TRANSCRIPT OF ORAL SUBMISSIONS OF

NEIL HAMILTON, [REDACTED]

There are only 9300 Grade I buildings in the whole of England. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] is one.

Would anyone dream of submerging Salisbury Cathedral or Wilton House in a sargasso-sea of black solar panels each the size of a double-decker bus?

Grade I buildings are of the "highest significance" because they are considered an "irreplaceable resource".

Island Green Power show no understanding of this.

They want to target-bomb Bradfield with all the worst elements of their scheme to industrialise the heritage of centuries.

The setting of a Grade I building is an essential part of its historic significance. From 1066 to 1992, Bradfield and the surrounding farmland were in the same ownership, connected to Bradfield Wood, ancient woodland dating back 500 years or more.

They plan to besiege us with panels right up to our boundary hedges and completely wreck our uninterrupted view of Bradfield Wood.

180 acres of fields in an arc from north west to south east smothered in tens of thousands of black solar panels each the height of a double-decker bus, plainly visible from our windows and grounds.

In 1946, Ed Miliband's predecessor as energy minister, Emanuel Shinwell, mandated open-cast coal mining right up the front door of Grade 1 listed Wentworth Woodhouse, a great Palladian house in Yorkshire. This is widely regarded as a supreme act of heritage vandalism. Although coal is no longer mined, the scars on the landscape are still visible today.

Grade 1 buildings should be preserved from such assaults on account of their rarity and exceptional importance. No solar scheme needs to threaten any Grade 1 building – there is no shortage of alternative

schemes and a strategic approach in planning terms could easily avoid such conflicts

The King called a proposed extension to the National Gallery – also Grade I - as ‘a monstrous carbuncle on the face a well-loved and elegant friend.’

What IGP propose for us isn’t a single carbuncle but a leprous rash spreading over 180 acres – plus a huge Battery Storage Unit with several hundred shipping-container sized batteries and a 400 KV transmission station with its 40 ft pylons.

The BESS and transmission station do not have to be adjacent to the solar panels. They could go anywhere in Lime Down’s 3000 acres or any other less intrusive site. IGP could have sited it right next to the grid connection 15 miles away at Melksham but preferred to wreck Bradfield instead. No other sites have been seriously considered.

60% of the profit from BESS schemes typically derives from buying electricity from the grid when demand is low and selling it back at a higher price when demand is high. A BESS doesn’t even have to be attached to a solar scheme.

The disproportionate harm to Bradfield is far greater than any marginal benefit 180 acres could contribute to achieving national net zero objectives.

In its evaluation of this scheme PINS should, at a minimum, propose an amendment at least to take out the fields immediately adjacent to

██████████ The National Gallery shows the way. Robert Venturi’s replacement of the rejected carbuncle is now itself listed Grade I.