

ISH1 – Summary of oral representation made under agenda 3.5 – Landscape and Visual

Sporle with Palgrave Parish Council represented by Michael Bennett RIN - [REDACTED]

1. Sporle with Palgrave parish has the Peddars Way national footpath passing through it which will be considerably impacted by views of the Drovers. The path is used by a great many villagers.
2. The landscape consists of long views across farmland with hedges and trees that although not being of national importance are greatly appreciated by those who live locally.
3. These views will be further impacted by 3 fields of solar array as part of the High Grove development. (northern most solar arrays on the western side of High Grove Central Area). These can be seen from viewpoint V8 shown on figure 6.7 APP-084 as well as along Sporle with Palgrave PRoW's BR4, BR5 and FP11. These fields of solar arrays extend to the A1065 from where solar arrays will be visible in fields 21, 23, 24 & 25.
4. The reverse views can be seen from Fincham Drove (Southacre PRoW RB6) near Round Covert and viewpoints V2 and V3.
5. Although it is recognised that gapping hedges and planting standard hedgerow trees is planned to reduce visual impact this will in fact change the landscape character by reducing its open nature. Sporle with Palgrave PC would wish to see a reduction in the number of fields with arrays in consultation with High Grove to reduce the visual impact.
6. The various responses to the applications made by Sporle with Palgrave PC show that users of Southacre and Newton roads will be impacted as shown in the area of VRG4 of figure 6.7 of the DCO application.
7. Sporle with Palgrave PC have request for a further site visit by the ExA.
8. Notwithstanding the issues regarding the siting of the NGET substation, Sporle with Palgrave PC have requested, in various responses, that mitigation of the visual impacts of the substation is of high priority and that all efforts are made to ensure the 'double turn' option is taken and no second line of pylons is constructed.

## ISH1 – Summary of oral representation made under agenda 3.3 – Cumulative effects

Sporle with Palgrave Parish Council represented by Michael Bennett RIN - [REDACTED]

1. Reference was made to document APP-068 figure 2.1 showing a map of cumulative impact as per the methodology set out in ES chapter 2. This only extends to a 25km radius. It does not include existing renewable infrastructure already built or in progress. Only major scheme shown is High Grove solar scheme.
2. It was put to the ExA that a more strategic look at the cumulative impacts of all the renewable developments proposed within Norfolk should be undertaken in his examination. The extent of these developments that Norfolk is being asked to bear has been made clear by NCC, local councils and MP's.
3. Referring to the list of existing and proposed renewable development in the local area contained in Sporle's statutory consultation response of which two were highlighted: - High Grove and Jafa solar developments (Jafa to the north east of Sporle and west of the Dunhams.)
4. Referring to High Grove – Sporle will have at least 1000 acres of this development within the parish boundaries as well as an area of the Drovers to the west of the A1065. The cumulative effects will be seen in:
  - Landscape and visual impacts which will be identified in the representation to be made in agenda item 3.5
  - Traffic impact on the A1065 during construction if High Grove takes place concurrently or sequentially to the Drovers whereby there will be three access operating over a short section of the A1065. It is in the interest of Applicant, landowners, councillors and MP's if this issue is addressed in conjunction with local residents.
  - Impact on the deer population. The need for a deer management plan to be put in place by both the Drovers and High Grove as yet to be seen in any documents. A call for proper deer surveys to be done to assess numbers and to allay concerns about large numbers of deer moving through the landscape that would be corralled down narrow corridors with potential of causing accidents on the A1065.
  - The above three points highlight the need for the ExA to ensure that, as was requested at the Preliminary Meeting by Sporle with Palgrave PC, there is a full examination of the cumulative impacts even with the delays of the High Grove DCO application. Sporle with Palgrave PC suggested that local representatives be involved in these discussions at the detail level and on the ground.
5. Referring to Jafa: This has planning consent and if constructed concurrently or sequentially with the Drovers and/or High Grove will cause even greater problems along the A1065. Travel route will leave A1065 at Newton by Castleacre.
6. With all that is planned we will see a change from a rural, agricultural landscape to an industrialised one. The consequences will be:

- Poorer mental health for those living in the area as the existing natural environment will change to a built one.
  - A huge experiment with the soils and wildlife over the supposed 60-year life of the Drovers. With the substations remaining after then will not this land be lost permanently as there will be a continued need to generate electricity?
  - Tourism is a large earner for Norfolk. Impact of an industrialised landscape around Castle Acre and the A1065 being a major route to North Norfolk AONB and coast will reduce this vital part of Norfolk's economy.
  - Impact on jobs and livelihoods. Economically Norfolk will gain little from this and other developments.
7. Conclusion: Notwithstanding the government policy for Net Zero by 2050, Norfolk is being asked to carry a heavy burden with the extent of these projects. It is vital that the scale of this project is looked at, and cumulatively with others nearby, to reduce the size and impact before irreparable damage is done.