

Cottam and West Burton Webinar Summary FAQ's – 30/11/2021

What will the impact of water running off the panels be on the risk of flooding?

The Environmental Impact Assessment will assess all potential flooding impact on a site by site basis. Panels are supported by frames placed into the ground so water can easily flow underneath the panels. The frames do not have a large surface area, and so water can be absorbed by the ground underneath the panels. Swales can also be designed into the site to minimize the risk of flooding. i.e. shallow, broad and vegetated channels designed to store and/or convey runoff and remove pollutants. Solar Panels can be placed into flood zones which flood with a water level up to 1 meter and operate as normal, making them an appropriate development for these areas.

How long does the project last and are the panels efficient throughout this time or do they need replacing throughout?

Early signs from other Solar Farms suggests panels are lasting longer than original expected lifespan of 25 years, therefore it is expected that the majority of panels will remain efficient for at least 40 years. Battery storage units are expected to last for 10 years and will require repowering after that. After decommissioning, it is expected that the land will be returned to its former state, and this will be agreed as a requirement of the planning permission.

What is the nearest Island Green Power Solar Farm to Gringley-on-the-Hill?

Exning Solar Farm is the nearest Island Green Power (IGP) site to Gringley-on-the-Hill. The site is 30 MW.

How many kilowatt hours will the project produce?

The amount of electricity generated by a Solar Farm is dependent on the location of the site and therefore the amount of sunshine the panels are exposed to. The number of panels in each site's layout also affect the total generation capacity. Mathematical modelling to estimate these values will be used and presented as part of our Phase Two Consultation Process.

What does the energy storage proposal look like?

Batteries used for energy storage are usually placed within single story shipping containers. Each container can store around 5MW of power. Some sites, West Burton 4 for example, will only host panels and will not be used for energy storage.

Why isn't the area around the West Burton Power Station being considered?

The land at West Burton Power Station itself will continue to be used by EDF for gas powered electricity generation. Some land close to West Burton Power Station has been considered and discarded due to environmental factors such as flood risk.

How are IGP listening to the local communities affected by the proposals?

Our consultation activities have included a range of methods to encourage our consultation to be accessed by all members of the community. All the feedback we have received as part of our phase

one consultation has been and will continue to be logged to help us refine our proposals.

How will the visual impact of the proposals be minimized?

We will be undertaking a landscape and visual impact assessment for the sites and sharing the results of the studies with nearest neighbours and the community during the consultation process. We will use tools such as photomontages to provide a visual representation of the solar parks at our phase two community events. The viewpoints from which the landscape and visual impacts will be assessed will be agreed in consultation with the local planning authority landscape officers. During our phase one consultation we are seeking community feedback on environmental issues, from which we will assess the landscape and visual impact of West Burton and Cottam Solar Projects. Throughout our consultation process we will discuss the potential for tree planting and screening in appropriate locations.

How will the fire risk of the panels and batteries be managed?

As part of the planning process IGP will consider all the appropriate fire safety measures for of all sections of the site. The local authorities will then review such considerations and ultimately decide whether all the appropriate actions have been met.

If the proposals are accepted who will ultimately run and manage the sites?

The owners of the project will be required to manage the sites and will use contractors to help with other areas such as security, planting and regular management of trees, hedgerows etc.

Why is the area between Clayworth and Gringley which rises from 12 to 60 metres being used?

Our team has undertaken an extensive process of site selection to identify areas of land close by to the existing grid connection infrastructure. We considered a range of factors including :

- Their existing land use and quality;
- The need to avoid existing environmental or heritage sites;
- Other environmental issues such as minimising visual impact; and
- Agreement with the relevant landowners.

Why have the Henry Smith Charity not been represented during the Phase One Consultation?

This proposal is a planning matter and the outcome will be determined by the independent Planning Inspectorate by reference to local and national planning policy and taking account of all the comments made. The Charity's decision to enter into the Option Agreement with IGP is not a planning matter and falls outside of the scope of the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects planning process.