

Glentworth Parish Council is opposed to this application as we believe on its own and taken with the other proposed solar farm developments that are coming forward at the same time (West Burton, Cottam, Gate Burton and Tillbridge) the overall, cumulative development impact is seriously detrimental. There are specific issues that we believe the Inspector should take into account: 1. the 4 schemes collectively will impact on 10,000 acres of current farmland, affecting 31 villages and the lives of all those who live in the area. These schemes cannot nor should they be considered in isolation, the cumulative impact is a fundamental and material consideration in planning terms and we would urge the Inspector to review them as a set. We would add that it is clear that whilst being promoted by separate companies, there is cooperation between those companies, who clearly regard the schemes as being interlinked. 2. The scale of development proposed is inappropriate for a rural area. It amounts to the industrialisation of the countryside on a scale that would not be considered if what was proposed was housing or industrial/commercial buildings. Whilst there are claims about the environmental benefits of the scheme in terms of supporting the UK's need to develop alternate energy production using renewables, any such claims need to be properly assessed and measured against the environmental impacts arising from the loss of habitats, destruction of green space, environmental impact of bringing construction materials, the panels themselves and the supporting infrastructure to the UK. Glentworth Parish Council is not opposed to the development of renewable energy, but we challenge and question the scale of these proposals in the context of the setting. 3. Building on point 2, the loss of productive farmland is of serious concern. Much is made in the application that the land in question is of low grade but however low that agricultural grade might be, once consent is granted for extensive solar panel construction the land will not produce any food, whether for human or animal consumption or for use as biomass. At a time when, as well as energy security, the UK is concerned with food security and the cost and environmental impact of importing significant amounts of food, there is a balance to be struck between the development of solar farms and the use of that farmland for food production. We believe there needs to be a proper examination of the relative benefits and a testing of any assumptions that the claimed CO2 reduction benefits of the solar farm offset the impacts of lost local food production, the CO2 absorption of land being used for agriculture and the loss of farm land. 4. The development of the solar farms would have a significant impact on the views west from along the Lincolnshire Edge, and the views from the villages looking up towards the Edge. These are classified as an Area of Great Landscape Value, awarded not for the benefit of the land, but the benefit of the people to enjoy those views... It's not the land in itself that's protected, it's the views. Added to this will be a loss of habitats, impacts on wildlife and the wider ecosystem and weather systems, along with destruction of soil structure and increased flood risk. Little to nothing will grow in the fields covered by the panels, this will in turn affect insects and the animals that feed on them, including birdlife. There will also be an increase in rat populations due to lack of predation and invasive plant weed species. In essence the environment and communities in the region will be significantly harmed for no real national benefit.

Further to these issues, there would be a considerable long-term impact on the health and wellbeing of the residents of Glentworth and other surrounding villages due to the harm caused during and after construction of the proposed solar farm in addition to those also proposed for the area. This would be felt in terms of reduction of recreation and leisure activities such as dog walking and cycling due to construction traffic using highways and the mental impacts of the removal of the visual amenity of agricultural land and replacement with an industrial landscape. Noise, dust and other pollutants will also be a significant concern along with the risks of battery safety and potential fire. A majority of residents live in this area to enjoy the peace and quiet of country life and the benefits to their health that this provides.