Pereira, Ilyas

From: [redacted]
Sent: 02 June 2025 17:23
To: Springwell Solar Farm
Subject: Re: Request is blocked

Categories: Deadline

Hello Ilyas
Thank you for your speedy reply. I have tried again, using a different browser/cleared my history etc and I am still having the same problem. My name is Lisa Ann Cronin, my registration identification [redacted] *and my email address is* [redacted]
If you could be so kind as to upload my written submission for me so that they are published along with all other Deadline 1 responses before the deadline closes tomorrow night, I would be most grateful.

My submission is the following:

Representation: Objection to Springwell Solar Farm Application (NSIP)
I wish to raise my objection to the proposed Springwell Solar Farm development. While the transition to clean energy is important, this particular project raises serious concerns due to environmental, infrastructural, and cumulative planning risks. The proposal, as submitted, is neither appropriate for the location nor adequately supported by the necessary infrastructure or strategic oversight.
1. Major Environmental Risk from Battery Storage on Limestone Aquifer
The inclusion of a large-scale battery energy storage system (BESS) directly above a limestone aquifer is extremely concerning. Limestone is a highly permeable rock, and any leak from battery systems—such as fire-induced chemical release or coolant fluid—could contaminate local groundwater supplies. This is a completely unsuitable location for such infrastructure. Government and academic studies (e.g., EA Groundwater Protection guidance, NREL 2020 Fire Hazard Analysis) highlight these risks clearly. There is no effective remediation for contamination of this type of aquifer.
The applicant has not submitted a hydrogeological risk assessment to justify this location, and the absence of such evidence places the project in contravention of Environment Agency groundwater protection guidance.
2. Increased Risk of Fire – Inadequate Local Emergency Response Capability
Grid-scale battery systems are known to carry a significant risk of thermal runaway and fire. Incidents in the UK and globally have resulted in toxic smoke, explosions, and fires that can last for several days and require specialist equipment and training to manage. This is especially concerning in a rural setting like the Springwell site, where fire response times are slower.
Local villages such as Navenby, Scopwick, and Metheringham rely on part-time and volunteer-staffed fire stations. Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue, already stretched across a wide rural area, may not have the resources or specialist training to safely manage a BESS fire. The National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) has published guidance highlighting the need for enhanced emergency planning and fire suppression systems for battery installations—none of which appear to be guaranteed in this proposal.
In the event of a fire, rural residents would be exposed to toxic gases, potential explosions, and the risk of groundwater contamination from fire suppression runoff—all with limited means of protection or evacuation. No detailed fire management plan, suppression infrastructure, or NFCC-compliant mitigation measures have been secured. This failure leaves local communities exposed to unmitigated risk.
3. Speculative Nature of the Proposal – No Secured Grid Connection
The viability of this solar farm hinges entirely on a proposed substation at Navenby, which has not yet been approved. If that application is refused by the local planning authority, this development cannot proceed. Approving Springwell without certainty about the grid infrastructure creates serious legal and planning inconsistencies. National Infrastructure projects should be underpinned by confirmed delivery routes—not conditional proposals.
As the substation remains unconsented and may face planning obstacles, the applicant has been instructed to demonstrate why refusal would not jeopardise the delivery of Springwell. Until this issue is resolved, the application remains speculative and inconsistent with national policy requirements for deliverable infrastructure projects.
4. Cumulative Impact from Multiple Energy Schemes – No Strategic Oversight
There are already several large energy infrastructure applications affecting this part of Lincolnshire, including:

- Leoda Solar Farm

- Fosse Green Solar Farm
- Coleby BESS
- Navenby BESS
- Proposed Navenby Substation

Together with Springwell, these schemes represent an unprecedented level of industrial-scale energy development in a small rural area. The cumulative impact on the landscape, infrastructure, and community has not been adequately assessed. These are not isolated cases—they are part of a wider pattern of creeping industrialisation of the countryside. Without a coordinated regional energy plan, the local environment and character are being irreversibly damaged.
The Planning Inspectorate has directed the applicant to submit a revised cumulative impact assessment incorporating other relevant schemes such as Leoda Solar Farm, Coleby BESS, and the proposed substation. The lack of an integrated regional energy strategy compounds these issues and renders the project's cumulative impacts unassessed.

5. Loss of Productive Farmland – Threat to Food Security

The proposed development would see large areas of previously productive agricultural land taken out of food production for decades. This land is currently used to grow crops and contributes to local food supply and national food security. At a time when climate resilience and domestic food production are increasingly important, removing high-quality farmland from use is short-sighted and counterproductive. According to DEFRA and the National Food Strategy (2021), retaining agricultural capacity is vital for future sustainability. Energy generation should not come at the cost of long-term food self-sufficiency.
The Examining Authority has specifically requested further detail regarding the consideration of brownfield land within the site selection process. To date, no such justification has been presented. National and local policy favour brownfield over productive agricultural land, particularly in energy infrastructure proposals. The use of active farmland contradicts sustainability principles.

6. Dangerous Impact on Local Roads and Junctions

Springwell's construction and operation will increase traffic, including heavy goods vehicles, on roads that are already under strain. The A15 junctions at Green Man Road and Heath Lane are particularly dangerous, with known collision histories and inadequate sightlines. The cumulative effect of vehicle movements from multiple nearby schemes (including Navenby BESS and the substation construction) has not been properly considered. Local infrastructure will struggle to cope.
The applicant has failed to submit Stage 1 Road Safety Audits or secure sign-off for highway improvements by the County Council. Given the known hazards of the A15 junctions at Green Man Road and Heath Lane, and anticipated construction traffic from multiple projects, this omission is a material risk to public safety and non-compliant with standard planning protocols.

7. Long-Term Visual and Psychological Impacts

Solar farms of this scale permanently alter rural landscapes. Residents who moved to or live in this area for its rural character will instead be surrounded by fencing, inverters, security lights, and large industrial batteries. This visual degradation can affect people's quality of life. Academic research (*The Lancet Planetary Health*, 2021) has linked loss of natural views and rural surroundings with increased stress, anxiety, and reduced community wellbeing.

8. Inadequate Justification for Floodplain Development

The proposed solar panel infrastructure includes areas within Flood Zone 3B. The applicant has been asked to provide a map and operational justification for this decision, as well as to revise the Flood Risk Assessment based on updated Environment Agency data. Neither requirement has been met, and the current plan fails to comply with the sequential test required under national policy.

Summary

The Springwell Solar Farm proposal fails to meet critical safety, environmental, and planning requirements. Key elements of the application remain incomplete or unproven, including flood risk mitigation, emergency response planning, cumulative assessment, and infrastructure viability. Instead it prioritises speculative energy export over the needs of the local environment and community. Approving this project would create long-term, high-risk infrastructure in an area without the capacity to support it safely.
I urge the Planning Inspectorate to refuse development consent on the grounds of environmental risk, speculative design, loss of agricultural land, and failure to adequately address cumulative and infrastructure impacts.

If you have any problems please let me know asap so i do not miss the deadline and would you mind letting me know when it has been done. Many thanks and warm regards

Lisa Cronin