

## Preliminary Meeting

Hello, my name is Paul Frost, I'm a resident of Scopwick, a member of Scopwick and Kirkby Green Parish Council and a member of the Springwell Solar Action Group. I'm talking today personally.

I object to the solar farm for many reasons which I have submitted in the relevant representation phase of the process.

As part of the preliminary meeting I would like to make a couple of points and observations.

The process from submitting relevant representations to the examination process seems pretty rushed and the notice period and timing for the hearings is such that many people, including myself, have prior engagements, hence joining today by teams. The timing of the events themselves is only during the day and in office hours also excludes many people who work.

The time between the preliminary meeting finishing and the examination process starting, ie only an hour or two, doesn't seem to give sufficient time for amendment or reaction to points raised at this preliminary meeting.

I think the list raised and highlighted for issue specific topics does not cover some of the topics which have been raised by many people during the relevant representations. I have performed some analysis on the relevant representations and listed the topics which people have raised.

As an example Mental Health concerns were raised 35 times in relevant representations yet does not figure in your list of specific items nor seems to fit into any of the subject areas you have put forward, There are also no questions proposed by the inspectors on the subject.

Other areas mentioned in the relevant representations by numerous people but not specifically listed or not clear which sections they fall into are:

Food security - 86 mentions

Fire - 115 mentions

Piling - 10 mentions

Noise - 58 mentions

Effect on house prices - 22 mentions

Unethical procurement - 28 mentions and no questions raised

Glint & Glare - 22 mentions and no questions raised

Effect on tourism - 28 mentions

Sheer size and scale of the proposal - 128 mentions

Aquifer - 27 mentions and no questions raised

This raises a procedural question on the process. How can we be sure that all the points we jointly have raised in the relevant representations have been properly taken into account? If they are not raised in the questions nor listed as items worthy of further debate then has a decision already been taken to ignore them? Procedurally how do we know? How can this be tracked?

To illustrate if someone raised three points in their relevant representations, the inspectors read them, and we have to assume you do, and decide that the first is a large item and needs an issue specific hearing, the second requires further detail so a question is raised for the relevant party, the third item is not assigned one of these two actions. What happens to this third item from then? Reading the examination process I can see how this allows for the questions and items raised at hearings to be followed up and commented upon but I'm really not sure about the third category. It would be good to fully understand this before we move into the examination phase.

Thanks

# Open Floor Meeting

Hello, my name is Paul Frost, I'm a resident of Scopwick, a member of Scopwick and Kirkby Green Parish Council and a member of the Springwell Solar Action Group. I'm talking today personally.

I object to the solar farm for many many reasons which I have submitted during the consultation and relevant representation phase of the process. I am assured these will all be taken into account so I'm not trying to cover them all here.

Today I want to highlight a couple of areas please, fire and screening.

Firstly fire risk. Like many residents I am very concerned about the high risk of fire and the catastrophic consequences for health, the environment and water supply when it happens. Much detail has been provided in the relevant representations

Many previous projects have glibly listed all the usual, that they are building and operating the solar farms in line with legal regulation. Many have then gone on to catch fire. There is even a database now to track all the battery fires, the EPRI failure incident database, which already lists three events in the UK just this year. Why will this one be any different? It absolutely does happen and isn't a small risk as the applicant would like us to believe. With the onslaught of planning applications for BESS this list of incidents will just get higher and higher unless it is properly tackled in the planning stages.

It isn't good enough to simply say well sort it out with Fire and Rescue later which seems to be the current status in this application. It needs to be done now, be part of the planning process and subject to the same scrutiny by the inspectorate and the public as other documents.

I note the National Fire Chiefs Council have updated guidance in draft on grid scale battery energy storage systems which is due for publication imminently. They are updating this guidance which was first drafted in 2023 due to their wider experience with BESS and the explosion of applications for new BESS facilities, yes explosion. This new guidance, to be clear the 2025 version, should be used to provide a final version (not a draft) of the agreement and plan between the applicant and Fire and Rescue with any suggested provisions of equipment, water, bunding, space, personnel etc. by Fire and Rescue becoming a binding condition of planning should the worst happen and you actually approve this dreadful solar factory.

My second point relates to aesthetics. Lincolnshire is a beautiful county with large sky's and long sweeping horizon style views. The views around Scopwick from the large network of public footpaths and roadways will be forever spoiled by the introduction of solar related structures. It will not be possible to see the horizon and the large sky's will be significantly reduced. The applicant seems to think that planting hedges and trees in front of the solar structures will mitigate this aesthetic problem. Of course it wont. It just means we will have a close up view of a hedge. The government's own EN3 planning document 2.10.43 states visual impacts should be minimised and that "screening along public rights of way networks to minimise the outlook into the solar park may impact on the ability of users to appreciate the surrounding landscape". Of course it will. This seems to be the applicants mitigation for all affected views and should not be accepted. The location is simply wrong for a solar factory, you can't mitigate a bad location choice. I have submitted a visit location suggestion for the spires and steeples trail just to the north of Scopwick where this can be demonstrated along with the effect of 4 years of construction traffic crossing the footpath and spoiling the peace and tranquility as well as the views and increasing the risk of accidents. The application should be rejected for this point alone yet alone all the other points I and others have made and are making today.

Thank you for the time to raise these points. Please listen to and don't just hear and dismiss peoples points of view.

Thanks

Points relating to the Hearings held on 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> May

1. During the OFH the applicant agreed to provide more detail in writing on BMV land usage and on the environmental and soil points raised by interested parties. These points were not captured in the actions summarised at the end of ISH Part 6. Please will you make sure these are provided and duly reviewed.
2. At around timestamp 37:41 of ISH part 1 recording Sarah Price on behalf of the applicant states that all the land considered for selection was of grade 2 and 3 with similar characteristics from an agricultural viewpoint and therefore it wouldn't have mattered if alternative sites were selected as it would have the same effect. As pointed out by a number of speakers the Blankney Estates land is not similar, it is better, it is irrigated land, irrigated with a taxpayer funded grant which makes the land even more valuable for agriculture and the funding for which will be wasted should the application go ahead.
3. At around timestamp 54:39 the applicant agreed to provide in writing justification for restricting their site selection to just North of Bicker Fen. This was not picked up in the inspectors verbal list of actions. Please will you make sure this is provided and duly reviewed.
4. At the beginning of ISH1 part 6 the inspector quoted action points and said they would be made available in writing on the project web site. I have been unable to locate the list of actions on the project web site. Please can these be provided.

Additional relevant representation.

**Chemical leaching from buried cables reducing soil quality and contaminating the aquifer forever**

The application talks of using over 13 million metres of electric cables weighing in at over 18 thousand tonnes in its construction with a significant proportion being buried underground.

The cables will deteriorate over time especially when reacting with other chemicals leaching from the solar panels themselves and decrease the quality of the land they are buried in and lead to additional contamination of the aquifer and the users of its water.

The application also intends just to leave these cables in the ground at the end of its term allowing them to continue their degradation forever.

This 18 thousand tonnes of cables along with the 126 thousand tonnes of concrete, stone and aggregate the applicant plans to use will not be removed from the site at the end of the application period and will have a significant effect on the soil quality in the long term and be yet another reason the site will not be able to be returned to high quality agriculture.

Submission ID: 36644

Additional relevant representation.

Chemical leaching from buried cables reducing soil quality and contaminating the aquifer forever. See attached document.