

## **Summary – Thurlby Parish Submission on Fosse Green Energy (EN010154)**

Thurlby Parish objects to the Fosse Green Energy planning application, citing serious concerns about site selection, lack of detail, safety, landscape impact, and the applicant’s financial credibility.

### **Context and Setting**

Thurlby is a small historic hamlet with minimal lighting, open skies, a 1,000-year-old church, and war graves of national and international importance. The proposal would surround the hamlet on three sides with solar panels close to homes, listed buildings, and ancient monuments. The Parish argues that vague and “indicative” plans make it impossible to properly assess impacts.

### **Site Selection and National Policy**

The Parish contends that the site selection does not comply with National Policy Statements EN-1 and EN-3:

- National policy prioritises proximity to existing grid infrastructure and minimising new connections.
- Brownfield, previously developed, contaminated, and industrial land should be prioritised over agricultural land.
- The site was chosen following approaches from local landowners, not a national or policy-led site search.
- Alternatives were only considered within a small part of Lincolnshire, inappropriate for a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project.
- Lincolnshire already exports surplus electricity, weakening the local justification.

The Clean Power 2030 Initiative and a 2025 Ministerial letter reinforce that brownfield land and strategic national planning should guide solar development, further undermining the applicant’s approach.

### **Battery Energy Storage System (BESS)**

National grid data shows BESS capacity is already three times oversubscribed, making this BESS unnecessary.

- Insufficient detail prevents meaningful assessment.
- The Parish raises serious safety concerns, referencing UK Health and Safety Executive guidance.
- Fire risks, watercourse contamination, and separation distances are not convincingly addressed.
- The Parish calls for the BESS to be removed or assessed via a separate planning application.

### **Funding and Corporate Structure**

The Parish questions the financial robustness of the applicant, citing:

- Complex and unclear corporate ownership links to Canadian Solar entities.
- Apparent lack of capital, employees, and transparency.
- Previous concerns raised by the Planning Inspectorate, which the Parish supports.

### **Landscape and Visual Impact**

The development would permanently transform open agricultural land into an industrial landscape for 40–60 years, which the Parish argues is not temporary. Construction impacts, long-term maintenance, lighting, hedging, and cumulative effects with other Lincolnshire schemes would severely damage landscape character, agriculture, and food security.

### **Tourism and Local Economy**

Tourism—second only to agriculture locally—would be harmed. Walking routes, caravan parks, war grave visitors, and the internationally recognised Lost Village music festival are all at risk.

### **Traffic and Highways**

Construction and operational traffic, including HGVs, would use narrow, unclassified roads unsuitable for heavy vehicles, increasing safety risks, congestion, and road damage.

### **Conclusion**

Thurlby Parish formally objects to the proposal and requests that an Open Forum Hearing be included in the examination process

## From Thurlby Parish Meeting

Dear Sirs,

**Fosse Green Energy Planning Application – EN010154,**  
for deadline 1 of the Planning Examination i.e. 20/01/2026.

Thurlby is an historic hamlet surrounded by farmland and open spaces. We only have four street lights for the 30 or so dwellings and therefore have the luxury of 'big skies' and open areas. We have a 1,000 year old Church with War Graves and other military graves which are visited by people from all around the Country and the World.. It appears that with this development we will be surrounded on at least three sides by solar panels very close to the residential areas, ancient monuments and listed properties.

Owing to the lack of substantive detail, and the position that much of what detail is available, being caveated/classified by the applicant as "indicative"; it is very difficult for us to determine exactly to what extent all these solar panels and associated structures will impact onto the hamlet. Maps have been very vague and wide ranging in the lack of detail and have been difficult to obtain on a scale that we as a Parish can understand. They seem to illustrate a wide indicative area but no definitive facts. Within that context, we have the following comments to make:

### **Location: Site Selection**

It is believed that Fosse Green Energy (FGE) misrepresents National Policy in this regard when they state "*the proposed location is suitable and aligns with national policy, including EN-1 and EN-3.*"

The first key point is that of "Proximity to Infrastructure" and that EN-1 and EN-3 both emphasise that sites should:

- Be reasonably close to grid connection points (substations, transmission lines).
- To choose sites that can achieve a grid connection to an existing electricity substation with capacity.
- Minimise the need for extensive new infrastructure, especially long grid connections.
- Support efficient delivery and operation of the energy system.
- **That Grid accessibility is a material locational consideration.**

The second key point is that of "Land Use". National Policy (NPS EN-3 -reference Paras 2.10.21, 2.10.23, 2.10.17) prioritises the use of brownfield, previously developed, contaminated and industrial land for solar projects.

- There are numerous and various alternative locations which would have emerged from a proper, professional site selection process across the UK. This is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project and should be taking a National perspective on appropriate sites compliant with National Policy.
- The FGE Site Selection Report (Para 2.3.1, Appendix A, document APP-185) clearly states that the site was selected as the result of an approach from local landowners. It was not selected following a search for sites that would utilise the types of land that NPS EN-3 prioritises for solar deployment (brownfield, previously developed, contaminated and industrial land) or sites that could achieve a connection to the existing grid infrastructure, as also prioritised by

NPS EN-3. The Site Selection Report only considers alternative sites within a small area of Lincolnshire, indeed North Kesteven for a National project.

- The proposed justification by FGE for this application is founded upon the National requirement to develop “green energy resources” rather than a North Kesteven or even Lincolnshire requirement.
- Please note that Lincolnshire is viewed as a net exporter of electricity to the rest of the UK due to having an oversupply of electricity for local Lincolnshire requirements.

**The Clean Power 2030 Initiative** further contradicts and undermines FGE’s site selection. This initiative emphasises strategic site selection for energy infrastructure, with key conditions and criteria used for selecting site locations highlighting:-

- Proximity to existing grid infrastructure,
- Brownfield land — previously developed and now disused — is explicitly preferred for
- clean energy infrastructure due to faster permitting and community acceptance.

In summary, we contend that an appropriate Site Selection process for an application for renewable energy installations – especially solar – should be conducted in line with National Policy and on a National Perspective rather than exclusively in a small, focused section of land in North Kesteven, Lincolnshire.

### **Battery Energy Storage System (BESS)**

The recent National Energy System Operator’s (NESO) announcement, of 8th December 2025, recognised that the position on achieving the UK government’s target capacity had reached a status of being three times oversubscribed in actual and development pipeline capacity. Consequently, the proposed BESS in this application is surplus to national need and should be withdrawn from the application.

Further, the lack of detail about what the applicant is actual proposing, both undermines the Parish’s ability to comprehend what it might be facing, and curtails our ability to properly comment. Consequently, our comments are restricted to the following.

If the applicant is not withdrawing the BESS element of this project:

- We request that the Inspectorate require the applicant to urgently clarify what is actually being planned.
- We request that the Inspectorate require the applicant to urgently evidence the grid connection status.

Regardless of the lack of detail provided by the application, there are serious, founded concerns regarding BESS safety. •

- We would like to draw the Inspectorate’s attention to the latest advice from the UK Health and Safety Executive which raises serious and well-documented concerns regarding the safety of Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS).
- If the proposal is to distribute multiple BESS “compounds” across the site, this significantly increases the land area affected and exacerbates the adverse impact on the landscape. •
- Whether the units are clustered or dispersed, the applicant’s reliance on an overly optimistic accident rate is not credible. In particular, the assertion that a fire would not

spread to adjacent units and that contaminated fire-fighting water would not enter local watercourses is unsupported by real-world evidence.

- Planning permission should not be granted until clearer and more stringent national guidance is in place regarding minimum safe separation distances between BESS installations.
- Given the distinct and substantial safety risks involved, the BESS element should be the subject of a separate planning application and assessed independently from the associated solar development.

#### **Funding** - Planning Inspectorate Scheme Reference EN010154 Application Document Reference EN010154/APP/4.2

There is considerable concern arising from the financial nature, and lack of corporate substance of the applicant and its corporate connections. There appears to be just a trail of debt, no capital and an absence of employees, extending from FGE through its connections to Canadian Solar Projects Ltd in the UK and then internationally to the Netherlands and Canada.

In the applicant's Funding Statement, 1.2 Corporate Structure, it states that the majority shareholder (72.5%) in the applicant is Rugeley West Solar Ltd (RWS), which is an entity owned by Recurrent Energy.

However, in RWS's Companies House accounts it appears that the "significant control" is held by CS UK Holdings III Ltd. who in turn has "1 person with active control – Canadian Solar UK Projects Ltd". The latter, in turn, has "1 person with active control – Canadian Solar Inc. Active, Canada, and states "that it is a wholly owned subsidiary of Canadian Solar Inc".

It is unclear whether Recurrent Energy (in whichever of its forms based in the Netherlands) actually owns RWS as stated, or is merely a corporate division of Canadian Solar Inc which engages with it operationally.

We note that the Inspectorate in its letter, EN010154 Date: 22 August 2025, queried the Funding position of the applicant – we support this challenge.

#### **Impact on Landscape – Visual Impact**

The visual impact of this area will change irretrievably from open fields to an industrial landscape. Lincolnshire has an age-old agricultural foundation which surrounds isolated dwellings and hamlets such as ours. It is not only the solar panels that will impact the landscape, but the construction of the project, traffic, noise, pollution for at least two to two and a half years. There is then the ongoing maintenance, lighting, high hedges forming a 'tunnel' effect. Forty to sixty years is hardly 'temporary' and in reality the land will never be able to be returned to growing crops thus impacting on our food security. Jobs will have been lost in all sectors connected with agriculture including haulage companies, seed and fertiliser suppliers and other smaller suppliers who are dependent on the countryside for their livelihood. The cumulative impact of the many schemes in Lincolnshire should be taken into account as they will have an unacceptable impact on the character of the landscape.

#### **Impact on Tourism**

The visual impact will also be felt on the tourism industry in this area as this is the second largest economy after agriculture. There are walking routes and caravan parks within the proposed site around Thurlby and as mentioned previously visitors come from all around the Country and the World to walk, stay on the caravan parks and remember

those in the Commonwealth War Graves and other military graves in the grounds of the historic Church. Additionally, the immediate area is host to what has become an internationally recognised and visited music festival – The Lost Village. This is a significant social and financial event for our area which will be at risk if this industrialisation of our community proceeds.

### **Traffic and Highways**

Another main issue of concern is the traffic that will be generated around our hamlet. The routing of HGVs through Thurlby is potentially dangerous. These are unclassified roads, in some places barely wide enough for two cars to pass and two HGVs trying to pass on the narrow roads destroys verges and kerbs. The roads are hardly fit for purpose as it is and the extra input of HGVs, additional vehicles for workers and continued maintenance is not acceptable in this area. Vehicles are frequently parked on Bassingham Road in Thurlby which can create a traffic hazard and make access for large vehicles more dangerous. Clay Lane, another road identified as a 'suitable' route is also very narrow, potholed and has no passing places, hardly suitable for existing traffic and definitely not suitable for heavy vehicles.

### **Conclusion**

The points raised above are of considerable concern to Thurlby Parishioners and we object to this proposed development. We request that an Open Forum Hearing is arranged at which the applicant will present firm and final design layouts/locations rather than the "indicative" design circulated thus far.

Roy Martin,  
Chairman, Thurlby Parish Meeting  
19.01.2026