

Thorpe on the Hill Parish Council - Interested Party Ref: [REDACTED]

Notes from OFH1 Oral Submission

Fosse Green Energy (FGE) – Deadline 3

Good evening, my name is [REDACTED] and I am Chair of Thorpe on the Hill Parish Council. In order to avoid duplication, I intend to confine my input today to matters which have not been covered elsewhere.

I would like to start by thanking you for organising this event.

1. Cumulative Traffic

A recent NKDC planning application (25/1612/FUL) proposes a Satellite Feedstock Storage facility at Haddington Lane. This application is yet another example of industrialisation of an agricultural landscape. Also, of major concern is the potential impact upon traffic. The applicant for this scheme envisages 9000 extra HGV movements into the area, though several responses from residents point to flaws in this calculation.

These additional HGV movements have only recently emerged and therefore were probably outside the modelling for the FGE scheme and worst-case scenarios. Additionally, the entrance to the Feedstock Storage Facility is directly opposite Construction and access point C-003. Field 4/16 from Land Plans APP-007.

The fact that these two site entrances lie opposite one another close to the brow of a hill on a de-restricted road presents a significant risk of accidents and should be reviewed carefully.

2. Community Liaison Group & Benefit Fund

At a recent Community Liaison meeting, representatives from local parishes met the Applicant who confirmed their intention to establish a Community Benefit Fund. I understand that such funds cannot form part of planning considerations but this concerns policy matters. The applicant explained how this fund would operate and be administered once the project is operational and grid connection in place.

Having familiarised ourselves with NKDC's policy entitled **Large Scale Energy – Community Benefit Policy**, which was adopted in January 2024, we took some comfort from the fact that this states the following under point 3 page 2:

“... this policy will be relevant to both applications made for planning permission where the electricity generation to the grid is under 50MW/year and for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) that seek a Development Consent Order for electricity generation at 50MW/year or over.”

However, at our recent meeting the Applicant claimed that this policy does not apply in this case, despite the fact that to our eyes it appears to have been created specifically to cover exactly these types of projects.

The applicant is proposing to commit to an annual payment based upon £400 per MW to this fund, rather than the £500 specified in the NKDC policy under point 28 page 5. How can this 20% reduction in contribution be justified? Is the applicant suggesting that this project has less impact than other similar schemes, and if so, please could they provide the evidence, or is this simply a means to maximise their own returns at the expense of local communities?

The applicant claims that this project will be able to power 110,000 homes, which leads many of the local population to expect that they will somehow be the beneficiaries of locally cheap electricity.

Looking at published population figures for the affected villages there are approximately 10,000 people living in the area. The applicant's contribution equates to an equivalent of less than £10/person. This is a far cry from a meaningful reduction in utility bills that many expect.

3. Shooting Rights

A long-standing resident of Thorpe on the Hill, who formerly farmed some of the affected fields no longer owns this land, but he has retained the shooting rights. Has the applicant considered such rights and do they propose to acquire the rights by Compulsory Acquisition?

4. Lincoln & Witham Landscape Recovery

As a minor landowner, TOTH PC is a contributor to the Lincoln & Witham Valley Landscape Recovery project which is nearing the completion of a DEFRA funded feasibility study which may result in a multi-million-pound grant application for a project of 30-year duration to enhance the landscape in the very same geographic area planned for the FGE solar development. The two projects are not mutually exclusive, but it further demonstrates the apparent strategic deficit and lack of a so-called joined up plan. Members of the public will be rightly perplexed by the same land being industrially developed by one project and at the same time being subjected to a recovery process.

5. Land Use

The applicant has stated that about half of the agricultural land falling within the project boundary is used for non-food crops such as biofuel. In so doing the applicant implies that less weight should be applied to the loss of crops for human consumption. However, the applicant has not addressed, and the Enquiry should now consider, the loss of the output from FGE land on, for example, local bio-digestion units. We feel that this matter has been given inadequate consideration as it is clear that a considerable investment has been made

in local bio-digestion facilities and evidence in the form of two recent local planning applications suggests a continuing push to develop more.

If FGE is consented and proceeds it seems likely that alternative sources of crops to feed the bio-digestion sites will be sought to replace the production lost to the Solar development. This in turn would likely impact food production capacity elsewhere.

6. Site Inspections

With regard to impact on public rights of way and the potential adverse effects on visual amenity, we welcomed the thorough Accompanied Site Inspection yesterday and the Inspector's Unaccompanied Site Inspection from December 2025.

In a previous submission we proposed that attempts should be made to walk some key sections of local footpaths as this provides the most realistic assessment of the real-world impact that cannot be gained either from static locations or by looking at simulations in the form of photo-montages which have been carefully selected and presented in a way to minimise the apparent impact and overplay the benefits of mitigation actions.

We note that the Inspector plans to conduct further Unaccompanied Inspections but if it proves impossible to view key locations, we would like to ask whether suitable drone footage, which we have produced, would be submissible as evidence?


7. Consultation process

I am sure that the applicant has complied with his statutory obligations with regard to consultation and yet I, along with local residents feel short-changed by the process.

Thorpe's Neighbourhood Plan contains key parish priorities and yet these have been largely ignored. At no point did the applicant reach out to the PC and offer the chance to be involved up-front to try to find a scheme which might be acceptable as some sort of compromise. The scheme was only presented when supported by endless justifications prepared by experts with hundreds of technical documents. The planning application is substantially unchanged from that originally developed. The lack of an attempt to involve communities up-front in the process contrasts starkly with the longstanding consultation and discussions with local landowners to formulate a scheme to best suit their needs.

Is it any wonder that the current process leads to an adversarial position and communities are left feeling schemes like these are imposed upon them, by external agencies against their will.

Thank you


08/03/26