

Notes for Oral Submission Given on Wednesday 11th March 2026

I have already made an objection regarding various items, including site selection, site design, fire/explosion/pollution risk and financial responsibility for decommissioning. My concerns and objections on these items remain; however I do not intend to speak about these items at this hearing as there is not adequate time to cover all topics.\*

Instead I would like to say something about health and well-being, footpaths, tourism and associated businesses.

The peaceful rural environment is why many people choose to live in this part of Lincolnshire, and why I chose to move to Thorpe on the Hill from London.

The freedom to walk in the countryside from your doorstep, whether for a short walk or longer hike, every day, is an invaluable amenity for the mental and physical health of local residents. The surrounding landscape is part of our home, and while it is not protected in the same way as more dramatic landscapes, it does not make it less valuable to us. It is observing the daily changes of weather/seasons/crops etc and the peaceful open views that make this landscape so important to us.

The applicant views the footpaths purely as link routes between villages, when in fact they are many things to the local community - dog walks, jogging circuits, after work/school strolls, nature rambles or simply a good way to stretch your legs and clear your mind/problem solve in peace and quiet. Elderly people, or those who do not have access to a car, particularly value the ease of access to local paths for exercise and fresh air.

It is not just the damage to the views that is concerning, but also the replacement of natural sound with the humming/buzzing of electrical equipment.

People with sensory issues around noise and bright light are likely to be particularly affected by buzzing/humming and glare. Such people are more likely to choose to live in the countryside so they can avoid these issues and should not be subjected to an industrial environment imposed upon them.

The applicant dismisses concerns because they consider only a small part of an extensive network of paths is being affected. Given the whole project has a similar footprint to the City of Lincoln, this is not a reasonable position. Concerns about the effect on footpaths and landscape were raised at the very first consultation with FGE at Thorpe on the Hill and have been consistently ignored by the applicant ever since.

Turning to Long Distance Routes, the applicant used the specific example of the Viking Way, to support their view that local footpaths had lesser importance. However, in order for FGE's proposal to be operative, a substation will need to be built at Navenby to provide a grid connection, right near the Viking Way, with FGE's cable route crossing the Viking Way to join it. This footpath will be substantially impacted in terms of view with the proposed construction of the substation, various BESS sites and surrounding solar installations and will likely be severely disrupted/diverted in the construction phase. Not only is the Viking Way an important LDR, but it is likely to get busier in the future as it is due to be incorporated into the Camino Ingles pilgrim route to Santiago de Compostela in Spain, forming part of the planned route running from Finchale near Durham to Southampton. It can be expected that an increasing number of people, from the UK and elsewhere, will wish to follow the route of the Viking Way because of this new designation. Such visitors are likely to be deterred by years-long massive construction works and the significant degradation of the countryside landscape caused by the proposed mass industrialisation of the area. They may also not be able to obtain accommodation if many hotels/B&Bs etc are full of construction workers for all the proposed projects.\*

The accommodation issue will hit flagship Lincolnshire events like the Lincolnshire Show and Asylum Steampunk Weekend very hard.\*\*

It is not just hospitality businesses which will lose out if visitor numbers decline. Also garages, shops, visitor attractions such as museums/stately homes/farms open to the public. I regularly trade at markets/festivals around the county and meet many visitors, some who have come for the quiet countryside, some for the history of Lincoln and surrounding area, and some are on a daytrip inland from the coast.

Source Notes to Support Oral Submission

\*\*"The Friends of Finchale Camino Association now have a route mapped out to the Humber Bridge and then through the Lincolnshire Wolds to Lincoln Cathedral, making use of the Viking Way to Rutland Water. From here the path follows the established, if a little neglected, Queen Eleanor Crosses Way through Northamptonshire, the county of spires and squires, to connect with the St Frideswide's Way at Christchurch Cathedral, Oxford. The St Frideswide's Way already connects to the St James Way which starts in Reading. Hence, it will provide a continuous camino from Finchale Priory to the docks of the port of Southampton." from the Camino Pilgrim website

Given the popularity of the various routes to Santiago (around 530,000 people received their completion certificate in Spain in 2025) and the fact that the Finchale and the Reading to Southampton routes were in the top 10 of English pilgrimage routes in 2025 (from the British Pilgrimage Trust website), the new proposed link routes, including the Viking Way, would bring more visitors to Lincolnshire.

\*\*Lincolnshire Show attracts 60,000 plus visitors each year and generated about £11m income for the county in 2017 according to a study by University of Lincoln. Asylum Steampunk weekend annually brings in up to 100,000 people from all over the world earning about £2.5m for local businesses according to the BBC website