

Dear Sir,

Following your acceptance of the One Earth Solar proposals for examination and the recent hearings, South Clifton Parish Council (SCPC) wish to add to our registration comments.

As with our previous submission, we note that over 95% of our villagers' object to this application. SCPC voted unanimously to object at an open meeting on 23rd October 2023. Nothing since has changed that stance. This proposed 4,000-acre solar farm—larger than Newark-on-Trent (3,840 acres)—poses unacceptable and permanent impacts on our communities and environment. Villages within and adjacent to the order limits will be permanently affected, and it is our responsibility to speak out for future generations who will inherit these consequences after 60 years.

Your Rule 8 letter requests that we identify agreeable and disagreeable parts of the application. Unfortunately, we find it difficult to support any component.

Cumulative Impact

The scale of solar NSIPs and similar applications in Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire threatens to alter the nature of these counties. Six NSIPs have already been approved (Cottom, West Burton, Mallard Pass, Gate Burton, Heckington Fen, Little Crow), and more are either proposed or approved at local level (e.g. Welby, Vicarage Drove, Moors, Pilfery, Hatton, and an unnamed site in Nottinghamshire).

The likely overlap of construction phases will strain road networks, increasing traffic and damaging road surfaces. We support the Examining Authority's suggestion for an OS-style map showing this project's relation to others, including land grades.

The visual intrusion from numerous solar farms will redefine the rural landscape. We agree with Mr. Brown (Lincolnshire County Council) who said solar could become a "defining characteristic" of the counties. The sequential visual impact will shift the perception of these areas from agricultural to industrial. We support Action Point 44 identifying routes subject to this cumulative visual fatigue.

Impact on Residents

Residents near panel fields or BESS sites face immense disruption. We support the request for detailed assessments per dwelling. Many affected homeowners were dissatisfied with the applicant's consultation, which often failed to follow up on requests for further dialogue.

The five-year mitigation establishment period is too long for residents to wait for screening. Upper-floor views will not be softened effectively. What further strategies will be used to reduce this impact?

Mental Health

The application fails to fully address the mental health consequences for those in Zone 1. Dr. Sarah Armstrong, a GP resident, conducted a study of residents on the east side of the River Trent; her findings were sent to the applicant and discussed at meetings. The applicant knows the level of opposition. SCPC asks the applicant to explain why they believe mental health impacts will disappear post-construction.

Drinking Water, Flood Risk, and Drainage

We refer you to the submission by David White and the 'Say No To One Earth Solar' action group (SNTOS) regarding use of a Drinking Water Protected Area and Flood Zone land.

The site is at high flood risk, especially given the sandy soil. We support Action Points 32 and 33. Structures must withstand flooding, and North Clifton residents must be assured that panel fields will not worsen the situation. The Environment Agency's floodgate operations must be factored into a full hydrological impact analysis.

The adjacent Anglian Water Treatment plant and Hall reservoir must be considered. The applicant raised panel heights to mitigate flood risks, which could lead to panels as tall as double-decker buses. We await the plan detailing panel height variations and areas expected to be partially submerged.

BESS, Cables, and Pollution

According to SNTOTES, over 1,000km of buried cables will be used, potentially releasing microplastics into soil and water over time. Refer to the SNTOTES report, *Clean Water or Energy?*

BESS or inverter fires present major pollution risks. Current plans to let fires “burn out” are unacceptable. Bassetlaw Council noted that the Fire Authority does not recognise this method. SCPC requests a detailed procedure for managing BESS fires and measures to prevent airborne pollutants reaching nearby villages or the reservoir. Prevailing wind assumptions are insufficient—9% of winds come from the east.

Mitigation Plans

We support Action Point 14 regarding mitigation plans. The wording should indicate firm commitments, not optional considerations.

Agriculture, Soils, and BMV Land

We share the concerns of Lincolnshire County Council and Newark & Sherwood District Council about the loss of over 53% Best and Most Versatile (BMV) land. SCPC supports the recent ministerial letter signed by 30 MPs’ and Peers, sent to the Prime Minister calling for prioritisation of rooftop and brownfield developments.

We also question the 10km search area. Expanding the range could identify less BMV land and reduce proximity to villages. The choice of High Marnham for grid connection appears driven by cost-efficiency rather than minimal community disruption.

Heritage

Historic England raised concerns about archaeological potential near the reservoir. Was this area included in the 2km assessment zone? The applicant still has 21 or 29 areas pending full archaeological assessment—this must be prioritised.

Environmental and Ecological Impact

The fencing-off of vast areas for panels will disrupt habitats, especially for deer populations. Videos from other solar sites show deer trapped within fences. The current mitigation plan—installing ramps—is inadequate. A meaningful strategy to preserve habitat connectivity is required.

Grid Connection

The applicant plans to connect to High Marnham in 2029, exporting and importing up to 740MW. However, the National Grid’s application for necessary infrastructure won’t be submitted until late 2025. How can the current Environmental Statement remain valid when the grid substations have yet to be approved or built?

Public Rights of Way

The local footpath and bridleway network is vital to our rural lifestyle. We support their protection and enhancement.

A proposed permissive path from the A57 (Newton on Trent) southward through panel fields and past the BESS site must avoid feeling claustrophobic. Maximum panel spacing (100m) and significant planting are needed to maintain a pleasant experience.

According to the masterplan, the 2.5km path lacks trees on its northern section. There is minimal softening of the landscape across the eastern Trent area. We urge preservation of hedgerow trees and stress that no veteran trees (15 listed) should be felled. Their exact locations must be highlighted and safeguarded.

Access Points (Eastern Side of River Trent)

SCPC notes five direct road access points and three internal ones. In our consultation feedback, we requested no access via Moor Lane, South Clifton. Despite reassurances, two access points are now proposed there. We also warned about the dangers of an access point off the A1133 near a blind slope—this too was ignored.

Accidents are common on this stretch. These concerns have not been adequately addressed, and the proposed access points remain unacceptable.

Lone Field

The small, southernmost field opposite The Chase at the Moor Lane/A1133 junction remains in the plan despite feedback asking for its removal. Its inclusion, with an access point and inverter near a home now surrounded on three sides, appears unjustifiable. It may suggest future development intent.

Accompanied Visits

SCPC suggest the following sites on the east side of the River Trent for accompanied visits –

- The Chase and Moor Farm, Moor Lane, South Clifton.
- Moor Farm, North Clifton.
- Station House, North Clifton and east along Sustrans to Wheatholme Lane crossing.
- The Hall, North Clifton.
- A1133 access point north of Sustrans track.
- Layby on A1133 North Clifton – views across open country to Lincoln Cathedral.
- Viaduct over River Trent.
- Field south of Hall Reservoir, North Clifton.

South Clifton Parish Council would be happy to expand on any of the above, should you wish it.

██████████ (Chair)