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Area Secretary
Nottinghamshire Area Ramblers

17th February 2026

Registration identification number: [REDACTED]

Sir/Madam

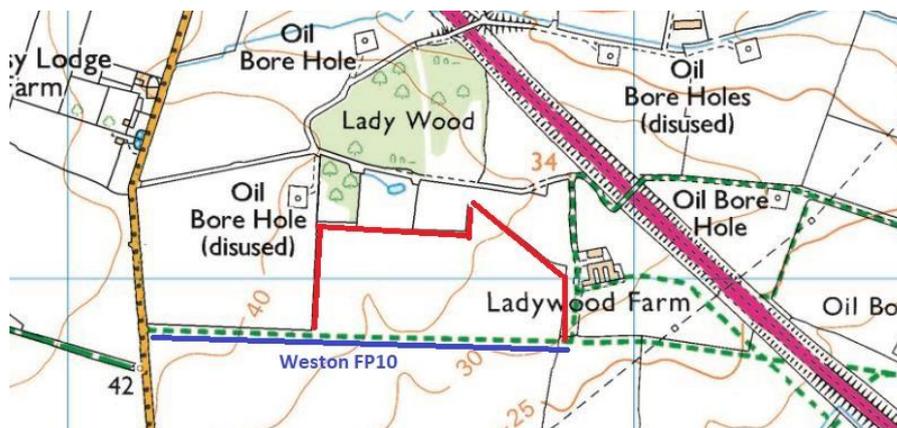
**Great North Road Solar and Biodiversity Park
Application for a Development Consent Order (Application Reference: EN010162)**

With reference to the above Nottinghamshire Area Ramblers wish to make a further submission in relation to:

- The diversion of Public Right of Way Weston FP10
- Applicants response to ExA Question 2.1.6
- Applicants response to ExA Question 11.1.3

The diversion of Public Right of Way Weston FP10

The Applicant proposes to divert part of Weston FP10 which currently traverses an arable field, to the field edge. The proposed diversion is shown in red below:



In its Response to Representations Report (EN010162/APP/8.8) the Applicant acknowledges that the diversion is an increase in distance of 91%, which is hardly consistent with their Rights of Way Strategy (EN010162/APP/6.4.4.1A) para A4.1.5.

Ramblers

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The Ramblers' Association is a registered charity (England & Wales no 1093577, Scotland no SC039799) and a company limited by guarantee, registered in England & Wales (no 4458492).
Registered office: The Ramblers, c/o Bates Wells, 10 Queen St Place, London EC4R 1BE.

Whilst the reason for the diversion is understood, we do not support the proposal to make it a permanent diversion rather than a temporary one.

Like many other PROW in this area, Weston FP10 is an historic path, which is shown on the OS six-inch map (1888-1913) [Source: Ramblers DLYW website]



It is clear from the above map that Weston FP10 was not a cross-field path 100 years ago. The section of the path that the Applicant wishes to divert has only become a cross-field path as the part of the field boundary hedge has been removed. This is a well-used path, as evident in this Google Earth photo:



In Environmental Statement Volume 3, Chapter 18 Recreation Figures [EN010162/APP/3.18A] [AS-048] the applicant states: "Whilst it is acknowledged that local people value access to local routes, it is considered that PROW crossing arable fields generally retain limited historic character".

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We dispute the statement that PROW that cross arable fields retain limited historical character. The Applicant also proposes the permanent diversion of Carlton-on-Trent FP6 and FP10. Again, these footpaths are clearly shown on the OS 6inch map (1888-1913).



The current OS map is shown alongside for comparison. What is remarkable is how little the setting of these historic footpaths has changed in more than 100 years.

Applicant's response to ExA Question 2.1.6

The foregoing is relevant to the Applicant's response to ExA Question 2.1.6. In our submission of 7th December (REP1 – 103) we questioned why the Applicant was specifying permanent diversions to PROW for a DCO that had a maximum permitted operation of 40 years. We cited a number of other Solar Farm DCO's, none of which make permanent diversions to PROW. In its response (EN010162/APP/8.22) the Applicant quotes the A66 Northern Trans-Pennine Development Consent Order 2024, The Drax Power (Generating Stations) Order 2019 and Sizewell C (Nuclear Generating Station) Order 2022 as examples of DCOs that make permanent diversions to PROW. However, none of these DCOs are solar farms with a limited permitted period of operation.

The Applicant's response also states *"The Applicant considers that users of a PROW would consider a route that has been in situ for 40 years or more to be permanent by that time"*

The suggestion that the diversion of Weston FP10, Carlton-on-Trent FP6 & FP10, and also that of Kelham FP7a (as per our submission of 15th January 2026) would be accepted as permanent fails to recognise the historic aspect of these PROW, nor the inconvenience to users of the length of the diversions.

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Nottinghamshire

We would also point out that there is no certainty that Great North Solar will be in operation for the whole of its permitted lifetime. In his award of solar farm CFD contracts on 10 February 2026 the Secretary of State awarded 157 solar contracts for a period of twenty years, in order to ensure that the developers could achieve a reasonable return on their investment. It is quite probable that a number of these contracts will not be renewed in twenty years time, and therefore the solar farms will then be decommissioned.

In Q1.1.9, Planning Benefits, the ExA invited parties to comment on whether they agree that the proposed development would deliver the stated benefits. One of those benefits was “enhanced public access legacy”. Clearly the proposed permanent diversion of Kelham FP7a, Weston FP10 and Carlton-on-Trent FP6 & FP10, do not enhance public access.

Ramblers was formed 90 years ago to protect and enhance public access to our countryside. That remains one of our charitable aims today.

The closures / diversions of the PROW highlighted in our submissions should be Temporary. Should that be deemed not feasible, then the DCO should state as part of the decommissioning that these PROW must be restored to their current alignments, rather than use the procedure of the Highways Act 1980.

We ask that the Examining Authority takes the necessary steps to ensure that, if the application is approved, these footpaths are restored to their rightful position in our landscapes, and that future generations of walkers are able to enjoy these footpaths as we can enjoy them today.


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