

Written Submission following ISH2 11th & 12th February 2026

Fields For Farming (FFF)

The following points, clarifications and objections were raised by Fields for Farming. Please note other representations maybe submitted by FFF given limited time to submit responses and collate them – apologies in advance if this is the case.

Agenda Items :

(3) Flood

That the Secretary of State considers that there is a significant regulatory gap in the Environmental Permitting Regulations relating to pollution control and Solar arrays and more specifically relating the Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) and that they are primarily regulated through Health and Safety and Planning systems which leaves an unacceptable risk to the environment.

The developer has yet to determine what plant and infrastructure they are to use through the detailed design process which they say is to follow DCO. This leave unknown unknowns in terms of potential toxic and polluting chemicals in both the panels and the BESS.

FFF also maintains that the main thrust of the flood risk analysis is the protection of the plant from damage rather than the community and the environment.

The whole area is a flood plain which is drained by pumps. Flooding in the past has been a result of pumps failing, and this does not appear in the worst-case scenario in the flood risk assessment. In addition, it was noted that the SuDs will be drained to the ordinary watercourses within the area which ultimately pump into the River Trent, this does not appear to have been addressed.

(4) Health, Safety & Wellbeing

We note that the developer had not yet responded to all matters raised in previous representations (from FFF and other IPs).

The Health Impact Assessment focuses on physical pollutants and, in our opinion inadequately quantifies the mental health impact and wellbeing of this project on our community. Professional judgement is heavily relied upon, and landscape-scale changes and loss of recreational amenity has not been given proportionate weight.

Given the cumulative impact of this on other projects, Electromagnetic fields has been raised as a major concern and this project brings these concerns within closer proximity to the villages and its residential properties.

Great concern regarding BESS Safety and toxic plumes have been raised, plume dispersal was discussed, but appeared to rely on the prevailing wind direction, not helpful to residents and other critical manned projects and residents in those situations, and as yet there is no clear emergency plans in place for such an event (see fire risk) which is also causing much debate and heightened anxiety amongst residents.

This is a very quiet rural environment (even with the existing energy infrastructure), however this large-scale development brings the low frequency emitters closer to residential property and more so to users of PRow. Low-Frequency noise will be constant and has potential to affect sleep quality.

FFF maintain that the cumulative impact of construction stress and consultation fatigue has not been addressed sufficiently given the high number of NSIP projects in the wider area. This has now been compounded by the Landowners Lawyers representation comments made at ISH3 regarding other potential projects including a Datawarehouse.

Residents, Visitors and tourists to the area will lose their sense of pride of place and association with the historical heritage assets in the area and the open countryside, the impact on this good feel factor has not been adequately assessed. maybe classed as temporary and transient, but when looking out of the windmill windows towards the solar array (180-degree impact) and the panels will be angled towards the windmill), the assessment appears only to consider views from ground level.

Representatives from the community spoke about the real and current concerns around health and well-being, loss of amenity and isolation, expected crime levels once construction commences (especially theft as seen in other areas), the health risk assessment once again relies heavily on professional judgement and appears to place great weight on air emissions and reaching its conclusion and forgets the negative impact of all the other factors raised by the FFF community Group.

(5) Land use and agriculture

FFF do not intent to re-state their previous representations, however a local tenant spoke poignantly about the impact that this project will have on the farming community in this area, both directly and indirectly.

There will be no socio-economic benefit to the micro economy, rather the other extreme, generations of tenant farmers will have their tenancies terminated, and support service industries will suffer loss of business. The Trent valley is The Breadbasket of Nottinghamshire. The developer in their own reports says that the only benefit is short-term to the wider locality from remote construction workers using hotels and the like for accommodation (not even local temporary construction jobs).

Much reliance is put on the fact that 40 years is only temporary, and that steel posts will be driven into the ground for the solar arrays. The developer has not quantified the amount of concrete and other aggregates that will be used to facilitate this project given many roadways are to be constructed, the substation and BESS infrastructure pads and not least, the many miles of fencing posts that will require concrete mountings. Can the community be assured these will all be removed and the land truly re-instated.

The developer implied that the ponds, scrubland and other mitigation will be left to the landowner to decide what to do.

(6) Biodiversity and ecology

The applicant confirmed that gaps would be left in fencing to allow wildlife to move around the proposed development, however it was noted by FFF that this amounted to only 400 gaps 200mm x 300mm in an area of 2200 acres (5 per acre), where currently, as the inspector has seen they have free movement as the landscape is open with little, if any fenced fields. The area is open fields and hedgerows.

FFF also noted that the surveys are all well and good, but wildlife follows seasons and the weather, and a survey is a single point in time (yes it was repeated but on a daily basis). FFF has photographic evidence of the prolific wildlife in the area as seen daily (1000's of photographs taken by local residents). These include red listed Yellowhammer and Fieldfare seen in the development area (all taken from ProW). The mitigation proposed by the applicant is not sufficient to accommodate the numbers of redlist wildlife that is being impacted – the mitigation areas (if effective) will become very crowded.

The conversion of arable land to managed grassland may increase floral diversity on paper, it fails to account for the habitat loss caused by the physical presence of the solar arrays. Research suggests that ground-foraging and hedge-nesting birds often exhibit 'displacement' by avoiding even high-quality foraging margins if they are hemmed in by tall, industrial infrastructure.

Furthermore, how will the applicant ensure that the proposed margins and mitigation actually provide what our local bird and wildlife population will lose when the 2200 acres of arable baseline is removed. The mitigation remains speculative and insufficient to prevent a localised decline in vulnerable populations.

(7) Transport and access

FFF restate their concerns regarding the cumulative impact of this and other projects, whilst assurances have been given that these will be managed effectively between National Highways, Nottinghamshire County Council and the applicant, matters such as off road traffic management and clashes with other projects using the same off-road network remains unanswered.

(8) Historic Environment

FFF and North Leverton Windmill trust have worked together to submit responses to the Examining Authority and much has already been said. The Parish Council has also provided much detail to support why this project should be refused because of the light touch approach the applicant has given to the impact on the many heritage assets (some of significance) in the area. Nottinghamshire County Council have also echoed these concerns with respect to buried archaeology, St Peter's and St Paul's Church in Sturton le Steeple and North Leverton windmill.

In addition, the applicant has not assessed the impact that this development will have on the sustainability of these assets and their contribution to the local economy (direct and indirect) as a result of this application.

To confirm, there is a Pilgrim Trail driving route, a Pilgrim Trail walking route and the Trent Valley Way walking route, all will be impact by the development.

(9) Landscape & Visual

Regarding glint and glare, residents' views will be impacted by the panels, this is acknowledged but underestimated. Visitors and tourists to North Leverton Windmill will be greatly impacted, the development maybe classed as temporary and transient, but when looking out of the windmill windows towards the solar array (180-degree impact) and the panels will be angled towards the windmill), the assessment appears only to consider views from ground level.

There is significant landscape and visual impact from this project.

(10) Other

Emergency Access to the BESS was discussed, FFF seeks clarification as to which road and where the two access points will be as there is potential confusion on where the secondary access will be (street names used locally may differ from those used by the developer especially regarding North Street, the point it becomes Common Lane and Cross Common Lane).