

Following the oral representation and subsequent question directed at the applicant relating to noise from the BESS site, I feel great concern that the BESS site between Monk Fryston and Hambleton will introduce an audible “hum” to the area. The response received did not inspire confidence that this would be properly addressed, and it felt as though the applicant would have no real intent to eliminate any operational noise that should arise, passing the accountability back to the bare minimum mandated in government guidelines, as opposed to working in earnest with the lived experience of residents that might be affected.

Other representations expressed further concerns toward the BESS that also contribute toward my feeling that the placement is highly inappropriate. As the number of Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) installations increases across the nation, so do the risks of vapor clouds, thermal runaway, and explosion. It is my understanding that there are currently no universally accepted methods for extinguishing lithium-ion or lithium-ion fires; response teams generally must either let the fire burn out or apply massive amounts of water over an extended period. Allowing a unit to burn would risk allowing the fire to spread, if not to another unit than to the wider area. Conversely, emergency crews dosing the flames would need to utilise vast volumes of water over a period of many hours in an attempt to control the flames and dilute flammable vapor clouds below explosive limits, resulting in millions of litres of contaminated runoff. A clear and detailed plan of action must be prepared regarding the handling and the disposal of the resultant toxic water. In addition, the currently-proposed location isn't anywhere near a body of water large enough to handle this demand under emergency conditions, with all routes to access to the closest body, the river Aire, being narrow country roads, not appropriate for response vehicles to reach safely and swiftly in emergency conditions. Most significantly of all, any smoke and vapours produced in the event of a fire, regardless of how it were to be handled, would ultimately represent severe and significant health risks to every one of our residents, both immediate and in the long-term, being far too close to residences to avoid this inevitability. I therefore implore the planning inspectorate to advise for this facility be moved to a more appropriate remote area, away from residences, and somewhere where appropriate access for emergency services can still be achieved.

Indeed, even any amount of water required for general operation should be a grave concern. When asked if Yorkshire Water could fulfil the increased demands of the site, the response was simply “they said they could”. When it is acknowledged that so-called “Nationally Significant” projects are not being properly required to take each other into account, I question whether this should be considered a dubious claim at best. It was only a couple of years ago that it was being widely reported that our water systems could not keep up with the then-current demands after decades of skimming profits and paying out dividends instead of investments and upgrades, yet now we're set to massively increase demand on them? It is inevitable that these corporate developments will pull water from our homes (as is already being seen throughout the western world in residential areas far too close to such developments). Access to clean drinking water is our basic human right, and, thanks to privatisation, a product we must now pay for. That our access should be in any way hindered should not be countenanced.

As also highlighted in the oral representations, it's been a recurring theme throughout the process that the applicant has repeatedly failed to engage with residents, and are consistently making errors in their documentation, with errors even persisting across multiple resubmissions. This does not inspire confidence in any “assurances” made.

I would also question how much of Light Valley Solar's documentation utilises so-called “Artificial Intelligence technology” (deliberately mis-branded by big tech companies such as it is). It's been identified that use of AI must be highlighted in our own relevant representation (incidentally, none of my representations have utilised this in any way). While I've no doubt LVS are covering themselves in this regard with some vague disclaimer, I would suggest that this being a requirement at all on those submitting representation is a tacit admission that any document prepared in this manner has an unacceptably high chance of containing erroneous material. For those of us submitting these representations, that's one thing, but the use of AI in hundreds upon hundreds of planning documents compounds this issue exponentially and should simply not at all be considered good enough for documents pertaining to the safety and welfare of the public in the vicinity.

It is disingenuous to claim that this development “could power X number of homes”. This project must justify its existence based on projected energy needs. The most recent housing statistics data shows that we are not building anywhere near enough homes to justify the need for the amount of solar developments currently being proposed

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/housing-statistics-1-april-2025-to-31-march-2026>). Therefore, this projected energy need must be coming from elsewhere, and that will undoubtedly be from developments such as data centres. The claim that this will, in the long term, reduce common household bills needs to be substantiated by concrete data.

Ultimately, I am not at all inspired to have much confidence in any responses or assurances made by the applicant, and I sincerely hope that the Planning Inspectorate will admit in earnest if they find themselves similarly uninspired.