

We are working a family farm and landowners of some 73 years which spans 3 generations of the same family. This proposed cable route across our farm land, some of the best farmland in the country effectively cuts our farm in two and crosses the land we farm in three different places. The proposed substation looks likely to be sited on an additional parcel of our family land farmed by our holding.

It's hard enough trying to make a living as a livestock farmer these days without the threat of this cable ruining our most valuable asset- our farmland- and disrupting our livelihood for many years. I understand that the two parties involved in the project will not commit to the simultaneous installation of their cables (Project representatives' statement in Landowners' meeting with at St Matthew's Church Ballam 04/12/2024). This would seem basic common sense to me. This could potentially mean that we will not see our farmland restored to any workable order in our lifetime. How are we to earn our living? How are we to produce food for our nation? Or indeed to keep our local farmworkers in their jobs?

We have temporarily paused our working Dairy Farm enterprise due to [REDACTED]. All equipment and resources have been maintained with the intention of a return to dairy farming in the near future. The uncertainty around this project has frustrated our attempts to find a Dairy Farming Tenant.

We do not farm for money therefore compensation is not the answer. It's about putting our hearts and soul into the land and this cannot be distilled into monetary value, nor perhaps understood by large corporations who stand to profit from this project of so called 'green energy'

Following concerns raised by the Examining Authority's concerns around the economic impact on the proposed project on farms along the cable corridor, (specifically if businesses would be left 'viable' when land was 'returned to agriculture' and Fylde Borough Council's similar concerns), the Examining Authority requested the Applicant to 'provide plans showing how the proposed development would affect land held by individual farms so that we can have a better understanding of the effects on each farm' Issue specific hearing 1 part 8 on 2/5/2025 at 32:00). We kindly request that details of the impact on our farm and family/other land parcels we farm be provided to us under the Freedom of Information Act. We feel the impact on our farming practice is unquantifiable.

It seems that the cable route will leave us with a legacy of irregular shaped parcels of land with raised manhole covers to allow for cable inspection. This will make the land impracticable to farm. How are our children expected to the prime grazing land which has been mutilated by this unsolicited project? This project continues to cause us acute psychological stress when we have more pressing [REDACTED] to consider.

We have been met with threats of Compulsory Purchase Orders and legal action should we attempt to impede investigative work across our land. Reassurances of respect and commitment to working with landowners have proved near worthless promises. We have experienced wires from flags being left in grazing fields for cattle- a wire can kill a cow when ingested- Contractors digging exploratory trenches have already left open road gates on our farm – potentially endangering the public driving down the local country lanes when they encounter cattle straying onto the highway. replicate soil which has taken thousands of years to develop. The projects' Soil Management Plan has already proved worthless in protecting our productive grazing land from damage done during the initial investigative work. We have photographic evidence which clearly demonstrates on a small scale the impact of the soil structure on our prime grazing land. This will be provided upon request.

We are required to meet stringent criteria to ensure our farming enterprise adheres to the Red Tractor standard/ dairy contract with Arla. Red Tractor Biosecurity Policy requires farmers to establish controls to 'manage biosecurity risks on farm including risks from equipment (contractors' equipment including vehicles.... Farm visitors that have access to livestock B.BI.1b); and that 'DEFRA approved disinfectant/cleaning equipment is available for use on boots/clothing/vehicles and facilities (B.BI.2a). Will every vehicle coming onto our land and every individual disinfect tyres/work boots before entering our land to prevent diseases such as Foot & Mouth/TB being transferred from farm to farm? Who will ensure contractors' compliance?

During the investigative phase which has been underway for a lengthy period already, we established a Whatapp group to enable us to establish when contractors were accessing on and working on the land which we farm. This was agreed at a meeting with our land agent, representatives from the project and their land agent Dalcour McLaren. We required prior notice of dates/exact location of visitors with signing in and out. This seemed basic common sense to us and provided assurances that contractors working alongside our livestock /machinery were all accounted for under basic Health & Safety protocols. This is common practice in most workplaces and good manners considering workers were only on site permissively. It was disappointing to have several contractors not following protocol as agreed in the meeting by the project land agents Dalcour McLaren on 31st May, 2024. Evidence of such failure to follow agreed protocol can be provided to the Examining Authority.

We are grateful that Examining Authority raised our oral submission concerns around gates left open on our holding during the surveying process but disappointed by responses by [REDACTED] at Session 8 of the Issue Specific Hearing (29.53 minutes). Outline Codes of Practice submitted as part of the DCO may not have been in operation at the time of the surveys, but policies and ALOs on site will not prevent contractors from leaving gates open. This project is only as good as the contractors on the ground. [REDACTED] stated that ALOs will be on site and known to the farmers yet Agricultural Liaison Officers were already on site on the days when gates were left open and dangerous wires left in fields where cattle graze. Contractors continue to fail to follow agreed protocol regarding accessing our land. (Details available)

The Outline Code of Construction Practice also states Co T97 'outline Cocp include that farmers' access routes between field within a farm holding will be maintained where reasonably possible or alternative routes agreed with the landowner to ensure the continued operation of agricultural land holdings during the construction phase , where this may be possible'. We have built a series of single farm tracks which allow us to access most of our farmland over the 73 years we have farmed the land. The tracks are in use 24/7 365 by farm machinery, to move livestock between pastures, or on foot to check crops. In a meeting believed to be on 21/3/2024 we were informed by [REDACTED] of Dalcour McLaren of their intention to 'take' these tracks for access When questioned about the word 'take' [REDACTED] agreed that it was 'unfortunate' and reframed it as 'use ' the tracks. Discussion followed regarding how were we to continue to farm.

Policies sound great on paper but the practicalities such as head to head traffic might be problematic. Whose business takes priority? The landowner who requires the flexibility to access their land when conditions are favourable/staff available? Are we expected to ask for permission before we let our cattle out to graze? The practicalities of this project

need addressing properly rather than generating endless meaningless policies.

How are our children expected to continue farming when our most valuable asset- the land has been devastated and devalued by this unwelcome and uninvited project?

In our opinion, the project is ill conceived, rushed and a nonsense. We urge the Examining Authority to consider the devastating impact that this project will have upon the hardworking farmers along the cable route. We invite the Examining Authority to visit our farm during the forthcoming site Inspection and request that this proposed route be scrapped and alternative routes properly investigated.

Thank you