

Fosse Green Development Meeting at Thorpe on the Hill 12th September 2023

Notes in order of comments received from participants:

- List of actions to be taken required
- Use of so much agricultural land is the main issue
- Direct influence on locals – reduction in house prices
- Protection of open countryside and avoidance of industrialisation
- Lincolnshire/North Kesteven becoming a Klondike for Solar Panels ‘dumping ground’
- No national or local plan to manage the developments – seems like a free for all
- Evidence of value for money required
- Decommissioning issues
- Concern over battery storage safety and real carbon cost of construction, what is the whole life carbon cost? Panels need maintenance and replacement.
- Loss of food production, but also current green energy production.
- Involvement of overseas company with no local or national accountability
- Impact on neighbourhood plans
- National Infrastructure Plan creates a favoured position for developers to bypass local planning
- Will this technology be transitory?
- Need mixed renewable energy input on brown field sites. Use of domestic and industrial sites, including airfields
- Strategic importance of local food production
- Short time frame for discussions
- Mitigation measures. Conditions to be applied. Community benefits?
- Preference for a bond rather than compensation
- Manufacturing of panels is outside the UK
- No extension beyond 40 years? It will be a brown field site, so could have turbines as well.
- Impact on views from the Cliff Edge, a significant landscape feature.
- Witham Valley Country Park
- Financial pressure on farmers because of the relative value of solar panels to eg wheat. Land use priorities should not be swayed by short term gain.
- Cumulative impact of many schemes in the pipeline
- Lack of clarity over whether power connection will be underground or overground on pylons up to 50m high, which cost some ten times as much. Plans can change.
- Scheme will not provide cheaper electricity – international market
- Fields are variable and location of tests will make a significant difference – so effectively developers mark their own homework, only 1 test per ha is required.
- All agricultural land can produce good food, with irrigation or it can capture carbon, so 3 or 3a is arbitrary and means almost nothing in terms of food production - all of it is growing crops.
- Some Parish Councils have asked their members whether they support the plans or not, so they know where they are going.
- Consultations direct with local electorate but takes time and can be difficult

Recommendations:

Parishes to submit a measured response submitted by closing date in October 20th

Set up Steering Group made up by members from each Council – underway

Set up a detailed action plan

Share a clear understanding of the key issues

Information piece for social media, TV etc.

Set up a fighting fund

Keep up the pressure by using influence early and often.

Meeting closed after 90 minutes