I strongly object to this project as this will be a huge blight on the countryside. I live in Saxilby as it has a good range of amenities, is close to my work, and I feel happy here surrounded by green open space. I enjoy the views when driving, walking, looking out of my windows, the feeling of space, the positive effect on my mental health from being in this kind of environment rather than a built up industrialised area which is what the countryside around me will become if these large scale projects are allowed to go ahead. They will change the whole character of the area for decades to come, the rest of my lifetime. Public rights of way across fields will be affected visually, if they still remain at all. It will engulf many small villages on multiple sides. At least 4 large scale solar projects in this area will cover more than 10,000 acres, stretching 16 miles by 8 miles across fields, farmland and wonderful countryside. Every time I go out in my car, every journey I take, I am going to be confronted by this monstrosity as it covers such a huge area with each proposal next to one another. The Nature and Mental Health Report produced by mental health charity Mind, states that spending time in nature can actually reduce anxiety and depression. Sitting on a bench to take in the views or to walk through fields or along a riverbank are a privilege and a pleasure appreciated by many. Taking your dog for a walk through a solar park with a tunnel of metal fences, security cameras, storage batteries, will create the opposite; anxiety, stress and depression. This will seriously affect the mental health of myself and my family and we do not want it. Residents will be wishing they could move away, or had not moved here in the first place, but will then face the worry that house prices will be affected. I noticed a property for sale in Thorpe le Fallows which the agent Fine & Country describes as being '*In a little hamlet surrounded by open fields with far-reaching views*' and '*Thorpe-Le-Fallows is a well-kept secret, halfway between Lincoln and Gainsborough and halfway between Sturton by Stow and Scampton – close enough for central Lincoln commuting convenience and far enough for rural peace and tranquillity. It's a small hamlet surrounded by beautiful Lincolnshire farmland which in the pre-industrial age must have been some of the most valuable and productive in the country judging by the quality of the churches that have been built*'. This is one of many estate agents listings I have seen which point to the views and surrounding countryside as a selling point. It would be absolutely criminal to let a current fad for solar farms destroy the valuable farmland, history, tourism and desirability of this area. It seems Lincolnshire has become a dumping ground for these projects.

There has been extensive flooding of the fields where panels are proposed to be located. The River Till runs through the centre of the Cottam project and very close to Thorpe le Fallows, a small hamlet and medieval village. I sent a previous submission about this with photos showing how the flooding developed over the course of a few hours, cutting off the village on one side. Please refer to my Deadline 2 submission to see photos of flooding around the River Till and Thorpe le Fallows and how this pushed along the river to Lincoln city centre.

What about the electromagnetic field as cables are located underneath or through the River Trent? What effect will this have one the fish and other marine life? Research has shown subsea power cables cause electromagnetic fields (EMFs) into the marine environment. EMFs can interfere with certain species orientation, navigation, and locating conspecifics or buried prey. Cables may intersect with egg laying sites, mating grounds, foraging habitat.

We are going to see hundreds of miles of ancient hedgerows and trees ripped out, why is this acceptable? It seems like a contradiction in the pursuit of green energy considering the role plants play in the atmosphere. The devastation this will cause to the amazing wildlife we are privileged to have living around us is truly shocking. Replacement hedgerows will take decades to grow. Wildlife routes will be affected. There will loss of natural habitat for a wide range of species. I don't believe

grass and or other plants will be able to grow underneath the vast area of panels. The mention of grazing sheep is purely a marketing tactic. Britain's native wildlife species have declined dramatically over the past 50 years. Creating safe habitats for wildlife to live, shelter and breed has never been more important. What will happen to the nesting birds, hibernating hedgehogs, dormice and other small mammals, as well as insects like beetles and butterflies. Many species use hedgerows for food such as leaves, flowers, berries, insects or small mammals. Some species rely on hedgerows as shelter from predators or the elements whilst out foraging. Birds rely on berries in hedgerows for food in winter. Hedgerows criss-cross the country, enabling wildlife to move about the landscape. They consequently connect populations that would otherwise be isolated and vulnerable. Bats use hedgerows as both feeding sites and flight paths for commuting between their roosts and other suitable foraging sites. Butterflies and other flying insects take advantage of the shelter hedges provide when in flight. The People's Trust for Endangered Species states over 500 plant species, 60 species of nesting bird, many hundreds of invertebrates and almost all of our native small mammal species have been recorded as being supported by hedgerows. As many as 16 of the 19 birds included in the Farmland Bird Index are associated with hedgerows, while 10 of these indicator species use hedgerows as a primary habitat.

CPRE, the countryside charity, is calling for a "rooftop revolution". Its website says: "Putting solar panels on rooftops across the country can help us to generate the clean electricity we need, while cutting our carbon emissions and sparing land for food, farming and nature." They also want car parks to be used as "power stations" and add that putting panels on warehouses, schools, car parks and farm buildings, can be quickly roll out renewable energy "without harming wildlife, food security and landscapes." The research, by the UCL Energy Institute, for CPRE, shows that decarbonising the national energy grid requires far less land than feared. It also reveals that the potential of brownfield sites to generate renewable energy is dramatically underused. Rooftops can provide over half our solar energy targets, report shows. The CPRE has found that over half the solar panels needed to hit national net zero targets could be fitted on rooftops and on car parks.

In fact, the government estimates there are 250,000 hectares of south-facing, industrial roof space across the country. Please tell me why these solar projects cannot be located on brownfield sites, warehouse rooftops, new housing developments rooftops, the old power station sites which they intend to connect to? The Bentley factory in Crewe, has used solar panels at its factory for over 10 years. With a total area of 60,911 m2 – equal to nine football pitches, able to generate 10 MW of power in total – enough to power 2,370 homes per year and capable of delivering up to 75 per cent of the plant's daytime electrical demand on average and can peak at 100 per cent. Think of all the Amazon warehouses and such like.

Other countries use the usual shaped ridged roof tiles containing solar technology and build houses with a complete solar roof. Just last week I saw on the news a ground-breaking development, with researchers at Oxford University developing a new solar power-generating material that can be applied to everyday objects such as rucksacks, cars, and mobile phones, potentially revolutionizing the way we harness solar energy. This innovative approach could allow for the generation of solar electricity without relying on conventional silicon-based solar panels. This suggests solar farms will become out of date very quickly as better technology emerges.

It is clear to see there are other options for renewable energy! The developers of all the proposals in this area keep commenting that this landscape is already industrialised because of the cooling towers on the horizon. They clearly know nothing about this area as the power stations are located in Nottinghamshire, on the other side of the River Trent, not Lincolnshire where these solar park proposals are.

There is danger in siting BESS batteries too close to village and residents. In September 2020 a fire at a BESS site in Liverpool took 59 hours to extinguish following an explosion. During the exothermic reaction process (i.e., thermal runaway), large amounts of flammable and potentially toxic battery gas will be generated. The released gas largely contains hydrogen, which is highly flammable under a wide range of conditions.

There will be a huge number of abnormal load vehicles through villages with narrow roads and parked cars on the street and in some cases no footpath. This is bound to cause structural damage to roads and grass verges. There will be traffic build up, causing delays on roads which are commuter routes in the morning and afternoon.

Food production should be the primary focus for farmland. How can we remain in any way self-sufficient if giving over vast swathes of agricultural land to ground mounted solar installations, battery storage and other large scale development. Roof tops is where solar should be. Land is proposed to be taken for this purpose which is deemed 3b land but is capable of producing a ten ton per hectare wheat harvest. Lincolnshire is known as the bread basket of Britain. This is depressing and wrong. We cannot eat solar panels. Importing more food surely contributes to increased carbon footprint.

What about the disposal of all the panels? From a regulatory aspect, PV panel waste still falls under the general waste classification. If recycling processes were not implemented, 60 million tons of PV panel waste would lie in landfills by the year 2050; since all PV cells contain a certain amount of toxic substances, that would truly become a not-so-sustainable way of sourcing energy.


Public Footpath
Public Footpath
River Till / Thorpe bridge
⬇️

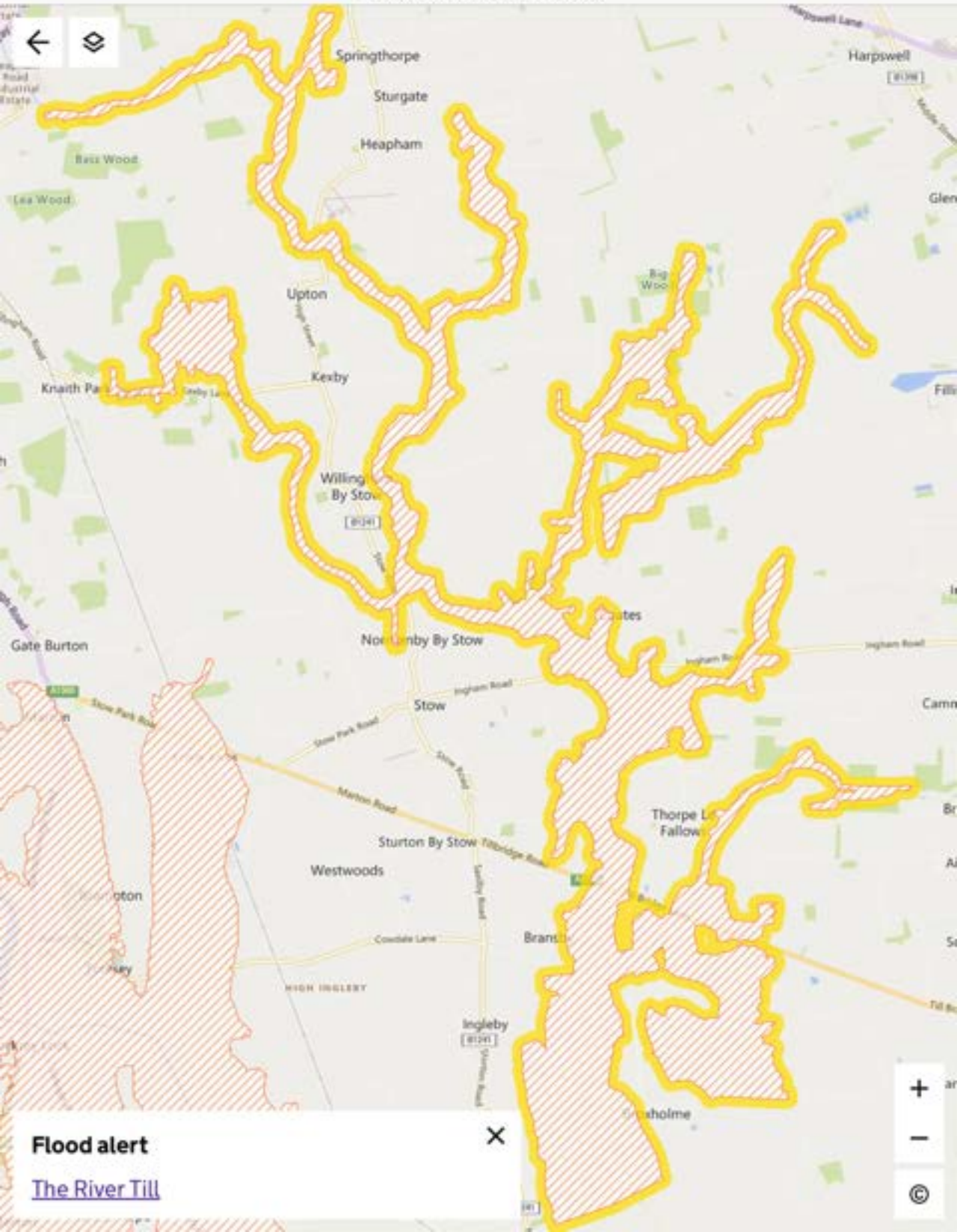

Proposed site
River Till bridge

20/10/23 Photo ref 6 looking NW from River Till/ Thorpe bridge, 09.02am

20/10/23 Photo ref 3, bend on Thorpe Lame heading to Thorpe, water pouring from dyke 09.10am

20/10/23 Photo ref 3,
bend on Thorpe Lane,
taken at 11.58am,
water level has risen
since photos at
09.10am.

Bransby crossroads
20/10/2023 which became
impassable and remained
flooded for several days



Looking North from Dunham bridge, Cottam power station on the left

The Lincolnite
Yesterday at 14:33 ·

The Lincolnite
Yesterday at 14:33 ·

Torksey Lock, Cottam power station

Flooded fields looking East from Beckingham towards Gainsborough

Gainsborough

Dunham bridge

Brayford Wharf,
Lincoln