

EARLY ACTIONS NAVENBY RESIDENTS CAN TAKE TO REGISTER THEIR CONCERNS ABOUT THE SUBSTATION AND BESS

There is already a well-established Stop Fosse Green movement, currently focused on the solar panel complex, but Navenby does not have a big presence on it. With the recent information released by National Grid about the electrical substation, and with the knowledge of Fosse Green's intent to build a BESS, Navenby residents now need to take the lead on objecting to these particular proposals as part of the wider objections to (potentially) seven local solar farms.

With little time to create and distribute this note I have not been able to explore how we can best object to these proposals. However, to get the ball rolling, please be aware of the following meetings, which I encourage you to attend to help shape the Parish Council's thinking.

- **Friday 27 September.** National Grid drop-in public consultation at The Venue between 3pm-7pm to talk about the electrical substation: the Navenby Parish Council will have a stand there to canvass residents' views on the proposals and to start collecting signatures for a petition to NKDC objecting to the proposed locations of the electrical substation and BESS.
- **Wednesday 16 October.** Navenby Parish Council-led meeting at The Venue starting at 7pm. The meeting will:
 - Provide more details about the solar development projects.
 - Seek Navenby residents' suggestions for actions to maximise local awareness of the proposed construction.
 - Seek volunteers to form a Navenby Action Group to help the Parish Council influence NKDC's decision-making.
 - Collect signatures for the petition against the construction.

I am meeting this week with Barry Earnshaw, Chair of the Stop Fosse Green Movement, and Councillor Marianne Overton MBE, who serves on the Lincolnshire County Council and the North Kesteven District Council, to discuss what actions a Navenby Action Group might take and I will provide you with details as soon as possible.

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IMPORTANT INFORMATION FROM NAVENBY PARISH COUNCIL ABOUT PROPOSED SITING OF MAJOR ELECTRICAL INFRASTRUCTURE ELEMENTS ADJACENT TO NAVENBY



Electrical Substation at Bicker Fen, near Boston: similar scale to Navenby proposal



Battery Electrical Storage System at Kingston Upon Hull

Dear Resident,

Issue. You may already be aware of the proposed Fosse Green solar panel complex near Witham St Hughes and the Springwell complex near Blankney and Ashby de la Launde. The immediate 'so what' for Navenby is that it is proposed that the power generated by these complexes will be fed into an electrical substation to the east of Navenby on the northern side of Heath Lane, and Fosse Green want to build a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) facility on the northern side of Green Man Road. However, what is probably less well-known is that the electrical substation is being built on a scale to provide connectivity for a further five proposed solar complexes in this area, the locations of which are currently not defined, so there is a risk that these might also have an impact on Navenby. While the Energy Secretary can unilaterally approve the solar complexes, the electrical substation and BESS on which their builds depend require approval by the planning department of North Kesteven District Council (NKDC), so we need to engage with them to influence their decision-making.

Aim of this Note. The Navenby Parish Council (NPC) is supportive of green energy initiatives, but only within a National Plan (currently absent) that identifies production needs and outputs, and defines an appropriate mix of renewables. Furthermore, we believe that in the first instance, renewable energy infrastructure should be sited on brownfield sites, residential and commercial premises' roofs, redundant military bases, car parks, etc., rather than on high quality agricultural land

such as that in Lincolnshire. This note therefore aims to make you aware of the impact (and risks) of siting an electrical substation and BESS so close to Navenby (or any other area of habitation) during their construction and operation, in order to inform your thinking on whether to support or object to these particular developments.

Need for All Residents' Involvement.

If the NPC's stance reflects the collective view of the village, we will provide a focal point and information conduit for addressing this issue, but it is not something we (eight unpaid volunteers already dealing with a wide range of village issues) can manage on our own. If the NPC is to persuade NKDC that it is inappropriate to build National Grid's electrical substation and Fosse Green's BESS so close to the village, we will need significant evidence that villagers support us, and I provide details of how you can do this on the back page of this note.

Value of Engagement. Although the current Energy Secretary has recently approved three solar projects, you should be aware that on 26 July 2024, Torridge District Council refused permission for a 73-acre solar farm, with battery storage, on land at Ebberley Down in Devon. They did so for similar reasons that the NPC and other local groups are objecting to large-scale solar complexes in Lincolnshire: the loss of high-quality agricultural land, the fact that Lincolnshire already has a disproportionate number of solar energy complexes, and the inappropriate and unnecessary industrialisation of our rural landscape.

Issues with the Current Proposals.

So, the following points are offered not

to fight the development of clean energy generation, but to highlight the issues of building its supporting infrastructure too close to existing centres of population. I don't expect that everybody will agree that all of the issues are important to them, but hopefully most people will find at least one or two that will persuade them to play an active part in objecting to the proposed sites for the electrical substation and BESS in particular, and the currently uncoordinated siting of solar panel complexes in general.

Concerns with the Electrical Substation.

- Construction scheduled to last 'Summer 2026 to late 2029', although National Grid cannot quantify their confidence in this delivery date. Increased traffic congestion on Heath Lane throughout this period, risk of collisions between cars and heavy construction vehicles.
- Site will cover approximately 500 x 250 metres of agricultural land.
- Unquantified light pollution created by inevitable security measures to protect the site: what impact will this have on wildlife?

Concerns with the BESS.

- Construction dates likely to mirror those of the substation, so traffic issues on Green Man Road will mirror and exacerbate those on Heath Road.
- BESS will store electrical energy in a large number of large-scale Lithium-ion batteries. Should one of these fail spontaneously, or be subject to interference, there is the risk fire will spread to adjacent batteries. Burning

Lithium-ion batteries cannot be extinguished, so Lincolnshire fire brigade's response would be to try to contain the toxic fumes emitted using water mist sprays, cool the area around the fire, and wait for it to burn out.

- Although no details are yet available, the BESS is likely to be on a similar scale to the substation and generate the same issues of light pollution and any impact on wildlife.

General Concerns.

- There is already anecdotal evidence of house sales falling through around the proposed Fosse Green and Springwell sites as awareness spreads of these developments: it is inevitable that the substation and BESS would have an adverse impact on Navenby property prices.
- Much of the hardware associated with solar energy cannot be recycled when it comes to the end of its 40-year lifespan.
- Much of it is provided by China, leaving the UK dependent on a potentially hostile third-party for a critical element of national infrastructure.
- UK companies are developing better and safer alternatives to Lithium-ion batteries, but not being supported by the current government in their haste to deliver net zero.

Yours sincerely,

Mike Burt

Chairman of Navenby Parish Council