

29 May 2025

Lincolnshire County Council - Highways and SuDS Support  
Highways Department  
Lincolnshire County Council

**Re: Planning Application 25/0533/FUL - Proposed Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) near Coleby, Lincolnshire**

Harmston Parish Council (HPC) is writing to provide information and seek your support regarding the above planning application, specifically concerning the potential use of Church Lane in Harmston by heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) and Abnormal Indivisible Loads (AILs) during the construction and operation of the proposed Battery Energy Storage System (BESS).

Church Lane is classified as a 'C' road, serving as a rural lane to our small village, used by local residents, cyclists, pedestrians and others. It passes through the Harmston Conservation Area, which is designated for its special architectural and historic interest and is home to several Grade II listed buildings: Top Lodge and Bottom Lodge, both being located on Church Lane / Station Road. It features a significant pinch point adjacent to the village church and a resident's property, where the carriageway narrows to a width that prevents two HGVs from passing safely. HPC has implemented various traffic management measures over recent years—including enhanced signage, road markings, and a Speed Indicator Device—to mitigate risks associated with HGV use on Church Lane and Station Road. Despite these efforts, incidents persist, such as vehicles damaging wing mirrors or windscreens, walls to resident's properties have been damaged by vehicles struggling to stay within the confines of the lanes of the road, and residents frequently report vehicles mounting the pavement to avoid oncoming traffic. This poses a particular danger to pedestrians at the crossing point opposite the church, where sight lines are limited. HPC believes Church Lane lacks the structural capacity, width, and design standards to safely accommodate HGVs and AILs, making it entirely unsuitable for the traffic likely to be generated by the BESS development.

Our specific concerns about the potential use of Church Lane by HGVs and AILs include:

- **Safety Risks:** The narrow road limits manoeuvring space, increasing collision risks. Ongoing incidents and complaints highlight persistent hazards, with pedestrians (including children and the elderly) and cyclists facing heightened danger due to vehicles encroaching onto the pedestrian walkway. The walkway is less than a metre wide with a stone wall along one edge.
- **Environmental Impact:** Increased HGV and AIL traffic would elevate air pollution from emissions, harming the local environment and residents' health. HGVs and AILs would generate significant disturbances, particularly during construction, affecting residential areas along the route.
- **Heritage Impact:** The increased presence of HGVs and AILs on Church Lane would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the Harmston Conservation Area and could cause physical damage to Grade II listed buildings due to the narrow road and proximity of the structures to the carriageway.
- **Road Damage:** The road surface, not designed for heavy vehicles, would deteriorate rapidly under frequent HGV and AIL use, raising maintenance costs and disrupting residents.

- **Traffic Congestion:** The narrow road's limited passing opportunities could lead to blockages and delays, disrupting traffic flow.
- **Cumulative Impact:** We are concerned that there is the likelihood of a cumulative effect from the significant number of large-scale solar generation sites being considered in the local area from Fosse Green through Navenby and onto Springwell. These are linked to the possible new National Grid substation at Navenby and further BESS installations around that location. We believe that the investigation into alternative sites for these developments has not been conducted with a view to this cumulative effect on the road infrastructure in Harmston and elsewhere along the cliff edge which we hope the Highways Department will address.

It is noteworthy that Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) has recently acknowledged the detrimental effects of HGV traffic through small villages such as Harmston (*Minutes of the Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee - Tuesday, 15th October, 2024 10.00 am*). From April 2025, LCC has imposed contractual bans on HGVs using this route for journeys to and from the 'Energy from Waste' site at Teal Park in Lincoln and for the new LCC Food Waste contract. Permitting HGVs and AILs for the BESS project would undermine these measures and exacerbate existing safety and environmental issues.

In light of these concerns, HPC respectfully requests that you consider the following in your response to the planning application:

1. Conduct or recommend an onsite review of Church Lane to assess its suitability for HGV and AIL traffic, focusing on the pinch point by the church and the steep hill's bends. The route's use during winter months, with snow and ice on the hill, further underscores its unsuitability.
2. Advise that Church Lane is not an appropriate route for HGVs and AILs associated with the BESS development, given its classification, physical constraints, and existing safety issues.
3. Recommend that any planning approval includes strict conditions to prevent HGV and AIL use on Church Lane, with alternative routes designated in consultation with the highways department.
4. Suggest that approval be conditional upon the completion of the North Hykeham Relief Road, providing a suitable alternative for HGVs and AILs away from cliff villages during both construction and operation phases.
5. If the applicant cannot demonstrate effective mitigation of traffic impacts, recommend refusal of the application on highways grounds to protect the Harmston community's safety and amenity.

While the BESS may support renewable energy objectives, its benefits must not compromise the safety, well-being, and infrastructure of Harmston's residents. The risks posed by HGV and AIL use on Church Lane are significant, threatening highway safety, the environment, and the village's rural character. Harmston Parish Council will be submitting an objection to this planning application.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We hope you will support our concerns and provide a robust response to the planning authority reflecting Church Lane's unsuitability for the proposed traffic. If you require further information or wish to discuss this in person, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Cllr Paul Wallace  
Chairman, Harmston Parish Council

Email: [paul.wallace@harmston.info](mailto:paul.wallace@harmston.info)

Please Cc: [clerk@harmston.info](mailto:clerk@harmston.info)