# Concerns raised over proposed solar farm in Lincolnshire



A significant proposal for a solar farm in Lincolnshire has sparked concern among local councillors, who have expressed alarm over its substantial size and potential impact on the countryside. The proposed Springwell solar farm, envisaged by EDF Renewables UK and Luminous Energy, would span approximately 4,200 hectares, an area equivalent to around 2,800 football pitches, and is located between the cities of Lincoln and Sleaford.

During a council meeting on Tuesday, April 1, representatives from North Kesteven raised objections to the project's scale, highlighting the potential consequences for local farmland and the landscape. The developers assert that the solar installation has the capacity to provide power to 180,000 homes, contributing to the broader transition towards renewable energy sources.

However, the decision regarding the development will not rest with the local council but will ultimately be determined by the government, given the project's extensive scale. In preparation, the council plans to submit a detailed list of objections to the Planning Inspectorate. Among the major concerns highlighted by councillors are the loss of agricultural land, the anticipated alteration of the local landscape, and the safety implications posed by lithium-ion batteries.

Councillor David Suiter, an Independent representative, remarked, "If you look at a map, it will leave an enormous scar on North Kesteven - the scale is quite alarming." He emphasised that while addressing the climate emergency is critical, utilising agricultural land for solar farms should not be viewed as the sole solution.

Another Independent councillor, Marianne Overton, echoed these sentiments, questioning the feasibility of the proposal and suggesting that alternatives exist to meet net-zero targets. "There are so many better options to fulfil net-zero requirements - this is just ridiculous," she stated, adding that a substantial portion of the land in question comprises high-quality farmland. “It's a very big site - that’s an awful lot of food we're not growing and will need to import," she pointed out.

Councillor Ian Carrington from the Conservative Party raised concerns regarding the regulatory framework governing the construction of such projects, comparing it unfavourably to the scrutiny faced by other agricultural developments. “If you want to build a chicken farm, you need planning permission,” he noted. “But if you want to bring tons of highly toxic materials formed into batteries which may or may not be fire-safe, you can plonk them down in the middle of the countryside.”

Additionally, Councillor Linda Edward-Shea, representing the Labour Party, called for transparency in the planning process. She suggested that a comprehensive map detailing current solar farm proposals in Lincolnshire would provide a clearer picture to the Secretary of State for Energy, who will decide on the application. “It would be useful to give the Secretary of State for Energy a better understanding of how much Lincolnshire residents are being asked to give up, and aren’t getting anything in return,” she stated.

The proposal will progress with public meetings anticipated later in the year, allowing residents to contribute their views as the government compiles information about the project. A final decision regarding the solar farm could be expected early next year.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://solarstoragextra.com/edf-renewables-800mw-solar-farm-proposal-accepted/> - This URL corroborates the proposal for the Springwell Solar Farm by EDF Renewables UK, its scale, and the potential impact on the local landscape. It also mentions the project's capacity to provide power for up to 180,000 homes.
* <https://scopwick.parish.lincolnshire.gov.uk/council-business/springwell-solar-farm/5> - This link supports the concerns raised by local councillors, including the reduction in size from the original proposal and the objections related to the scale and environmental concerns.
* <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wp-content/ipc/uploads/projects/EN010149/EN010149-000130-7.24%20Draft%20Statement%20of%20Common%20Ground%20-%20Lincolnshire%20Fire%20and%20Rescue%20Service.pdf> - This document provides detailed information about the Springwell Solar Farm proposal, including its location in North Kesteven, Lincolnshire, and the components of the proposed development.
* <https://solarpowermanagement.net/article/112553/Analysis_of_UK_commercial_roof_space_shows_solar_PV_film_can_achieve_net_zero_without_greenfield_sites> - This article mentioned by the Scopwick Parish Council highlights alternative options for achieving net-zero targets through the use of commercial roof space for solar energy, rather than greenfield sites.
* <https://www.gov.uk/government/planning-act-2008> - This link provides information on the Planning Act 2008, under which the application for the Springwell Solar Farm is being processed. It outlines the framework for nationally significant infrastructure projects like the Springwell Solar Farm.