

At the Preliminary Meeting Day 1 Mr Kean invited comments on if Food Security and Land Use Implications should form part of the Examination. We consider that they should form part of the Examination as there is a clear tension between Food Security in the UK and the loss of agricultural land to large scale solar energy projects.

Regarding the Issue Specific Hearings, we would like to request that the ExA considers Issue Specific Hearings on

Food Security (there are issues relating to this that are separate to other agricultural points)
Assessment of Alternatives

Food security is of great importance to the UK. At present we import approximately half of our food. Taking vegetable growing land out of production increases pressure on other areas, which may have effects on the efforts to reach Net Zero- through higher rates of fertiliser etc being used to increase yields, issues with water supply as many vegetables are irrigated and even increasing imports.

The whole issue of food security should be considered in the light of other proposals taking land out of production - rewilding and rewetting peats.

An issue specific hearing on this topic could be of major benefit by highlighting the potential problems.