

## Simon Says

Transcript Export

<https://www.simonsaysai.com>

### Mallard Pass OFH 1\_17 May PT1

Created on: 2023-05-17 11:58:12

Project Length: 01:25:51

Account Holder: Ryan Ross

File Name: OFH 1\_17 May PT1.mp3

File Length: 01:25:51

FULL TRANSCRIPT (with timecode)

00:00:05:22 - 00:00:15:10

Start time to begin this hearing. Welcome all to this open floor hearing for the application by Mallard Park Solar Farm Limited for the Mallard Path. Solar Farm.

00:00:17:07 - 00:00:28:27

An application for an order granting development consent for the proposed solar farm. Sorry, a misprint on my script though I can just confirm that everyone can hear me in the room. Okay.

00:00:31:10 - 00:00:37:21

And can anybody attending online. Can you just give an indication that you can hear me online as well?

00:00:40:13 - 00:00:45:16

Okay. There's nobody understand actually participating online at the moment. Uh.

00:00:47:08 - 00:00:56:03

If they do, I will check later on on that and can can check with Mr.. Johansson that the live streaming and recording of this event has commenced.

00:00:58:21 - 00:01:10:13

Thank you. My name is David Cliff. I've been appointed by the Secretary of State as the lead member of this panel to examine the application. I'm now going to ask my colleague and fellow panel member to introduce himself.

00:01:13:06 - 00:01:17:28

What? My name is Mark James. I'm a Charlestown planner. I've been appointed as a member of the panel.

00:01:19:26 - 00:01:50:08

Thank you. Together, we constitute the examining authority for this application. Our role is to examine the application and to report to the Secretary of State for Energy Security. And that zero with a recommendation as to whether or not a development consent order should be granted. I'll be leading this open floor hearing and Mr. James will be leading the open floor hearing that's taking place this evening at 7:00. I also want to introduce our Planning Inspectorate colleagues who are working with us on this examination, some of which you'll have spoken to already.

00:01:50:10 - 00:02:21:28

On my right is Mr. Johansson, uh, who's the case manager leading the Planning Inspectorate case team, and he is assisted by Ben Chan, who is working with the online element of today's hearing, and Michelle Gregory, who sat over there in the corner. Just a few housekeeping matters to deal with. For those attending in person, can everyone please turn off their phones or put them to silent? The toilets are located through the entrance into the room.

00:02:22:00 - 00:02:41:13

You'll have passed them as you walked into the lounge area and there are no planned fire alarms today. And in the event of an alarm, please follow the signposted fire exit routes. And there are several. There's one behind me. There's two at the far side of the room. And there's one over in the corner of the room over there. Yeah.

00:02:46:05 - 00:03:19:23

Moving onto the agenda and logistics for today's hearing. A detailed agenda is not required for this hearing because its purpose is to hear from the representations of interested parties who have registered to make overall representations about the application. The order in which you'll be invited to speak and will follow the list provided to me by the case team, and this has been published on the websites of our National Infrastructure website last Thursday with some updates I've understand since with certain additional speakers and some speakers who did register but now can't speak.

00:03:20:08 - 00:03:51:11

And today's hearing has been undertaken in a hybrid way, meaning some of you are present in the room and some of you are joining us virtually using Microsoft teams or might be during the course of the meeting. And we'll make sure that whoever anybody chooses to attend today, you'll be given a fair opportunity to participate. A recording of today's hearing will be made available on the Mallard Pass Solar Farm section of the National Infrastructure Planning website as soon as practicable after the meeting. And with this in mind.

00:03:51:14 - 00:04:22:11

Please, can you speak clearly into the microphone stating your name and your organization that you are representing before you will speak, if any? Now, there's a table obviously at the front that speakers can use, and there's also a roving microphone available that can be used as necessary. And please wait for that to be brought to you before you speak. Uh, the acoustics in this room, I don't think are absolutely fantastic. So think the key is to sort of position yourself.

00:04:22:13 - 00:04:56:20

So you're about this distance away from the microphone. If you get closer and closer, it gets too loud. If you get further away, then that's probably about right, isn't it? Um, so and we'll endeavor and hopefully everyone can endeavor to speak as clearly and slowly as possible throughout the hearing, giving the acoustics that we are working with now. A link to the planning inspector's Privacy Notice was provided in the notification for this hearing and we're assuming that everybody has read that document which establishes how the personal data of our customers is handled in accordance with the principles set out in data protection laws.

00:04:57:05 - 00:05:00:01

Um, excuse me if you feel it's necessary to refer to.

00:05:03:04 - 00:05:35:21

To refer to sensitive personal information, we would encourage you to speak to a member of our case team in the first instance, and they would explore with you everything. Information could be provided in a written format which might be redacted before being published. Just a word on social networking. If anyone intends to use social media or to report film or record during the hearing, you are free to do so. But please do so responsibly and with proper consideration for other parties. And this must not be misused or be disruptive. And no individually recorded items may be relied on as evidence by any party or used in submissions.

00:05:38:03 - 00:06:17:09

Now, let me briefly explain the purpose of this open floor hearing before I move over to the speakers. They provide an opportunity to raise anything direct directly to the examining authority that's ourselves that is important and relevant and that you think we should know about and consider. These hearings are not about a particular location or topic. The topic of your representations about the proposal is therefore up to yourself, and we have decided to hold an open floor hearing or two open floor hearings early in the examination in order to give an opportunity for local people, organizations and businesses an early opportunity to make points they wish to make about the application.

00:06:19:09 - 00:06:48:07

There are other opportunities to submit written submissions later on in the examination at deadline two due to the number of parties wishing to speak today will be setting a time limit of five minutes per person and ten minutes for organizations. And when you are speaking, we'll indicate to you when you have about a minute left, if you feel you want to have submissions which take longer than that, then you can submit them as part of written submissions at deadline. Deadline two.

00:06:50:08 - 00:07:06:21

And it will assist in making sure that everyone is heard that where a previous speaker covers points that you were going to make. You simply indicate your agreement with those points rather than repeating them in detail. And we will have a record of all points made and they'll not gain any greater weight from being repeated.

00:07:08:12 - 00:07:23:16

And once you have spoken at the panel myself, Mr. James may ask you questions and these will usually on matters of clarification. And finally, the applicant will be given a short opportunity to respond to any matters raised once all the speakers have been heard.

00:07:25:03 - 00:07:38:00

And the applicant may also wish to respond to all representations made today in writing at Deadline one. Now, we intend to take a short break at about 11:30 this morning.

00:07:39:23 - 00:07:55:28

And it should be possible, I think, to accommodate all the parties who wish to speak by lunchtime. So my aim is for the meeting to close by 1:00, provided we've heard by that time all the speakers that are registered to speak.

00:07:59:11 - 00:08:06:12

Now, before we hear from any speakers, can I ask who will be speaking for the applicant today, please?

00:08:08:19 - 00:08:10:26

If a roving microphone could be provided, please.

00:08:17:07 - 00:08:27:04

Thank you, sir. It would be Matthew Fox, Senior associate. Vincent Mason's on behalf of the applicant and or Gareth Phillips, partner at Pizza Mason's.

00:08:29:15 - 00:08:31:15

Okay. Thank you, Mr. Fox.

00:08:34:06 - 00:08:40:07

And I'm assuming that you will want to make a submission at the end of the meeting. Okay. Thank you.

00:08:45:13 - 00:09:01:18

Okay. I'll now move on to invite representations from those interested parties who have given the notice of us of their intention to speak. And I'll turn to the list from the agenda that is on the screen behind me and elsewhere.

00:09:06:00 - 00:09:18:01

Now, the first of those speakers was going to be Justin Johnson from Rutland County Council. I understand his not wishing to speak at this meeting. In which case.

00:09:22:07 - 00:09:39:14

I'll move on to South Kesteven District Council represented by Phil Jordan, who I understand is appearing online this morning. But ten minutes ago wasn't in attendance online. Is Mr. Johnson now in Mr. Jordan, rather, now in attendance online?

00:09:43:14 - 00:09:44:20

That. Okay, well.

00:09:47:06 - 00:09:59:29

If he wishes to speak later on in the meeting, then he can be accommodated and would add. And those who were present at the meeting yesterday will also be aware that.

00:10:01:17 - 00:10:22:02

The local authorities will be submitting local impact reports at the relevant deadline as well, which will be confirmed next week in our procedural Rule eight letter as well as written representations. In that case, I can move on to Mallard Pass Action Group represented by Mrs. Holloway.

00:10:32:21 - 00:11:03:02

Good morning. I'm speaking today. I'll sit back a bit. I'm speaking today on behalf of my pass action group, in my capacity as chairperson, not as myself, which I'll be doing later tonight. The Action Group was formed in December 2021 after residents across all the local villages realise the sheer enormity and complexity surrounding this national infrastructure development.

00:11:03:15 - 00:11:40:18

They decided they needed to form some kind of group to represent their views and become better informed. For the record, the group is not against solar. We just believe it's better placed on rooftops and brownfield land. And there are other renewable technologies that are far more efficient with less impacts that would better deliver the energy need. We will be articulating our detailed arguments about all the key issues within our written representation due in four weeks time.

00:11:41:15 - 00:11:55:23

However, today we want to focus specifically on the subject of community. And the importance of it when considering the benefits of the scheme versus the harm and many impacts.

00:11:57:10 - 00:12:04:15

We feel that often the community impacts can be overlooked whilst the more technical arguments are being explored.

00:12:06:18 - 00:12:41:11

Scale of the solar farm at 852 hectares. Or put into layman's terms at 2105 acres is huge and unprecedented. There is no large scale ground mounted solar farm in the UK that has been installed to compare to this shot with Solar Park in Flintshire at 72MW compared to Mallard passes projected 350MW is a fraction of the output and size.

00:12:41:25 - 00:13:08:00

It's located next to a paper mill in an industrial setting and is supplying energy to that paper mill. My life pass is surrounded by eight villages and in close proximity to over 20 villages in the rural environment. All the energy supplied will go into the national grid with no direct or meaningful benefit for the local community.

00:13:10:01 - 00:13:42:16

So given the unprecedented scale of this development, it's understandable why there's so much community opposition to it. Despite residents being worn down bamboozled by the long and complex process, their feelings are stronger than ever. There have been three key touch points for the public over the course of the 18 months. But stage one consultation, there was hardly any time for residents to draw breath and realise what had hit them.

00:13:42:26 - 00:14:16:16

But the initial reaction generated 978 responses at stage two statutory consultation six months later. There were 1097 responses on the increase. Unfortunately for both these consultations, Malpass never calculated the percentage breakdowns of, for and against the development. From the email feedback they received, they just provided stats from the questionnaire that residents filled in.

00:14:17:25 - 00:14:53:27

So round one, another five months the public entered into the unknown domain of the CIP process and registered as interested parties. Despite having to learn the language of CIP and infrastructure planning, the level of feedback increased yet again to over 1206 registrations from the public and stakeholder groups excluding Consultees. Of course, we've been through every relevant representation and found that 95.7% are opposed to this development.

00:14:55:09 - 00:15:25:22

So I think it's fair to say the public opposition to this development is overwhelming. In the same way, a 2105 acre solar farm is also overwhelming the impacts of a more typical sub 50 megawatt scheme compared to this 350 megawatt scheme cannot be compared as directly proportional. The impacts on the community are that much greater where rural populations exist.

00:15:26:28 - 00:16:06:00

Malpass perceives the community to be the villages directly adjacent to the site, which we agree is a starting point. They have a population of approximately 4000, which loosely equates to 1600

households. Remembering that over 1200 people registered as interested parties think it's safe to assume that the level of response was not just consigned to adjacent villages, but stretched out across other rural areas that share the same issues and concerns and will also experience the many impacts.

00:16:07:08 - 00:16:40:06

Had the consultation been targeted at a wider rural envelope, there would have been an even higher level of opposition. It's forecast that up to two thirds of the 13,000 leaflet distribution went to the market town of Stamford. To individuals that don't necessarily share the same values, way of life and recreational habits and therefore are less likely to be affected. So bringing this back to the point about community.

00:16:40:23 - 00:17:09:18

It's not just a group of people from a similar location. It's a social group whose members have something in common and share similar values. So I want to explain a bit more about those values and the relevance to Mallard Pass. Just consider for a moment the choices people make when living in a city, a town or a rural environment. The values and interests can be very different, especially when it comes to a way of life.

00:17:11:09 - 00:17:44:11

We think there's an interesting parallel with the local issue to give context. So without getting into any politics, a local town has recently fought hard to save an important facility, the local swimming pool and sports centre. There is huge opposition, not just from the local community but also from others coming from outside the area. Using this important facility, whether for health, recreation or competition needs. No one can argue losing this facility would be detrimental to many people.

00:17:45:07 - 00:18:10:07

In the same way, it needs to be understood how carpeting the rural landscape with 530,000 solar panels will change the environment, the landscape, the everyday amenity and wellbeing of the local people living in and around it, and also those coming from the outside the area to enjoy and experience it.

00:18:12:08 - 00:18:55:01

The community's feedback is clear and unwavering. They not only care deeply about the countryside, the environment or way of life, but are deeply concerned about the many principal issues already identified by yourselves, the examiner, and to be assessed in detail by ourselves in our written representation. They're not confident that the extensive mitigation, by virtue of its meaning, addresses their real concerns and issues and don't believe a development of this scale and nature is appropriate in this greenfield environment and amongst rural communities.

00:18:55:28 - 00:19:28:04

A development of this nature risks destabilising what is a thriving cluster of interconnected communities, ultimately leading to the isolation and confinement of those left living in and around this industrial landscape. We hope and ask that along with the many issues that will be reviewed, the Examiner will carefully consider the level of public opposition clearly apparent from all the feedback over the last 18 months.

00:19:28:18 - 00:19:29:04

Thank you.

00:19:31:07 - 00:19:56:15

Thank you, Mrs. Holloway. That's very clear. And thank you for keeping within the time limit as well. That was very clear. I've got I've got no questions for you at this time. Obviously, we'll look forward to your written submission at deadline two, which will be very helpful to us, and I'm sure as well that you'll be joining or your representatives will be joining various issues, specific hearings as they arise today. Thank you for that submission.

00:20:14:28 - 00:20:32:01

Okay. The next speaker on our list is. Sarah. Christy, son. Yes. You here? Good. Thank you. And your. I understand. Representing Rye Hall, Lang Toft and Carl Parish councils this morning.

00:20:36:01 - 00:20:40:01

Okay. Thank you. When you say combined.

00:20:41:06 - 00:20:47:15

I'm a I'm a I'm a resident in the area that is affected as well. Okay.

00:20:47:17 - 00:20:55:10

So all the views, just absolute clarification, all the views you'll be saying today, your representations will be held by both yourself personally and the parish councils.

00:20:55:12 - 00:21:01:19

Councils. Yeah. The parish councils have asked me to to read out a statement on their behalf. Okay.

00:21:03:05 - 00:21:24:06

So I'm parish clerk for Ryle and Bell, Messer and Calvi Parish Councils. Three villages directly affected by the Malad Pass solar electricity plant proposal. I speak on behalf of the parish councils as well as personally as a resident living within the proposed development area.

00:21:25:22 - 00:22:15:27

Firstly, I repeat the assertions previously made that the applicants have failed to comply with the non-statutory and statutory public consultations. The consultation leaflets and publicity material in both cases was obscure. In particular, the plans in the consultation leaflets were very small and showed the solar plant and surrounding settlement in a very grey, pale grey. Making identification of the location and the extent of the development very difficult and impossible for anyone unexperienced in reading maps and determining to work out what was what what was being proposed in the statutory consultation leaflet maps.

00:22:15:29 - 00:22:32:09

The settlements of Ryle and Bell Muscle and Stamford were blanked out by illustrations. Consequently, we feel the public in the area is largely unaware where the development would be or its extent.

00:22:33:28 - 00:23:05:03

However, at no time did the developer provide illustrations of what the proposed development would look like, with not one single photo or illustration of a solar panel on view at the public consultation events. Given that the proposed panels would be 3.2m high, significantly taller than the vast majority of solar panel arrays installed in the UK to date, this is a very serious and misleading omission by the developers,

00:23:06:28 - 00:23:37:27

as the inspector would be able to see from the consultation. Pictorial false information was included. For example, large areas of land shown as green mitigated land would, which is either already land in high habitat value or in farmland where the use will not change. The the impression given was one of large areas of new green space with a diverse flora, whereas the reality is very different.

00:23:39:01 - 00:24:32:16

This lack of clarity in inaccuracies of much of the consultation material means that the consultation has been ineffective in informing the public to the extent scale, location and character of the proposed development to extent that they have been misleading. Consequently, the public and the Royal Burmeister and Colby Parish councils have largely been excluded from the application process to date. We understand that the process is legally bound structure, but many residents in our village feel are too overwhelmed by the confused pictures painted by the applicant's consultation and the National Infrastructure Project procedure to attempt to have their voices heard from parish council public meetings and communications.

00:24:32:25 - 00:24:45:05

We can say that the majority are against the project for many reasons and the number of the registered interested parties does not begin to reflect the true feeling in the area.

00:24:48:00 - 00:25:15:08

The inspector will be aware that we have only just had council elections and it is only this week that the parish councils are reforming. In view of the complexity and scale of the proposed development, it is essential that the parish councils and the public are given adequate time to prepare their representations. As I know it was discussed yesterday at the preliminary meeting about date dates being extended.

00:25:17:05 - 00:25:24:17

Other matters from a parish council and myself point of view. We've we've been speaking to our residents and

00:25:26:07 - 00:25:57:29

I'd just like to just quote some of the things that have been mentioned to us. I personally asked regarding cabling and and the huge impact this would have on verges and fields and roadsides at the consultations. I personally have two miles of privately owned water pipe that feeds rural heath, which am extremely concerned about. The sheer size and block nature of this site has a detrimental impact on the visual and visual landscape.

00:25:58:05 - 00:26:15:17

Much of this land is undulating countryside and surrounds an SSI site and protected verges. The rolling nature of various areas of this proposed proposal makes the panels even more prominent in the wider landscape.

00:26:17:05 - 00:26:53:05

Some of the some comments the parish council have encountered from residents have been with regard to the screening and the mitigation and I quote, They say that the screening will be planted, but it will be 30 years before these panels will be any way obscured and will be long dead. The rest of my life will be blighted by this and an amenity I've used all my life will be lost to me. County residents have no shop, pub or any facility.

00:26:53:20 - 00:27:01:17



The only amenity that residents have for their leisure, health and wellbeing is footpaths and lanes to walk in.

00:27:03:10 - 00:27:34:06

The collective impact in this area with the solar factory application along with other how large housing development proposals and gravel extraction applications on the horizon are having an enormous impact visually as well as loss of large swathes of prime agricultural land, resulting in significant food loss at a time when, as a country we are importing products that should be grown locally.

00:27:35:11 - 00:28:03:03

And another person was questioning the data which. A questionable data such as total productivity of this site and it will produce. He said. How, as an individual, could I possibly question the figures that are being branded without employing experts to question it? And so the feeling was overwhelming by many of our parishioners.

00:28:04:25 - 00:28:05:10

Thank you.

00:28:08:09 - 00:28:45:06

Thank you for that submission. Just one question for you and you refer early on about plans. Think during the consultation stage, which were not very clear. Obviously the plans have been submitted with the application documents as well, and if there are any, which you feel are. Still unclear. What could be clearer than obviously make that clear either directly to the applicant or in written representations? You noted it now appears in written representations to us because obviously we want to ensure that everybody understands the plans properly.

00:28:45:08 - 00:29:04:20

So if there are any now which is carried through from consultation which you feel is still unclear, please, you know, let it's probably worth actually letting the applicant know directly if you can so they can address that. And if not, you can submit that as a representation in writing to us. Okay. Okay. Thank you for your submission.

00:29:11:08 - 00:29:24:13

Now. I understand that, Mr.. Jordan from South Kesteven District Council is now with us. Online. I understand.

00:29:28:14 - 00:29:31:01

Mr. Jordan with us.

00:29:32:16 - 00:29:35:13

Hello? Yes. Are you there? Stephen?

00:29:36:15 - 00:29:39:08

Good morning and welcome. Can everybody hear Mr. Jordan? Okay.

00:29:45:28 - 00:29:46:13

But.

00:29:47:21 - 00:30:02:08

I didn't intend to speak at this session. I'd registered just for the purposes of listening to the comments. Okay, so, um. I didn't have anything. Formal stay at this stage.

00:30:02:27 - 00:30:32:23

Okay, That is absolutely fine, Mr. Jordan. I understand that. And think, as I said earlier, that there was a discussion yesterday on the submission of local impact reports at the preliminary meeting, which you were part of. And obviously, as I've made clear earlier on, the councils will be submitting or I expect they'll be submitting their local impact reports and written representations at the deadlines which will cause will confirm in our Rule eight letter. So we look forward to receiving those from you. But yeah, thank you for your your attendance today.

00:30:34:03 - 00:30:34:19

Thank you.

00:30:41:00 - 00:30:45:07

Okay. Going back to the published list.

00:30:49:05 - 00:30:53:29

The next on our list is a mr. Simpson. From

00:30:55:21 - 00:30:56:21

Rutland.

00:30:58:16 - 00:31:10:28

Hello. Good morning. If when you come to the table, if you can sit at the right hand microphone, it's probably better. As I'm chairing, I can sort of see directly. Otherwise there's a camera stand which slightly gets in the way. So thank you.

00:31:14:24 - 00:31:23:18

And again, you have ten minutes and we'll give you a sort of one minute reminder of your. If you're if you're at nine minutes and getting close.

00:31:25:09 - 00:31:25:27

Thank you.

00:31:32:24 - 00:32:19:27

It is now. Okay. Thank you. Speak obviously as chair of Rutland, but also on behalf of Lincolnshire, which does not have an active branch at the moment, but has membership and also for CPR nationally. My observations today draw upon the countryside. Charity's recent submission to the Government's Environmental Audit Committee, which considered evidence on the future contribution of solar energy to the UK's transition to net zero. Also the findings of a new 2023 Rutland Renewable Energy study published only two weeks ago, which researched the future energy requirements of the Rutland community with particular regard for the potential contribution of solar and onshore wind.

00:32:22:05 - 00:33:01:23

Rutland is of the view that well executed solar energy projects of appropriate scale and location utilizing the latest in panel design and construct have a significant role to play in the nation's future energy provision. Local community support for any project and the use of rooftops and brownfield sites rather than agricultural land will be key components of the rapid adoption of the technology. There appear to be no consistency in government policy on this matter. Local agriculture based

communities are said to be destroyed by such projects as the solar farm, which will severely impact Lincolnshire and Rutland.

00:33:02:12 - 00:33:41:07

Regrettably, regrettably, current planning, policy and practice is endangering swathes of valuable agricultural land at a time when severe economic hardship and the war in Europe highlight the value of home grown food. CBRE believes that solar should be on roofs and brownfield sites. It is in government's hands to ensure this. The Ministry of Defence alone has many brownfield sites lying unused which would lend themselves to energy production. Why support the loss of farms and green space at such a critical time for the food supply chain? The position defies logic.

00:33:41:28 - 00:34:07:18

Will undoubtedly have political consequences for rural MPs. The Inspectorate's report is the opportunity, in our opinion, to set an example and recommend stopping the loss of productive land and highlight the need to relocate such large scale projects to a brownfield site. Such sites include a significant number of former bases airbases dotted around the region and the country.

00:34:09:11 - 00:34:44:23

Most of the current applications for large forms, including this one, appear to be driven by financial opportunity rather than being part of an integrated strategy of energy supply. Foreign investment seems to be a significant force in the market, with little evidence of long term commitment to the UK. The community benefit offered to supporting communities touted by some of these investors does not stand up to scrutiny and is frequently not transparent. There is therefore considerable public disquiet with such large scale applications as not being considered today.

00:34:45:07 - 00:35:19:16

With regard to the application. Today the inspector is invited to note the following facts Alternatives are available. The success of offshore wind to date, supported by the current growth rate in rooftop solar, means that the UK is projected to be self-sufficient and actually able to export energy by the year 2030. This alone challenges the need to cover farmland and greenfield sites with huge solar installations. Rutland currently has solar farm applications under consideration, which cover over 2% of its countryside.

00:35:19:25 - 00:35:29:00

This compares with the national position of 0.1%. This is clearly unjust and disproportionate from a Rutland perspective.

00:35:31:13 - 00:35:43:09

Planning policy in Rutland offers the opportunity to meet the companies and it needs almost entirely with a small number of turbines on the Rutland Plateau to the north of the county with minimal footprint on green space.

00:35:45:15 - 00:36:17:04

This study argues that many nuclear reactor such as that developed by Rolls-Royce, located on a disused military site, would be more than enough to meet the region's future energy requirements. Importantly, that to be considered by the Inspectorate, along with the May 2003 Rutland Landscape Character Analysis by David TILDESLEY Associates. It states that the environmental quality of the county of Rutland, particularly of the landscape, is very high, and that is widely appreciated by residents and business alone.

00:36:18:21 - 00:36:53:20

Understanding that Rutland is a tourist destination is paramount in any planning deliberation with significant countryside impact. The relevant facts are well evidenced in the future. Rutland conversation, published by the County Council and the recently successful levelling up bid undertaken by Melton Borough Council and Rutland Council together. Tourism lies at the heart of Rutland's economy. This project will not enhance its sustainability. It will detract from it. The wildlife of North Rutland and nearby Rutland Water has an international profile attracting visitors from all over the world.

00:36:54:10 - 00:37:27:21

The change of character and the impact upon biodiversity necessitated by this project brings little cheer with future prospects and again, a negative contribution to sustainability. The desire to industrialize a large piece of countryside for financial gain when there are clearly better energy alternatives is difficult to comprehend and invokes skepticism on the project's stable. The purpose? Given the reported performance of offshore wind and the potential of onshore wind in line with current strategic planning policy.

00:37:27:23 - 00:37:32:13

There is no sound or science based planning reason for this project to be approved.

00:37:34:06 - 00:38:12:17

Rather than just stating all that is wrong with this application, the funded and renewable energy study, which is online and hardcopy with me, provides clear, community based evidence of what would be right for and with regard to renewables and demonstrates the benefits to a low carbon future. In total, the renewables of the residents have proposed a suitable for local countryside in the county would generate more than its domestic and commercial needs. Throughout the discussions that created the vision, it was clear that rural residents want it to be careful not to sacrifice the beauty of the local landscape for the sake of generating a commodity electricity.

00:38:13:00 - 00:38:52:21

However, there was also a recognition that having an appropriate scale and well sited renewable energy area could bring valuable benefits to the county. If the schemes proposed in this vision were to go ahead, residents would like to see some of the financial returns be invested back into the community to enhance the local landscape in other ways, for instance, through heat pump subsidies and for buildings that are suitable. Similarly, there was a clear desire for solar and wind to bring investment in genuine biodiversity improvements such as local hedge and bridge planting to support pollinators, provide wildlife corridors and prevent soil erosion.

00:38:53:29 - 00:39:24:10

In related workshops, it was suggested that the creation and management of new networks of hedgerows to shield brownfield solar developments could provide an important source of land based employment and training in rural skills for young people in the county. Finally, there was a clear feeling that any growth in renewable energy generation across Rutland should also translate into lower prices for local residents so that clean energy produced in the county also helps to tackle fuel poverty.

00:39:25:00 - 00:39:29:18

The charity can see little such community benefit from the proposal.

00:39:31:07 - 00:40:03:00

Too often, the shift to low carbon energy across England has become divisive and confrontational. When rural communities have been presented with a proposed scheme in their landscape, which they have had little input on and must either accept or reject. By developing a proactive vision for the future, incorporating a small number of onshore turbines linked to rooftop and brownfield energy provision, the residents of Rutland have sent a clear message about the importance of their landscape and what renewables don't well would look like in their local context.

00:40:03:24 - 00:40:35:00

In summary, this published 20 division shows that the residents are prepared to play a significant role in the effort to avert a climate emergency. This vision would generate enough low carbon electricity not just to meet the needs of Rutland now, but also will enter the future. Residents have shown that they are in favour of new and renewable energy, not just in principle, but would also support hosting new installations in their countryside. As long as these developments are sited sensitively to protect or enhance the stunning views across their landscape,

00:40:36:18 - 00:41:05:21

there is an especially clear appetite for renewable energy schemes with a limited footprint that would contribute to the restoration enhancement of the habitats, nature and wildlife that much their residents and residents eventually value so much. This very recent study, which incorporates the relevant past and future energy requirements. Statistics supplied by Western Power acts as a supplement to the well documented future written conversation undertaken by the County Council.

00:41:07:08 - 00:41:30:14

View is clear Malad past does not offer a sustainable future. A better plan exists that has community support and could still generate profit. The nation needs every area of productive land to ensure its future food supply and independence. Thank you for this opportunity to submit opinion and evidence. The inspector at the charity is happy to provide further evidence if required.

00:41:34:04 - 00:42:05:11

Okay. Thank you, Mr. Simpson. That's helpful submission. Just one question. You mentioned there, the 2023. At Rutland Renewable Energy Study, which by the end of the date is a recent document. I'm not I don't think that's part of the examination so far. So what I would say is if you wish to submit that as we've we've a written submission at deadline to then obviously you're you're welcome to do so it sounds on relevance on the face of it. And from what you've said and obviously sort of draw.

00:42:07:11 - 00:42:19:13

Examining the files attention to any particular relevant parts of that in a subsequent written submission. And just ask the background of that document. Is that is that document that's being consulted on?

00:42:21:03 - 00:42:24:02

And it is a project.

00:42:24:04 - 00:42:46:17

Which was nationally piloted in three county areas with Richard, which Rutland was one. It was literally only finished and published a couple of weeks ago. That's right. Not time to submit, but it involves quite a significant number of the community, including people having engaged in the various industries. And Mullard was invited to get involved in the workshops involved in that, but chose not to.

00:42:48:20 - 00:42:58:01

Okay. Thank you. As I say, if you wish to submit, that would be a written submission subsequently. Then obviously please do so. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

00:43:10:03 - 00:43:28:09

Okay, Moving on to our next speaker. Uh, Sue Mitchell, representing Stanford Ramblers Group. Who is. I was thinking she was going to be online, but I think now I see a hand up. So would you like to come up to the table? Welcome to the hearing this morning.

00:43:36:08 - 00:44:13:16

A good morning and thank you for asking me to speak. I'm the secretary of the Stanford Ramblers Group, and to put that in context, the Ramblers are a national organization of walkers. We are a registered charity. Um, I represent Stanford Group today. So what I'm going to say is the view from the Stanford Group, although I am also the membership Secretary for the whole of the Lincolnshire area representing 1500 walkers.

00:44:14:06 - 00:44:17:29

To be clear, today I'm representing Stanford Ramblers Group.

00:44:19:28 - 00:44:20:13

Um.

00:44:21:01 - 00:44:27:20

The Stamford Ramblers group use many of the public footpaths and rights of way in the locality.

00:44:30:14 - 00:44:42:25

The joy of walking is taking in the beautiful countryside and observing the wildlife. It's a boost both to physical and mental health.

00:44:44:13 - 00:45:04:22

The landscape as exists today makes walking a very enjoyable and therapeutic experience. But to be surrounded by solar panels spanning the views sometimes on both sides of a path would derive no pleasure for the walker.

00:45:06:19 - 00:45:18:23

The addition of five miles of extra permissive paths won't compensate for the losses made by building this huge solar farm.

00:45:20:18 - 00:45:28:02

Our workers would not walk in this area. If the solar farm is built.

00:45:29:19 - 00:45:46:10

We would get into our cars and we would drive to areas of natural beauty unspoiled by solar panels. If we wanted to walk in a glass farm, we would go to Canary Wharf.

00:45:50:27 - 00:46:39:13

This proposed solar farm is too large. The sheer scale of the solar farm 1052 acres, I believe, means it's impossible to mitigate the impacts of the landscape character. How could you make it better when it's such a huge development? At the moment. Currently, the countryside is lightly undulating, but

with solar panels of 3.3m high, it'll completely change the look and feel and character of the landscape and it will become an industrial environment of over 2000 acres.

00:46:41:02 - 00:46:47:00

We believe it's impossible to discreetly screen a solar farm of this size.

00:46:49:09 - 00:46:51:23

And we really do believe that.

00:46:53:12 - 00:46:55:21

It's not the right thing to do.

00:46:57:25 - 00:47:31:17

And during the the development period when all the works was going on. The disruption, we believe, could lead to accidents. The closure of public rights of ways of various times during construction could be disruptive. Um, walkers might be forced onto the road in some places, which will inevitably be busier with construction traffic, and therefore it will be more dangerous for us and for other walkers.

00:47:33:11 - 00:47:39:01

And also the endangered endangerment of the flora and fauna.

00:47:40:24 - 00:47:51:24

This project will impact the habitats of wildlife corridors. They will be disrupted for two years during the construction phase.

00:47:53:17 - 00:48:20:25

Now the extensive fencing of the solar areas on the site will disrupt the patterns of the flora and fauna which flies in the face of conservative conservative conservationist campaigns. Apologies. So are we preserving our environment with this project or are we destroying it? Is this a green project? No.

00:48:23:20 - 00:48:24:21

Moving on to.

00:48:24:23 - 00:48:25:09

The.

00:48:26:10 - 00:48:57:12

Security of food. Think the war in the Ukraine has brought into sharp focus the essential need of a country to feed its own population. So food security is essential. And to use valuable agricultural land to house solar panels is nonsensical. A land loss of productive agricultural acreage is a bad decision, in our view.

00:48:57:18 - 00:49:17:01

Solar panels could be placed on the rooftops of new builds of new build housing, the huge factory and warehouse roofs which are populating on towns and around the around areas of the countryside. They're springing up everywhere.

00:49:18:23 - 00:49:25:19

Um. Also, couldn't we adapt existing buildings to to provide these solar to houses? Solar panels?

00:49:27:20 - 00:49:35:17

Believe that the go ahead of the Mallard project would be a government policy that would be granted by future governments.

00:49:37:15 - 00:50:02:21

Also, we're very concerned that this would set a precedent for other big projects going forward. There's already applications in for another two other big projects in Lincolnshire, Springwell and Gainsborough, and we're really concerned that Lincolnshire is just going to be a glass county.

00:50:04:07 - 00:50:14:11

It's just going to ruin the the quality of the beautiful countryside that we've endured for several thousand years and.

00:50:16:03 - 00:50:50:03

When I went to one of the public open days at Ford Hall last year, I spoke to one of the representatives from the applicant and said, is there isn't a way that this could be a smaller project. Why does it have to be so big? And he said, well, it's not cost effective to be small because it doesn't it's not sunny enough in the UK, in Spain, because it's sunny. We can make the projects smaller or include agricultural land within the project.

00:50:50:05 - 00:51:17:08

So it's not so not so much. Land is committed to the solar panels in one area. So the bottom line is, is this about a money making scheme? Or is it really what is needed for sensible sustainability and doing the best thing for our country and our local area?

00:51:20:25 - 00:51:21:20

That's it. Thank you.

00:51:23:03 - 00:51:57:25

Okay. Thank you for that submission. Just one question. You've talked about the effect on wellbeing of workers, and I think as examining authority, we have details of what we do have details of both existing footpaths in and around the site and the proposed permissive footpaths as well. What we'd like to get an interest in as well is actually how those footpaths work in terms of what local walking routes are used by local people in the area of the site, sort of circular walks.

00:51:57:27 - 00:52:02:15

And I don't think at the moment there's much information before us on that. So.

00:52:04:04 - 00:52:23:23

Let's do a question for you, particularly as the Stanford Ramblers Group probably has a good awareness of that will be quite helpful to get as part of any written submission details of what are the local routes that are frequently used or how the footpaths all join together with roads etcetera. Bridleways to form local local walks.

00:52:23:25 - 00:52:55:17

Yeah, I mean there is a network of paths that link the surrounding villages and being in the middle and then you've got coal there and rail and northeast of rail at south east southwest, and there is a network of paths all the way around that. And to be honest, it would all be affected by this project



either visually or physically. But if you want more detail on that, then obviously we could submit the maps.

00:52:55:19 - 00:52:57:09

Which detail the path. Yeah.

00:52:57:16 - 00:53:24:08

Just to mean we've got I've got a map of the, of the, of the area which I've got for this project. But just to get to it and I've already walked to feel the purpose when I did my company site inspection a few a few months ago. But just be getting good to get an indication of actually what are the sort of the particularly well-used local walks in terms of how the paths all join together can sort of imagine when look myself, but just get an indication from yourselves as what those particular routes routes are. Yeah, I.

00:53:24:10 - 00:53:24:26

Can do that.

00:53:25:07 - 00:53:25:22

Okay.

00:53:26:03 - 00:53:28:06

Okay. Thank you. Thank you for your submission.

00:53:36:07 - 00:53:53:05

Okay. Now those are the groups and organizations who registered to speak this morning. And can I turn to the individual interested parties who registered to speak? And first one of those is Jane Allen.

00:54:20:20 - 00:54:21:06

Thank you.

00:54:41:02 - 00:54:44:16

It's take your time to get comfortable. Thank you.

00:54:49:13 - 00:54:53:28

You hear me? If I sit here, what do I need to speak near the microphone?

00:54:54:18 - 00:55:05:17

I can hear you. Can everybody hear? Okay. If the microphone could microphone just be touched? Just turned a little bit closer. No, don't. The microphone can be moved if that is helpful. That. Okay?

00:55:06:21 - 00:55:10:00

Yeah, I can. I can hear you clearly now. Yeah.

00:55:10:21 - 00:55:15:00

Sorry, but I'm waiting for spinal surgery, so I can't. Very well.

00:55:15:21 - 00:55:16:13

Well, thank you for.

00:55:16:22 - 00:55:20:17

Taking the time and the effort to join. Join us this morning. It's appreciated.

00:55:21:10 - 00:55:29:13

My name is Jane Allen, and my reference number, if you need it, is 2003. 5913.

00:55:32:13 - 00:56:06:29

Reasonable points. I'm concerned that the psychological impact of fields of black solar panels and their cost to people's health, the national health and social services are not being taken into consideration. Counsellors tell those who are depressed to wear bright colours to cheer themselves up. Not black or grey as they are depressing, is widely recognised that the countryside has a positive impact on people's mental health and this is in part because of the colour of fields.

00:56:07:06 - 00:56:41:14

Even car insurance companies know that some colours have a higher incidence of accidents than others because of colour psychology. It's been known for years that colour impacts our psychology. Yet colour psychology is not being taken into consideration when planners are considering fields of black solar panels and the loss of green and golden fields that are calming on the mind. What's more, the NHS picks up the cost of people needing medical help for depression and social services picks up the cost if people are depressed and can't work.

00:56:41:19 - 00:57:14:07

I'm concerned that those costs are not being factored into the cost benefit analysis of the project. I'm also concerned that fields of solar panels are detrimental to epileptics travelling past at speed in the car or by train, travelling past rows of solar panels reflecting the sun creates a strobe light effect and strobe lighting causes seizures even on a dull day. Travelling past rows of silver frames as a flashing light effect that can trigger seizures.

00:57:14:28 - 00:57:46:13

And planting trees around the site would not resolve the problem. The panels would simply flash between the tree trunks. I'm also concerned for the health of people who need to walk daily to keep on top of fragile joint or health. If those currently using the footpaths that will be impacted by Mallard Pass are not able to maintain their mobility by taking their usual stress free walk through the fields during the construction of the project. They could potentially end up disabled or even dead of a heart attack.

00:57:46:18 - 00:58:17:16

And eight days is enough to make a big difference. As I know from personal experience, having been fully mobile prior to eight days in hospital last year. Finally, I'm concerned that this area will lose agricultural land and its benefits unnecessarily if Mallard goes ahead. If other projects currently in the 10 to 15 year queue to go on the national grid elsewhere in the country were all fully operational and those on it didn't have to be turned off.

00:58:17:18 - 00:58:48:24

When the grid can't cope with a surge of power because it's too wet or too windy, the country would have more than enough net zero energy parts of the country that are reliant on providing hydro and wind power are suffering economically from loss of income when what they provide has to be turned off. And this is having a knock knock on effect for social services and the NHS. I believe it's the grid that needs updating to benefit them rather than agricultural land lost here.

00:58:48:26 - 00:59:01:12

And ask you please, to take into consideration the wide range of health issues that could be incurred as well as the cost to the NHS and social services here and elsewhere in the country if Mallard past goes ahead.

00:59:05:21 - 00:59:11:23

Thank you. That's very clear submission and that's very helpful. Thank you. Got no questions. But that was very helpful. Thank you.

00:59:15:06 - 00:59:15:21

You.

00:59:37:17 - 00:59:43:10

Okay. Next on the list is Claire Alliston.

00:59:44:13 - 00:59:45:15

You may be.

00:59:46:23 - 00:59:48:16

Online with us this morning.

00:59:50:04 - 00:59:50:19

Yeah.

01:00:09:07 - 01:00:20:00

Okay. Miss Allison isn't able to join us this morning, and I'm informed. So moving on to the next speaker is Mr. Trevor Barfield.

01:00:28:00 - 01:00:30:00

Good morning, Mr. Burchfield. Good morning to you.

01:00:30:12 - 01:00:34:01

And I'm here representing myself today, not as a nine parish council.

01:00:34:18 - 01:00:35:23

Thank you for clarifying that.

01:00:39:19 - 01:01:13:06

So Sw9 is a very small community, which I've lived in for 20 years. It has 350 voters and 30 plus children who go to school on a bus every day because there is no school in S9 and the walks to the school are excessive. We have no shop, we have no pub, we have no amenities apart from the beautiful countryside that surrounds the area that we live in. I urge you when you carry out your site inspections to smell the air. Take a few minutes of silence.

01:01:14:23 - 01:01:23:02

Based on what's around you. Look at the natural, unspoiled beauty. Touch the ground in the wildflowers and just listen to the wildlife

01:01:25:02 - 01:01:51:26

equally. Urge you to visit the three schools at Great Casterton, particularly in the hours of 3 to 330, which is a very small road that has to take in excess of 1000 pupils away from that school or those

three schools rather, on a daily basis. The introduction of 60 plus heavy goods vehicles daily to that road will be dangerous and irresponsible.

01:01:54:08 - 01:02:19:18

Equally encourage you to visit and dine when the children are going to school at approximately 8 to 830 in the morning and getting off the school bus between 3 and 4. There are a number of different schools that the children go to and therefore the buses come and go at various times. The introduction of considerable more traffic will make it increasingly dangerous for the children that live in Sandy.

01:02:22:19 - 01:03:04:08

Elsewhere acquisition. I fully appreciate that there will be a separate hearing on this. But just briefly, there were two in-person consultations held in the village of Indian and other villages around. This was never openly communicated at either of the two in-person consultations. The developer failed to communicate on time and effectively with the effective parties and the chaos it will bring by digging up the entire main road or main roads of Stamford Road and Bourne Road within S and D, therefore affecting affecting a road that carries 8000 vehicle movements a day.

01:03:05:23 - 01:03:45:14

That was on a traffic count carried out by Rutland County Council in 2019. Okay. Compulsory acquisition will equally affect the human rights of all affected parties. Okay. So carte blanche compulsory acquisition should not be granted. On the point of ecology and biodiversity. I do not support the wholesale destruction of the balanced, ecologically friendly biodiverse environment with the introduction of millions of tons of concrete, steel, solar panels, fences, hard infrastructure and hundreds of thousands of vehicle movements.

01:03:46:13 - 01:04:11:15

I do hope that in your investigation that you ask the applicant, how many years will it take before the development will be carbon neutral, especially when you consider the materials that will be shipped around the globe from foreign countries. To support this. Particular development. On health and wellbeing.

01:04:13:03 - 01:04:46:23

Anxiety already has been increased by residents within Essendon and people have communicated that to me personally. Some are already complaining of sleepless nights. They are scared of the noise. They particularly don't wish to see the visual eyesores, as neither do I. We are already aware that people's lives are affected by the loss of house sales. Now we appreciate that that is not a planning consideration, but it is a human consideration because we are denying people the ability to live where they choose.

01:04:48:13 - 01:05:23:00

All of the above is affecting the lives and conditions of myself and people in Essen dying. So to sum up, we choose to live in the country or I choose to live in the country. I've lived in towns and cities around the UK and I particularly choose to live in a nice green environment. I particularly choose to live next to a railway line which has been there for in excess of 150 years, and equally a village with a very small industrial zone. The houses, carpenters, electrical retailers and garages, which is in a very hidden dip.

01:05:23:14 - 01:05:52:19

Okay, I choose to live harmoniously with the naturally occurring biodiversity. I walk in that. I choose to look at and enjoy the fields, the hedgerows, the virgin, the rivers, the open country, the open views

as our amenity isn't does not have pubs, shops, theatres, clubs, restaurants, etcetera. I therefore do not choose to support this development. Thank you.

01:05:55:16 - 01:05:56:14

Thank you, Mr. Belfield.

01:05:56:29 - 01:06:05:28

Just a question of clarification. You mentioned three schools in Great Casterton. Could you just name what those three schools are for? My. My note, please.

01:06:06:00 - 01:06:37:29

The answer to that is I don't know the actual names, but there is Castleton Community College, which is a secondary school for children between the age of 11 and 16. Within that school, there is a preschool environment for preschool children under the age of four, Stroke five, which has a separate entrance to the main school. And at the bottom of the road is the primary school within Great Casterton.

01:06:40:02 - 01:06:52:03

Primary school is directly on the corner and immediately opposite a listed building of a junction. I do encourage you to go there at 330. Okay.

01:06:53:16 - 01:06:55:07

I have driven on my.

01:06:55:22 - 01:07:13:25

Initial site visit. I did drive through Great Atherton to look at. Obviously this junction, this works at that junction, proposed and noted the location of the primary school too. And you talked about, obviously how schoolchildren use those schools. What?

01:07:14:27 - 01:07:15:19

Time.

01:07:16:28 - 01:07:21:02

What times do they return back from those schools into.

01:07:21:08 - 01:07:21:23

Into.

01:07:22:04 - 01:07:46:10

Between 3 and 4 p.m.? Okay. Different children go to different schools. Their parents have parental choice now, and therefore, they go to schools in Bourne, they go to school in Stamford, they go to school in Royal, they go to school in Great Casterton. And so therefore, there are a number of buses which come and go at various times. These are not service buses. These are school buses. Okay.

01:07:46:27 - 01:08:18:19

Okay. Thank you. In a way, it's a perhaps more of a note for the for the applicant, but I think it'd be useful for us to get an indication of the start and the finish times of those schools in Great Casterton and then how that translates with schoolchildren arriving back on coaches, whatever, in in terms of relationships with obviously delivery vehicles and construction and transport, that's probably more of a point for the the applicant, which maybe we can raise An interesting question.

01:08:18:21 - 01:08:26:13

But if I could just highlight that here based upon what you what you said. Okay. Thank you for that submission. That's very helpful. Thank you, Mr. Birchfield.

01:08:40:09 - 01:08:43:02

Okay, Moving on.

01:08:45:15 - 01:08:49:14

So the next speaker is Sue Cook.

01:08:51:15 - 01:08:53:06

Welcome and good morning. Thank you.

01:08:53:08 - 01:09:25:14

Good morning. Um, as you just said, my name is Sue, and I'm a farmer. I'm not representing the farming community as a whole. I'm representing myself here today. Um, the industrial scale of the development on good, productive arable land is a permanent contamination of the area. It will become a brownfield site and remove this land from any future food production capabilities. It will never be productive farmland again.

01:09:26:10 - 01:09:37:19

And I know there's been a lot of talk about BMV land and the grading of such land. And I'd like to say that any farmland in this area that's been considered for this

01:09:39:08 - 01:10:23:12

development is capable of being formed successfully, profitably and producing good food, be that for animal or human consumption in an environmentally positive and sustainable way. The loss of the natural habitat for all creatures, be it birds, wildlife, insect life, cannot be truly mitigated against, and any attempt at mitigation to this natural habitat is negated by the area being surrounded by high, impenetrable fences that the loss of food, nesting and resting sites for this wildlife during construction when they will leave the area looking for better homes.

01:10:23:28 - 01:10:48:10

Is it realistic to believe that the ground nesting birds, for example, will stay and put up for the destruction of their home turf? I'm not sure I would if I were a skylark. Understand there are plans within the mitigation process to recreate sites for ground nesting birds. But is this simply too little, too late? And will the damage done be reversible?

01:10:50:07 - 01:11:27:04

As someone heavily involved and invested in farming. I'm familiar with the government schemes such as Elms, SFI and Countryside Stewardship Scheme. These schemes seek to improve farming practices and our countryside through hedgerow management, soil management and many other ways. Everything we as farmers are encouraged to do is for the betterment and sustainability of the countryside. We are continuously measured and governed by bodies and have to complete a lot of paperwork and provide proof that standards are being met, all in order to improve the environment.

01:11:27:06 - 01:12:05:10

We live and working not only for ourselves, but also to maintain and improve the land, ensuring the longevity of farming practices in the future. The scale of this solar development means the

construction process will do an unimaginable amount of damage to the land compaction of the land, for instance, which will be caused by construction machines on the land. There's no doubt about that. It will have a serious knock on effect on land drainage ability, which will lead to surface water runoff and increase the flood risk to surrounding areas.

01:12:06:01 - 01:12:37:14

The damage to the soil incurred during construction, which can't be remedied once solar panels have been cemented into the ground, will cause the loss of fauna and flora, not to mention the micro control life within the soil itself. I'm also very curious to understand the reporting and structuring process and proof of attainment of the 10% biodiversity net gain quoted as being achievable from within the remade mitigation areas.

01:12:38:13 - 01:13:20:22

Who will these areas be managed by? Who will be the governing body responsible for ensuring best practices carried out? Who and by what measure will decide if they have been successful? And what is the what baseline is being used as the standard that will be measured against? And what remedial action, if possible, if biodiversity net gain has not been met? Will, for example, the baseline be taken from before construction and the destruction of the natural nesting and breeding habitats, or once the landscape has been destroyed and there is no habitat or biodiversity for our wildlife or any wildlife.

01:13:20:24 - 01:13:29:14

So an improvement. So any improvement is an improvement. I don't know if I've got a bit flustered there, and that's not clear. But.

01:13:31:25 - 01:13:33:23

Okay, wait a minute. Left of the five minutes.

01:13:34:01 - 01:13:53:22

I agree that this country needs to look at alternative ways of producing power, but using good arable land to cite acres and acres of solar panels is ludicrous. There are plenty of brownfield sites across the UK that could be put to use for this, which would allow food production to continue. Thank you.

01:13:55:16 - 01:13:56:13

Thank you for that submission.

01:13:56:15 - 01:14:00:07

Just one clarification. Are you a local farmer?

01:14:00:14 - 01:14:04:02

am a local farmer. We farm adjacent to the proposed site.

01:14:04:07 - 01:14:05:08

I see. Okay.

01:14:11:06 - 01:14:13:24

Okay. Thank you for that submission. That's helpful. Thank you.

01:14:24:11 - 01:14:25:22

Okay. And the next.

01:14:25:24 - 01:14:27:20

Speaker is Pauline.

01:14:27:22 - 01:14:29:00

Cramping, please.

01:14:34:11 - 01:14:35:13

What I propose.

01:14:35:24 - 01:14:38:08

It's about 11:15. So after.

01:14:39:05 - 01:14:42:13

The current speaker, I think propose we'll have a.

01:14:42:22 - 01:14:45:05

A short coffee comfort break.

01:14:48:08 - 01:14:50:08

Thank you very much. Is it?

01:14:52:10 - 01:14:56:13

If you can turn your microphone on, please. Yeah. Thank you. Can you hear me? Can?

01:14:56:15 - 01:14:57:00

Yeah.

01:14:57:02 - 01:14:59:24

Is it at all possible to flick the camera to full.

01:14:59:26 - 01:15:08:15

Size for me? Because I have some images I would like to share with the party here? Is that possible?

01:15:08:17 - 01:15:10:17

What are the images? Are they just.

01:15:10:19 - 01:15:26:00

The paintings of the environment? As it looks at the moment and as it will look when it's got 3.3m solar panels or when it's got half a meter solar panels, depending on which they go for.

01:15:26:03 - 01:15:28:06

And what are they? What are they based upon.

01:15:29:05 - 01:15:55:11

That Based upon my research, looking at Chinese solar panel farms and then transferring them to South Lincolnshire. Not very accurate, but a lot more accurate than what the developer pictures gave, where they drew a picture of grass verge higher than the solar panels. Okay. Artist must have been lying on his stomach to have such a view.

01:15:55:13 - 01:16:00:07



Okay, I understand. So. So the ones that you prepared yourself on your own, your own research.

01:16:00:09 - 01:16:01:11

If yes.

01:16:01:18 - 01:16:02:03

I.

01:16:02:20 - 01:16:24:00

Don't mind if you. Show them, but do ask that you submit them at Deadline one, which is the submission for written versions of oral submissions today in order that everybody has the chance to comment on them. And I'm not sure showing that I'm not showing them on the camera how clear they will be. So.

01:16:27:28 - 01:16:51:27

Thank you very much. Solar panels are good when located in sensible places such as roofs, bases, factories and warehouses, offices and houses. Brownfield sites like decommissioned industrial sites and airfields are also a good place. But not good quality agricultural land.

01:16:53:12 - 01:17:05:12

At agricultural land is an important and scarce commodity. So highlighted by the Prime Minister at yesterday's meeting with the farmers.

01:17:08:06 - 01:17:43:25

Um, I found it very difficult to understand the information sent by you, and at first thought we could only talk about the process. So what I wanted to say about the process was that there was an immense contrast between the feedback from yourselves and from the developers who were wholly inadequate in their initial presentations of the solar industrialisation of South Lincolnshire and Rutland.

01:17:44:18 - 01:17:47:21

Much misrepresentation.

01:17:52:12 - 01:18:34:02

However, the feedback is highly technical and so detailed that most interested parties are left confused and too intimidated to even make representation. Which is why there are so few people here today. And yet there are so many people who are most anxious to protest against this development. Could we please have a simplified version of the process of this enormous project? Because we are rather confused by all the appendix and all the.

01:18:35:11 - 01:18:43:09

Technical writing, which is necessary, but I think could be explained in more simplified ways.

01:18:45:29 - 01:19:10:08

Another problem I have with the developers was their lack of effort in finding alternative brownfield sites. It was woefully inadequate. They have simply chosen the cheapest solution adjacent to a badly sited new substation because it's the easiest and the most profitable place to be.

01:19:12:24 - 01:19:22:04

These. These are my personal opinions, but I know I share them with many of the people who live in the area.

01:19:26:01 - 01:19:42:00

This massive, inefficient site sprawling between eight villages, blighting the lives of many rural communities. The size of this development is quite out of proportion to the rural location.

01:19:43:27 - 01:20:23:15

When I asked the developers what was the perimeter of this 200 field installation, they had no idea. Well, I've measured it on the map. Obviously not scientifically, but I make it 36km long and over six miles in length across from one side to the other in its maximum. So quite a bit bigger than Rutland Water. But I think many people cannot imagine what this will look like, what this will feel like, and the area it will take up.

01:20:23:17 - 01:20:31:11

But if you imagine Rutland water and then increase it, it will give people some idea.

01:20:33:09 - 01:20:56:25

Because this is such a sprawling site. It's not. Neatly arranged, but it fingers and spreads between these villages. It will require a lot of planting to mitigate these glacier fields that will be 3.3m high.

01:20:58:19 - 01:20:59:15

Yes. Sorry to interrupt.

01:20:59:17 - 01:21:02:03

We got about round about a minute left. Thank you.

01:21:02:07 - 01:21:05:29

Thank you. However, such afforestation cannot.

01:21:06:01 - 01:21:37:07

Give net biodiversity gain as there are already hedge fields, boundaries and many small woods in that area. There are some 26 spinney or copses which will be either engulfed or edged by these panels. So unfortunately, the benefit of these will be negated through the lack of access of wildlife by the two metre high security fence and lights.

01:21:37:18 - 01:21:57:16

So those small woods that exist at the moment would have to be there. Their benefit will have to be demolished because of the fencing around them, as will the mitigating planting. That will be negated by the high security fence.

01:21:59:13 - 01:22:15:25

The developers may work their powers on biodiverse metrics, but it is the local community who will be left with a completely depleted natural environment of 2175 acres of black glass.

01:22:17:21 - 01:22:46:26

I was interested to hear the psychological effects of blackness on people, because after I'd finished painting the two pictures, I was in deep depression, whereas I had spent a whole year in lockdown, painting and recording the natural life of this area, which gave me enormous pleasure. So the psychological effect of this development will be unknown, but enormous.

01:22:47:23 - 01:22:51:13

How much longer have you got on your script to go because you.

01:22:53:06 - 01:22:59:18

Right. I'll just quickly skip. The granting of footpaths is the only community

01:23:01:09 - 01:23:35:26

compensation that is being offered, which I feel is inadequate and totally unwarranted. Um, I wanted to mention the variable water table, the sporadic springs and the flooding of the church and the flooding of graves before they used that. I'm hoping that you, when they consider the water, they don't just consider the flow of the glen, they consider the water table and unmarked springs which pop up here and there.

01:23:36:11 - 01:24:07:01

And I also hope they consider when they're looking at the history, they consider the Roman villa with its mosaic floor, which is hidden in a field opposite Carson College, along which the construction vehicles will thunder past. This was excavated in 1953 and has been covered over, but it is there and it will get damaged by heavy lorries driving past it.

01:24:07:04 - 01:24:09:20

I hope that will be taken into consideration.

01:24:09:22 - 01:24:13:03

Thank you. It may be that it's difficult with.

01:24:13:27 - 01:24:42:05

The time limits there intended just to make sure that everyone's got a fair chance to speak. But if you've got much else to say, you can submit it in writing in your written representation submission if you intend to do one at deadline two. So in terms of providing sort of detailed submissions, that can be a good place to say anything that you've not been able to say this morning. I know it's difficult with the time limits that we've had to impose to be proportionate in terms of fairness to people, but getting the maximum number of speakers. What you've not mentioned, though, is your, uh.

01:24:43:19 - 01:24:45:20

Your interest.

01:24:46:01 - 01:24:49:27

Well, no, your the pictures, drawings.

01:24:49:29 - 01:24:58:11

Photographs that you think have been circulating rather than appearing on the screen. And they've not made it. They've not made it through to these to me, to.

01:24:58:13 - 01:24:59:10

Me to see at all.

01:24:59:12 - 01:25:13:17

But is there anything to briefly obviously submit those at deadline one. Yeah. And they've been going around and want to make sure that the applicants had a chance to see them as well and they'll get the chance to see them at deadline. One Is there anything just briefly you want to say as background to those other than what you've said already?

01:25:15:28 - 01:25:18:15

No, I think I've said too much. Thank you very much.

01:25:18:17 - 01:25:19:24

Okay. Well, thank you for your.

01:25:19:26 - 01:25:21:12

Thank you for your submissions this morning.

01:25:26:11 - 01:25:42:24

Okay. It's 11:25 and so think that's a good time for a mid-morning break. So I propose that we adjourn for 15 minutes and come back at 1140. Thank you.