

Mallard Pass_ISH1_11 July_PT3

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FULL TRANSCRIPT (with timecode)

00:00:05:17 - 00:00:20:22

Okay. Good afternoon, everybody. The time is now. Just gone. 2 p.m. and we'll reconvene hearing issue specific number one. Um, kind of just check that the recording and the live streaming has commenced, please.

00:00:25:04 - 00:00:25:22

Thank you.

00:00:27:23 - 00:00:38:23

Okay. Just moving back to the agenda then for today's meeting. We're now on to agenda item number four regarding relevance planning, policy and decisions.

00:00:40:17 - 00:01:21:09

And item four, a a discussion around the national and local policies that may be deemed important and relevant. That deadline to the applicants provided an addendum to their planning statements and associated policy accordance tables and provide updated commentary in relation to the implications of the draft. Revised draft should say national policy statements, particularly Ian one, Ian three and Ian five. Could the applicant please just briefly summarize the implications of those draft statements please, and set out their views in terms of implications for policy, weight and the planning balance?

00:01:22:15 - 00:01:42:07

Mr. Fox and Mr. Fox and for the applicant. I'm just going to introduce two new members of the project team who have joined us at the table. Um, Sarah Price, partner at and David Bell from Associate Planner at Design. And they will assist in answering that question.

00:01:45:01 - 00:02:32:03

Thank you, Sarah. Price on behalf of the applicant. And so you helpfully referred to the various documents that the applicant has provided with regards to compliance with both national and local policy. So I'm going to give a summary in terms of national policy first, and no doubt so that you then might turn to local policy, which my colleague, Mr. Bell is going to address. So in terms of the the weight, first that we would ask you to apply to national to the draft national policy statements, the first thing to say is, as we addressed earlier in discussion, that we have a revised draft of those national policy statements which came out in March of this year.

00:02:32:05 - 00:03:20:03

And it's those statements that we've addressed compliance with in our most recent documents, and we've referred to the long field decision, the long field solar farm decision a number of times already today, and think that that decision is also particularly relevant to the weight that the secretary of state and the inspectors recommendation in this instance gave to the draft NPS in that context. I would draw attention to paragraphs 3.3.2, 4 to 3.3 .26 of the Examining Authority's report on Long Field, which the Secretary of State agreed with, which was that the emerging NPS should be given considerable weight.

00:03:20:14 - 00:04:10:02

And we agree with that and would stay the same. I think that's particularly in the context that the existing NPS and three, the renewable energy NPS doesn't deal with utility scale solar. And so that think puts even more weight than might otherwise apply to draft policy, particularly with regard to nationally significant scale solar projects. I think the other reason that we would say that those draft NPS hold considerable weight is in terms of their compliance with government's recent policy, for instance, in the British energy security strategy of 2022, which makes it clear that the government expects a significant increase in the deployment of solar.

00:04:11:09 - 00:04:40:11

That's also just to give another reference to Longfield addressed in the Secretary of State's decision letter, paragraph 4.5. So think that what we have is a very recent decision which looks at the weight to be applied to draft national policy in the context of large scale solar. And we would we would say the same here. And so would you like me to say anything else about our compliance with policy generally on a national scale?

00:04:41:17 - 00:04:52:15

Thank you. Yes. In terms of the long field decision and others, we will come on to that later in the agenda. But yes, if you have anything else to add in terms of general policy compliance at this point, that would be helpful. Thank you.

00:04:52:20 - 00:05:31:25

Yes, sir. So I mean, think the the if it's helpful to to others and interested parties attending the Appendix three of our planning statement, the the applicant's planning statement, the updated policy tables which is rep 2042 goes through each paragraph of the and the draft is in detail in terms of compliance with policy. We talked a bit earlier about how that applies to to access and we'd be happy to address questions in relation to particular elements of policy as well.

00:05:32:06 - 00:06:07:14

But I'd, I'd guide the examining authority and other interested parties to that appendix as well as the, the, the topic specific considerations that apply to which we we comply within full. There's also the the thrust of national policy which is very much that large scale solar is needed in order to be able to get to the 70 gigawatt target which is in the British energy security strategy and now also referred to in the revised draft NPS.

00:06:10:16 - 00:06:11:04

Thank you.

00:06:15:03 - 00:06:41:08

We will come to local policies shortly. But in terms of the. Draft national policy statements and the current national policy statements to any other interested parties. Have any comments queries to raise on those at this stage in terms of the overall position as to how they may be deemed important relevance and the weight to be given to them. In terms of the overall case for the for the development.

00:06:44:23 - 00:06:53:13

By Sir Justin Johnson, Rutland County Council Just to agree with the applicant in terms of the weight to the draft statements. Thank you.

00:06:54:03 - 00:06:55:09

Thank you. That's helpful.

00:07:02:15 - 00:07:39:00

Okay. Moving on, then. Um, still staying at a national level. Um, in terms of the written ministerial statement from 2015 that deals with solar energy and noting that this includes the following statement. Any proposal for a solar farm involving the best and most versatile agricultural land would need to be justified by the most compelling evidence. Um, first of all, I'd just like to hear from the applicant in terms of how much weight they believe should be given to the ministerial statement, given the timing of it in particular.

00:07:41:01 - 00:08:14:06

Thank you, sir. And obviously the timing was some years ago, eight years ago. Although again, we do note the long field decision there where substantial weight was applied to that ministerial statement. So we wouldn't seek to take a different view from what the Secretary of State set out there. And we might come to it later in terms of policy compliance. I think you do have an agenda item on agricultural land policy in particular. And then clearly we have a topic tomorrow dealing with that in more detail.

00:08:14:09 - 00:08:34:07

But we would we'll address those points then. But think even with the weight to be applied to that statement, clearly in that particular decision that we've referred to, there was still a substantial area of best and most versatile land taken for solar panels with with grazing underneath.

00:08:37:12 - 00:08:52:06

Thank you. Would any other interested parties like to comment on the the weight to be given to the ministerial statement, in particular the position in terms of agricultural land and the need for the compelling evidence?

00:08:55:16 - 00:09:01:21

So Justin Johnson, Rutland County Council. Again, just to agree that significant weight should be given to it.

00:09:03:09 - 00:09:03:24

Thank you.

00:09:06:23 - 00:09:07:22

Okay. Um.

00:09:10:11 - 00:09:43:10

In relation to emerging local policy and evidence and notes from Rutland County Council that there's some work ongoing looking at potential sites to accommodate renewable energy, which is due to report within the next couple of months. And could Rutland's County Council please clarify whether or not this assessment will focus solely on Town and Country Planning Act scale developments and also whether they deem it to be particularly relevant to the application before us today.

00:09:47:03 - 00:10:03:04

Sir Justin Johnson, Rutland County Council. Um, I believe that it will be related to town and country planning development rather than scale of this nature, but will need to confirm in our written submission just to confirm that position.

00:10:09:09 - 00:10:17:22

Thank you. Would you like to? Pointing that at all the state stuff as well, Actually.

00:10:18:24 - 00:10:48:27

Yes, sir. So we we did make a comment on this in our in our response to the the written submissions of Rutland County Council and merely making the point that the local plan appropriately ought to

deal with applications to be dealt with under the Town and Country Planning Act. And so our working assumption was the same that Mr. Johnson has just clarified. So that is what we would assume to be the case as well.

00:10:52:03 - 00:10:52:21

Thank you.

00:10:56:01 - 00:11:33:04

Um. Moving on. South Kesteven District Council have highlighted some additional policies that are relevant to the site selection process. In their more recent submissions and they refer to policy SP one SP five um, and the applicant is now considered those in their policy tables believe that the draft national policy statements one and three are primary. And do the District Council have a view on the applicant's interpretation as to how much weight should be given to those policies in terms of the site selection process?

00:11:37:21 - 00:11:48:04

Phil Jordan on behalf of DC. No, we'd agree that national policy statements take primacy over those local local plan policies.

00:11:56:27 - 00:11:57:16

Thank you.

00:12:01:00 - 00:12:37:20

I'm still on the subject of local planning policies that may be important and relevant to the site selection process. And note from the first written questions responses from Lancashire County Council and Rutland County Council that they weren't in a position to respond at this stage. It will be helpful to the examining authority if we did have a steer from both authorities on the extent to which respective policies may be important, relevant to the selection process and whether you're in position to respond to that now or in writing it.

00:12:37:23 - 00:12:41:29

Deadline for. I'm happy to take it either way. Really. It's up to you.

00:12:42:01 - 00:12:46:21

Yeah. Think we'll we'll do it as a written response to provide the detail. Thank you.

00:12:52:14 - 00:12:54:09

We have Mr. Willis online.

00:12:56:04 - 00:13:08:04

Yeah. Thank you, sir. It's from Lincoln County Council. Yeah. Similarly, we didn't reply. I think that's in response to the examiner's questions. Is that what you're referring to in terms of specific? Yeah. So we can provide a written response to that.

00:13:09:20 - 00:13:10:12

Many thanks.

00:13:16:15 - 00:13:17:07

So for me.

00:13:20:27 - 00:13:36:03

Go ahead and pass that. Just to note that we are anticipating that, yes, it will submit at deadline for will hopefully have an agreed list of the important of durations between both parties in terms of the local policies that are important and relevant.

00:13:36:28 - 00:14:00:03

Are that was going to happen. Next question. Um, yes, I was going to ask whether it would be possible for all local authorities within the common ground to set out, as we have, with links to a belief and a position where there is either agreement or disagreement in respect of the various policies. I think that we've got a useful thing for us to have clarified. So thank you. That's sounds like it's in hand.

00:14:00:05 - 00:14:03:28

Yes, it is. And just just to confirm if there's any dispute between us either.

00:14:05:07 - 00:14:06:13

Thank you. That's helpful.

00:14:13:16 - 00:14:23:10

Do you have any further points from interested parties in relation to this item before we move on? Mr. Hughes. John Hughes.

00:14:23:26 - 00:15:05:21

Party. Excuse me. The applicant has just gone back and mentioned long field Solar Farm as being sort of the basis for the weighting of this, except I don't necessarily fully understand it all. Would like to highlight is that that's being run by renewables in association with a solo solar sorry. And they're working with nature positive on a research programme to understand the environmental benefits of solar farms and will be testing biodiversity improvements of a range of measures such as planting hedgerows, creating wildflower meadows and installing beehives.

00:15:05:23 - 00:15:26:13

They're doing it as a research project at the moment because they don't have the background data, but also with regards to that and it's a provable there is £130,000 a year annual contribution to community initiatives, but also £50,000 a year in skills and education annually being contributed to the local community.

00:15:28:22 - 00:15:40:27

Thank you, Mr. Yates. We will all be discussing benefits later in the agenda. Hopefully we can we can discuss that. But if there's anything you wish to put in writing on that point for line four, please feel free to do so.

00:15:42:13 - 00:15:47:19

Okay. Do we have any further comments on this particular item before we move on?

00:15:49:16 - 00:16:24:08

No. Okay. So moving on to item B and the implications of recent decisions that are made on other farms and other schemes elsewhere. We've touched on, on long fields already. Um, the source referred to as Little Crow and Cleeve Hill Solar Farms. Um, their response. The deadline to submissions summarizes how the approach has been taken in terms of the relevance to similar paths, particularly in relation to the scale of development and needs.

00:16:24:10 - 00:16:31:20

Um, and you touched on long field already, but is there anything you'd like to discuss? Um, broadly on those at the moment?

00:16:32:14 - 00:17:25:05

Yes. Thank you, sir. Sarah Price for the applicant. So turning to Longfield first. There there are a number of points which the applicant would encourage interested parties and the examining authority to to look at. Although, as I'm sure you will be looking at that decision, which which will go through in a moment. There's also another appeal decision which we referred to in our deadline two submissions sorry, our response to interested parties deadline two submissions, which is document 3023, which is an appeal in relation to the decision in Hambleton District Council and that's appeal reference 3315877.

00:17:25:22 - 00:18:28:24

And we've appended the the inspectors reported appendix A to that submission and that's got some useful clarifications on the inspector's view in that case. With regard to the site selection process and the importance of grid connection, which is dealt with at paragraph 28 of that decision. And also in terms of agricultural land, which we might come on to later under that agenda item, if you're happy for us to sir, in relation to to Longfield and the Secretary of State's decision letter and the report and provide some helpful considerations in terms of both the availability of grid connection and how that might feature in the site selection process.

00:18:29:06 - 00:19:00:11

So paragraph 4.10 and 4.16 of the Secretary of State decision letter and also paragraph 5.2.78 of the report, which deals with affectively that particular applicant's approach to securing grid connection and that being the starting point, we'll come to that later. In terms of our site selection and the importance of grid connection in in the applicants siting process.

00:19:00:19 - 00:19:40:03

And we've already referred to the need and weight to be attached to the draft in pieces. Um, there was also comments and, and considerations in relation to best and most versatile land, which again we, we referred to briefly earlier. But in, in this case, the loss of or rather the temporary use of 150 hectares of best and most versatile land was was found to be outweighed by the very considerable need for solar renewable energy in that instance.

00:19:40:24 - 00:20:11:07

And so we would direct to those points. Um, in relation to the Hambleton appeal, which I referred to earlier, and there's as well as the consideration of grid capacity. There is also discussion on the impact of solar on agricultural land and the benefits of resting land from intensive agriculture during the period that the solar farm would be in operation.

00:20:12:04 - 00:20:26:24

Um, and also noting that whilst arable farming is restricted, it's not necessarily a loss of the agricultural land and particularly where the land can either be used for sheep grazing or for.

00:20:29:04 - 00:21:04:02

Grass and baling of the grass growing underneath the solar panels. And also with reference to that document, paragraph 22, which refers to other government schemes which encourage farmers to take land out of production. So that's the Government's environmental land management schemes, including the local nature Recovery scheme, to take account of the benefits of putting it to grass meadows or trees for for carbon capture.

00:21:06:18 - 00:21:12:14

So so we would we would draw the examining authorities attention for those those points as well. Thank you very much.

00:21:13:03 - 00:21:26:26

Thank you. Believe you also refer to the recent site will see judicial review decision and the possible implications there. In terms of the consideration of alternatives, would you be able to just briefly set out your believes we can.

00:21:26:28 - 00:22:00:02

Do um mean the was going to raise that in the context of the technologies um aspect of the agenda and the last engine but can talk to it now which was essentially that many we've had quite a few representations in this examination about the alternative process should have been considering alternative technologies instead of comparing the site for solar against other sites. So no. And that size will judgment one of the many grounds for claim related to that very um suggestion.

00:22:00:21 - 00:22:37:26

And the judge in that case referred to having to do such an alternative comparison as a, as an absurdity. Um, that's an important word there. And this is in the context of the government policy, is that we need to reach net zero with a range of technological solutions. And so in that size, which was the alternatives process for a new nuclear power station, it was appropriate for that alternatives exercise to be done in the context of other nuclear options, because nuclear is one of the many types of technology that are needed to meet the overall need to meet net zero.

00:22:38:03 - 00:22:58:24

So in the context here where we have solar, which has been recognized by the government with its 70GW by 2035, um, you know, that's why it makes sense for it us to be comparing and doing alternative process in the context of what works for solar, not what works for solar versus wind versus nuclear or any other type of technology.

00:23:01:18 - 00:23:16:23

Thank you for that helpful summary. Um, I'm not sure how many interested parties had a chance to read those decisions in detail since they were submitted to us, or if anybody wish to comment on them at this stage. Mr. Orvis.

00:23:17:25 - 00:23:28:00

Thank you, Tony. Over the past group. Um, I note in relation to Longfield there is a 40 year life.

00:23:30:12 - 00:23:38:27

Criteria apply to that. And the applicant has just said, of course, in that instance, the loss of agricultural land is temporary.

00:23:40:25 - 00:24:11:26

Does that apply to the solar farm, who we're told is a permanent. Development and therefore presumably the loss of farming land is also permanent. Um, I can. If I could go on, I could well understand the applicant's recount of the judge's decision on Sizewell C that to look at anything else is, in that instance, an absurdity.

00:24:11:28 - 00:24:47:27

And obviously it is fairly absurd to try and see if there is something else that would apply to a nuclear power station. I would suggest that the same is not true here because it is quite easy to look in this instance at an alternative wind. And so therefore, whilst I understand the same statement, I don't really believe that it has any merit. The last thing I would like to do is to comment on the long field statement of need, if I.

00:24:47:29 - 00:25:30:11

If I may. Point 13 133 and the statement of need that says um batteries are essential technology for a high reliable energy systems such as which the such as that to which the Nets is anticipated become during the critical 2020s. And then it goes on. Battery systems play an essential role in the provision of those services and then again under 12 528 it says that it will allow the project batteries will allow the project to fulfil its ambitions in providing full support to UK action plans to deliver decarbonisation.

00:25:31:01 - 00:25:46:06

Now the reason why I say this is that here we haven't got a battery system and it is my contention, therefore, that without a battery system pass is suboptimal.

00:25:49:20 - 00:25:58:27

Thank you, Mr. Roberts. We will come on to the battery storage question and carbon matters shortly. Mrs. Holloway.

00:26:01:12 - 00:26:38:16

This is Holloway Mallard Pass Action Group. Just one point. I just wanted to say, whilst we're mindful of emerging policy, of course, the planning balance has to be judged against the benefits versus the level of harm and impacts and the specifications of the two developments for Longfield and Malpas Solar Farm are not the same. There are many differences and therefore when coming to weighing up the planning balance, the variables will be different. Take 453 hectares of land versus 852 hectares for a similar generating output.

00:26:38:25 - 00:26:42:11

Lower BMV, far less community

00:26:44:07 - 00:27:00:28

opposition to the scheme, less residential. There are a whole number of factors. So when it comes to weighing up the planning balances to of course the things that are important as a benefit in terms of energy versus everything else, think that just needs to be considered in that light. Thank you.

00:27:03:10 - 00:27:11:15

Mrs. Holloway, do we have any other interested parties who would wish to comment on the cases referenced so far?

00:27:16:17 - 00:27:18:20

Yes, sir. We have a hand at the back.

00:27:21:14 - 00:27:22:09

Mrs. Davis.

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

Davis interested party.

00:27:25:18 - 00:27:48:07

I concur that you cannot compare this development with any other. Both Longfield and the other one are much, much smaller. And so I absolutely agree that there are so many differences with this that you cannot cite that I think it's wrong for them to do so.

00:27:54:15 - 00:27:55:00

Thank you.

00:27:57:06 - 00:28:04:12

Any further hands before we move on? Yes. Sorry. Andrew Hoyle. Yes.

00:28:04:19 - 00:28:35:17

Okay. Everyone will think. Just taking a step further. You have to look at and take note that within. A mile and a half. The solar farm starts and goes for miles further out, but a marathon half takes you to the very center of Stanford. And the population of Stanford, plus the surrounding villages is about 30,000. And everybody in Stamford and surrounding villages are going to be seriously affected by this development.

00:28:36:19 - 00:28:37:22

It's in the wrong place.

00:28:40:09 - 00:28:51:14

Thank you. We will be picking up the various effects of the developments, particularly in the hearing sessions tomorrow and Thursday in relation to various topics. So yeah, we'd be pleased to hear your thoughts on that then. Thank you.

00:28:53:20 - 00:28:56:17

Okay. Sorry. Yes, Mr. Fox? Yes.

00:28:57:01 - 00:28:58:25

I may have just come back with a couple of those points.

00:28:58:27 - 00:28:59:12

Absolutely.

00:28:59:14 - 00:29:29:15

Yeah. Mr. Fox, in behalf of the applicant. Um, first of all, just in relation to the sizable judgment, I would direct Mr. with this attention to paragraph 131 of the judgment which specifically says the absurdity includes the examples of a solar farm being compared to a wind turbine. And secondly, just in terms of how we are saying Longfield is relevant is that we fully recognize that every project is different and the balance needs to be weighed up in terms of the impacts of each specific project.

00:29:29:17 - 00:30:03:21

But what Longfield does and should say is consistent with most of the recent energy decisions of Secretary of State on projects, not just solar, is that significant weight should be given to the planning support given by the emerging Energy national policy statement and that is what we're saying is relevant. Um, the other point I would just make is that community benefits and we all come on to discuss that and the Atkins position on that. But would I would make the important point that community benefits, particularly in light of the right decision in relation to a wind farm are not something for the planning benefit.

00:30:04:11 - 00:30:37:25

That's taking it out of the planning balance. Um, in terms of a community funding or community benefit packages put together is not something to be taken into account, into the planning balance and recognised by the courts. Um, in relation to the point around. Finally, um, as I said, every scheme and the impacts it is having are, are different. We've been clear that whilst we have assessed the permanent impact um, in relation to impacts to soils, the scheme will have to be commissioned.

00:30:37:27 - 00:31:29:27

So in the consideration of the assessment and the assumptions used for assumptions, the basis of your assessment versus the actual reality, which is that as we said before, electric infrastructure will eventually need to be decommissioned and through the management plan our impacts will be

reversible. Um, and finally, in the context of um. Even if you took the worst case situation with with agricultural land, we take up such a small amount of BMV and Hamilton appeal, which again is appended to our response to deadline to submissions talks about that point and the fact that the local authority there and in that inspector's view is its food security is not actually an issue relevant to the planning iterations of such projects and agreed there, which is the case which in any event it was we would not have an effect on it.

00:31:33:05 - 00:31:43:06

Thank you, Mr. Fox. Um, I believe we have Mr. Willis from Lancashire County Council who's online as well, who has his hand up. Would you like to speak, Mr. Willis?

00:31:44:12 - 00:32:18:05

Yes. Thank you, sir. Mark Willis, Lancashire County Council. Perhaps more for for tomorrow. But I'd just put on regard the relevance of a long field decision just to say that we recognise, you know, that is an important decision and it does have implications with regard to relevance for the need and arguments. Perhaps more of a conversation had tomorrow about the the weight, perhaps how those two schemes compare though in particular to do with the proportions of land and therefore justification for temporary permission or otherwise.

00:32:18:07 - 00:32:30:17

So I can perhaps expand on that tomorrow as a specific hearing on, but just to recognise that we do note the Longfield decision does have implications on this, but it's not directly comparable.

00:32:33:24 - 00:32:37:00

Thank you, Mr. Willis. Look forward to those submissions tomorrow.

00:32:43:00 - 00:33:05:04

Okay. Think that's all the hands have been dealt with for now. So moving on to agenda, item number five in relation to need, which we have touched on to some extent already at five A, could the applicant please just set out their position in relation to the need in regard to the statement of need which has been submitted?

00:33:06:14 - 00:33:12:11

Thank you, sir. Mr. Fox, on behalf of the applicant, I will hand over to Mr. Gillett to talk through this.

00:33:14:15 - 00:33:28:00

Thank you very much. So good for the applicant. So you will have read the statement of need and you will have heard also the comments on national policy that my colleague Ms.. Pryce

00:33:29:23 - 00:33:57:15

spoke about earlier. I therefore would like and just checking that I'm fulfilling what your requirement for this section. My intent was to run through the major points in the statement of need and provide updates on recent material which has been issued which we believe is relevant and and that might take 5 or 6 minutes. Is that is that okay, sir?

00:33:59:12 - 00:34:09:25

That'll be helpful. Yes, it's just to set the context for any discussions that may follow on from that. Really in relation to some of the submissions we've had addressing needs. So yes, that'd be a useful way to proceed. Thank you.

00:34:11:05 - 00:34:56:10

Thank you very much, sir. In which case to to continue, I'm going to talk about three needs. The first is the need to decarbonize society. And the second is around energy security. And the third is around

the affordability of energy. And I'll then draw some conclusions. So we're all aware that the world is warming. I'm sure many may have read the World Meteorological Society's organization's sorry press release on the 17th of May of this year, which said, and I quote from it, in 98% likelihood, there is a 98% likelihood that at least one of the next five years and the next five year period as a whole.

00:34:56:12 - 00:35:42:18

That's from 2023 through 2027 will be the warmest on record. And the World Meteorological Organization are sounding the alarm, therefore, that we are more likely to breach the one and a half degree temperature level on a temporary basis with increasing frequency. So the world is warming and it is urgent action which needs to take place in order to slow that warming and ultimately stop it or reverse it. The Committee on Climate Change in their June 2023 Progress report to Government on the carbonization and spoke about the lack of urgency in delivery of decarbonization actions in the UK.

00:35:43:27 - 00:36:16:17

Their summary was that the UK should stay firm on its existing commitments to decarbonize and should move to delivery. And that's on page 14 of that report. Sir, that's the 2020 3rd June 2023 Progress Report to Government. So what does decarbonisation means? It means decarbonising electricity and using carbon free electricity to decarbonise other sectors such as home heating and such as transport and removing fossil fuels from our daily life.

00:36:17:29 - 00:36:48:21

The SEC is on Alcohol nuts Committee on Climate Change in their June report also saying, I quote, To achieve the government's 2030 international commitments under their index. That goal of at least a 68% fall in territorial emissions from 1990 levels. The rates of emissions reduction outside of the power sector must all almost quadruple from what has been achieved so far.

00:36:48:29 - 00:37:14:18

And they go on to say that some of the key planks of the net zero strategy have substantial lead times, and those two points are incongruous. One cannot urgently decarbonize if many of the technologies have got long lead times of delivery. And this is why solar has its part to play in that urgent decarbonization.

00:37:16:04 - 00:37:33:05

Moving on National Grid, The electricity system operator yesterday published their future energy scenarios report, and this is an annual report which includes projections of how the UK's electricity system will evolve.

00:37:34:22 - 00:38:06:20

And the implications that that has on. On decarbonising electricity and achieving government's 2035 goal for a carbon free electricity system and ultimately the 2050 zero carbon legal requirements. And on page 132 of that report that was issued yesterday. So the electricity system operator state that sufficient electricity connection capacity is vital to support solar capacity projections.

00:38:07:01 - 00:38:10:20

It's also vital to support offshore wind projections.

00:38:12:18 - 00:38:14:09

Put simply. Therefore.

00:38:16:19 - 00:38:42:07

In order to fight climate change, we need to make the most of the infrastructure we have available, and then we will need to build more and buy infrastructure. I mean, not only generation assets, but

also the transmission assets to which they will connect. This context, fresh off the press yesterday, provides further support for the applicant's proposal to use the available grid connection capacity at rival.

00:38:43:24 - 00:39:24:28

So solar is critical for decarbonization. The pipelines for solar generation are not yet full in that there are not sufficient projects on pipelines to meet government's need, as was explained earlier or set out earlier. And the guarantees that are provided by a site being on a register are simply not there. They are not guarantees. For example, National Grid's Tech Register, which lists projects which have applied for and been granted connection agreements, includes approximately 15GW of large scale solar for connection this decade.

00:39:27:20 - 00:39:37:20

And National Grid also say in. And we've quoted this as a sorry, we've provided this

00:39:39:16 - 00:39:58:17

publication as part of an appendix in rep 2038. National Grid have also said that the attrition rates for projects on their connection register can be 30 to 40%, which implies that what is listed on a register is not guaranteed to deliver.

00:40:02:15 - 00:40:32:19

And all the time the world continues to warm. So it's not just solar, which is. Subject to capacity constraints, its other technologies as well, its offshore wind. It will be hydrogen, it will be carbon capture usage and storage. All of these technologies are needed and the applicant's position is that Mallard Pass will be a part of a multi technology solution for these longer term technologies.

00:40:33:06 - 00:41:06:06

Nuclear. Hydrogen and technological hurdles must be overcome. Grid connection must be secured. Funding and consent must also be secured. Some also rely on each other, but yet not all have been guaranteed. What do I mean by that? Blue hydrogen, as it's called, relies on a functional removal of carbon dioxide. Functional. So blue hydrogen will not be possible until is deliverable at scale.

00:41:06:16 - 00:41:39:11

Green hydrogen, which is around the electrolysis of water, relies on the abundance of low carbon electricity so that two will not deliver until low carbon electricity is abundant. So the future path is incredibly, incredibly uncertain. Urgent action is therefore, we believe, needed now. Solar technology is proven in delivery and in operation, and there are 14GW of solar operating in the UK at present.

00:41:39:24 - 00:42:17:12

National Grid's projections for the need for solar generation is part of an integrated electricity system is up to 99 zero gigawatts by 2050. And by the way, National Grid also in their report yesterday say that it will be very difficult and in fact, their scenarios do not deliver government's commitment of 70GW by 2035, implying that there are significant constraints in grid connection and that will need to move fast in order to in order to secure our future in that regard.

00:42:20:01 - 00:42:53:29

I wanted to touch very briefly on security of supply and note that Mr. Price has already talked about the British energy security strategy. So I'm going to be quite light touch on here, but good point yourself, sir, and interest passes to sections 8.7 and 8.8 of the statements of need and in particular figures, 8.1 and 8.2. What these sections do is they underpin the multi technology approach of decarbonisation in the electricity system.

00:42:54:15 - 00:43:00:12

They show how wind and solar can work together in order to.

00:43:02:09 - 00:43:36:01

Deliver a low carbon supply. And indeed, again, in yesterday's report on page 16 of National Grid's future energy scenarios Report 2023, National Grid states that a range of technologies with different characteristics can in combination help deliver secure, affordable, low carbon electricity supplies and harness the potential of domestic renewable resources. More electricity from wind and solar is vital to help the UK meet its target for net zero by 2050.

00:43:37:12 - 00:44:24:19

The last point before I summarise which relates to security of supply is around affordability and the British Energy security strategy notes that when energy may be scarce, so when there is a risk of an energy shortage, price goes up and consumers pay. June 20th, 23 Climate Change reports, which I've spoken of earlier, makes an interesting point in its executive summary at Page 20 and says that given the short lead times and rapid deployment of onshore wind and solar, these assets could have helped to mitigate dependence on imported gas during last year's fossil fuel crisis.

00:44:25:11 - 00:45:04:18

Now, what we are not suggesting as part of that is that mallard parts itself could have delivered those benefits last year because as we've mentioned, projects take time to go through the development processes and construction. But what we do note is that the themselves support domestic, i.e. UK based renewable generation providing affordability and security of supply benefits and mallard pass solar Farm, if consented, would provide those benefits from its very first day of operation.

00:45:06:02 - 00:45:26:20

The more benefit the technology brings and the more sorry, the more the quicker those benefits can come forwards, the more benefit those those technology brings and equally, the more more benefits that technology can bring in terms of megawatt hours of generation, the more benefits of security of supply and affordability. They also bring

00:45:28:12 - 00:45:43:10

just on on points of reference back to the statement of need figures 10.3 and 10.4 of the statement of need and sorry should have said that's up to zero two. Show that large scale solar is already among the cheapest

00:45:45:07 - 00:46:18:00

generation technology in the UK and it is projected to get cheaper over time and would also point to Section 10.2 of that same document statement of need at 202, which explains the UK electricity market mechanism, which means that the delivery of increasing capacities of solar generation do reduce electricity price for consumers. So in conclusion, I just wanted to

00:46:19:23 - 00:46:53:13

quote again once more from last month's reports on page 25, which states that the Government's decarbonization framework is currently missing, coherent plans to mitigate the delivery risks to meeting the 2030 NDC, and that's its nationally determined contribution under the Paris Agreement and its sixth carbon budget. The current strategy has considerable delivery risks due to its overreliance on specific technological solutions, some of which have not yet been deployed at scale.

00:46:53:15 - 00:47:30:04

This lack of balance carries considerable and increasing risks to meeting the emissions targets. Against that context, the need for solar is enormous and urgent. Solar has a critical role to play, to deliver carbon decarbonisation, to deliver security of supply and to deliver affordability, affordability

benefits. These benefits, which the statement of need provides evidence for, are consistent with those described by the Secretary of State in the 2023 draft National Policy statement.

00:47:30:06 - 00:47:54:09

In one a paragraphs 3.2.5 and 3.2.6 in which the Secretary of State has determined that those benefits should be given significant weight when considering applications. And we would ask therefore, sir, that you two provided gave significant weight to those benefits in your assessment of the scheme. Thank you.

00:47:57:02 - 00:48:09:27

Thank you. Um, can I ask the progress reports that you referred to earlier is submitted at deadline four so we can review that. That'd be helpful. Thank you. Yes, sir.

00:48:12:29 - 00:48:43:15

Okay. Thank you for helpful summary of the overall position in terms of the applicants view on on the need for the developments. We will be coming on to talk about the benefits. I appreciate the links, but there will be a separate discussion about benefits come shortly. But would it? Any other interested parties like to comment on this stage on what you just said in terms of the the need? And we have various written representations which which have created various assumptions within the statement of need in particular.

00:48:44:20 - 00:48:46:09

Yes. Mr. Holiday Pack.

00:48:47:07 - 00:49:12:12

Ian Passer Action Group. Just wanted to make one comment on the statement that utility solar was the one of the cheapest forms. That statement is does not seem to fit with the data published by the IPCC. Won't quote the figures. I won't quote them. I'll let you look at those and make your own decision. Thank you.

00:49:15:17 - 00:49:16:21

Thank you. Yes.

00:49:18:16 - 00:49:22:06

David County's chair brace from Bilsthorpe Parish Council. Just want to.

00:49:25:06 - 00:50:02:07

Bring up an observation where we talk about need to decarbonize. Nobody disagrees with that at all. And there's energy security issues as well. But we also have food security issues and the government's food strategy, strategy policy in June 22nd clearly wants to maintain the agricultural production within the country. And farming and the agro food industry within South Kesteven economy is huge and losing this would be really detrimental to an effect on local income and reduce our ability to provide locally grown food.

00:50:02:22 - 00:50:12:09

And one other one other comment with regards to the manufacture of solar panels is that we talk about

00:50:13:25 - 00:50:53:13

decarbonising and the taking out the use of fossil fuels in our everyday life. But what I think people tend to forget is that the major manufacturer of solar panels, China produces over 90% of the solar panels, and they use an enormous amount of fossil fuels in the production of these solar panels, and that's never been taken into consideration. The other aspect is the materials that go into the

manufacture of solar panels in terms of the mining of these these things is enormous and is detrimental to the environment.

00:50:56:10 - 00:51:08:17

Thank you. Raise a number of points there that we will come on to discuss separately in the not too distant future. But thank you for that. Any further submissions at this point in time?

00:51:12:11 - 00:51:14:06

Sorry, Mr.. Mr. Williams.

00:51:15:10 - 00:51:33:08

Yeah. Richard Williams, again. Just the need. Very focused on supply rather than demand, isn't it? So you could all switch off your air conditioning in your office for an hour a day and reduce the demand for electricity.

00:51:35:05 - 00:52:00:20

So the focus here is all about supply, but there's no consideration being given to the demand side of the equation. And secondly, on the the number of projects in the pipeline. Think did some maths and showed it was slightly different. Um, but I don't want to repeat myself because I'm told not to in the notes. So that was, I think, my original submission some months back.

00:52:02:06 - 00:52:15:09

Thank you. There is no need to repeat written submissions. We have read those. They will be taken into account. And at this point, I don't know if the applicant wishes to come back and any of those points have been raised.

00:52:16:17 - 00:52:47:16

Just briefly, Mr. Marks, on behalf of the applicant, just just to briefly touch on so in terms of the GHG emissions associated with applying the construction of solar panels, that is accounted for in our assessments and also based on IPCC work, on working out what the average percentage should be applied to that. Um, just quickly point out that obviously we are as a society, electrifying, um, electric cars, etcetera. So there is that point about demand.

00:52:48:00 - 00:52:48:15

Um.

00:52:49:27 - 00:53:19:19

There is there's going to be an increasing demand for electrical energy. And then thirdly, just to restate the point about agricultural land, um, appeals, recent appeals and decisions show that food security isn't a matter for land use planning. There's no controls on how agricultural land is used. If people want to change it, then they can. And even if it was relevant, we take such a small amount and you compare that to the need that Mr. Garrett has gone through, that it's not really a relevant consideration.

00:53:24:05 - 00:53:25:28

Thank you. Yes, Mr. Holiday Pack.

00:53:26:28 - 00:53:59:03

Thank you. Ian Halliday, Action Group. With respect to the the figures that have been used for the GHG emissions, the life cycle carbon and note that the applicant has used the media and has made a defence to the use of that with reference to longer, which think we've established my factual perspective. There are so many variables I'm not sure that suitable comparable. Um, the median is about a third of the way between the.

00:53:59:05 - 00:53:59:21
Minimum and.

00:53:59:23 - 00:54:32:23
Maximum. If you consider a distribution statistical distribution, then it would not be unreasonable to note that if you are 75% are not 50th percentile, you could have twice the life cycle carbon more than twice don't actually don't have access to the distribution curve. But um, given that the papers that I've, I've read seem to indicate that fully sourced from China is the panels themselves would contain the highest lifecycle carbon, therefore likely to be over 50 percentile.

00:54:33:08 - 00:54:41:22
I would like to understand and perhaps even request if it's possible, independent professional verification of that assumption.

00:54:43:26 - 00:54:50:19
Thank you. If we could just hold that thought for a for a few minutes, we will be revisiting this issue further down the agenda, if that's okay.

00:54:50:21 - 00:54:51:14
Yes, Thank you.

00:54:51:19 - 00:54:52:05
Thank you.

00:54:53:27 - 00:54:57:08
Um, yes, Mr. Fossil?

00:54:57:18 - 00:55:16:13
Yeah. There was two things that come out of what we just heard. Keep on hearing that. Only it's only a very small part of the agricultural land that we're taking over for solar. But it would be interesting to know how many tons of arable production we're taking out just for Mallard Pass. And as a.

00:55:16:15 - 00:55:17:25
Nation, you.

00:55:17:27 - 00:55:49:01
Know a little bit here, a little bit there, you keep adding the bits up and I would imagine it comes to quite a large amount. We're led to believe that technology and farming will compensate for the loss that we're suffering for renewable energies. But at that, that comes at a cost with increased fertilizer, fertilizers, pollution to our rivers, etcetera. And also with parts. What we have here is a solar farm in on its own.

00:55:49:29 - 00:55:50:29
We've heard that there.

00:55:51:01 - 00:55:53:06
Are benefit that that we need solar and.

00:55:53:08 - 00:55:53:26
Wind.

00:55:53:28 - 00:56:28:09

And it's a pity and I'm sure it can't be done for Mallard Pass. But a combination of the two on the Mallard Pass site would have resulted in far less land being used. But we have one company that is purely solar and they plot on. Using only solar. Just draw your attention to a renewable energy park in Southeastern, which is in Bedfordshire, which utilizes solar, wind, hydrogen on a brownfield site on an old airfield site.

00:56:28:14 - 00:56:47:01

Surely as a nation, those are the sort of things that we should be doing and harnessing and coordinating the different types of renewables when we're looking at a particular site so we don't lose all the agricultural land that we are. Doing.

00:56:49:04 - 00:57:24:24

Thank you, Mr. Vassal. Again, some of the issues raised there will be discussed at a later point in the in the not too distant future. But we'll thank you. Um, before we move on from the discussion around, need I'd like to ask the applicant just to briefly set out, um, their position in terms of the implications of um, should the situation arise that the current draft national policy statements are designated, um, before the decision on this application is determined and what consequences that would have in terms of consideration of need.

00:57:27:18 - 00:57:49:11

Uh, don't think that it would, because we would it would still continue to be an important consideration, but perhaps even greater because it's now been designated rather than emerging. Um, it doesn't change the position in terms of section 104 and 1.5 is imagine you're aware. Um, but it would be an even more important consideration if I could put it that way.

00:57:53:14 - 00:57:54:00

Thank you.

00:57:57:05 - 00:58:33:01

Okay. Um, moving on to the consideration of the benefits of the proposed developments under item B. Um, and actually just coming back on a on a question that was raised in this morning's discussion that I'd like to revisit if possible, please. Um, there was a query around the number of homes that developments would help to, to power. Um, there have been submissions that relate to the development proposing proposed that it would accommodate for 92,000 homes.

00:58:33:14 - 00:58:54:02

Um, I think there was a query whether or not that related to the 350 megawatt output as opposed to the 240 connection agreement. And I'd like the applicant just to clarify that point, please, if that's okay. In terms of the number of homes that may be supported by the by the development.

00:58:56:12 - 00:59:08:03

Behalf of the applicant, um, we're going to come back in writing on this. We stand by the 92,000 homes, but it does involve a calculation and it's easier that set out in writing. So we will do that by that number.

00:59:09:00 - 00:59:10:06

Thank you. Okay.

00:59:15:09 - 00:59:16:28

Yes, Mr. Pogue.

00:59:17:12 - 01:00:01:04

Thank you, Mr. Halliday. From our section group, it was myself who raised the the query earlier, and it was based, as you suggested, on the difference between capacity and output. And the output we have demonstrated, I believe has already been submitted, has been overstated. They've used for many of the the benefit statements they've used the headline 350,000 megawatt hours when in fact, if you do include degradation and you include the losses, even the feed in the grid losses, inverter losses, etcetera, and maintenance losses and perhaps a more realistic load factor, that output drops to 253,000.

01:00:01:24 - 01:00:14:25

And that is what equates to the lower number of homes. And so I look forward to seeing the revised calculations because certainly the premise on which the benefits of being stated was flawed. Thank you.

01:00:16:15 - 01:00:19:22

Thank you. All Mr. Fox, we'd like to come back. Yeah, just.

01:00:19:24 - 01:00:46:26

Just to confirm that. Yes. Mean in writing will confirm the basis of of the number. But I would just emphasize that, um, the point isn't really the 92,000 homes is a benefit to the scheme, but it's not the, you know, the one benefit in which the scheme is saying it, it's need arises or the benefits of the scheme. It's not really about the number, it's about the amount of electricity that's generated and going to the network as a whole.

01:00:51:04 - 01:00:53:18

One final point on this issue. Think. Thank you.

01:00:54:10 - 01:01:31:05

Thank you very much. I do completely agree. It is about the electricity. Hydrogen is a way in which we can perhaps visualize it or 60,000. It is about the amount of electricity of low carbon and the carbon, which is CO₂, which is saved. But in the same respect, when you consider the lower output rather than a higher output that's been used for the calculations. Therefore, the CO₂ savings drop significantly, but in fact by 38%, the extent the length of time it takes to pay back increases to over 12 years, and certainly the CO₂, by my calculations, drops to 1.25 million.

01:01:31:12 - 01:01:41:28

And that's before we consider, as we had mentioned earlier, what you choose for the life cycle carbon from the range that's available from the IPCC data. Thank you.

01:01:43:12 - 01:02:11:23

Thank you. So just really quickly, just just to confirm, just in terms of before the deadline for in, although we didn't deal with the question of the amount of homes, there's queries about numbers and output are dealt with in our table responding to interested parties deadline to submissions on climate change. Um so you know, save interested parties from waiting for what we might say. A lot of what they're looking for is there it just didn't deal with the homes number.

01:02:22:23 - 01:02:26:01

The reference for that is 3029.

01:02:30:21 - 01:03:16:27

Thank you. I think we shall move on from that matter for the time being and moving on to, um, discussion around battery storage or lack thereof. The applicant's response to the Examining Authority's question 1.2.4 states that due to limitations of the ry Hall substation of battery could only store the surplus from the proposed developments and would not be commercially viable. Notes the

wording from the draft national policy statement one paragraph 4.2.26 that alternative proposals which mean the necessary developments, could not proceed, for example, because the alternative proposals are not commercially viable, can be excluded on the ground.

01:03:16:29 - 01:03:34:12

They are not. Importance and relevance to the secretary states. Is the applicant in a position to provide any information that would support the view that the battery storage would not be commercially viable? Recognizing the limitations around the scope to imports energy.

01:03:38:02 - 01:04:00:09

The starting point is because in order to do it, we would have to update upgrade the substation and the extension and extension to the substation would be needed, which costs in the 2 to 3 million to 2 to 3 figure million. Uh. In fact, costs of that. That would be, um.

01:04:04:08 - 01:04:12:28

So on the basis of the current substation, it's not technically feasible. To make it feasible would be essentially not commercially viable in the context of the scheme.

01:04:19:16 - 01:04:33:24

And just to clarify, that upgrade would be necessary to store surplus energy that's generated, for instance, during the summer months, during the daytime. So this is just energy that's generated within the site itself rather than energy from elsewhere.

01:04:35:27 - 01:04:42:04

Yes, sorry. So in order to store electricity just generated by pass, it would require an upgrade of the substation.

01:04:43:09 - 01:04:45:10

Of the two £3 million cost to do that.

01:04:45:18 - 01:04:48:20

Yeah, sorry. 2 to 3 million. So. Yeah.

01:04:50:03 - 01:04:52:28

Thank you, Mr. Orvis.

01:04:54:14 - 01:05:26:00

Thank you. Tony Malpass, Solar farm on the question of batteries, which you've just asked. Um, the applicant has said that there is no commercial case for batteries. I assume that's because there isn't sufficient capacity at the substations to download from the grid into those batteries. So the applicant would not be able to actually trade electricity. It would be reliant upon generation from the solar farm only.

01:05:26:18 - 01:06:21:03

So on that basis, and because it is not commercially viable to have a battery, the applicant is attempting to ameliorate the problem by over planting. Solar panels. The applicant hasn't said by how much they're planting solar panels in order to make in order to take account of the fact that there is no battery. But the extent to which they are over planting is yet another evidence that the royal substation is not totally fit for purpose because it cannot support a battery system, which, as I've said before in the long field submission, states that they are an essential part and they should be co-located.

01:06:22:06 - 01:06:55:16

So think here we have yet another example of the applicant trying to get around the fact that the royal substation is absolutely fit for purpose, which it is not. And therefore it means that all the dis benefits associated with the with the development have to be analysed against the actual situation regarding the R substation and not the generalities of substation.

01:06:59:24 - 01:07:07:05

Thank you, Mr. Orvis. Do you have any other points, queries that anybody wishes to raise on that at this point to come back?

01:07:07:11 - 01:07:10:06

Yes. I'd just like to bring in Mr. Get it possible, please.

01:07:12:18 - 01:07:23:15

Thank you very much. So for the applicant. I just wish to clarify a couple of points around over planting, Around storage. Around. Around co-location.

01:07:25:02 - 01:07:38:12

Before I do that, I'd like to set the context or reiterate the context as stated in the future energy scenarios from from yesterday and in Ofgem and National Grid's

01:07:40:14 - 01:07:41:04

prior

01:07:42:19 - 01:08:00:01

public statements that grid connection capacity is a serious constraint to our ability as a country to decarbonize and we all know what the risks of that are. If we don't. If we don't. If we don't decarbonise. So.

01:08:01:22 - 01:08:30:24

The first case is that we have at rail an unused portion of the existing infrastructure which will fit, for want of a better word, a solar scheme, and will allow it to export efficiently to the grid. And this is really important because low carbon megawatt hours are what will decarbonize the grid.

01:08:33:19 - 01:08:43:19

If the applicant. Was to co-locate batteries. Was to insist on the co-location of batteries with the solar.

01:08:45:18 - 01:09:20:18

We've heard from Mr. Fox and from others that would require an upgrade to the to the rail substation, which would take time and refer back to the very first statements made this morning around the selection of rail and indeed the question around whether rail could be upgraded or not. And the answer, of course, is yes, it could be upgraded, but that all takes time. And that's unfortunately time that we don't really have and don't I don't want to be alarmist here.

01:09:20:20 - 01:09:51:19

I'm just I'm just kind of stating the facts that others who are who are more experienced in in climate change have have have themselves stated. So we have an opportunity to deliver low carbon generation now. And when I say now, I mean this project along these timelines or waits for a potentially indeterminate period to potentially deliver later. Now in the event that there is a full pipeline of solar schemes, which is.

01:09:52:18 - 01:10:37:17

Which would provide a surplus to what has been identified by National Grid, the Eso as a national need. Then one could argue that rail and the Mallard Pass scheme is not as good as other schemes and

use those words kind of loosely and therefore that may weigh against it. But that's not the fact. The fact is that there are insufficient schemes currently coming forwards, that there is an urgent need for low carbon generation and there is an available and contracted by the applicant export connection at rail, which is at the earliest opportunity currently.

01:10:39:13 - 01:10:59:17

But if the project moves to consent, I'm absolutely confident that the applicant would do everything that they could do to ask grid to bring that connection forwards. Now that's within grids. Usk. So it's nothing that we can commit to here, but that's certainly the intent of the applicant, is to get this, to get this

01:11:02:27 - 01:11:21:18

to bring our project to operation as soon as possible so that it can deliver on the benefits that that it talks about. I just also want to make one other point, which is around over planting versus storage. And these are not, as my professional opinion, is that these are not as related as they're being made out to be.

01:11:23:11 - 01:12:10:12

A solar park in Bristol, which commissioned in June, is over, planted without storage. There are other solar parks which are over planted with storage. They are different things, they are additive things, all of which help improve or increase and optimize the utilization of existing of existing grid connections. So I would not say that this scheme is sorry. What I would say is that the fact that this scheme is over planted is not a direct a dis benefit, if you like, to the fact that there is no storage available.

01:12:10:14 - 01:12:18:02

If storage was available at this site, I would fully expect an over planting ratio as well.

01:12:19:20 - 01:12:20:05

Thank you.

01:12:21:27 - 01:12:36:15

Thank you for that helpful clarification. In terms of relationship between neighbor planting and the lack of battery storage and. Just a couple of questions on on both of those matters briefly and.

01:12:38:15 - 01:12:58:25

Just in terms of, um, let's say the summer months. Um, during the day there's energy that's being generated, um, that cannot be stored. What happens to that, that energy. All the panels powered down so they no longer generate electricity. What happens to that energy that could otherwise have been stored?

01:13:00:14 - 01:13:17:05

So it's like for the applicant. That's a very good question. There are controls on the inverters with stretching into electrical engineering space, but there are controls on the inverters and the plant controls, which mean that that electricity effectively, effectively is not generated, is not it is not exported.

01:13:20:20 - 01:13:21:20

Thank you. That's helpful.

01:13:23:06 - 01:13:26:11

And in terms of over planting, um.

01:13:28:01 - 01:13:44:00

Is there a figure in terms of the number of panels or the area of land that is available that would set out precisely how much planting is proposed within the development? As a percentage, let's say. How much does it make up with the number of panels and the site area?

01:13:45:04 - 01:14:11:15

Sure. So I don't have that number, but perhaps one of my colleagues does. But what I will do is refer back to our written our response to the first written questions. Rep 2037. Question 1.2.6 I believe. But I'll check that reference. So I think it's 1.0. 16 which talks to.

01:14:14:27 - 01:14:45:09

The mathematical model that sits behind over planting where you get lost generation. As you explained, sir, during the peak of the sunniest days of the summer. But you gain generation at all other times. And the ratio that makes sense from a lifetime generation perspective. It's not a hard and fast number, but it's somewhere between 1.3 and 1.5, 130 to 150% of the of the connection capacity.

01:14:45:18 - 01:14:51:25

That obviously is something that will vary on a on a development by development basis.

01:14:53:07 - 01:15:19:12

Thank you. Appreciate the ratio point that you referred to previously. I'm just trying to quantify that in terms of land occupied by the A's in particular, which may have implications for other issues. Um, I don't know if it's possible, um, to, to estimate that. Guess it's a simple calculation based on what you just said, but perhaps that's something could be submitted as part of the deadline for as well, if that's technically possible.

01:15:20:28 - 01:15:23:10

I'm sure we can look into that, sir. Thank you.

01:15:24:15 - 01:15:25:03

Sorry, sir.

01:15:26:18 - 01:15:57:06

Mr. Fox. Yes. Mr. Fox, I think just want to be absolutely sure of the ask there because we have I mean, think on responses to 118 as well where and 17 where you started to consider kind of the the other implications of of where your questioning is going essentially. And we did answer them and talked about the fact that the work number one sets out the maximum ascent of of the solar with landscaping around it.

01:15:57:08 - 01:16:17:04

And then it was likely that if if panels were to be removed, it would be from the edges. It's not likely to be kind of fulfilled that we're talking about here. Um, so in that context, suppose, um. I just need to clear what you're expecting to see at that time for.

01:16:19:08 - 01:16:19:23

I'm.

01:16:21:14 - 01:16:41:20

It was just to see whether that could be quantified in terms of an hour. It sounds as though and appreciate the point around talents we could take away from the edge of fields. I'm just looking for a figure that would be easy to quantify that still possible. So you could refer to that in terms of the overall effects of the developments and just quantify the amount of land that was actually being devoted towards

01:16:43:06 - 01:16:45:02
planting. Okay. The ratio.

01:16:45:06 - 01:16:52:09
Essentially the difference between 240 and 350. Okay. Well, is that kind of think that's what you think? Yeah.

01:16:52:11 - 01:17:02:19
Yes. In terms of power. Yes. But in terms of the number of panels, for example, and the land they would occupy, if you used to have some estimate about how much land that would that would take up. Thank you.

01:17:07:05 - 01:17:11:28
Okay. Um. Yes, Mr. Holiday Pack.

01:17:12:13 - 01:17:50:02
Thank you. Ian Harold. Action Group. Um, I have a question. Um, well, I had a comment really on. Nobody has any, any issue. Think they need to decarbonise? Think It's absolutely straightforward. All the issue is that we need a mix of renewables. Um, I think that's all very straightforward. Um, I think that the issue is when, when we're considering what is suitable and where the benefits are. Um, in the documentation provided by the applicant, um, it makes a comparison between the decarbonisation from the point today to point in the future.

01:17:50:18 - 01:18:22:18
It also in the documentation makes a comparison with how much carbon it actually saves over time. When you consider the grid is being decarbonised by other projects as well. In that particular section I'll get the reference for you in a second. It mentions that it will save 423,000. Um, equivalent tons of CO2 and the light cycle carbon is 672,000. So it's a net by their own numbers. Net positive by 250,000 tons of carbon.

01:18:23:00 - 01:18:31:28
To me, that's is a consideration we consider are we trying to reduce the carbon in the environment or are we trying to just produce a low carbon grid? Okay.

01:18:33:17 - 01:18:43:28
Thank you. Again, we will come back to the discussion around carbon fairly shortly. Um, so the gentleman with the yellow don't have your name notes down. Apologies, could you.

01:18:44:12 - 01:18:46:05
Simon Davis interested party.

01:18:46:07 - 01:18:46:22
Thank you.

01:18:47:01 - 01:18:49:08
During these conversations this afternoon.

01:18:49:21 - 01:18:51:08
I'm sort of struck.

01:18:51:10 - 01:19:00:26

By the thought that if we have an equivalent energy output for 92,000 homes or 62,000 or whatever it is.

01:19:01:13 - 01:19:02:18

Why don't we actually put.

01:19:02:20 - 01:19:07:08

The panels on the roofs of the houses and we can forget all this and go home?

01:19:13:14 - 01:19:21:24

Um. Don't you think we should come back on that? But guess the answer is that we're here to discuss the application and the proposal before us today. Um, yeah, but this is a.

01:19:21:26 - 01:19:46:21

Statement of need. Oh, that's the need for this. For this application and for this proposal. And somebody from Mars looking at what we were doing would think would question our logic thoughts. Our logic patterns put in. Putting these panels on roofs is much more efficient than building this power station, which effectively destroys our local environment.

01:19:49:07 - 01:19:51:19

We've taken the definite let's go.

01:19:51:21 - 01:20:23:09

On camera salutes the applicant. Just a quick point. It's not a case of one or the other. When you look at national policy around all these technologies, it's a case that we need to exploit all the forms that are available. And this is a common point. But for ground mounted solar, well, why are we putting it on greenfield land when it can all go on rooftop? Well, the short point is there isn't enough rooftop and not all rooftop that might be feasibly suitable to have a solar solar panel design on the roof is available.

01:20:23:11 - 01:20:46:12

Not all of it is is you know, you need to have willing landowners, whether that's the landowner of a roof or the landowner of the ground. But the point is, there isn't enough rooftop available to meet the projections that are in national policy by that form of solar alone. So it's not one or the other. Both need to come forward over time. Thank you.

01:20:50:13 - 01:20:52:03

Thank you, Mr. Orvis.

01:20:52:05 - 01:21:11:15

Yes. All right. Tony Orbis, Mammoth Action Group. Mr. Gillick referred to the fact that even without batteries, this would be an efficient way to feed the grid. Of course, without that, batteries, this development will be entirely at the mercy of the weather.

01:21:13:00 - 01:21:43:17

And so therefore, it will it will feed the grid in a very variable way. And I therefore don't can't suggest that it will be efficiently. And therefore most solar farms have a battery to even out that particular case. Now, I'm not suggesting. That the applicant should upgrade the substation rail in order to accommodate the battery, clearly. As has been said, that is not commercially viable.

01:21:43:27 - 01:22:22:14

However, it does go back to how viable this particular developer is without having to be without having a battery. And go back to my former point in the long field statement of need, where the

statement of need said that these batteries are an essential technology. Power systems, electricity systems. And so therefore, if it's essential for long field, how come it's not essential? Samantha Power.

01:22:23:21 - 01:23:02:05

The other point is that Mr. Gillette referred to a solar farm near Bristol, I think came on in June. Well, I think it might be generally accepted that smaller solar farms do not have to have batteries. Some of them are for generation on site and usage on site anyway, and can well imagine, although I'm not an engineer, that balancing a small battery into the grid, it's a lot easier than balancing this large amount of energy that will go into the grid.

01:23:02:20 - 01:23:15:26

So I would suggest that most of the size solar farms that are going through have or will have battery storage co-located.

01:23:20:03 - 01:23:28:23

Thank you, Mr. Harris. And just before we move away from battery storage related matters, I don't know if the applicant wishes to have a final say on the issue.

01:23:30:09 - 01:23:30:24

And

01:23:32:09 - 01:24:04:17

I think it would just make the point that I've not managed to get up to date with the need on long field, but would note that even our own statement of need recognizes the importance of battery storage to the overall electricity network in the UK. And yes, it is an essential part of the overall network. That's not the question of each project and the specific requirements of each project and whether battery storage is needed or not. To get it explained. That's not an either or between planting and battery storage.

01:24:04:19 - 01:24:20:22

You can't. And projects do have both. We're well within the range of what the NPS suggests as needed for is successful over planting. And in that context, it is an efficient use of capacity at substation.

01:24:24:00 - 01:25:11:27

Thank you, Mr. Fox. Moving on then. Um, in terms of energy pricing and in relation to the benefits that may transpire arising from the proposed development, the applicant statement of need section 10.2 states that increase in capacity of renewable assets in Great Britain reduces the traded price of power and therefore provides a benefit to consumers and notes the written representation from the action group that could test that point and make the view that exactly the price of gas that is determinant in the overall wholesale price of electricity and the response of deadline through third back to that statement of need.

01:25:11:29 - 01:25:24:08

And would the applicant please just to be able to kind of verbalize their response to that particular issue, please, in relation to whether or not gas is the factor in the wholesale.

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Price

01:25:26:10 - 01:25:29:09

of the applicant? I'll bring in Mr. Gillet to answer that.

01:25:30:18 - 01:26:03:21

Thank you very much. So good it for the applicant. So action group are correct in that generally gas is what's called the marginal plant, which means it is the last plant to be turned on at a point in time and therefore sets the price of electricity for that point in time. I would like you, sir, and interested parties to consider two parallel energy systems where one of them has a large chunk of renewable generation which is generating and the other one doesn't.

01:26:04:17 - 01:26:41:19

In the system which does not have renewable generation. Generating gas may be the last plant to be turned on. But in the event that there is a large capacity of renewable generation generating that gas is not needed and therefore it doesn't turn on and therefore the marginal price of power which sets the price of power in the UK at both the immediate the day ahead, the week and month and year and season ahead basis does not is not set by gas operating at that at that point in time.

01:26:41:21 - 01:26:51:28

And it's precisely the delivery of low carbon generation which will undercut gas, which lowers the price of electricity in the UK.

01:26:56:00 - 01:27:04:15

Thank you. Um, would they pass the action group? Like to. Respond to that point. Germany.

01:27:05:29 - 01:27:06:21

Points.

01:27:10:04 - 01:27:43:09

I can, if you wish. It's. It's good of Mr. Gillet to confirm my understanding of the way in which the market operates. Um, the question also is, is gas ever going to be absent from our generating system? And I suggest to you that it probably will not be because good though renewables are they are not very reliable. The wind doesn't blow at all times. The sun doesn't shine at all times and some solar farms don't have a battery.

01:27:43:11 - 01:27:56:06

So therefore there is always going to be, in my view, and think others a need for some gas. And so therefore we will not have a situation where gas will not be used.

01:28:00:19 - 01:28:07:04

Thank you, Mr. Orvis. Are there any other interested parties you would like to comment on this particular point?

01:28:10:08 - 01:28:38:15

Nope. Will the applicant respond before we move on? Nope. Okay. Thank you. Um. On note. The time is now. 330. Um, it's probably a good time to have a short comfort break. Um, if we could be back in the room for quarter two four, please. As per the clock on the the wall. That would be helpful. Thank you.