

TRANSCRIPT_OUTERDOWSING_OFH1_SESSION1_10102024

00:04

It is now 2:30pm and time for this hearing to begin. I would like to welcome you all to this open floor hearing for the outer dowsing offshore wind farm project, just to confirm first of all, can I? Can you let me know that you can all hear me clearly, hardly. Okay? I'm sure someone will do that. I'll speak a bit louder in the meantime, can I also confirm with Mrs. Haraway that the live streaming and recording of this event has commenced? Thank you. My name is Rod MacArthur, and I've been appointed by the Secretary of State to be the lead member of the panel to examine this application. I will now ask the other panel members to introduce themselves.

00:52

Good afternoon. My name is Mark James. I'm a an examining inspector and a charter town planner. Good afternoon. I'm Gavin Jones. I too, am an examining inspector and a charter town planner.

01:07

Good afternoon. My

01:08

name is Gaura Joshi, I am likewise an examining inspector and a human geographer.

01:14

Thank you.

01:16

Good afternoon. My name is Claire meganson, I'm an examining inspector and a charter town planner.

01:24

Thank you. Together, we constitute the examining authority for this application. I'll now come on to deal with a few housekeeping matters for those attending in person with us here today. Can everyone in the room with us? Please set your devices and your phones to Silent WCS, including accessible facilities, are located immediately outside this meeting room after you exit any of the double doors to your left into either the corridor or the caveats, suites turn right and follow the signage. Fire exits are also accessed by the same corridor outside the double doors and signage, signage will direct you to the nearest exit in the event of a fire. Tea and coffee will be available in the caveat lounge directly through the double doors towards the rear of the room. The Fire assembly point is the red car park, and the fire alarm testing is typically held on a Friday afternoon in the stadium. Therefore, if you hear a fire alarm, you should assume it's a real thing and make your way safely and quickly to the assembly points. An agenda has not been prepared for this hearing, because its purpose is to hear the

representations of interested parties who've registered to make oral representations, elaborating on their written representations which are to come. The order in which you'll be invited to speak will follow the list provided to us by the case team, and is based upon the order in which requests to speak were received. Today's hearings being undertaken in a hybrid way, meaning some of you are present with us at the hearing venue here, and some of you are joining us virtually on Microsoft using Microsoft Teams. We'll make sure that however you've decided to attend today, you'll be given a fair opportunity to participate. A recording of today's hearing will be made available on the outside offshore wind farm section of the national infrastructure planning website as soon as practical after the hearing has finished, with this in mind, please ensure that you speak clearly into a microphone, stating your name and who you're representing each time before you speak.

03:37

When you come to speak, you'll be invited to come up to the table in front of you, and please remember to switch the microphone on before you begin speaking. A link to the planning inspectorates privacy notice was provided in the notification for this hearing, and we assume that everybody here today has familiarized themselves with this document, which establishes how the personal data of our customers is handled in accordance with the principles set out in data protection law. Please speak to Mrs. Haraway if you have any questions about this, and let me now come on to briefly explain the purpose of this afternoon's hearing. Open soar. Hearings are your opportunity to raise anything directly to the examining authority that is important and relevant and that you think we should know about and consider they are not about a particular location or topic. The topic of your representations, about the proposals, is therefore entirely up to yourselves to ensure that we are able to finish the business of the day on time. Please keep your representations brief and to the point we encourage you not to repeat matters that you've already stated in writing or which you will come on state in writing. When invited to speak, please introduce yourself by name, and if relevant, by organization. This is important for the transcripts, recordings or live streams, for the examining authority and for other. Parties. This is the first hearing to be held as part of the examination of this proposed development. And the purpose of the hearing is to provide an opportunity for parties to put their views forward verbally to the examining authority, in line with section 93 of the Planning Act, 2008 and rules 14 and 15 of the examination procedure, rules 2010, we do not intend on setting a strict time limit today, but would ask that your submissions are concise and to the point and to be concluded in no more than 10 minutes once you've spoken. The panel may wish to ask you questions, but you should be reassured that if we do not ask you questions, that is not an indication that the points you've raised have not been taken seriously, the examining authority will give appropriate consideration to all important and relevant matters put before it during this examination, rather than inviting a full response in person today, the examining authority will give the applicant an opportunity to respond fully in writing to any matters Raised once all speakers have been heard the examining authority requests that the applicant submit this written response at deadline one however, it is possible that there may be matters which have been misinterpreted or misunderstood by persons making their representations today, and which the applicant may be able to bring to a quick resolution with a clarifying statement this afternoon, we will therefore come to the applicant to confirm whether it can assist in this way before bringing this hearing to a close. But would ask that the app would ask the applicant to withhold any comments, such as rebuttals of points raised or which contain opposing points of view or additional evidence until it's written. Responses to deadline. At deadline, one can I please just check with the applicant that this is clear. Thank you. And finally, a

reminder to all parties speaking today that in addition to the representations that you're about to make to us in person, the examining authority also requires that you submit a written summary of the matters that you raised to us at deadline one on the 24th of October. So I'll now come on to welcome today's attendees here at the venue and those watching on the live stream. Thank you again for joining us. I'm not intending to ask attendees to introduce themselves. We will rather go straight into your representations, and we ask that you introduce yourself and if relevant, who you represent, just before you make your representation. I currently have a running order for today as follows, which will be Jenny Pennington of H Pennington and son, followed by Ian Pennington of H Pennington and son, and then Alex Murray of Roy thorns, limited, Lucy Turner of Mason's rural and finally, Neil Wilson of woodlands, farm curtain limited, can I just first confirm that that is still correct? Anybody who I read out who is not intending to speak? Alex Murray, you're not intending to speak. Okay. Thank you, Mr. Pennington, you will be speaking Okay. Thank you.

08:17

Can I then ask if there's anybody here today who wishes to speak that we've not heard from

08:28

good. In that case, I'm going to hand you over to my colleague, Mr. James, who will take it from here.

08:36

Thank you. So first, then we have Jenny Pennington, would you like to take a seat? Mr. Spington,

09:00

press the button on the right hand side.

09:05

Thank you. My name's Jenny Pennington. We are farmers from Spaulding Marsh, which everybody's now decided to call Western Marsh. I'm sorry. I'm dealing with seven projects at the moment that are hitting us. Yesterday, I had my pylons hat on. Today, it's a wind farm project. We're concerned about the loss of the grade one agricultural land. Airline land is actually double cropping, so obviously we're worried about that. Think it's absolute sacrilege to be using grade one land for these sort of purposes. We're also we've got cabling, possibly, and erection of a national grid substation, which air to dowsing will connect into. We appreciate the need for renewable energy, but. We're concerned about the effects of the cabling running through the land, also access roads and any infrastructure which may be needed. We're worried about the disturbance of land, the long impact, long term impact on use of the land, some being taken out of production altogether, ie 35 acres of land at surf fleet for the substation. We're worried about the size of that, the screening, possible dust effects, and basically it's just absolute sacrilege. We don't think that you should be using grade one agricultural land for these sort of projects, there are other areas which could be utilized. Thank you. Thank you.

10:55

Thank you for that. If I can now ask Mr. Neil Wilson woodlands farm to come up to the front please. You can just confirm your name. Thank you.

11:14

Good afternoon, Neil. Neil Wilson, farm manager for woodlands farm at Curtin. We farm 3000 acres, organically producing potatoes, beetroot, brassicas and combinable crops. We our soils are all grade one silt, the grade one silt in South South Lincolnshire, South East Lincolnshire is unique in being probably the well, without doubt, the most productive land in the country. All of the crops that was produced on that land are premium quality destined for premium supermarkets. Majority of our potatoes go to Waitrose Marks and Spencers, among others. Similarly, the beetroot the same. The beetroot is exported into Europe. We're also exporting potatoes into Ireland. We are our customers. Expect nothing but the best, and to get the best, our land needs to be in absolutely top quality. It needs to be structurally sound. And because we're organic, we rely on natural fertility. The massive catastrophic disturbance that these cables effectively have on the land mean that the structure is ruined, the fertility is ruined, and it's probably likely that the land will never, ever produce the quality that our customers expect, ever again that combined, not only because of the that the reduction in fertility, drainage is an issue. We're all around about sea level, so under drainage is of great importance to us. These cables obviously affect that drainage. We don't know what impact the heat generation of the cables will have on our crops. I can only assume it will be negative. Because we're organic, we will have to have strict protocols in place to ensure that contamination does not occur on our land from conventionally farm soil. Those protocols will be very difficult to adhere to. That has been demonstrated already by the fact that we've had six environmental assessments done on the farm. For those assessments to be made, we had strict, fairly simple protocols that those doing the inspections needed to follow. Of the six, one was carried out correctly. Protocols were followed. Four of them, we kicked the inspectors off the farm because they didn't follow the protocol. And the final one managed to sneak on the farm and do the survey without our knowledge, with that, in taking that knowledge into account, what hope have we got of the contractors following protocols whilst they're carrying out the work? It just won't happen because the grade one silt. This is confined to a relatively small area. I can see no reason why these cables should not be diverted around this area on grade two and grade three land, most of those farming grade two and grade three land do not produce the quality of crops that we produce, potatoes, for example, are not for pre pack for supermarkets. They're destined for making crisps, and where the skin finish that we produce is not required, so it doesn't have an impact on them. I would say most of those grade two and grade three farmers would welcome you out of dowsing and Ossian and Eagle three and four with open arms, because the payments they would receive will be probably greater than what they would receive from farming that does not apply to us. I've I've suggested the compensation levels that we're offered we will require, and they cannot believe the sums that we're suggesting. So we know that we'll have a massive battle in the forthcoming 1015, years with compensation, and I don't think we'll we're successful in getting what we lose. So yeah, my To summarize, I think I speak on most of the farmers farming this grade one land. We do not want them. Thank you.

16:53

Thank you for that, Mr. Wilson,

17:01

thank you both for your submissions. Can I ask once more before we draw this to a close, whether there's anybody else here who wishes to speak that we haven't heard from so far? That question applies to those of you online as well. Seeing no, no volunteers to come forward. So finally, I will, I will

turn to the applicant to establish if it has any points of clarification that it can offer to the interested parties who've spoken. But I would remind the applicant of the examining authority's desire to limit the nature of its response. Today, i Good

17:46

afternoon. My name is Scott McCallum. I'm a partner at Sheppard and Wedderburn solicitors. And a period of this afternoon for the applicant, sir, the applicant will take the opportunity to respond to all the points in writing. We've taken a detailed note of the points raised the applicant, just wanted to take the opportunity to start to thank those who came to speak today for making such queer submissions, and to reiterate their offer to continue discussions outside of the examination as well to try and narrow issues, but no further points of clarification this afternoon, Sir.

18:19

Thank you, Mr. McCallum, that response is appreciated too. So if nobody else has anything that they wish to say, then that brings us to the end of this open floor hearing thank you again to those of you taking part this afternoon, a final reiterate, a reiteration that the applicant is invited to respond fully to the representations made today in writing at deadline one on the 24th of October, time is now 2:48pm, and this open soar hearing is now closed. Thank you. Applause.