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Cottam Solar Project

Created on: 2023-09-05 11:49:50

Project Length: 01:35:54

Account Holder: Ryan Ross

File Name: Preliminary Meeting-MP3.mp3

File Length: 01:35:54

FULL TRANSCRIPT (with timecode)

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

Morning. Everyone can check. You can hear me?

00:00:11:23 - 00:00:16:03

Can I check with the case team that the recording is now started and we're live streaming?

00:00:27:07 - 00:00:58:02

Thank you, Simon. Well, it's 10:00, and I'd like to start by welcoming you all to this. The preliminary meeting for the Cottam Solar project. My name is Rory Cridland. I'm the lead panel member of the examining inspectors appointed by the Secretary of State to examine this application and make a recommendation. By way of introduction, my professional background is as a solicitor. I've been a planning inspector for the past nine years, and this is the fourth nationally significant infrastructure project that I've been appointed to as a planning, as an examining inspector.

00:01:00:07 - 00:01:32:03

As mentioned at the start, a digital recording is being made. And so I'd be grateful if you could all introduce yourselves before you speak. That recording will be placed on the Planning Inspectorate's National National Infrastructure website for a period of five years following the Secretary of State's decision on the application. And so I'd be grateful if you could all try and avoid referring to any information that you consider or that you wish to be kept private and confidential. If you participate in today's meeting, it's important that you understand that you will be recorded and that information will be put on the Inspectorate's website.

00:01:33:12 - 00:01:46:10

Now, to avoid disrupting the meeting, can I ask you all to keep your microphones switched off until we invite you to speak? That applies to you, those of you in the room today as well as those joining us online. Trust my colleague now to introduce himself.

00:01:47:18 - 00:01:58:00

Good morning. My name is Darren Hendley. I'm the other member of the panel. My professional background is in town planning and I'm a chartered chartered member. The town a real town planning institute. Thank you.

00:01:59:01 - 00:02:30:28

Thank you, John. Both turn and are employed by the Planning Inspectorate as the examining authority. We will carry out an examination into this application, and then we'll write a report to the Secretary of State with our recommendation on whether or not consent should be granted. The case team works alongside us and they are led by Simon Redwood. Some of you may have met Simon as you came in this morning. He's assisted today by another case manager, Jake Stevens. If you have any questions outside the main meeting or on the examination process in general, those are the guys to have a chat to.

00:02:32:02 - 00:03:05:13

Now, this meeting is a blended event, and that means some of you are joining us in person. Others are joining us on Microsoft Teams. However you're attending, we will deal with you fairly. And we do aim to hear from everyone who wishes to speak. Can I ask you all to switch off your mobile phones or put them on to silent unless you're using them to join us via Microsoft teams, in which case we'll lose you. So please don't turn them off. Um, a few other things for those of you using Microsoft teams could ask you to keep your microphones turned off and try to minimize any background noise.

00:03:06:00 - 00:03:35:16

The chat function on Microsoft teams has been disabled and so please don't use that to try to post any comments or get our attention. And we'll only use the raise hand function at certain points during the agenda. And so if you could try and avoid using that because it can be quite distracting until we invite you to do so. If you are watching today via the live stream, then please be aware that it will be stopped during any adjournment if we have them. And you will need to refresh your browser to rejoin the meeting.

00:03:37:06 - 00:03:58:02

You all find it useful to have the Rule six documentation in front of you and the agenda that was published with it to hand. For ease of reference, you can obtain a copy of this on the national infrastructure website. There is a link to it in the banner and it will take you straight to the agenda and relevant parts of the agenda will be displayed on the screens here in the meeting room this morning.

00:04:01:24 - 00:04:36:06

The purpose of this preliminary meeting is very much to consider procedural issues only and the way in which the application will be examined. Our focus is on the examination process itself, and the meeting is not an opportunity for you to put forward your views, what you think is good or bad about the application. The open floor here in this afternoon will give an early opportunity for those of you who wish to express your views to do so on these points. There will also be several opportunities over the following months of the examination for you to put forward your views on the merits of the application itself, either by way of written representations or in the hearings.

00:04:37:24 - 00:05:09:11

Now I'm going to ask certain parties to introduce themselves. Please, can I remind you all to unmute your microphones when you do? So if you join via Microsoft teams and you're comfortable to please do switch on your cameras and a roving microphone is in place for anyone who wishes to speak but doesn't have a static microphone in front of them. And we are keen to make progress this morning. So if there are several people representing a party, we just need to hear from the lead speaker at this point and then other representatives can introduce themselves as we move through the meeting when they when they come forward to speak.

00:05:09:20 - 00:05:12:28

So can firstly ask who the lead speaker for the applicant is this morning?

00:05:15:01 - 00:05:31:14

Good morning, sir. My name is Claire Broderick. I'm a legal director at Pinsent Masons Solicitors for the Applicant Cottam Solar Project Limited. I'm joined today by various members of the applicant team, but I'll let them introduce themselves if required to speak at today's hearing.

00:05:32:01 - 00:05:34:00

Thank you. And how would you like to be addressed this morning?

00:05:34:05 - 00:05:34:20

Ms..

00:05:35:03 - 00:05:35:25

Ms.. Broderick.

00:05:38:03 - 00:05:42:18

Thank Ms.. Broderick. Do we have a representative from Lincolnshire County Council?

00:05:46:12 - 00:06:06:25

Let's have some pride. I'm head of planning at Lincolnshire County Council. I will be speaking mainly on behalf of the County Council, but I'm joined to my left by Justin proudly, who's the infrastructure manager with the council. And thanks to her, Martha Reese, who's seen the solicitor with Lancashire County Council.

00:06:07:15 - 00:06:09:20

Thank you. And how would you like to be addressed this morning?

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

Um.

00:06:13:02 - 00:06:15:14

Yeah. Let's listen up. Thank you.

00:06:17:15 - 00:06:25:22

And then next think we have someone from Nottinghamshire County Council joining us on the team's channel. Good morning.

00:06:26:23 - 00:06:31:03

Good morning, sir. My name is Stephen Pointer. Nottinghamshire County Council.

00:06:33:26 - 00:06:35:22

And how would you like to be addressed this morning?

00:06:36:01 - 00:06:37:03

Mr. Pinter is fine.

00:06:37:18 - 00:06:38:03

Thank you.

00:06:42:03 - 00:06:53:19

And then West Lindsey, District Council. Good morning. My name is Samuel Sheikh. I'm of council. I'm instructed by Ms.. Martha Reeves. It's two to my right of legal service.

00:06:53:21 - 00:07:06:02

Lincolnshire to represent West Lindsey District Council. I'll briefly just introduce those sitting beside me. To my right is Mr. Russell Clarkson, who's the development manager. And to my left is Mr. Alex Blake, who's associate director at Atkins.

00:07:07:13 - 00:07:11:07

And how would you like to be addressed this morning, Mr. Sheikh? Mr.. Thank you, sir.

00:07:13:15 - 00:07:16:23

Thank you. Are there any other local authorities present?

00:07:19:18 - 00:07:21:20

Do we have any statutory bodies with us today?

00:07:25:01 - 00:07:26:27

I'm sorry. I can see your hand going up to the back.

00:07:27:18 - 00:07:32:13

Good morning. I'm Carol Gilbert. I'm representing Stirton by Stow Parish Council.

00:07:33:11 - 00:07:36:23

I'm sorry. Could you move the microphone a little bit closer to you? Didn't quite catch that.

00:07:37:12 - 00:07:43:02

Good morning. My name is Carol Gilbert. I'm representing Stoughton by Stow Parish Council.

00:07:45:18 - 00:07:48:02

And how would you like to be addressed this morning, Mrs. Gilbert?

00:07:48:04 - 00:07:48:21

Mrs. Gilbert.

00:07:49:08 - 00:07:50:09

Good morning, Mr. Gilbert.

00:07:50:11 - 00:07:50:28

Thank you.

00:07:57:14 - 00:08:17:28

Now, we've had a number of requests to speak from interested parties as well. I'll call you forward in turn, and I'd be grateful if you could introduce yourselves, explain your interest in the application, and if you represent an interest group, tell us what the name of the group is and how many people you represent, roughly. And firstly. I have 7000 acres.

00:08:19:28 - 00:08:33:14

Thank you, sir. Yes. My name is Liz Garbutt. I'm speaking for 7000 acres today and roughly have about a thousand members, I believe. Um, and could be addressed as Ms.. Garbutt. Thank you.

00:08:33:20 - 00:08:34:05

Was that Ms..

00:08:34:15 - 00:08:35:00

Ms..

00:08:35:07 - 00:08:35:25

Ms.. Garbutt.

00:08:35:27 - 00:08:36:14

Thank you.

00:08:40:24 - 00:08:48:24

Then next I have filling a parish meeting, filling parish council. Anyone present?

00:08:51:08 - 00:08:51:23

Nope.

00:08:53:08 - 00:08:55:08

I'm Simon Skelton.

00:08:58:15 - 00:09:03:17

Good morning, sir. Yeah. So I'm a skeleton. I'm a affected local resident.

00:09:05:15 - 00:09:07:14

And how would you like to be dressed this morning?

00:09:07:27 - 00:09:09:08

Simon will be fine.

00:09:09:15 - 00:09:12:17

We'll keep it formal so it can go. Mr. Skelton? Yeah.

00:09:12:23 - 00:09:13:08

Thanks.

00:09:20:08 - 00:09:27:02

Thank you, Mr. Skelton. Is there anyone else present who hasn't? Who has notified us of a wish to speak but hasn't already introduced themselves?

00:09:30:04 - 00:09:53:13

Nope. Okay. Well, that's all the introductions for now, if you haven't introduced yourself, but you do come forward to speak later on, then I'd be grateful if you could just briefly introduce yourselves for the formal record at that time. We have structured the meeting today so that you'll all have an opportunity to raise anything relevant to the meeting when we invite you to speak at the relevant point in the agenda. Could now ask the case team to display the agenda on the screen, please.

00:10:05:08 - 00:10:27:15

Thank you. We are just about to complete item one and one final point. Under this agenda item subject to progress, we do intend to take short comfort breaks of around 90 minutes. It may be that we don't run for 90 minutes, but if we do, just give you an indication of when we take our first break. Are there any questions at this point about the agenda or the arrangements for the meeting this morning?

00:10:30:08 - 00:10:36:08

No. Well, in that case, I'm going to hand over to my colleague now who will provide some remarks about the examination process.

00:10:38:24 - 00:10:50:13

Thank you. We're now at agenda item two. I'll make some remarks about the examination process and will highlight some of the key points which is set out in Annex of the Rule six letter.

00:10:52:00 - 00:11:07:20

We will consider your submissions and questions on the examination process later under agenda item three and we will address the examination timetable and deadlines under agenda items four and five. Please keep your microphones muted until we invite you to speak.

00:11:09:09 - 00:11:33:13

Some of you may be familiar with the procedures set out to the Planning Act of 2008, But for those of you who are not. I'll now outline some of the essential features of the examination process. The purpose of the examination is to enable us to make a recommendation to the Secretary of State as to whether this project should receive consents in the form of a development consent order under the Planning Act 2008.

00:11:35:03 - 00:11:40:10

This act brought in a distinct regime for the consideration of nationally significant infrastructure projects.

00:11:42:05 - 00:12:17:29

First. It is a process in which we is examining authority. Take the lead in establishing what is important and relevance to the decision that the Secretary of State needs to take. We will therefore be looking for evidence of what is important and relevance and testing that evidence put forward to see how robust it is in the context of the relevant matters. Secondly, the primary method of examining the application is through the written process. While there is provision for holding certain types of hearings, the central part of examination is the written process which is used for gathering information about the application.

00:12:19:10 - 00:12:35:16

We would only hold a hearing into an issue if we consider that it will be necessary to assist our examination. We have decided to hold an open floor hearing this afternoon and issue Pacific hearing about the draft development consent order tomorrow.

00:12:37:24 - 00:13:02:28

The Planning Act 2008 sets a statutory timescale for examination and for the determination of the application. This includes six months in which the examination must be completed and a further three months in which we must complete our reports with our findings, conclusions and recommendations to the Secretary of State and then a further three months for the Secretary of State to reach a final decision on the application.

00:13:04:22 - 00:13:08:28

That decision is therefore scheduled to be published within 12 months from the start of examination.

00:13:10:24 - 00:13:14:00

I'm not going to make some general remarks about the written submissions.

00:13:15:22 - 00:13:23:27

You would have the opportunity to set out your case and the evidence to support it in writing. You will also have the opportunity to comment on everyone else's written submissions.

00:13:25:13 - 00:13:29:24

Many of you have already provided us with written material in the relevant representations.

00:13:31:17 - 00:13:54:29

Any document that any party wishes us to consider must be formally lodged as part of the examination process and available to all parties. Documents can be introduced during examination in several different ways and that such as the representation. Which answers to the examining authority's questions and written comments on material submitted by others

00:13:56:24 - 00:14:01:15

or as otherwise requested by us as examining authority.

00:14:03:24 - 00:14:18:06

A written material that is accepted into the examination will be published on the project page of the National Infrastructure Planning website, so it is available for all to see. Please contact a member of the case team. If you don't know how to find the project web page.

00:14:20:12 - 00:14:37:00

I'll now look at the different types of documents, starting with the local impact reports before moving on to statements of common ground, written representations, and the examining authority's questions. I'll then look at hearings and site inspections before giving you some guidance and how to make effective submissions.

00:14:42:28 - 00:15:01:17

Firstly, local impact reports. A local impact report is a report written by a local authority giving details of the likely impact of the proposed development at any part of the local authority's area. The Planning Act 2008 defines which local authorities are required to be invited to submit a local impact report.

00:15:03:09 - 00:15:10:10

The planning Inspectorate's guidance for local authorities to start preparing their local impact report is as soon as the application is accepted for examination.

00:15:12:02 - 00:15:24:26

Next year if our all six letter and the 10th of July 2023 sets out our procedural decision for local impact reports to be submitted at deadline one that is on the 17th of October 2023.

00:15:27:04 - 00:15:55:21

And now moving on to statements of common ground. And each of our all six letters requests the preparation, statements of common ground between the applicants and various parties. The aim of

these is to agree factual information and to identify where there is agreement, and particularly where there are points which can remain in dispute. We need to know and understand your positions and whether they're shared or otherwise. The identification of outstanding concerns is important to us.

00:15:57:16 - 00:16:08:15

This statement, Common ground that we are produced is not exclusive, and we encourage you to find opportunities for identifying areas of common ground, either by joining forces with others or individually.

00:16:10:03 - 00:16:15:18

Where matters are included in the sense of common ground. It does not mean that we will not examine them further.

00:16:17:29 - 00:16:36:25

And moving on to present representations. This brought a further opportunity for interested parties to make a submission to the examination. As we will see when we come to look at the draft timetable, we have set a date the 17th of October 2023 for the receipt of written representations.

00:16:38:19 - 00:16:43:24

You do not need to submit your representation. If you had looking to add though to your relevant representation.

00:16:45:10 - 00:16:53:15

There will also be opportunities to be made and for comments on the relevant and written representations and for responses to be made to those comments.

00:16:56:15 - 00:16:59:03

Now we move on to the examining authorities written questions.

00:17:00:27 - 00:17:11:21

Version questions will follow my initial assessment of the principal issues. Our consideration of the submissions that we have reached received up to that point and also our completed site inspections.

00:17:13:09 - 00:17:29:03

We will ensure that the examination is even handed and rigorous. There'll be a significant number of first round questions. These will be directed to the applicant, local authorities, other public bodies and also interested parties. They will be right wide ranging.

00:17:30:21 - 00:17:59:16

Something will address quite fundamental issues. Some will focus on more detail points. When you see the questions, you may think that some of those answers are already contained in the documents that have already been introduced to the examination so far. But even so, please answer the questions directed to you and where relevant, please provide any cross-examinations or the examination documents. We need to be sure that all issues that might be relevant are identified and shared so they can be properly tested.

00:18:03:06 - 00:18:14:19

The examination timetable sets a deadline for our responses to our questions. All comments and responses will be published on our project web page as they are available for all to see.

00:18:16:17 - 00:18:45:19

I'll also be second round of questions, questions and answers later in the examination. The second round will see clarifications provide further so probe further into any unanswered points or address any new points that have emerged. In addition to these iterations of questions, answers and comments, we may at any time during examination, seek further information or written comments. And provision is made for this under Rule 17 of the infrastructure planning Examination procedure rules.

00:18:52:00 - 00:19:22:12

Turning then to the hearings, the primary method of examining the application is in writing, but there are provisions for hearings during the examination. The hearings will build on the foundations, the various documents and comments we have just considered. Your advice. Make your submissions in writing rather than assume that you can wait for it for a hearing as your opportunity to influence the proceedings. You may be that a hearing on an issue is not held. It might not address the questions that you want to ask or that you want to answer.

00:19:23:12 - 00:19:30:10

You'll find it useful to follow the production of evidence as it appears on our project webpage so that you can see how the examination is progressing.

00:19:32:10 - 00:19:47:29

There are three different types of hearings under the Planning Act. The first type of hearing is an open floor hearing, which must be held if requested by an interested party. Now, letter of the 10th of July, we took a procedural decision to hold an open floor hearing this afternoon.

00:19:49:21 - 00:19:56:01

The second type of hearing is a compulsory acquisition hearing, which must be held if requested by an infected person.

00:19:58:14 - 00:20:25:03

As you'll see from where we come to our draft timetable, a deadline the 17th of October 2023 has been set for relevant parties to inform us that they wish to speak at another open floor hearing or at a compulsory acquisition hearing. The third type of hearing is an issue for hearing which is held if we decide that it is necessary to ensure adequate examination of an issue, also ensure that an interested party has a fair chance to put their case.

00:20:26:24 - 00:20:45:18

Issue. Pacific hearings will be held on the development consent order or the DCO, and the first one will be tomorrow is a critical document. If consent is given, the will govern how the development takes place and will be controlled. All matters relating to the draft DCO are integral to this examination.

00:20:48:04 - 00:21:20:18

Draft time till the draft timetable identifies the provisional dates that have been reserved for the hearings. If you'd like to participate in a hearing, then you are required to submit a request to register for each hearing on or before the date set out in the timetable. Information about how to submit a request to register is provided in the Rule six letter. If you simply wish to observe the hearings, then you do not need to make a request to register. Public livestreams and recordings of the hearings will be available on our project web page.

00:21:26:16 - 00:21:51:19

I'll now make some more general points. Now the hearings will be run. We encourage anyone who wishes to be heard at hearing new has a common view or common point to make with others to group together and appoint one spokesperson. This will help us make better use of the time rather than having the same points repeated. Repetition of a point does not mean that it will carry more weight in the examination and we will intervene if submissions become repetitious.

00:21:53:12 - 00:22:18:11

Anyone who wishes to speak at a hearing should expect to ask them questions at a hearing. Anyone who's interested party can give oral evidence based on their relevance or recent representation. Should there be lots of requests to speak, then we will announce a time limit on speaking. We do not expect someone to read out their previous representation, but expect speakers to elaborate on evidence already submitted.

00:22:20:22 - 00:22:27:03

The applicant will be provided an opportunity to respond orally or clarify factual matters through an interested party or spoken.

00:22:28:21 - 00:22:36:26

No dialogue will be generally permitted with any parties in the hearings. Apart from certain circumstances when it will be beneficial to allow cross-examination.

00:22:39:08 - 00:23:04:17

We'll carry out this meeting on the first open floor and issue. Pacific hearing is splendid events, which means that some participants will attend at the physical venue in person and some will take place. Sorry, sorry. Someone take part via Microsoft teams. Our decisions on the format of any other hearings to be held during the examination will take account of the views of all parties expressed in writing if they wish to do so over the use of physical, virtual and blended events.

00:23:06:26 - 00:23:09:02

So I'm not going to move on to the site inspections.

00:23:10:27 - 00:23:29:27

And on the company's site. Inspection took place over two days in March. This was based on viewpoints featured in the environmental statements and also public land in the vicinity. In the vicinity of the developments. A record of these inspections has been published on the project webpage. A further on a company site inspection will be carried out.

00:23:31:27 - 00:23:53:25

We intend to undertake inspections of viewpoints listed in the environmental statements. We believe that these can be carried out and accompanied. We intend to make time for further unaccompanied site inspections over the next few months. This is through the sites and Viewpoints visited will be posted on our project webpage and updated. We currently see no need for further unaccompanied visits to these locations.

00:23:56:08 - 00:24:01:01

I'm now going to move on to making some advice on making effective submissions.

00:24:04:13 - 00:24:34:03

During the examination. We will seek information on that we will take account of in our recommendations. Secretary of State. Our recommendation will be based on facts and sound evidence

rather than speculation or opinion. It will consider whether the application compliance legislation, policy and guidance rather than being based on the votes for or against the application, and will require the consideration of large volumes of information. We want to hear from you, including if you have local or specialist knowledge that may be important in relevance. So recommendation.

00:24:36:09 - 00:24:56:21

You should be aware that this is a process that is not a public vote on the merits or otherwise of the applicant's case. Rather, it is for us to obtain evidence so that we can consider whether the applicant's case is made against the relevant legislation and policy. We will read and consider every submission that we that we make, that we have and we make in our recommendation to Secretary of State.

00:25:01:05 - 00:25:20:09

Therefore, there is no need to repeat the point that you've already made in previous submissions or to repeat the points made by others in their submissions. In particular, it'll help us greatly if a single submission can be made by any group on behalf of the people that it represents. There's no need for people to repeat any part of the group's submissions in their own.

00:25:22:18 - 00:25:39:04

As you have seen, there were several opportunities for you to make submissions during the examination. It would help us if you could please submit any information once and provide evidence that is factual. For example, I provide any data, methodology and assumptions used to support your submission.

00:25:40:26 - 00:25:45:08

Recognize that the process is principally a written one by making your submissions in writing.

00:25:47:19 - 00:25:53:24

Work with any of the people that you are in contact with. You have the same views to put together a single coordinated submission.

00:25:55:17 - 00:26:04:06

Avoid making the same submission others will be making in writing as we're giving the same weight to the same information that's provided once or many times.

00:26:05:26 - 00:26:11:21

And also provide references to any documents that you refer to and wearing that documents you are referring to it.

00:26:13:16 - 00:26:17:25

That now completes agenda item two. So now I'll turn back to Mr. Cridland.

00:26:20:18 - 00:26:51:10

Thank you, Darren. And as you'll see from the agenda, there was a break programmed for this point, but did say at the start, we'll go on for 90 minutes. So we're going straight on to agenda item three. And. I'm going to take us now through examinations. Sorry, submissions on the examination process itself. Can I ask you all to remember to unmute your microphones? And if you're joining us via teams, then to switch your cameras on if you wish to do so. And a roving microphone, as said at the start, is available for those of you who wish to speak but don't have a static microphone in front of them.

00:26:52:07 - 00:27:31:29

Now, for each item that follows, I'll firstly deal with any written submissions that we've received and then I'll summarize each submission in turn before respond to it and I'll invite any of the parties making those written submissions to add anything they wish to add. I'll then invite other oral submissions on the topic after all, written submissions have been dealt with. Um, we have received a large number of written submissions which relate to the relationship between this examination and the examination of other nearby projects. In particular, a number of interested parties have raised the possibility of conjoining this application with the nearby Westport and Solar project and examining them together.

00:27:32:18 - 00:28:07:23

Concerns have also been raised which relate to the challenges that examining these applications separately. But along a similar timeline poses to those of you who wish to be involved in more than one examination at the same time. Firstly, I'd like to say that as the examining authority for this application, we do understand those concerns. However, I do need to emphasise to you all that the legislation in which under which the examination is being conducted does not allow us to conjoin these applications in the way being proposed. They do need to be processed separately and as the examining authority for this application, Mr.

00:28:07:25 - 00:28:37:25

Henley and I do not have any responsibility for the examination of the other projects and likewise the examining authorities for those other projects have no responsibility for the examination of this one. Having said that, as we make clear in Annex C of our Rule six letter, we will be looking at the assessment of cumulative effects, which will include the other projects considered in the cumulative effects assessment and in particular whether an appropriate level of detail has been included for these other plans or projects.

00:28:38:26 - 00:29:14:09

We'll also consider whether there are any changes to the information available on those plans and projects during the examination. Now, we also recognize the resource challenges that those parties who wish to be involved in more than one examination at the same time. And we've developed our examination timetable in light of this. And as you'll see, we've sought to minimize the number of deadlines and maximize the time scales between them. As my colleague has already mentioned. We've decided to hold early hearings this week, which will hopefully help limit the number of potential clashes there are with the other examinations.

00:29:15:01 - 00:29:32:07

However, if anyone who does wish to be involved in more than one examination is having a particular difficulty in responding to one of our deadlines as a result of being caught up in responding to the deadlines in one of the other examinations that's ongoing at the moment, then do raise these issues with us when we get to item five.

00:29:33:28 - 00:29:40:20

So with all of that in mind, does anyone who is put in a written submission on these points wish to add anything at this time?

00:29:44:20 - 00:29:45:19

Mr. McBride.

00:29:47:11 - 00:30:19:12

Thank you, sir. Neil McBride, Lancashire County Council. Yeah. I'd like to make some sort of further comments really, in terms of the written submissions that were made. Um, first of all, I'd like to draw attention to the planning Inspectorate's guidance and presentation that it gives to local authorities, describing the process and the role of a host authority in that process as being a community champion to present the views of local communities throughout the process.

00:30:20:09 - 00:30:36:25

With this role in mind, the County Council remains concerned that the local communities wishing to participate in this examination and other examinations should be able to do so in an effective and simple way as possible.

00:30:38:16 - 00:30:46:25

And she was requested by councillors who consider the local impact report and written response to the Gate Burton

00:30:48:11 - 00:31:30:18

application. A couple of months ago and during the discussions that took place on that particular application, there was also reference to the other examinations or applications that were either sitting or were due to start the process shortly. And the the view of a councillors is very much that they remain concerned that there is ample opportunities for the cumulative impacts arising from these three as it is at the moment, potentially for applications in this area to be considered in a holistic way.

00:31:33:16 - 00:31:47:23

Also, this view is being clearly supported by the local communities. And when many members of a community have raised similar issues in their relevant representations that were submitted earlier this year.

00:31:52:16 - 00:32:31:08

So the particular issue that arises is in relation to the assessment of cumulative impacts. The County Council has host authority for a number of the existing and forthcoming DCO scale solar projects and is concerned to ensure that as a matter of substance, cumulative impacts are considered holistically and thoroughly. And this is a matter of procedure that is that needs to be given to some consideration as how this is achieved, which encourages rather than discourages, public participation.

00:32:32:27 - 00:32:53:27

Specifically, the County Council is concerned to ensure that interested parties don't succumb to consultation fatigue and assume incorrectly that representations made to one examining authority in relation to community impacts, for example, will automatically be taken into account by other examining authorities.

00:32:55:12 - 00:33:13:10

One potential practical solution would be to hold a linked session with other extant examinations. This would be a visible statement to members of the community that cumulative impacts are being given careful attention.

00:33:15:20 - 00:33:38:17

Shortly free examinations will be underway. Obviously Cottam starting today and West Burton later this week. And this, in the view of the council members and members of the public, would enable joint sessions to be held to look at those impacts in a holistic way.

00:33:40:03 - 00:34:08:08

However, this is not the only means of achieving the mix of procedural fairness. Even if the examining authority were to stop short of holding a formal lead linked issue. Specific hearing cumulative effects from other issue specific hearings for a number of projects could be held at the same location at the same

00:34:10:11 - 00:34:10:26
time.

00:34:12:04 - 00:34:18:27

So a similar time to to enable those considerations to be given adequate.

00:34:21:23 - 00:34:52:10

An adequate examination. Think just. A similar request was made in relation to the examining authority for Burton. At the time that request was made at the preliminary meeting. The view was that due to the other examinations had not commenced at that time, it would not be possible to do that, although there was a commitment that that would be kept under review as the examination started.

00:34:53:07 - 00:35:50:28

Um, at the specific hearings for Gate Burton a couple of weeks ago. Again, that request was made to the examining authority. Um, but there seemed to be a view that because that particular examination was progressing at a reasonable speed, there seemed to be resistance again, to hold a session where these cumulative impacts can be looked at together. So again, the view of a council is that we're asking this examine authority to give consideration, to hold in a linked session where all the developers are in attendance, and that will give the opportunity for the local community to hear and to ask questions of all those developers in the room at the same time, which currently that opportunity is not available to them.

00:35:53:21 - 00:36:28:01

Thank you, Mr. McBride. I'll respond to a number of the points that you've made in turn. Firstly, I'd say that as an examining authority, we very much encourage public participation in this process. And so for anyone watching online or who is present today, I'd like to give you an assurance that if you wish to participate in this process, then we do invite you forward to do so. And we will take account of all of the representations that have been made. Secondly, I'd like to say that we are acutely aware of, as mentioned, the issues that are posed by running numerous examinations along a similar timeline in the same area.

00:36:28:03 - 00:36:58:28

Unfortunately, because of the nature in which the Planning Act operates, it is not possible, as I've said, for us to conjoin these applications or to hold joint hearings in the way that you've suggested, Mr. McBride. Having said that, I think your suggestion of having some hearings in a similar location at the same time, it would need to be separate. But that's certainly something that we'll take away with us today and give some further consideration to you mentioned the the gate burden examination that is considerably ahead of us in time scale.

00:36:59:00 - 00:37:23:18

So I would say at this point, it's probably unlikely that we'll be able to hold any sort of similar current timings with them, but am aware that the westbound one is running along a similar timescale to ours and I will look at whether or not we can accommodate you in some way or shape or form along those

lines. But again, that's something that we'll take away with us and we'll give some further consideration to after this meeting.

00:37:30:21 - 00:37:31:23

Don't say anything. You wanted to.

00:37:33:11 - 00:37:40:18

Okay. Thank you, Mr. McBride. Is there anyone else who wishes to comment on this particular point? Mrs. Garbutt.

00:37:41:18 - 00:38:13:17

Thank you, sir. Miss Garbutt, 7000 acres. I'd like to say that we completely agree with Mr. McBride from the County Council. The residents in the area who we represent don't care who owns which scheme. All the schemes collectively affect us. All the wildlife, the communities, you know, the landscape. It doesn't matter who owns what. Appreciate that the schemes are dealt with independently, examined independently under the Planning Act.

00:38:13:19 - 00:38:51:21

However, perhaps a planning act doesn't. Meet its purpose in this respect, that it doesn't allow these schemes which do form a collective mass to be addressed and to be looked at. And we urge the planning inspector, appreciate this. Obviously you've got to work within the Act, but we urge the Planning Inspectorate to look at offering a cumulative impact hearing or something along those lines it could possibly do within the Act to allow this to happen, because this is a paramount consideration.

00:38:51:23 - 00:39:30:11

The scale of all of these collectively is huge, obviously, as you're aware, and obviously the local impact reports do are paramount within your consideration and therefore local impact is a major consideration. And obviously people need to feel as if they can participate. There are barriers to that. Many barriers in the area. Local broadband is very poor and it's an ageing population. There's many issues and so the more the inspectorate can reach out and allow people to have access and participate is really important from our perspective, but also from your own.

00:39:30:13 - 00:39:45:13

So really this issue goes beyond obviously what perhaps the Planning Act can offer, but perhaps it's failing us in this respect. So could the inspectorate look at this again and address this issue in some way? Thank you.

00:39:46:21 - 00:40:29:11

Thank you, Miss Garbutt. I won't comment on behalf of what the Planning Inspectorate do. We are the examining authority for this application. And so we are confined to to this examination itself. But having said that, you have seen in the examination timetable that we do have some time set aside for hearings in December. There is a week of hearings and some of those will be issued specific hearings. And Mr. Henley will give some consideration as to whether or not accumulative assessments year in is one that we can insert at that time or at some other point during the examination to enable local residents to come along and participate ensure what what's being said as well as to give us an opportunity to ask questions of the applicant and the applicant team around the work that they've done around cumulative assessments.

00:40:30:25 - 00:40:34:09

Thank you. Does anyone else wish to speak? Mr. Sheikh?

00:40:34:29 - 00:41:03:12

Thank you, sir. So much for West Lindsey District Council. It's just very briefly, I'll say specific representations on the draft examination timetable for item five. But just at this point, we would like to repeat the comments and representations that were made by Lancashire County Council.

Specifically, we have concerns about the consideration and assessment of the cumulative impacts given its significance and given the approach that has been taken in the West in the Gate Burton examination so far.

00:41:05:07 - 00:41:20:10

Thank you very much. I'm not familiar with the approach taken in the Burton application that you're referring to, but what I will say is that Mr. Andy and I do intend to consider cumulative impacts, as we've already indicated in the assessment of initial issues.

00:41:22:13 - 00:41:23:26

Does anyone else wish to comment?

00:41:31:11 - 00:41:39:12

Thank you all very much for those contributions. As said, we will take it away and we will give it some further consideration. And if we make any procedural decisions, we'll issue them with our rule eight letter.

00:41:41:00 - 00:42:11:17

Moving on into hearings. As already mentioned, we do propose to hold hearings with an open floor hearing scheduled for this afternoon and an issue specific hearing on the draft development consent order scheduled for tomorrow. We also, as mentioned, anticipate holding further hearings in December. We have had some written correspondence from 7000 acres indicating that the holding of an open floor hearing during the day poses some difficulty for those wishing to attend and make submissions.

00:42:11:19 - 00:42:42:24

And we have taken this on board and you will see that there is an opportunity in deadline one for anyone who's unable to attend tomorrow's open floor sorry, today's open floor hearing to request to be heard at a further open floor here in December. If we do receive requests from interested parties to hold a second open floor hearing in December, we will look at the possibility of doing so in the evening, which will give those parties who wish to come along and can't attend during the day an opportunity to make their views known.

00:42:43:20 - 00:42:47:20

And with that in mind, do you have anything else you'd like to add on this point?

00:42:49:28 - 00:43:03:15

Thank you, sir. We would really appreciate that would be a lot more people here if it was in the evening, for the evening, for here in this evening. Imagine, because obviously people do find it difficult to get here in the afternoon. So that would be much appreciated. Thank you.

00:43:06:04 - 00:43:31:11

Another point on this. We do have some availability issues and we may come onto those later on the agenda with this particular site. And so I'm going to ask if anyone online or anyone present has any other venues in mind that would be acceptable to parties and reasonably accessible. If you could have

a word with the case team and let them know and then we can explore the possibility if we can't get this venue or get in another venue again to enable people to come along and participate.

00:43:33:03 - 00:43:37:11

Does anyone else present wish to make any oral submissions on our approach to hearings?

00:43:40:29 - 00:43:42:11

Anyone on Microsoft teams.

00:43:48:02 - 00:44:20:07

Okay. In that case, moving on to site, inspections and assembly set out our approach to site inspections under item two. Earlier, we've received a large number of suggestions for other locations to visit, and we intend to visit these as part of our unaccompanied site inspection. For those where public access is not possible and there are a small number of those, we will firstly seek to visit these on what's called an access required basis and where we're given access to the site. But Mr. Henry and I go along on our own and view the site in that way.

00:44:20:19 - 00:44:47:10

This only affects a small number and the case team will be in touch with the relevant parties to make arrangements for that if required. At this point we don't envisage the need to undertake an accompanied site inspection and we will only do so to sites if there is no other option. Does anyone wish to comment on this point? We haven't received any written submissions other than suggestions, so does anyone wish to comment on our general approach to site inspections?

00:44:53:17 - 00:44:55:23

Yep. Anyone on Microsoft teams?

00:45:04:11 - 00:45:08:09

You can see what Lindsay having a discussion over there. Is that because you want to comment or is that a separate issue?

00:45:14:20 - 00:45:33:02

No. Okay. Thank you. Moving on into local impact reports. We haven't received any written any written submissions on local impact reports. And so I'll go directly on to oral submissions on this point. Does anyone wish to comment on our approach to local impact reports?

00:45:35:29 - 00:45:36:15

This complex.

00:45:37:24 - 00:45:40:03

Thank you, sir. Sorry. Sorry.

00:45:40:05 - 00:45:45:05

Could you just introduce yourself each time you speak? I know it's a bit laborious, but if you could do it, it's just for the formal record.

00:45:45:07 - 00:46:24:00

Sorry. Forgot. Miss Garbutt, 7000 acres. Thank you. Um, in terms of local impact reports, and we note that, um, in terms of government guidance, um, and policy, um, sections 14 115 of the Planning Act 2008 are being obviously followed your Fe obviously with this and then myself. But um,

obviously we believe that the weighting of the local impact report, which will be produced by the respective councils is paramount in relation to the relevant sections which should be given that amount of weight.

00:46:24:04 - 00:46:55:02

And also we noted within the um, the rule six letter for the Gate Bourton scheme, it was cited that um, no national policy statements applied. Um, so this and obviously this scheme is only about a distance of 1000m from cotton one and so it seems to be a sort of a mismatch there and how the approaches are being taken. That was our comment.

00:46:55:05 - 00:46:58:02

Hope that applies here. I'm not sure if it does. Thank you.

00:46:58:04 - 00:47:15:24

I'm not sure entirely understand the point. I'm sorry, Miss Garwood. As understand it, the the approach of gate burden is no different to the approach that we will take in terms of the policy basis, because we're both operating under the same policy remit and legislation. Is that the point.

00:47:15:26 - 00:47:43:12

That you think it refers to a point within the Rule six letter that the examining authority issued for Great Britain, where they believe the applicant stated that no national policy statement applied and that was cited within that letter and that for that scheme and that wasn't perhaps addressed within this scheme.

00:47:43:19 - 00:47:44:17

I see your point.

00:47:44:28 - 00:47:48:10

Sorry, I'm not an expert on this, so you have to forgive me.

00:47:48:12 - 00:47:48:27

That's great.

00:47:49:03 - 00:48:14:20

And there's only in terms of distance for the schemes in landscape, there's only 1000m is such from cotton one to get the Great Britain scheme. So we're just unsure how these different policies apply within a short distance of one another. Thank you. Very, very similar schemes obviously do take.

00:48:14:22 - 00:48:56:28

I don't understand it enough. Thank you. Yes, we may not not have mentioned it in our Rule six letter, but it doesn't change the policy basis upon which we're all operating. The discussion around what policy applies and what parts of the national policy statement, if any, apply, will be something that we deal with in the examination and we will invite views from both the applicant and interested parties on those particular points. And we'll obviously reach our own conclusions as to where we consider the policy basis sets in terms of advising the Secretary of State. But I will comment at this point because we haven't started the examination of what we consider to be the policy basis, but there will be opportunities for you to make your representations around those kind of issues as part of the examination, and we will look at that as well.

00:48:58:29 - 00:49:01:01

Does anyone else wish to make a point? Mr. McBride.

00:49:02:24 - 00:49:16:01

Certainly. McBride. Counsel So. So are we at the moment talking about the sort of the deadlines for these particular documents, or are you just sort of going through what the expectation is for them to.

00:49:16:09 - 00:49:26:18

We'll come on to the examination timetable deadlines shortly and think, I've already got you down to someone who might wish to speak on the deadlines for that point. Anyone else on local impact reports.

00:49:28:23 - 00:49:41:28

In that case, it's a statement of common ground, next. We haven't received any written submissions on this point either. And so I'll move straight on again to invite any oral submissions on the requested statements of common ground contained in our Rule six Letter.

00:49:43:22 - 00:50:26:07

Collaboratively. Yes. We just had one comment on the list of statements of common ground in Annex eight of the Rule six letter, and that was just in relation to the request for a statement of common ground with the Health and Safety Executive. And it transpired that the Health and Safety Executive did not submit their relevant representation directly to the Planning Inspectorate. They only sent it to the applicant. So a copy of that relevant representation was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate on the 24th of August, which I don't believe has been uploaded onto the project website yet, but confirmed that the Health and Safety Executive didn't have any comments to make.

00:50:26:11 - 00:50:30:07

They also made a submission at the procedural deadline, which is

00:50:31:28 - 00:51:04:22

19in the examination library reference requesting to be removed as a consultee from one of the draft requirements. And therefore on that basis, the applicant's view is that the statement of common ground may not be of assistance to the examination in light of those representations. So we just wanted to raise that to see whether you did still in fact require the statement of common ground with them on the basis of those submissions. But appreciate, you might not have seen that relevant representation that was sent last week, so you might wish to take that point away.

00:51:05:07 - 00:51:18:05

Yes. Thank you, Mr. Project. I have seen a representation, but I still would like to take it away. And we'll we'll issue something with the rule eight letter to deal with that point. So thank you very much for drawing that to our attention this morning. Is there anything else anyone would like to raise on statements of common ground?

00:51:21:26 - 00:51:23:09

Anyone online.

00:51:27:14 - 00:51:44:11

Okay. Well then moving on to written representations. As with the local impact reports and statements of Common Ground, we haven't received any written submissions on this, and so I'll go directly on to invite oral submissions again on the written representations. Does anyone wish to raise anything in respect of written representations?

00:51:48:02 - 00:51:51:22

No one in the room. Anyone joining us via Microsoft Teams?

00:51:57:02 - 00:52:37:09

Moving on into the examining authority's written questions. And you'll see from the draft examination timetable that we're asking for responses to our first set of written questions to be submitted at deadline to which is the 21st of November. And we aim to issue these. For those of you who are wondering towards the end of October. As you'll see, there are further rounds of written questions programmed for the middle of January if required, and the responses to those are around two weeks later towards the end of January. Now, other than some issues in terms of timetabling, which we'll come on to under the next agenda item, I think actually agenda item five, we haven't received any written submissions on this point either.

00:52:37:11 - 00:52:44:24

And so does anyone present wish to make any oral representations on our approach to written represent written questions?

00:52:49:17 - 00:52:50:29

Anyone on Microsoft teams.

00:53:02:18 - 00:53:11:22

Well, in that case, I'm going to hand over to Mr. Henley, my colleague. That completes us agenda item three. So I'm going to hand back to Mr. Henley, who will take us through agenda item four.

00:53:13:09 - 00:53:13:24

Yeah.

00:53:16:03 - 00:53:20:26

And thank you. So I'm not going to move on to the the examination timetable agenda item four.

00:53:22:29 - 00:53:34:15

The draft timetable is set out in our Rule six letter of the 10th of July 2023. So could the team share the draft timetable on the on the screen, please?

00:53:47:15 - 00:53:48:09

And thank you.

00:53:50:02 - 00:53:59:24

And as Mr. Cridland said, we will consider your submissions and questions on the timetable under agenda item five. Now the timetable itself covers a range of possibilities.

00:54:01:13 - 00:54:38:15

Not all of the events timetable may actually be necessary. We'll take any decisions on the events to be held as examination progresses. But once the examination is closed, we can't take any further submissions into account. So any submissions made to the Planning Inspectorate after the examination has closed be forwarded to the Secretary of State to deal with and we will not see them when we write our report. So if you do want to spend anything for us to consider, we strongly encourage you to do so as soon as possible within the timetable and all the deadlines on the relevant date within the timetable are at 2359.

00:54:41:16 - 00:54:57:07

And the times have itself, as I've indicated, is not set in stone and we may amend it during the examination. But will they write to all interested parties should be amended for any reason. So I'm not going to go through the the items of the draft timetable in turn.

00:54:59:07 - 00:55:15:04

In terms of items one and two, these dates are past. And strictly speaking, these aren't actually examination deadlines, but they are included to give you a complete set of key dates following our all six letter. And obviously, item three is this meeting.

00:55:17:07 - 00:55:39:25

Items four and five cover the open floor hearing that will be heard this afternoon. And tomorrow's issue, Pacific hearing regarding development consent order. These hearings are called by our procedural decisions in Oxford. They're all six letter and the updated agendas for those hearings were published on the project website on the 29th of August 2023.

00:55:42:15 - 00:55:47:16

Terms of agenda item, item six on the timetable.

00:55:49:24 - 00:55:55:08

We will issue that after the meeting and this will be published in the Rule eight letter as soon as we can.

00:55:57:01 - 00:56:11:21

And then move on to item seven. This is the first examination deadline. And as you set out in the procedural decision in Annex of our Rule six letter. Now, this is a particularly important deadline because it includes some of the key written submissions for the examination

00:56:13:08 - 00:56:36:10

includes the requested statements of common ground that are set out in Annex eight sorry, Annex H of our Rule six letter. This includes a process updating and submitting statements of common ground during the examination. And we ask that same A common ground include frequent updates on the principal concerns held by the relevant interested party and the applicant's responses to them.

00:56:38:12 - 00:56:47:12

Local impact reports are also to be submitted by this deadline as or any request to be heard as a further open floor hearing. And that's a compulsory acquisition hearing.

00:56:50:10 - 00:57:00:10

Any affected persons would like to request. A compulsory acquisition hearing should write to us and please ask the case team. If you're not sure whether you are an infected person or not.

00:57:03:03 - 00:57:13:12

This set and also provides the applicant to submit updates to the draft development. Consents order the explanatory memorandum, the book of reference and the statement of reasons.

00:57:15:02 - 00:57:23:07

It also includes for the applicant to provide a series of reports on progress, again, the details of which we provided in a mixture of the Rule six letter.

00:57:25:00 - 00:57:33:26

On a regular basis. These submissions of the applicants are also set out in the timetable, again to ensure the examinations kept up to date with the important information that they contain.

00:57:36:18 - 00:57:44:24

Please note that any submissions received after any deadline, in fact in the timetable may not be accepted. So it is important that you adhere to the timetable.

00:57:46:18 - 00:58:00:19

And then publish our first written questions on Tuesday, the 31st of October 2023. And we will also notify of any hearings or on site inspection to be held on the provisional dates reserved under item nine.

00:58:03:14 - 00:58:14:13

And this will include information on the overall scope of each hearing to help you to decide whether you'd like to watch live stream or recording, whether in fact you'd like to make an oral submission at the hearing.

00:58:16:20 - 00:58:41:00

Okay. I'm going to move on to item eight on the timetable. This includes a deadline for our responses to our first written questions and for the submission of written representations amongst other documents. There's no need to repeat anything from your from your relevant representation in your written representation. And similarly, for local authorities, there's no need to repeat anything from your local impact reports.

00:58:42:17 - 00:58:51:29

Single submission has been by any group on behalf of the person that it represents. There is no need for people to repeat any part of the group's submissions in their own.

00:58:55:20 - 00:59:07:27

And the genders for the items. So the agendas of the hearings that will commence the week commence in the 4th of December 2023 will be issued on Tuesday the 28th of November 2023.

00:59:09:13 - 00:59:19:11

These will be sufficiently detailed to allow parties to complete their final preparations. If the hearings are not required, they will be cancelled at least a week before their timetabled date.

00:59:21:22 - 00:59:36:10

And item nine concerns are taking place, the hearings themselves and the company site inspection if required. That Item ten provides for updated versions of documents and written summaries of the oral submissions amongst other submissions on that deadline.

00:59:38:26 - 00:59:58:22

Items 11 and 12 include further cycle of written questions as required by us to probe further into any unanswered points or address any points. A new points that have emerged during the examination, as well as updated versions of documents. This is also when we will issue the report on implications for European sites if one is needed.

01:00:00:14 - 01:00:15:13

And moved on to item 13. This is the date by which we will issue our scheduled changes to the draft of a consent order that follows the submission by the applicant and their final version of the draft and the explanatory memorandum underwriting 12.

01:00:18:00 - 01:00:24:29

Think twice in 14. This includes comments on the schedule of changes and final versions of documents, amongst other submissions.

01:00:27:13 - 01:00:42:07

An item 15 includes for the submission of summary statements from you about matters which you've previously raised during the examination but have not been resolved to your satisfaction. And then item 16 should be. Should be self-explanatory.

01:00:44:18 - 01:01:02:08

So again, the title includes for the applicant to provide a report on the relationship with other national infrastructure projects and also a sense of common ground between the applicant and the representatives of the other projects. Which relates back to the matter which my colleague has raised earlier. And these are both to be updated regularly during the examination.

01:01:05:18 - 01:01:25:12

A particular care to ensure that your submission to the nation if the application are made in accordance with the process and timetable that we've been through today and that we may subsequently notify for this specific project. Okay. Can the the draft timetable now be not shared, please?

01:01:29:24 - 01:01:40:00

And. It's that commonplace gender for. So I'm now going to hand back to Mr. Cridland he'll deal with the submissions of the draft examination timetable under agenda item five.

01:01:41:20 - 01:01:42:06

Thank you, Darren.

01:01:45:12 - 01:02:17:10

As before. Move on now to item number five. I think we're making good time, so we don't need to stop at this point. Can I ask you all to keep your microphones muted until we invite you to speak? And again, if you can identify yourselves before you do so, that would be very useful. Um. Can also make sure that you direct any comments or questions at this point through me and not directly to the applicant. Think everyone's been doing that this morning anyway. But just as a quick reminder, I've already dealt with the general points around resource issues and potential clashes with other nationally significant infrastructure projects.

01:02:17:25 - 01:02:26:09

What we're really interested at this point is any specific items anyone wishes to raise or any particular points around the examination timetable that anyone has.

01:02:29:21 - 01:02:31:18

This project. Do you have anything from the applicant?

01:02:33:29 - 01:03:25:23

Project. The applicant. Thank you. As we mentioned in our response to procedural deadline, which is document reference 001 and the limited availability of this venue, particularly in the run up to Christmas due to other functions. And we mentioned that in that week of the 4th of December that's been provisionally allocated for hearings, that the venue is only available on the seventh and the 8th of December for in-person events and our preference, noting the concerns that have been raised, would be for certain hearings to be prioritized for use for those days, such as an open floor hearing in the evening which has been requested and also potentially compulsory acquisition hearing where affected persons may appreciate the opportunity to speak in person rather than via a virtual hearing.

01:03:25:28 - 01:03:56:21

However, perhaps the earlier part of that week be used for issue specific hearings on environmental topics by way of a virtual hearing only, which we've done on other applications where there's been limited availability at the venue. So sort of a combination of events to make best use of the time and make sure the in-person events are prioritized for for open floor hearings and compulsory acquisition hearings. And we have investigated alternative venue options.

01:03:57:09 - 01:04:48:01

We're waiting to hear back from one other venue, but they are, as say, very limited at that time of the year. We have got availability for this particular venue in January, which we are putting forward for the West Burton hearing dates, which is the 9th to the 12th of January. And so if the authority were minded to investigate the possibility of holding an issue specific hearing on cumulative assessment on the same day as an issue specific hearing on the same topic for the West Burton examination, then potentially one of those dates between the ninth and the 12th of January, which would be in-person events, could potentially be suitable and provide the opportunity to speak in person about both projects on the same day.

01:04:48:03 - 01:04:53:14

That's been requested by the host authorities and also by lots of members of the public.

01:04:55:08 - 01:05:09:17

See the applicants keen to try and facilitate as best as we can within the confines of the process and the opportunity for people to participate. And so that's a way forward of enabling that to happen. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Rick.

01:05:10:07 - 01:05:20:01

Can I just check with you? The week of the 4th of December, you mentioned that there's availability on the seventh and eighth. Can check. Have you already reserved those dates just in case they go?

01:05:20:28 - 01:05:22:11

Can I project the applicant? Yes, we have.

01:05:22:24 - 01:05:56:21

Thank you. And we will take those views into account when we're finalizing the timetable. And we will notify everyone as part of the roll out on any decisions that we make in respect of the hearings of the week of the fourth. Did earlier ask as well if anyone does have any suggestions for alternative venues that might be suitable, then if they could let Simon from the case team know, we can also pass that information on to the applicant to investigate whether those venues are available around that time of year as well. We do appreciate with Christmas around happening around then as well, it can be quite difficult to get these types of venues.

01:05:56:23 - 01:06:08:26

So we'll have a look and see what we can do. And it may be that we have to change some of the dates set out in the timetable as a result. Does anyone else wish to make any comments on that particular point before. Invite other submissions.

01:06:12:02 - 01:06:46:21

A stimulus check for West Lindsey District Council. Yes. So just on that particular point, we would make the representation that all of the hearings, including those which are topic specific issues, specific hearings, should be in person rather than virtual on the basis that the public can properly engage in those hearings. Understand the point that they're more likely to be engaged in the open floor and compulsory acquisition hearings, but actually, in fact in Gate Burton, for instance, there's been particular public engagement with all of the issues, specific hearings, including those dealing with, for instance, landscape.

01:06:47:03 - 01:06:52:08

So we would we would make the representation that in fact all of them should be in person. That would be our preference.

01:06:55:11 - 01:06:56:06

Thank you very much.

01:06:57:11 - 01:07:25:28

Scott. So let's go back 7000 acres. We would absolutely agree with that. The issue specific hearings which were held the gate. Burton Where we were, even though they were in the day, a lot of people would have come if they were in the evening. But they certainly are, as it's sort of a local venue for people in the area is certainly something they wish to attend. So virtual hearings would not be, obviously, I'm afraid, in terms of participation. Thank you.

01:07:30:16 - 01:07:40:28

There are often different views on this. Some people enjoy the virtual tour more, other people like the in-person events. But we will take these points away and we will give it some consideration before we finalize the timetable. Mr. McBride.

01:07:42:02 - 01:08:11:26

He said. The Brightlingsea County Council again would concur with those points from the council's perspective. We feel very much that these sort of matters should be heard in person and particularly the environmental matters, which I think is a subject that does need to have the ability to be in person rather than virtual. So we would very much suggest that they remain as in-person hearings.

01:08:14:00 - 01:08:21:26

Thank you. Well, we've taken that point. And as I said, we'll take it away with us and we will give it some further consideration. We'll let you know of any decisions we make and hopefully rule out.

01:08:22:25 - 01:09:01:14

Collaborative with the applicant just before you move on. On that point, it might be worth mentioning that if there is a preference for in person hearings, then perhaps consideration could be given to the hearing venue being towards the centre of Lincoln, where there is a greater availability of venues that meet the specifications for these types of hearings. So it's a case of obviously balancing the desire for in-person hearings with having a venue that is closer to where people are located. Obviously this

venue is preferred, but it does have very limited availability, unfortunately, whereas there is greater availability in the centre of Lincoln.

01:09:01:27 - 01:09:07:17

If there is a preference for in-person hearings in that week of the 4th of December. Thank you.

01:09:08:18 - 01:09:34:16

Thank you, Mr. Broderick. Yes, that is a difficult one for us to. There are lots of moving pieces to setting these things up and appreciate that some people that have a preference for this venue and for in-person hearings and it might not be possible for us to accommodate all views on that point. So I'd like to make that clear now. We will do so wherever we can, but it might not be possible for us to have this particular location and to have them all in person. So it's going to be a balancing exercise for us as Garbutt.

01:09:35:09 - 01:10:00:20

Sorry, sir, just delay with a point. But in terms of being you talk about being sorry. The applicant talks about being closer in to closer. This is the area where the applications are being proposed, not Lincoln City. These are the people that will be affected detrimentally affected. Therefore, it's entirely inappropriate to hold them in Lincoln City. It doesn't

01:10:03:22 - 01:10:34:24

present the right approach, if you like, for the inspection. You're certainly examining the authority. If I may say so, to to to do to hope something within these within Lincoln City, because this is the area this is where people are affected. In the countryside, it's a rural district. This is the identity that people have here. And therefore we would really emphasise them to be holding in a venue in this area. Appreciate it's difficult, especially around Christmas, but there are always possibilities.

01:10:34:26 - 01:10:49:26

So if that could be really tried very hard to accommodate that, that would be very much appreciated and bode well for going forward in terms of the inspectorate, sorry, The Examiner thought audit getting more participation from residents and more evidence that obviously you want to hear. Thank you.

01:10:50:24 - 01:11:34:18

Thank you. And I do take that point. As said, there are lots of different factors that come into play here. One is obviously the availability in terms of accessibility as well, but also the knock on impacts that moving hearing date has on some of the other examinations and the resource implications of that poses. As we've already touched on, on those who wish to participate in more than one examination. And we are mindful of all of these different factors. What I can assure you, I can't give any guarantees today that we will be able to accommodate all of these views. But what I can assure you is that we will look very carefully at it and we will make our decision based on what the best balance of what we consider the best balance to be across the board, to make sure that we get enough public participation, but we also get availability and we have them in person as well.

01:11:35:03 - 01:11:44:06

So I will try to do our or we will try to do our very best to make sure that we do take on board all of these points. Does anyone else wish to say anything on this particular point?

01:11:46:06 - 01:11:48:26

Anyone on Microsoft teams who want to come in.

01:11:53:05 - 01:12:01:23

Very well. Next up, I have Mr. McBride. Think you'd like to say something on this agenda item on local impact reports. Is that right? Or deadlines in general?

01:12:02:25 - 01:12:38:26

Thank you, sir. Neil McBride, Lancashire County Council. Yeah. Just think, just to set some sort of context at the moment. Within Lincolnshire there are ten, um, solar DCO applications at various stages and by the end of this month five of those will be in examination. And clearly that does give would suggest that there's probably an unprecedented number of, of these sort of projects for one host authority to have to be involved in it to any one time.

01:12:38:28 - 01:13:20:29

So I think I just want to sort of emphasise the resource challenges that, um, poses to a relatively small team, um, that, you know, we clearly want to ensure that as a, as a council we are engaged in all of these projects to the level that our councillors and local communities expect us to be. So um, and given the number of these at the moment that is presenting some sort of challenges. And I think just in terms of a local impact report, um, obviously the deadline that's set for the 17th October as it stands at the moment, I think that that is that is hopefully going to be achievable.

01:13:21:01 - 01:14:14:15

But just also want to draw your attention, as you're probably aware, and the Premier meeting for West Burton is taking place this week. Hacking is taking place on the 18th of September. And to meet the, um, proposed deadlines for all those examinations, we will need to take three local impact reports to one committee that I think presents quite challenge and quite amount of challenge to to officers to be able to to do that and also think you know, in terms of the amount of attention that councillors might be able to give to that if they're having to deal with three local impact reports all at one committee, which is clearly quite a considerable amount of information they'll have to absorb and to consider.

01:14:14:17 - 01:14:48:14

So just really want to sort of, I suppose, give an early indication that whilst depending on our submissions to the other examiner authorities, if there is no movement and they all have to go to that particular planning committee, I think we will struggle to meet that 17th of October deadline. And just to think, put that on record and to see if there is any potential, um, flexibility around when the local impact report can be submitted.

01:14:49:18 - 01:14:50:03

Um.

01:14:51:07 - 01:15:24:12

Thank you, Mr. McBride. I think take the general point that there's a lot going on in the county at the moment and that you have particular resource challenges. But think in terms of this particular examination. We are already running a little bit behind and there has already been additional time as a result of the delays to prepare the local impact report. And so I wouldn't really be minded to move any of our deadlines on that basis. At this point. You may wish to make representations to the other examiner authorities on that, but I do think that there is or we're already.

01:15:25:27 - 01:15:52:23

Quite a way behind. The application came in in March and we're now talking about October. And if we don't get the local impact reporting in time, that does have a knock on effect to the other, the other

deadlines and the other things that we need to do within the application itself, within the examination. Um. How long would you be looking for in terms of extending our deadline if we were to consider doing it.

01:15:53:21 - 01:16:31:17

And the next planning committee would be the six of November. So we'd be looking around about that week to provide our local impact report and written representations following the following that planning committee. It might be if we get some sort of flexibility from the other examining authorities, obviously we would be able to achieve that, um, the current deadline, but obviously we haven't had those discussions yet and we don't know what the outcome from those of the examining authorities will be.

01:16:31:19 - 01:16:46:24

But think if we if they're all insistent that the deadlines that currently are set out for the free examinations to have all those local impact reports submitted in October at various dates, obviously the different

01:16:48:27 - 01:16:52:26

applications that will present us with some difficulty.

01:16:55:12 - 01:17:06:05

I suppose my next question is, is there an earlier one that our local impact report for our examination could go to rather than the October report? So could that be signed off at the previous committee?

01:17:07:11 - 01:17:39:00

And again it's it comes down to. Think sort of resourcing issues. We'd sort of programmed our expectation was that cotton would appear when it did appear West suddenly appeared um, very recently. And that has given us some, some difficulty with our sort of our work programme, which we'd obviously mapped out when we knew that cotton was coming. I think July was when we got notifications of that and we, and we plant and we're able to, to meet that.

01:17:39:02 - 01:18:12:17

And then all of a sudden within the last 2 or 3 weeks we've certainly been, um, West Britain has suddenly appeared, which has come unexpectedly, I would say, and that has given us this particular issue that we currently have. And think again, just to focus in terms of the issues we had, in terms of we had a deadline for Gate Burton on Friday. We've got the Mallard Pass examination questions, deadline today and obviously we've got the examinations of examination for Cotton and West Burton this week.

01:18:12:19 - 01:18:37:18

And it does. So it's not just a case of not being able to suddenly, even if it was a planning committee available between now and the one that would proposed that we just, you know, it's not that we've we're sitting around not doing anything. It's just, you know, in terms of resources, it is incredibly difficult to to meet all the deadlines and obviously to do it to the quality that, you know, our councils and communities expect us to do.

01:18:38:15 - 01:18:59:13

Yes. Appreciate that. Mr. Ryder wasn't suggesting that you weren't doing trying to get them through. I'm sure you're as keen as we are to get them in. I think my point really is that the information on

Cottam has been available to you for quite some time. And so I suppose I'm just wondering what else there is for you to do on our particular application that needs additional time as opposed to.

01:19:02:14 - 01:19:03:09

Guess. Done.

01:19:06:16 - 01:19:29:08

Brightlingsea County Council. I suppose all I can say is that obviously clearly on Thursday we'll be making the same representations to the West Burton examining authority and pleading to get an extension of time for the deadline for that local impact report. If that's agreed, then obviously that then enables us to progress to meet the timetable, the current timetable, the deadline for bickerton.

01:19:29:21 - 01:19:52:16

Well, don't think as we weren't able to pre-empt what will happen on Thursday and what the examining authority in West Burton will say in respect of any any comments you make there. But we'll take that away with us and we will keep a note of it. And if you do have any particular problems moving forward, once you've been to that meeting, then if you can contact the case team and let them know and we'll see if there's something that we can do.

01:19:53:19 - 01:19:54:04

Thank you.

01:19:54:06 - 01:19:58:01

Appreciate it. Thank you. Anyone else from local impact reports?

01:20:00:06 - 01:20:37:20

Every district council just thinks it's naught point on local impact reports specifically, it's a point more generally on the draft examination timetable. So it's suitable at this stage. It's really the general point that Mr. McBride has already raised, which is and make it relatively lightly in this examination, which is that the West Burton draft examination timetable runs almost concurrently and in parallel with this examination timetable. So we will be making representations more strongly in relation to the amendment of that draft examiner examination timetable this week.

01:20:37:22 - 01:20:57:20

But we would need to somewhat reserve our position as to whether that moves and there's any flexibility on that examination because it may or may not affect our ability to in a similar way given resource issues etcetera, and comply with and adhere to all of the requirements and deadlines in this examination timetable.

01:20:59:00 - 01:21:15:25

I think it's probably best if we proceed on the basis that the examination timetables aren't moving for the purposes of today's meeting because we can't pre-empt what might happen on Thursday. So are there any representations you'd like to make on the basis of the examination timetables that have been published at the moment?

01:21:35:19 - 01:21:54:06

Jimmy Lindsey, District Council. Yes. It's mainly about the concurrent issue specific here during weeks. So, for instance, the issue specific hearings for this examination timetable run in the week directly before West Certain. And the ability for the.

01:21:54:08 - 01:21:55:02

4th of December.

01:21:55:21 - 01:22:25:00

Yes. And then the ability to submit and prepare, for instance, representations in advance of those issues, specific hearings, but also the post hearing summaries for for the issue specific hearings for cotton that we will have had will be particularly problematic in that week. Now, that's just symbolic of a number of different issues that if both of the examination, timetables remain as they are.

01:22:26:16 - 01:22:35:24

It's symbolic of the issues generally that will be caused because there are a number of deadlines which are very close to each other and will cause resourcing issues.

01:22:37:29 - 01:22:43:13

Yes, I have a copy of the. Westbound timetable and can see that they are running.

01:22:44:29 - 01:23:16:22

In consecutive weeks. I think we had a discussion with Miss Broderick earlier around the availability of the week of the fourth. And so we are going to look at what the situation is with hearings and availability and will bear that in mind when we when we set any dates for hearings, I think would work on the basis that we will aim to have them in that week if it's possible. But I will take into account that the following week will be reserved for hearings for West Burton. And it may be that we we move one of or some of the written submissions from.

01:23:17:28 - 01:23:25:00

The deadline, I think it's the 18th of December, possibly into January, to give you some extra time to prepare those and submit them.

01:23:25:03 - 01:23:45:04

Yes, I'm grateful. It may be that in due course, once we have made representations in relation to West Burton and if there is any movement in that timetable, once we also consider, for instance, then your availability and whether there's any movement in the issue specific hearing dates for this examination. But but we perhaps make written submissions at that stage.

01:23:45:20 - 01:24:08:13

Thank you very much. It's probably worth me saying at this point that normally with a rule eight letter which fixes the timetable, we aim to get that out as soon as practicable after the preliminary meeting. It might take us a little bit longer this time as we need to investigate some of the issues around surance. It might be a few days after we normally wish to get it out. Just in case anyone's wondering why it's out a little bit later than normal.

01:24:10:06 - 01:24:50:06

Just to assist you with your considerations, we have made submissions into the procedural deadline a on the West Burton project to confirm that this hearing venue isn't available in that week of the 11th of December. And that is why we have put forward the dates of the 9th to the 12th of January as being the next availability of a block of days in this venue. So the applicant will be putting forward on Thursday submissions that that reserved week for hearings on West Burton needs to be moved because there isn't any venue availability for that for that week.

01:24:50:08 - 01:25:09:12

So hopefully there won't be that concurrent weeks of hearings that, you know, the concerns that have been raised about that won't actually transpire because we're fairly confident that those hearings, hearing dates will be moved to West Burton due to lack of availability of the venues because of the Christmas period.

01:25:10:23 - 01:25:11:08

Thank you.

01:25:13:23 - 01:25:33:21

Thank you. That's very helpful. It may be that as we move forward to what appear to be clashes at the moment and pinch points may not actually come to pass after all. So, again, as I said, we'll bear this in mind and we'll we'll have a look at what happens on Thursday before we finalize our timetable and see see what the examining authority for West Bolton have to say about that.

01:25:34:20 - 01:26:00:08

It was Lindsey District Council. Yes. Just on that point, obviously, our concern is equally that both of the timetables now perhaps move and then we end up in exactly the same position just with altered or amended timetables for both. So we'd be very grateful if after we've had the preliminary meeting for West Burton, that any potential changes to that draft examination timetable are taken into account and there's some sort of collaboration in setting each timetable.

01:26:00:25 - 01:26:33:17

Yes. As an examiner authority, we are unable to coordinate directly with the examiner authorities of the other examinations. But what we can do is we'll have our case team with the case team of the other examining authorities so that the information can be passed and shared between between us in terms of the procedural aspects. But we are unable to liaise directly with that, examining authority as we are very separate independent bodies for the purposes of these examinations. But yes, I think we will try to have or make sure there is some coordination between those two timetables before they are finalized.

01:26:35:01 - 01:26:37:22

Does anyone else. Mrs. Garbage can. So you've got your hand up.

01:26:38:25 - 01:26:45:21

Thank you, sir. Let's go back 7000 acres. Yes, It's just. Obviously, we agree with what the County Council and West Lindsey County District.

01:26:45:26 - 01:26:48:00

I'm sorry. Could you speak into that a bit closer to the microphone?

01:26:48:02 - 01:26:51:23

Sorry. I'm telling him. Thank you. Yeah, we.

01:26:51:25 - 01:26:56:07

Agree. I think they do move, if that helps. Close a little bit.

01:26:56:12 - 01:27:37:08

Thank you. Yeah, obviously, we agree with the Lincoln County Council and West Lindsey District Council on on those matters in terms of the the timetables when it can currently it causes our members great, great difficulties. We're not professionals within this remit. So it compounds those issues in

terms of the money can currently I appreciate your dealing with this application separately as is Minnesota. But one thing we would like your discretion on possible is if obviously it's a symptom of the fact that that these applications are running concurrent that or examinations running concurrently that that our members do find it difficult to submit.

01:27:37:18 - 01:28:14:00

Um, responses to the authority's deadlines. And so we would appreciate some discretion if possible, if, if certain deadlines are met by interested parties. Um, that would be something that could possibly be done by yourselves to allow people to meet all the many deadlines with the many projects that we have to deal with. If there's a little bit of leeway there, I know it's quite difficult for you to do, but something where you could offer a bit of discretion to allow people to send something in like that that would be much appreciated.

01:28:14:02 - 01:28:14:17

Thank you.

01:28:15:28 - 01:28:49:00

Thank you. The first point I'd make is that any submission by your members would be helpful if they could be coordinated as a single submission through yourself, because I think Mr. Henley made the point that in general that a good point is a good point. It doesn't matter how many times it's made. And so the number of representations on a particular point doesn't really affect the week that we give to it. And so if you are representing a number of of individuals, it would greatly assist us if we could have one submission on behalf of 7000 acres rather than numerous submissions from yourselves and your members.

01:28:49:09 - 01:29:30:00

And that's not to say that interested parties are being discouraged from from providing any information. It's just in terms of the amount of information that everyone has to go through. Those points can be made equally as effectively and sometimes even more effectively if they are coordinated by a single body or group. That's the first point I'd make on what you've said. The second point I'd make is that we do tend to exercise our discretion in these processes wherever possible. Having said that, I will not at this point give any indication that we would exercise that discretion for late submissions, particularly if there are large numbers of them, because they do have knock on effect to the timetable and our ability to keep everything on track.

01:29:30:02 - 01:30:02:10

And so would give a clear indication now that while we will try to exercise discretion, if there are particular or exceptional circumstances, I wouldn't give an open invitation for people to submit things late into this examination. It is important that we get things on the deadlines on time unless there are clear and exceptional reasons as to why someone can't do it. Otherwise, we do run the risk of having large numbers of representations coming in as additional submissions and it becomes very difficult both during the examination and during our reporting period, for us to

01:30:04:04 - 01:30:06:25

deal with all of the issues that are being raised effectively.

01:30:10:24 - 01:30:14:21

Does anyone else have anything on the examination timetable that they wish to raise at this point?

01:30:18:27 - 01:30:22:13

Does anyone have any? Anyone joining us via Microsoft teams?

01:30:27:21 - 01:30:33:09

Does anyone have any further comment about any of the issues that we've discussed in items 1 to 5 so far?

01:30:38:05 - 01:30:48:15

Then that completes the gender. Five We'll move on now to agenda item six. Any other matters? Does anyone have any other matters they'd like to raise within the scope of this preliminary meeting?

01:30:53:04 - 01:30:53:29

Mr. Skelton.

01:30:56:17 - 01:30:59:15

So I'm Skelton, the local resident.

01:31:00:01 - 01:31:27:15

This topic sort of been touched on, but I'm not sure I think we're properly the interrelationship between the between Cottam gate Burton West Burton till bridge they're obviously interrelated. There's no doubt about that because they're almost touching. Um, but in the list is also hacking Fen and Mallard Pass. Um,

01:31:29:03 - 01:32:02:22

I believe the list is incomplete and sort of dilutes the unparalleled sole issue, um, for Lincolnshire. Um, there's four others. Um, Beacon, Fen Springwell and Foss Green, um, which are now on the national infrastructure planning websites with applications expected next year. Um. They're all a lot closer to us than Mallard Pass and probably Eckington fan as well.

01:32:03:08 - 01:32:14:25

Um, so therefore I would expect that all ten should be listed and considered in any decisions by examining authorities.

01:32:15:27 - 01:32:56:25

Okay. Thank you, Mr. Carlton. And that's really moving into the merits of the application and the impact on cumulative or cumulative impacts. And we did give an indication earlier that we will be examining that once the examination starts after the close of the meeting. As part of our examination of that, we will be looking at the interrelationship between the projects that have already been identified by the applicant in the cumulative effects assessment, but also any new projects that come online during that process as well. And we will be looking to the applicant to provide us with up to date information throughout the examination and very close to the close of the examination on any projects that are affected or fall within the cumulative effects assessment at that time.

01:32:56:27 - 01:33:09:23

And so we would expect I can't comment on the specifics, specific ones that you've mentioned, but we would expect all the projects that have a cumulative impact or potential cumulative impact to fall within the applicant's assessment at that time.

01:33:14:02 - 01:33:54:26

Thank you, sir. This go up at 7000 acres? Yes. Just one final point. Take from Mr. Skelton's point. Another issue we may miss to consider in terms of the examination timetable is that the till bridge

scheme, I believe, is being adopted through early adopters program, through the inspector. And therefore, I don't know how this works, but obviously the idea is imagine this, this process is sped up. So the impact of that may be felt in relation to this scheme and therefore obviously there's interrelationship issues with that and also timetable and issues as well.

01:33:54:29 - 01:33:58:00

Think we need to obviously consider moving forward. Thank you.

01:33:59:00 - 01:34:21:26

Thank you. Think in the case of bridge, we don't have any information available to us in respect of that at this time. Those would be representations that you may wish to make on when the preliminary meeting for till Bridge is held in terms of the early adopters program, that shouldn't have any impact on this examination and the way in which we run it. We'll continue to run our examination as we as we do.

01:34:24:14 - 01:34:29:03

Is there anything else anyone wishes to raise within the scope of the meeting?

01:34:31:18 - 01:34:35:01

Nope. Anyone at the back wishes to say anything?

01:34:37:27 - 01:34:41:04

Well, then, thank you all very much. Anyone on teams?

01:34:44:26 - 01:35:20:12

Well, as soon as we can after the meeting, we'll send out our Rule eight letter, which indicated maybe a little bit later than we'd normally expect. While we have a look across all these different points. This will confirm the examination timetable as well as any other procedural decisions that we consider will be necessary following this meeting. The letter, the notes of the meeting and the recording that was taken today will all be published on the project web page for everyone to see. The open floor here in this afternoon will start at 3:00. Seating will be available from 230 and believe the arrangements conference will start at 245.

01:35:20:14 - 01:35:36:12

For anyone wishing to join us on Microsoft teams. We've now covered all of the items on the agenda. Certainly. Do you have anything else? In that case, I'd just like to thank you all for your assistance today, and I'll give you another reassurance that we will take all of your points on board. Um.

01:35:38:27 - 01:35:46:10

It is now 1135. It made very good time and this preliminary meeting is now closed. Thank you all very much.