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Good afternoon, everyone, and welcome back. For those of you who were here this morning, um, can see that you can all hear me. So I'd be grateful if someone from the case team could just confirm that we are live streaming and the recording has started. Thank you. Simon. Well, it's 2:00, and I'd like to welcome you all back to this, the third issue specific hearing into the Cottam solar project. As with this morning's hearing, this Sharon will focus on environmental matters. For those of you only joining us this afternoon, my name is Rory Cridland. I'm the lead member of the panel of Examining Inspectors, appointed by the Secretary of State to examine the application and report back with the recommendation.

00:00:46:15 - 00:01:14:00

Now, as with all the hearings this week, a digital recording is being made. And so it would be helpful if you could clearly identify yourselves before you speak. This recording will be retained and published on the National Infrastructure website for a period of five years following the Secretary of State's decision on the application, and so can ask you all to try and avoid mentioning anything that you wish to be kept private and confidential. The hearing is also being livestreamed on the internet, and hopefully we'll continue to be live streamed throughout the duration.

00:01:15:21 - 00:01:32:08

If you participate in today's hearing, it's important that you understand that you will be recorded and that you consent to the retention and publication of that recording. Now, a few of the usual general reminders, please, can I ask you all to keep your microphones turned off until we invite you to speak,

00:01:33:29 - 00:02:11:28

and please switch off or mute your mobile phones if you're not using them to join us on Microsoft Teams. And those of you who are joining us on Microsoft Teams, I'd be grateful if you could try to minimize any background noise. The chat function will not be enabled around you, so please don't try using that to get our attention. And if you're watching on the live stream, you should be aware that if we adjourn at any point, you will need to refresh your browsers to join the restarted hearing. And you'll also find it useful to have the agenda that we published on the 28th of November to hand, and we will display relevant, relevant pages.

00:02:12:00 - 00:02:36:29

In fact, I can see it's already come up on screen. Now we only have the room until 4:00 today, so we are a bit time pressured again this afternoon. So I'm going to ask everyone to try to be as concise with their responses as they possibly can be. I'm going to hand over now to my colleague, Mr. Henley, who will introduce himself and take us through the rest of the introductions. Before going on to deal with some of the main items listed on the agenda. Good afternoon.

00:02:37:01 - 00:02:54:05

For those who weren't here this morning. My name is Darren Henley and I'm the other member of the panel. Again, I have to have two parties to introduce themselves this afternoon, even though parties may also introduce themselves this morning. So again, I have to ask first the applicant who the lead speaker will.

00:02:57:12 - 00:03:20:11

Afternoon. My name is Claire Broderick. I'm a legal director at Pinsent Masons LLP, solicitors for the applicant Cottam Solar Project Limited. I'm joined by various members of the applicants team. We also have other members of the team available for different agenda items later on, but I'll let those at the table introduce themselves for now.

00:03:21:04 - 00:03:24:24

Thank you. And Lincolnshire County Council this afternoon.

00:03:27:00 - 00:03:55:01

Thank you. Good afternoon sir. My name is Miss Stephanie Hall, counsel instructed by Legal Services, Lincolnshire, and specifically Ms.. Martha Reece, who sits to my right. Yes. And on my left I have Mr. Neil McBride, who's head of planning at Lincolnshire County Council. We're also joined on the screen by Mr. Daniel Moss, who is the area manager for prevention and protection at Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue Services.

00:03:57:20 - 00:03:59:27

I think that's the full compliment. Thank you.

00:04:01:02 - 00:04:03:22

Okay. Thank you. And and West Lindsey District Council.

00:04:04:25 - 00:04:23:19

Thank you, sir. Shmuel Sheikh. On behalf of West Lindsey District Council, I'm instructed also by Ms.. Martha Reece. And I'm also of counsel. To my left, Mr. Russell Clarkson, who's the development management team manager at West Lindsey District Council. And to his left, Mr. Alex Blake. And he's an associate director at Atkins.

00:04:26:18 - 00:04:52:21

Thank you. Um. I'm so interested. Parties are registered to speak. Registered speakers again, please, for this afternoon's purposes. Can you give me your name and your interest in the application? I wish to be addressed, and if you're representing an interest group, give the name of the group and roughly how many people you're representing. So again, do have certain by parish council registered as a speaker for this afternoon. So are they available?

00:04:57:24 - 00:05:02:14

Okay. Um, and I'll now move on to Elizabeth. 7000 acres.

00:05:03:10 - 00:05:24:00

Thank you, sir. Liz Garbutt, 7000 acres. Um, we have various members of our team here, obviously introduce themselves as they need to. We represent roughly about a thousand members. Um, but that's a minimum number of members of our group. And I'd like to be referred to as Ms.. Garbutt. Thank you.

00:05:29:03 - 00:05:38:10

And again I've Alistair Wood, Phillip Raven and Alan Stone in relation to light Group and Blyton driving Centre.

00:05:45:27 - 00:05:50:05

I'm sorry, Mr. Ward, could you speak into the microphone, please? So it's sorry for the formal record. Thank you.

00:05:50:27 - 00:05:58:25

So my name is Alastair Wood, planning and development manager for the group, which is inclusive of Blyton Park driving centre.

00:06:01:14 - 00:06:09:18

Alan Muggleton, manager of Blight Park Driving Centre and affected party to the north boundary of the proposed project.

00:06:12:06 - 00:06:12:29

Thank you.

00:06:15:13 - 00:06:20:14

Um, I also have a Mitchell who's registered to speak.

00:06:23:12 - 00:06:31:11

Okay. Understand? Mitchell is is not available in relation to being online and again Mr. White.

00:06:36:01 - 00:06:36:18

Thank you.

00:06:38:05 - 00:06:48:05

And that is all the the introductions for now. But there is one more person I do need to ask in terms of who is here, and that is not on the county council. Okay.

00:06:51:08 - 00:07:03:16

Yeah. Thank you sir. I wasn't sure if I'd missed. I'm Steven Pointer, team manager, planning policy. Nottinghamshire county council, Mr. pointer address. Thank you.

00:07:04:14 - 00:07:09:08

Thank you. And? Is anyone from Bassetlaw District Council in attendance this afternoon?

00:07:13:25 - 00:07:23:24

Thank you. And the danger is returning to the interested parties list. Um, do. Actually, Mr. Simon Skelton registered to speak this afternoon. Is that why your hand was up? Okay.

00:07:24:17 - 00:07:27:27

Yeah. Thanks. Yeah. Simon Skelton affected party.

00:07:28:00 - 00:07:29:15

Thank you. Thank you.

00:07:37:16 - 00:08:08:15

Okay, that is all the introductions for now. If you haven't introduced yourself, there'll be an opportunity to do so. If we invite you to speak. Um, I'm just going to move on to actually sort of essentially what Mr. Cridland has said is also agenda item two. The one thing I will say is please direct all comments, questions and answers through us rather than directly to any other policy. So then moving on to agenda item three. Um. These forms main part of this hearing.

00:08:08:19 - 00:08:40:27

And. And again, as we said this morning, as we consider necessary, we'll raise and invite responses to these issues and questions and take further contributions as further questions and provide applicants with an opportunity to reply. Um, please can I remind all parties to keep your microphone muted and camera off? And so we invite you to speak each time that we invite you to speak, please give your

name and any organization that you're representing. But it is picked up for the formal record. So I'm going to start off with, with socioeconomic.

00:08:40:29 - 00:08:48:23

And firstly, um, the first questions will be about the outline skills, supply chain, supply chain and employment plan.

00:09:03:18 - 00:09:11:10

So I think it'd be useful if those parties can have that document to hand. Um, and in terms of the reference for it is app 349.

00:09:31:10 - 00:09:52:13

So my first question for this fact, my first series of questions really is to the applicant, who then have a questions for the local planning authorities as well. Obviously, as we go along, if you do wish to make a contribution, please, please raise your hand. Um, firstly turning to section six of the the Outline Skills Supply Chain and Employment Plan.

00:09:55:18 - 00:09:57:06

Just think is on page 24.

00:10:03:16 - 00:10:19:03

And at section 6.2, it refers to an organizational framework. Um, and I'd be interested in the relationship and also the differences between that document and the outline skills, supply chain and employment plan itself.

00:10:22:29 - 00:10:58:24

But Gareth Phillips, the applicant the. In practice there may not be a great deal of difference. So to illustrate this, we first developed this plan for the Cleeve Hill Solar Park a few years ago. That project has recently started construction, and so the requirements on the have been discharged. And the detailed version of this document that was submitted for approval and now has been approved, didn't change a great deal from from the first draft at outline stage.

00:10:59:00 - 00:11:33:09

Really what it's provided is that once there's more detail of the design known and the local authorities discharge the requirements on the design side of things, there's an opportunity to look back at this document and give it some fine tuning, adding some additional controls if needs be, and perhaps provide some specifics. So when you see look through this document, you might see that there's an opportunity to engage with, say, enterprise partnerships or skills promoting organisations, sometimes not for profit charity type organisations.

00:11:33:14 - 00:11:56:26

Those will be specific to the local area at the time that construction is being undertaken. So what I've seen happen on the Cleeve Hill document is that specific organisations have been brought into the document, and perhaps there's more structure around how those specific organisations will actually interface with the delivery and controls that are in this document.

00:11:57:22 - 00:12:07:15

So with the would they, if you like, the final version of the the operational framework, then sit within this document or would it be something else outside.

00:12:07:25 - 00:12:21:13

So to again, to take the full example, it's a separate document that in effect is superseded the outline document. But largely they look very similar. There's just more detail in the detailed version.

00:12:24:05 - 00:12:27:09

I'm not sure that that's really the. It's my microphone. Yes it is.

00:12:27:12 - 00:12:28:27

Yes it is. Yeah.

00:12:28:29 - 00:12:38:28

Just need to move it closer. I think Mr. Henley's getting that. Is this reference to organizational framework. Is that a different document. Because think you're talking about the difference between an outline and detailed.

00:12:40:00 - 00:12:42:11

I see. Sorry can be clear in that really.

00:12:42:13 - 00:12:43:27

Geared towards the organizational framework.

00:12:44:06 - 00:12:44:24

Yes.

00:12:45:06 - 00:12:55:27

On the Cliff Hill version it's been included in the detailed version of the of the plan. But it doesn't have to be. It can be separate. But in that example it's it's been included.

00:13:00:05 - 00:13:17:21

And again, just sticking on the relationship between the document and the organizational framework. Notice there are a number of matters which the outline, skills, supply chain and employment plan mentions, which the organizational framework doesn't in Six Points, but it's matters such as local recruitment. There are the things as well. But just wondered why,

00:13:19:06 - 00:13:27:26

why, why why? There's a difference, if you like, between what the organizational framework might cover then and what the outline, skills, supply chain and employment plan might look.

00:13:29:07 - 00:13:58:07

Confused the applicant think that's because with the with the organizational framework, this relates more to the work program and the detail of that. Whereas some of the other controls in here, it isn't it isn't necessarily required to set up that type of framework to deal with those actions. It would simply be a matter of consultation between applicant, local authority or local authorities, plural and and whichever organization is needed to, say, promote jobs locally.

00:13:59:23 - 00:14:00:11

Okay.

00:14:02:23 - 00:14:33:22

But in terms guess what you've said previously in terms of the final version of the outline skills supply chain, the employment plan that still covers matters like local recruitment, even if the operational framework doesn't cover that, because that is that essentially. Yes. That's correct. Yeah. Okay. Thank you. Um. I notice of with the outline, skills, supply chain and employment plan and a number of occasions in terms of language which is used in it. It says some things such as what could happen rather than necessarily what will happen.

00:14:33:24 - 00:14:51:23

If you're like, that's massive. This is reference to a skills and employment manager and also consultation on the documents as well. I just wondered why it couldn't be more definitive at this stage, given obviously it would be under the control of the applicant. So why? Why is the language kind of slightly caveated by using phrases like code rather than will.

00:14:52:14 - 00:15:26:03

Guarantee the applicant? Yes. Because essentially, as we move forward, this this document is essentially an iterative one. And it will it will develop through consultation with the local authorities. There may be controls in this that aren't seen, aren't seen as necessary for this particular project in this locality and some that would be seen. It's really an opportunity to to set out what can be achieved in delivering the project and, and offer the opportunity for, for comments to come in and then and then influence how this is set up in practice.

00:15:26:05 - 00:15:59:17

It's difficult because at this early stage, um, one doesn't quite know how things are going to play out, what organisations are going to be available. And actually, again, with the Cleeve Hill example, in reality, it's proven to be more of a light touch tool that that has worked on a simple basis without having very detailed organisational frameworks in. But, but we can certainly tighten up the language if local authorities feel, for example, that there were things that they would want to see delivered and it becomes a will rather than a may.

00:15:59:19 - 00:16:06:09

Okay, so will be intention. With the final version of the document, language will be firmed up. So in terms of the commitments correct. Okay. Thank you.

00:16:16:29 - 00:16:39:02

And I think that's fair. It's fair to the applicants recognize through the responses to the first written questions so we can go there if we need to, but I don't think we'll probably will need to. But but there is some deprivation in the area and obviously passes made reference with great gains where, for example, where we are now. And I just wondered whether the measures are in within this plan. Um, we'll seek to address those who might be economically disadvantaged in the area.

00:16:39:25 - 00:16:59:06

Guarantee it's the applicant. That's certainly part of the plan of it. You know, this is essentially trying to ensure that those who perhaps aren't finding it as easy to get into employment, and by that means skilled employment. These sorts of controls and opportunities should, should facilitate that benefit.

00:17:03:04 - 00:17:13:13

And obviously this is massive. 7000 acres of razed. And anything further you want to raise on this issue in terms of of deprivation particularly may relate to the to the plan that we're discussing.

00:17:18:03 - 00:17:49:00

But it's already 7000 acres. I'm not an expert in this field at all, but I've read the document or the documents that the applicants put forward. And I think one of our kind of concerns with this is the is the area that the the applicant has chosen as a study area for the for reference. Um, and having chosen the whole of kind of West Lindsey and Bassetlaw.

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The effect effectively dilutes the impact of the scheme within this region. Um. So effectively if you if you cannot draw. Draw yourself out far enough from the, uh from the from the point of actual development. Um, the averaging effect is, is is colossal. Um, and therefore the, the effects, you know,

guess you'll have walked around Gainsborough. Gainsborough is not an affluent place by by far lots of deprivation within the area.

00:18:22:07 - 00:18:22:22

Um.

00:18:24:06 - 00:18:47:00

And by averaging the the socio economic study over such a wide area, it completely misses Gainsborough as a as a as a focus. Um and and when you've got think something like 32,000 uh lower super output layers as they call them. Um. And Gainsborough has some of the.

00:18:48:21 - 00:19:03:13

The most deprived out of those 32,000. When we're talking in the in the sort of top 1%, um, for the for the study not to then reflect or even acknowledge that think is a serious failing of the study.

00:19:05:18 - 00:19:06:03

Thank you.

00:19:07:29 - 00:19:24:01

And and to the applicant. In terms of the comments which were made, um, they'll be useful to to address those comments in terms of the context of this document, in terms of explaining how that document might relate to to what has just been said in terms of the points raised, in terms of deprivation.

00:19:25:11 - 00:19:58:13

Sure. Gareth relates to the applicant. If I understand the point that's being made, it goes to the evidence underlying or background to this document, which is to what extent has the applicant accurately captured the scale of deprivation in the area around the solar park? That's that's what I understand the question to be or the point to be. We have our evidence on that and we think we have captured it. But to some extent it's it's not so relevant to this document because we are saying as a baseline this document is needed in order to address that deprivation.

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So even if the deprivation is greater than we have put forward in our evidence, this is the tool to help address that. And there's no cap on this, on this, this agreement or this this employment plan. It's there to serve all. And it can be the consultation around it when it becomes the detailed stage, can be worked up with, with local residents as well as local authorities. That's that's the way it works in practice to make sure that whether you've seen there are some what we call the outreach provisions in this.

00:20:30:18 - 00:20:43:09

So how do you target people who are not normally not going to see opportunities like this coming along that can be achieved? So this is a tool to help with the deprivation, whatever scale it currently is as a baseline.

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Okay. Thank you. I'm not going to move on to section seven of the report.

00:20:56:26 - 00:21:08:27

That concerns monitoring. Um, and wondered how this will be utilized to try and ensure the objectives of the plan are actually achieved. So things such as local recruitment, for example.

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How will the monitoring be used to to achieve that?

00:21:16:14 - 00:21:48:28

Gareth Willetts, the applicant at a high level. The purpose of this is that the local authorities will be able to request information from from the developer to demonstrate the extent to which the provisions in this document have been adhered to and say, local employment being achieved, and it gives them an opportunity to express dissatisfaction or satisfaction or satisfaction, depending on what's shown, and ask the developer whether further opportunities can be undertaken.

00:21:49:00 - 00:22:24:07

So the way I've seen this, not so much with the Cleve Hill example, but with other examples of this which is common to large scale development, whether it's residential, commercial, retail, whatever, it tends to be that there will be evidence submitted of how jobs have been marketed and advertised, then you know how people have been brought forward for interviews and set out their, you know, their credentials for the job and then who has been taken through to second stage interviews, etcetera, and then offered employment because actually it's very important how each step of those is carried out.

00:22:24:09 - 00:22:47:05

If it's not advertised in the right way, to the right cross-section of community. You might miss people if you set out criteria for what you're looking for in their CV that could advert or inadvertently exclude people. So there are steps along the process that need to be looked at to make sure that it's all geared to ensuring the opportunities are as presented in this document.

00:22:47:23 - 00:23:20:06

Okay. Um, you mentioned there obviously about the role of consultation with the local authorities and just that paragraph 7.1.2. He makes reference there to monitoring and reporting. Plan will be developed as part of the final version of the plan. Will be submitted. Just wanted to kind of what after that would happen that this document guarantee because obviously in terms of the monitoring that would need to happen after the plan is agreed, in terms of whether or not the objectives in it have been met or not, and where the measures need to be taken.

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So wondered whether. It's going to be some sort of program for annual reports to be submitted to the local authorities, so they can see what progress is being made and whether that whether or not that will be written into the, you know, final version of this document.

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Gareth is the applicant. There certainly can be, sir. Um, that detail can be brought into the final version of the document. Um, certainly we've seen on the Cleve Hill project that there has been sort of an opportunity for, if you like, information to be passing back and forth and, you know, additional controls put in place or ideas putting it tends to be more ideas than controls as to how others can be given opportunities arising from the development. So as you think, all of my answers are probably illustrating that this is an iterative process and the document would be too.

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And it can it can essentially be amended in response to input, consultation input at the time by at the time mean when the when the before the detailed plan is submitted and after.

00:24:27:22 - 00:24:42:13

Okay. Thank you. So in terms of the the council's view on on this document, I'll start with West Lindsey first. Um, so say I appreciate you to hear your views in terms of what you think of this document.

00:24:43:12 - 00:25:15:07

West Lindsey District council. Yes, we. Similarly, would very much invite more details in relation to the document coming forward, both in relation to control, but also the details are set out in relation to particular aspects of, for instance, monitoring which the applicant was taken to. If there is an intention that they're going to be particular mechanisms, controls, reports that are going to be submitted and approved by local authority, then some more details about when that would be the case and a control mechanism for enforceability.

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If it's not approved or submitted in a certain amount of time. So we'd invite that detail to be explored and we can review that. The other point really is in relation to actually securing some of these mechanisms as it currently stands, we would also invite the. Some of some of these to be actually secured, as opposed to aspirational or just optional, given that the current wording is is relatively weak and it's just could not well and will perhaps take away this document and indicate to what extent there might be particular aspects that we think, well, as a minimum could be secured and then others, which we might be happy with as an optional.

00:25:58:21 - 00:26:02:14

And so that's something we can do. We can take away and respond to it in writing.

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Mr. Sheikh, you're talking about the outline document?

00:26:06:21 - 00:26:07:07

Yes. The outline.

00:26:07:09 - 00:26:07:25

Document? Yes.

00:26:09:19 - 00:26:13:26

Okay. Thank you. Um, Lincolnshire County Council.

00:26:14:13 - 00:26:47:21

Thank you sir. Stephanie Hall, Lancashire County Council just a very quick point about, um, potential cumulative effects of this and usually a focus on the beneficial potential, beneficial cumulative effects of this document and the aspirations. So just question whether there's an opportunity missed in terms of a beneficial effect here about whether this project could, in combination with others, drive forward something more meaningful if there was a collaborative approach? Um, so from, from our point of view, that's that's the only question we would raise via you, if we may.

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Okay. Obviously we are going to talk about cumulative effects tomorrow. But I do wonder whether is that something which can be responded to now. Possibly.

00:26:54:23 - 00:27:26:16

Yes. So Gareth Phillips for the applicant. I'll respond on both points if made, but both good suggestions. I think what would be really helpful is if, if a word version of the document could be marked up by both councils, and I don't mind if they collaborate between themselves and send one back or two versions, but that's that's really how this would develop in practice on other projects. And in terms of the collaboration point, we've made the point in other examinations for the projects locally that there is strong collaboration between the applicants for each of the projects.

00:27:26:18 - 00:27:49:05

And it's precisely on issues like this that there can be of, you know, a lot of lot of cumulative benefit achieved if if the projects work together similarly on transport matters and things like that. That's, that's the whole premise behind the collaboration between the developers to, to actually make them work together rather than seen in isolation. So I think both points can be responded to that.

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Thank you. Um, and Nottinghamshire County Council, do you have any views in relation to this document?

00:27:57:24 - 00:28:30:01

Thank you sir. We haven't raised specific representations in respect to the document, but think we would just echo the views of Lincolnshire and West Lindsey and a desire to work collaboratively on this. We have a number of projects that are looking to redevelop the power stations in Nottinghamshire already, and we're looking to with Bassetlaw to create much more economic activity going forward on these these sites.

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So this is kind of part of that process. Yeah.

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Thank you.

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Mr. Grace, Mr. Phillips.

00:28:40:15 - 00:28:49:28

Um, just a quick point. Think, Miss Hall's point was, in terms of missed opportunity in relation to collaboration on this particular document. Now, did I understand that correctly, Ms.. Wall.

00:28:50:27 - 00:29:15:29

I say so, Stephanie Hall. It's all Liberty County counsel. Yes. Both the document and take Mr. Phillips point. I think it would be helpful to have some indication about what was achievable in this document. Now, I take the point that the applicant obviously has good working relationships with the other projects coming forward, and there's a potential there, but it would assist to have some specificity about what that might look like in practice.

00:29:16:06 - 00:29:20:01

Yes. And think, think. That was the point. And I'm not sure you responded to that point directly, Mr. Phillips.

00:29:20:11 - 00:29:48:09

So Gareth is the applicant. Sorry, I'd misunderstood then. Um, so the starting point on all of the projects has been the same draft plan. Um, essentially, it's the Cleeve Hill plan that's been amended to suit these, these particular projects. So that's the starting basis across all of them. There is a lot of collaboration going on in terms of can be achieved. I think there's only so far we can take it in terms of trying to second guess what might be.

00:29:50:02 - 00:30:28:19

Desired locally, and it really is in terms of collaboration. Think we can extend it around the room? This is an opportunity. This document represents an opportunity both for collaboration but also the end results of it. So think if there are ideas within the within this room or offline or online, rather, we'd be welcome to receiving them. And just to be clear, whilst the examining authority have made it very clear that each of the applications locally has to turn on its own merits and the separate

examinations, you know, we are in the position of being able we, as in the law firm I'm with, are in a position to share ideas around the different projects, so none of them are in a silo.

00:30:28:21 - 00:30:48:06

We are able to share input we we receive on documents to say this project with Burton and others recognizing that the Gate Burton examination comes to a close first week of January. So running out of time there a bit. But we do share the information around. So if we receive ideas in, we can feed them into the different documents.

00:30:48:21 - 00:30:56:11

Thank you, Mr. Phillips. I think you mentioned previously that you've invited the comments directly from both councils on the word document. So that's a way of moving that forward. Thank you very much.

00:31:00:04 - 00:31:06:03

Okay. So, Mr. Phillips, now I'm going to just turn to 7.3 of the documents.

00:31:09:04 - 00:31:23:21

That's why section 7.3 that's the sections concerns safeguarding. And just wondered in terms of what that says, and how will the applicant ensure that safeguarding against exploitation and forced labour is effective in terms of where the panels are sourced?

00:31:25:26 - 00:32:01:15

Okay. Gareth Phillips, the applicant. Bear with me if set out a little bit of background to this. Um, so for some time, Solar Energy UK is the industry body that represents predominantly everyone in the development industry, but also the supply chain in the UK. When you go on their website, you'll see a whole list of members and you'll see the backgrounds to each of those. As an organisation, solar UK has been essentially encouraging its members for some time to adopt practices which ensure that there's no forced labour in the supply chain for solar.

00:32:01:18 - 00:32:35:06

What that looks like in practice is it's asked its members to sign up to that commitment and ensure that in the contracts that they place with the supply chain, there are strong covenants in their essentially contractual obligations requiring the supplier in question, whatever part it is to demonstrate where the project, where the constituent elements have come from and demonstrate that there has been no forced labour in the production. So that's been ongoing for some time in the context of the Malpas Solar entity.

00:32:35:20 - 00:33:29:17

Um, there has been a lot of discussion over particular developers in the UK and associations with, with supply chain in China, where a lot of solar panels come from and where there has been allegations over the years of forced labour in that supply chain. So on that project, we developed this set of safeguarding provisions to ensure that whilst we there's it goes slightly beyond the planning arena, but we accept that this is a concern, that those who are consulted in the planning arena, that if we have a control like this that secured by requirement in the, then it means that whomever operate, builds, owns, operates the solar park in question, are committed, have an obligation to meet the safeguarding provisions and ensure that the contracts they let um, have the safeguarding provisions in it.

00:33:29:25 - 00:34:03:13

And essentially what it offers to the local authority is if people are concerned about this or the local authority concerned about that, and quite right too. Then they can call on information from the developers to say, right, how have you gone about breaching this in practice? Could you provide some

evidence, etcetera. And that isn't isn't a big ask because essentially a lot of organisations now are doing this as part of their policies and, and actually accounting to Ofgem and other organisations for, for what they're doing in terms of this particular issue.

00:34:03:15 - 00:34:39:29

So it's odd because there's a lot of criticism of the solar industry on this point. But frankly, it's a it's sadly a point that applies to many products and services associated with China. But solar industry has gone one step further and said, fine, we'll we'll actively or proactively deal with this. And here are the controls to do it. For example, if you were buying an iPhone or you were buying a television or something like that, would you automatically have a situation where the local authority can check where those things those items have been supplied from before getting to your local retailer? The answer no.

00:34:40:01 - 00:34:50:08

Here there is an opportunity to to look into the supply chain of the of the solar system, solar system, solar market and ensure that forced labour hasn't been involved.

00:34:50:14 - 00:35:11:18

Okay. Thank you. Um, one thing you did say there the ability of the local planning authorities to call on the information. And I just wondered, obviously, that that's not currently contained anyway, within section seven point. Again. Is that something which in terms of a final version of the documents, there will be a mechanism in there to enable the authorities to do that if they if they so wish.

00:35:11:25 - 00:35:14:00

Gareth, it's the applicant. Yes. I think that's fine.

00:35:14:09 - 00:35:15:04

Okay. Thank you.

00:35:27:00 - 00:35:39:22

Okay. Um. That's my last question on the outline skills, supply chain and employment plan. Are there any other matters in terms of this document which any party wishes to raise?

00:35:43:09 - 00:35:55:28

Thank you. So I'm now going to move on to the Cotton Power Station regeneration area. Obviously, I appreciate that we don't have, um, of district council here, but, um.

00:35:57:27 - 00:35:58:12

Just a.

00:36:00:10 - 00:36:21:15

Mr. Point wondered if you may be able to potentially, um, give give our give ourselves an update on this. No she didn't. When you answered a previous question, you did make reference to the to the power stations along the River Trent. So I wondered if you were useful to here. If you do know what the latest position is in terms of cotton power station and the regeneration area.

00:36:24:10 - 00:36:55:00

Yes. Thank you sir. Um, the Bassetlaw Local Plan is through its examination or reaching the end of its examination stage, with modifications published, which creates a policy, um, going forward for Cottam to to look to longer term redevelopment. Um, originally it was allocated for development to contribute in the plan period to 2036 or 7.

00:36:55:02 - 00:37:34:08

Believe that has been reconsidered in light of the time it would take to seek developments. So there's a long term aspiration still in Bassetlaw. Plan to look for appropriate redevelopment primarily, um, commercial with potentially some residential. But but the mix is yet to be defined. Um, so we are the county council is working with Bassetlaw, um, in regard to the series of power station sites along the Trent Valley to promote appropriate redevelopment and through

00:37:35:29 - 00:38:06:14

potential allocation as investment zones, um, and so forth. I don't, from what I believe, the, um, the cable corridor routing and, um, access into Cottam present, given the fact it will be largely underground until it enters Cottam, um, is unlikely to affect adversely the the prospects for redevelopment. It is a large site.

00:38:06:16 - 00:38:37:20

Clearly the substation facility um, is likely to be required in the future for um for appropriate energy infrastructure. Um, and from what I believe, although I've not read Bassetlaw representations, whether they have made any alternative thoughts on it, but we as a county council don't believe there should be any principle, in principle conflict necessarily between these two projects.

00:38:40:29 - 00:38:53:03

Thank you. Does the applicant have any comments on that? Mean. I guess I'll be particularly interested in relation to how the parameters of the proposal that Cottam have sought to take account of the regeneration area.

00:38:56:08 - 00:39:25:21

That was project for the applicant? Yes. As has been mentioned, we're only talking about the cable route corridor in relation to Cottam Power Station. And the applicant has been working collaboratively with the developers for Gate, Burton and the Tilbrook Solar project and in discussion with EDF and Uniper about the preferred routing of the cable corridor and.

00:39:27:21 - 00:40:02:03

Arrangements to try to minimize the impact on any future redevelopment plans. And to facilitate this, and as a result of these ongoing discussions, the applicant submitted a notification of its intention to submit a change application to allow for the cable corridor to be routed further to the south and southern side of Torquay Ferry Road, and that is a similar change to a change that was submitted and accepted as part of the Gate.

00:40:02:05 - 00:40:16:27

Burton examination and EDF are supportive of that change application and the routing that that will facilitate and that that won't have any adverse impacts on their redevelopment plans.

00:40:23:16 - 00:40:32:13

So in terms of that, is that both the grid connection points itself and also the router of the cable and also the construction which will be needed to to form the cable.

00:40:33:18 - 00:41:06:08

Clear project for the applicant, and the actual grid connection point itself is determined by National Grid with the owners of the Cotton Power Station substation. So in terms of the exact bay that each project goes in to, that will be determined by National Grid, and the applicant and the other developers have allowed for sufficient flexibility within the width of the cable route corridor in this location to allow for each project to be located or connected into the various bays.

00:41:06:10 - 00:41:39:15

There, there's an understanding of the initial bays that each project will have, but that could potentially change as a result of National Grid's preference. And so we've allowed for the for some flexibility in terms of the final routing of of the cable, but at the exact its exact connection point. But in terms of the land that is outside of the operational substation that's controlled by National Grid, the remainder of the land is owned by EDF. And so the routing of the cable corridor through that land has been discussed with EDF.

00:41:44:18 - 00:41:50:24

And how are those discussions progressing in relation also relation to the timetable for the examination?

00:41:52:04 - 00:42:16:04

A budget for the applicant. Yes, discussions are ongoing and it's hoped that agreement will be reached prior to the close of the examination. Think we'd previously mentioned that there are two aspects. There's the voluntary property agreements which are being negotiated. And then there's also protected provisions for inclusion in the draft development consent order for the benefit of and also for Uniper who have apparatus within the site.

00:42:18:00 - 00:42:48:04

I don't know whether now's a good time for me to make a more general point around the voluntary agreements, and I'm sorry, my voice is going around the voluntary agreements and the protected provisions, and sometimes happens in these examinations, is that the protective provisions are agreed there or thereabouts. And then the focus moves on to the voluntary agreements, but then the protective provisions are held back pending that. I don't think there's any need from our perspective for that, because we don't see the voluntary agreements. So protective provisions have been agreed between the parties.

00:42:48:14 - 00:42:50:18

Mr. Hendy and I would like to see them as early as possible.

00:42:52:17 - 00:43:33:10

The applicant. Yes, that's understood in this instance because Gate Burton has been ahead in the examination process. There's been a focus on reaching agreement on the version to be contained in the gate Burton draft, which will then be replicated into the into the Cottam draft. What I would say, though, is that the majority of protected provisions, both in relation to cost and power station, but also generally with statutory undertakers, require the applicant to restrict its compulsory acquisition powers and the applicant, in order to ensure deliverability, would not choose to do so until a voluntary property agreement was in place.

00:43:33:12 - 00:43:45:26

And so that's that's the relationship and why sometimes the final version of the protective provisions is held back, because The Undertaker requires that restriction on compulsory acquisition, which can't be given until the property agreement is in place.

00:43:46:02 - 00:44:03:15

And yes, I do appreciate that project. I suppose my point was more along the idea that if those are the only issues that are outstanding, I see no harm in putting the protected provisions in with the caveat that these issues haven't been yet resolved. So we can see where the issue actually is, as opposed to having it all very close to the end of the examination.

00:44:08:10 - 00:44:14:24

Like. Yes. We're hoping that there'll be further detail on protective provisions in the deadline. Three version. The DCO.

00:44:17:27 - 00:44:26:07

Okay. Thank you. That's my last question on the cost and power station. Does any other party have any matters they wish to raise in relation to the cost and power station?

00:44:28:08 - 00:44:59:27

Okay. Thank you. I'm now going to move on to impacts on well-being of local residents, residents in particular during operational phase. Um, again, first question for the applicant. Um, and explain please, why it's chosen, the particular determinants that it has of wellbeing. Um, and in terms of where I've taken these from. Um. In terms of the first written question document that you've submitted, I think it's 1.12 .21 on pages two and five, two, two and six.

00:44:59:29 - 00:45:10:05

I think they use summarize what determinants that you've used. So I'll be useful in understanding why it's so particularly determinants that you have used in relation to considering well-being.

00:45:25:26 - 00:45:36:16

Actually for the applicant. Um, think we're going to have to respond in writing if you're requiring a further detailed explanation to the one that was given in response to. Yeah, guess what.

00:45:36:18 - 00:45:44:09

I'm interested in really is why you've listed there what determinant you are using. I just wondered why it's those particular ones that that have been used.

00:45:49:13 - 00:46:06:24

So, for example, use matters like access to healthcare access. Assessment of access to employment, education as indices, deprivation, fear, intimidation, impacts, etcetera. Just wonder where. Where you taken those particular determinants from.

00:46:13:19 - 00:46:35:29

Clear for the applicant and we will confirm the position in the written summary. But my understanding is that there isn't there isn't any particular guidance that needs to be followed in respect of determining what the factors are that need to be considered, in that the individual items that have been referred to in the response to the written question are based on the professional judgment of the author. Chapter.

00:46:41:16 - 00:47:12:04

No 7000 acres raises issue previously as well in terms of well-being as a consideration. So again wondered what if you have a view, what your views might be on these indices as a representation of effects on well-being? I mean, do you consider if they represent how local residents might be used as determinants for considering how local residents might consider this proposal in terms of. Like how they may be, how they make a, you know, look on it in sense in terms of their wellbeing.

00:47:12:06 - 00:47:26:29

So it's things like assessment of access to health care, access to employment, deprivation, fear, intimidation, impact. So they sound like they're determinants which are relevant in terms of considering the effects on local residents.

00:47:28:17 - 00:48:06:04

At least go up at 7000 acres. I'm not an expert in this field. Our representative is away at present, but we will respond fully in writing. But they do seem relevant in terms of determinants that we residents and interested parties and affected parties would suffer. In fact, members have reported those aspects already in terms of intimidation and fear and effects on their mental health. These things are already

occurring. Um, people have spoken to me about this and are very worried about things, but also, um, the member of our team who is a GP is also concerned about mental health provision within the county.

00:48:06:06 - 00:48:23:15

He advises the Lancashire Health Trust and he's aware of the pressures on that service. And there is no capacity, no further capacity for any increased numbers in this regard. But obviously we can give more detail than that in written representations, but it is a grave concern. Um,

00:48:25:02 - 00:48:54:23

we are all aware NHS services, a dwindling or very hard to access in rural areas is particularly prevalent and this will only exacerbate those aspects. So it is a major consideration, something we feel should be given more weight within the examination. And we would say these request at some point believe, um, in relation to health aspects, but where maybe there may not be time for that. But we would like to examine this further.

00:48:54:28 - 00:49:26:03

Thank you. Yeah, I'm really one of the reasons I put this item on the agenda was because of that request. Really. So is anything you want to raise in terms of that, that this would now be a good time to do it? And obviously there are obviously also numerous written deadlines, as you'll be aware from the process before the examination closes as well. So you'd have, you know, well, I was aware of what you said in terms of 7000 acres said in terms of its responses so far. And obviously, you say you did request this was, was was heard. So this is one reason it's put on the agenda.

00:49:26:05 - 00:49:31:01

So there's anything else this size you wish to raise verbally. This, you know, now will be the time to do it.

00:49:38:00 - 00:49:52:03

Peter O'Grady, 7000 acres. Yeah. Sadly, as Liz described, our our particular expert on this isn't real, but I know he's very passionate about health and wellbeing and the potential adverse impacts widely. Um.

00:49:54:01 - 00:50:32:25

On mental health, in particular the loss of green amenity. Now guess conventionally green green amenity would be would be parks or or that sort of accessible area. Um, but within this region, actually the infrastructure of small roads, footpaths, bridleways, etcetera is our green infrastructure. It's where people walk, ride bikes or ride horses, you know, and, and, and spend their time in, in that green space, which is good for people's health and wellbeing.

00:50:33:17 - 00:51:11:09

Um, so, you know, closely related to this is this issue of, of deprivation and in terms of all the indices of, of, of health, you know, health is one of the indicators that is, is is lower in this region. Um, so it feels like development like this, um, has has the potential to adversely impact that amenity, that green amenity. Um, and also, as we've described earlier in terms of employment, there'll be some displacement effect and losses there as well.

00:51:11:11 - 00:51:16:17

So yeah, overall there's some material adverse effects in terms of health and wellbeing.

00:51:20:27 - 00:51:38:01

I think you said just sorry. Just to add. Obviously we're aware that there is now prescribing, um, sort of green prescribing and that's a growing area for people to be able to get out into the environment because there are obviously proven studies in the Landscape Institute promote.

00:51:39:20 - 00:51:43:07

So. Can't quite see that promote.

00:51:45:27 - 00:51:59:25

You know the mental health and wellbeing aspect of experiencing nature and it is well understood. So it's something that is a growing field and therefore to remove landscape and access to landscape.

00:52:01:14 - 00:52:09:01

It all is will have a detrimental effect on the health and well-being of the community. Thank you.

00:52:09:27 - 00:52:11:07

It's just a quick follow up question.

00:52:11:09 - 00:52:21:10

You just said remove access to landscape. In what way would the proposed development you consider remove access to to the landscape by the population?

00:52:23:14 - 00:53:05:16

So set this carpet 7000 acres in terms, obviously physically, in terms of any sort of temporary stoppages to public rights of ways, um, and also deviating those routes. People then may therefore then think they can no longer get access or and go elsewhere. It's the perception that's given. And also in terms of visually a lot of, um, understanding the landscape is another visual element. If somebody's an elderly person's looking at the landscape from their window and then therefore that is therefore removed from, from their view, that has a compounded impact on their mental health and well-being, that enjoyment is prevented.

00:53:05:19 - 00:53:13:22

And therefore it doesn't just have to be physical, um, physical activity. They go out and enjoy. They can also enjoy it passively as well. Thank you.

00:53:14:01 - 00:53:21:21

So if I understand what you're saying, it's related to the landscape and visual impact assessments as well. To to some degree.

00:53:21:23 - 00:53:43:14

Yes it is, but this it is correct sir. So Liz Garbutt, 7000 acres. It's obviously relates altogether in that the landscape affords and benefits people's health and wellbeing, and therefore to get access to that in whatever way, whether it be passive or active, um, has a beneficial effect. And if it's removed, therefore there's a negative effect.

00:53:43:27 - 00:53:45:07

If what's removed, sorry.

00:53:45:21 - 00:53:51:12

The the enjoyment of the landscape from their perception to be able to enjoy it.

00:53:51:23 - 00:53:52:18

Yes. Thank you.

00:53:52:27 - 00:53:53:15

Thank you.

00:53:55:26 - 00:54:06:10

And does the applicant have any comments you wish to raise on that in terms of issues around perception and enjoyment of the area, and in terms of what effects the proposed development may have?

00:54:08:09 - 00:54:45:12

Clare project. The applicant and think we can reiterate is, as we did in the response to the written question, is that the applicant has fully assessed the visual impacts of the scheme, both in terms of residential receptors and users of public rights of way. We've also assessed the impact on public rights of way themselves as a receptor, and put forward a quite detailed public rights, outline public rights away management plan, particularly to deal with some of the issues in terms of the length of the closure and diversions that will be put in place, etcetera, and.

00:54:46:19 - 00:55:03:10

There are a very limited number of public rights away within the actual solar panel sites themselves, and they will be retained during operation. So we don't agree with any suggestion that there will be a loss of access as a result of the scheme.

00:55:03:19 - 00:55:14:23

How about how the if you like the countryside around the rights, the way might be perceived if you're walking through it, say now compared to if you're walking through with, you know, solar panels on one or both sides of the rights away.

00:55:16:10 - 00:55:28:15

At the applicant. Think that's an. Type of question. We do have our experts here. If you would like more detail on the how public rights of way receptors.

00:55:28:20 - 00:56:05:13

It's more it's not really it's more in terms of the perception, not necessarily in terms of a, you know, quantified methodology. Think in terms of how what the effect might be in terms of just mentioned, the in terms of well-being, um, what the effect might be in terms of the perception of people living in areas or walking through areas where, you know, obviously they there will be solar panels. It's not a matter which the applicant has given some consideration to, whether it's through the the the disorder terminus, which I'll refer to in the first question on this or or through something else.

00:56:08:23 - 00:56:17:03

That clear project for the applicant. And I think, as we say in the question, obviously we have. Had regard to.

00:56:19:25 - 00:56:51:27

The desirability of the use of public rights of way and recreational facilities, and as part of considering their desirability, that takes into account public public perception or perceived perception of the use of those and public rights of way and recreational facilities. So within the parameters of the environmental impact assessment, which obviously is undertaken using um established methodology, we have we have taken into account perception where it's relevant to do so.

00:56:51:29 - 00:57:11:14

But in terms of the environmental statement, we've done that in accordance with the scoping opinion and the methodology set out. So there is a there is a limit to how much perception. Feeds into those established methodologies as we've as we've set out in environmental statement.

00:57:11:16 - 00:57:22:23

Okay. Thank you. Um, that's my last question on on wellbeing issues or and anybody else wish to raise any. Any other points on this particular matter. And.

00:57:25:02 - 00:57:49:01

Yes. So this go at 7000 acres? It was just one item that Mr. O'Grady maybe wanted to mention as well. I'm not sure. But his, in relation to our member who isn't here today, did raise the point of requesting a health impact assessment being carried out by the applicant, and we just wondered whether that had been taken forward at all by the applicant. Thank you I think so.

00:57:49:03 - 00:57:53:15

I think you also had your fundraiser. So what do we do with the two points together basically.

00:57:55:15 - 00:58:39:23

Yeah. Peter O'Grady, 7000 acres. It's just it's just in relation overall in terms of the kind of socioeconomic thing before we move off of that topic. Um, I know one of the earlier discussions were about the number of jobs that would be would be created. And as a as I mentioned, the sort of scale of the area means it's not clear what proportion of jobs would be available within the immediate region. But when you look at the the types of jobs that are described, um, you know, there's you would imagine things like security and that sort of role, which are lower paid and lower skilled would be for people in this area, you know, people who are.

00:58:41:04 - 00:59:13:03

Having that sort of role would not be. That that sort of traveling distance would not be available to them. It wouldn't be economic to take that sort of role at the very edge of that look. That impact area that's being assessed. And by contrast, the sort of more specialist financial engineering roles and financial roles and engineering roles are likely to, you know, be better paid and and probably more mobile and, and probably acting across a number of schemes so they're less likely to be in this area.

00:59:13:21 - 00:59:28:06

Um. I guess what it means is that the nature of roles that are on offer are less likely to be fulfilling. When you compare that to the loss of. Our farming livelihoods, which are a kind of a rewarding.

00:59:30:19 - 01:00:06:26

Profession. Um, so having the skills plan is good, but the net economic output of of the or the socioeconomic contribution made in this region is not clear. Um, and, you know, one of the things that is, is highlighted is that, yes, there are a net negative number of roles. So despite that plan, there's a net negative number of roles because of impacts on agriculture and impacts on tourism. So we've got an area that has deprivation and it's going to see a reduction in the number of roles.

01:00:07:17 - 01:00:45:15

Um, you know, the argument is that the GVA is positive. And the only reason the GVA is positive is that the landowner gets a wedge of cash. And then and then to equate that to set £27 per head per worker, you just wonder why on earth that is a you know what? What does that piece of mathematics add to the sum of anything? Because there's no way the landowner is going to give everybody £27 a head. It's nonsense to even include that within the socio economic assessment, but to include that on the one hand and then omit Gainsborough at all on the other just seems a.

01:00:46:12 - 01:00:47:14

Yeah. Really, really.

01:00:47:16 - 01:00:48:24

Partial piece of evidence.

01:00:50:18 - 01:00:55:26

So yeah, if the applicant can respond to those two points firstly on the health impact assessment, then the point in relation to jobs.

01:01:02:06 - 01:01:04:15

The applicant and.

01:01:06:10 - 01:01:40:19

The human health impacts of the scheme are considered in chapter one, which was 056, and it was agreed at the scoping stage that there wouldn't be a separate individual chapter on health impacts. And. The applicant's position is that the scope of a separate health impact assessment would largely cover the same scope that's already covered across the entirety of the environmental statement. So, as we said, and as in accordance with the scoping opinion, health impacts have been covered as part of individual topics.

01:01:40:21 - 01:02:12:23

As we previously mentioned, in terms of how the impacts air quality impacts, public rights of way impacts, etcetera. So health impacts have been considered throughout the environmental impact assessment. And the applicant's position is that there isn't any merit in undertaking a separate health impact assessment for this particular scheme. And as, say, the Planning Inspectorate confirmed they were happy with that approach in their scoping opinion.

01:02:15:02 - 01:02:31:17

In terms of. The job point. We note that the examining authority mentioned that they might have a question on agricultural holdings they might want to cover in this, um, session. Or perhaps it was the

01:02:33:07 - 01:02:36:19

one of the councils that had a comment that they wanted to perhaps deal with on.

01:02:36:28 - 01:02:38:28

I think we had wasn't aware that we had.

01:02:41:29 - 01:02:43:19

Are you inviting that question now, Miss Broderick?

01:02:43:21 - 01:03:24:28

Well, I'm just saying, if it's a comment on agricultural holdings in terms of job losses and things, then Mr. Baird is here to provide more detailed response in terms of how impacts on agricultural holdings were assessed and that form part of the agricultural. Chapter. So if there were specific questions on agricultural holdings and the loss of agricultural jobs, then Mr. Bear can answer any specific questions that might arise. But in terms of the actual methodology used for the socio economic chapter, my understanding is that there aren't any issues over the methodology with the local authorities that the methodology has been agreed, and therefore we disagree with the comments made by Mr.

01:03:25:00 - 01:03:38:03

O'Grady, that the approach taken to calculating the number of jobs lost as a worst case scenario, and the impacts the overall conclusions on um, impacts to to jobs is incorrect. We disagree with that.

01:03:39:04 - 01:03:52:03

I think this project, Mr. Sheikh. Is this a point that you'd like to come in on, or is it a completely different point that you wanted to make? Because think if it's related to what's been discussed, then we might as well hear it now. But if it's a separate point, then we can leave it to later in the agenda.

01:03:52:17 - 01:04:25:08

So West Lindsey District Council, so it's a point about socioeconomics more generally and the indirect impact on socioeconomics and the supply chain outside of and beyond the scope of agricultural holdings, which has been assessed. And the question, I don't know if it's best put at this stage or later in the same topic is to what extent further direct and indirect effects in terms of socio economic effects beyond that just affecting agricultural holdings has been assessed as part of the impact.

01:04:26:23 - 01:04:27:09

Yes. See?

01:04:29:19 - 01:04:30:04

Right now.

01:04:34:18 - 01:04:37:27

Mr. Broderick, would you like to respond to Mr. Sheik's point?

01:04:50:14 - 01:04:52:13

And clever of the applicant. I'm sorry, Mr. Broderick.

01:04:52:15 - 01:05:02:06

I'm just going to interrupt you there. Mr. shake, could you just refresh re we ask, we'll make your point again. Suppose I'm trying to say, just so that I didn't notice.

01:05:02:08 - 01:05:25:20

That Westminster District Council. Yes. We note that agricultural holdings have expressly been taken into account in the socio economic effects. The question is to what extent wider effects in socio economic terms have been taken into account, for example, disruption and impact on supply chains and other socio economic effects that go beyond merely just agricultural holdings.

01:05:27:02 - 01:05:40:22

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The reason I asked you is because understand that representatives are at the back of their hand up and think the point you might be getting to is a similar point to Mr. Sheikh. So if we take them, take them together and then Ms.. Project, you might be that you respond to both.

01:05:42:21 - 01:05:47:29

Thank you Alastair. On behalf of LNT Group Blyton Driving Centre,

01:05:49:28 - 01:06:24:18

this was the point that we wanted to make today. Really the most important point. Um. We don't believe that the impact on Brighton Driving Centre has been assessed. Literally at all. And where issues have been raised. And this is proximity of the solar panels to the driving circuit. This is a circuit where high speed driving activity is a daily occurrence. We have had no response to impacts of deflection of noise from the massive hard surface.

01:06:24:28 - 01:06:58:28

It would be presented next to the circuit and also been concerned to a lesser extent about glint and glare. But the the principal concern for us today is the proximity of the solar panels. And we've heard

today 4.5m high on their pile foundations. The unforgiving in relation to any of the activities. It's a it's a driver training and practice centre. Yeah. Your speeds are driving at speed is one of the main

01:07:00:15 - 01:07:22:03

reasons for practicing and and training. And the consequence of that is many drivers run off the track in circumstances. And what we have here, what we see in terms of the plans, are that solar panels are right up to the edge of the track, and

01:07:23:22 - 01:07:42:18

we can only we don't want to imagine the consequences off of the occurrence here. If this development were to proceed. The impact on the business and the wider economy, the way we would have recognised part of the local economy in West Lindsey and the impact would be severe.

01:07:45:04 - 01:07:45:19

Thank you.

01:07:48:03 - 01:07:58:09

Thank you. Think we have a general question for Mr. Sheikh on behalf of West Lindsey and a more specific point being made in response to. So, Broderick.

01:08:01:21 - 01:08:04:07

Becky Razak. On behalf of the applicant, I'll deal.

01:08:04:09 - 01:08:05:22

With the issue of impact.

01:08:05:24 - 01:08:53:27

On supply chains. The assess worst case loss of 17 full time equivalent agricultural jobs as a result of the scheme is equivalent to 0.4% of the agricultural employment in the local impact area. That's set out in chapter 18 socioeconomics, Tourism and Recreation, which is document app 053 and the potential for continuation of non arable agricultural practices on the scheme sites and the ongoing continuation of arable agriculture in the surrounding areas, demonstrates that it's unlikely that there'll be any more than a low level of impact on agricultural supply chains, and therefore they're not expected anticipated to experience significant effects even when considered cumulatively with other slips in the Till Valley area of west.

01:08:54:19 - 01:08:57:20

So as a result, these effects have not been assessed.

01:09:07:06 - 01:09:23:00

But for the applicant we will. In the written summary, we will also provide the references to the various tables that form part of the socio economic chapter that set out all of the different things that have been considered as part of of that assessment. Turning to

01:09:24:23 - 01:09:39:29

the impacts on the blind and driving center, my understanding is that there sort of two main issues that have been raised. One is in relation to the emergency runoff area that is within the

01:09:41:17 - 01:09:55:16

order limits. And the second point relates to potential noise impacts as a result of the presence of the solar panels somehow increasing the noise levels. We do have a.

01:09:59:02 - 01:10:15:21

I'm expert here, so if we wanted to deal with that point in more detail. There is time in the agenda to do so. We can do that then. Or don't know if that's something that we wanted to discuss at the compulsory acquisition hearing. If the representatives in the driving centre are able to attend that hearing. Just on Thursday.

01:10:16:25 - 01:10:40:25

Yes, Miss Brooke. Think we are a bit pushed for time, so it might be better to deal with that specific point in terms of the impact. On their land interests at the compulsory acquisition hearing, but think there were three points and you've only dealt with two of them. The other point, and if I've understood correctly, is how it impacts on the business of the driving centre and how that's been taken into account, or if it's been taken into account as part of the environmental statements assessments.

01:10:50:08 - 01:11:26:18

At the project for the applicant. So in terms of the environmental statement itself, it wasn't specifically assessed because at that point in time, we weren't aware that the scheme would have any impact on the operation of the blind driving centre. And that's because there aren't any formal property rights associated with the emergency run off area, and wasn't mentioned to the applicant by the landowner of that land that that he allowed the occasional use of, of that part of the field for, for the emergency runoff.

01:11:26:20 - 01:11:58:02

So the. First the applicant had heard of the particular concerns was as a result of the examination process. It wasn't, as I understand, it wasn't raised during the pre-application consultation was carried out. There weren't any representations made by Blind Driving Centre as part of that pre-application process, so the applicant only became aware of the concerns that been raised today during the relevant representation period.

01:11:58:21 - 01:11:59:06

And.

01:12:00:28 - 01:12:03:18

In which case what? What's the applicant doing about it now?

01:12:12:25 - 01:12:46:01

At clever. If the applicant and the applicant, as was mentioned, had a meeting um, some time ago with the and as an operators of the center and as following on from that meeting and we're currently exploring the options that are available in terms of the emergency access area, in terms of whether we can reconfigure the design or whether there are other forms of mitigation that could be put in place, such as barriers, for example. So that work is ongoing at the moment.

01:12:46:03 - 01:12:54:15

And we're also liaising with the landowner to try to establish exactly what the situation is in terms of the use of that land for that purpose.

01:12:56:01 - 01:12:57:00

Thank you, Mr. Broderick.

01:13:00:14 - 01:13:08:05

Elder any the masses in relation to socioeconomics, but anyone else wishes to raise which we've we've not already covered.

01:13:11:21 - 01:13:16:07

Okay. Thank you. I'm now going to move on to battery storage.

01:13:29:07 - 01:13:29:22
And.

01:13:31:03 - 01:13:50:18
I'm not getting. My first question is directly towards the applicants. Um, how was the water storage capacity of the battery energy storage system being derived? In order to deal with thermal runaway occurring, and also again on the matter of thermal runaway. There's any further explanation the applicant wishes to give. Now would be the time to do it.

01:13:53:00 - 01:14:18:21
The applicant will let Mr. Paul Gregory just introduce himself and he can provide some further information. He can also provide an update on discussions that have been ongoing with Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue Service. A meeting took place last week with them, and he can provide you with an update on the current status of those discussions, and also what that means for the battery safety management plan.

01:14:22:08 - 01:14:23:02
Paul Gregory for the.

01:14:23:04 - 01:14:41:03
Applicant, and I don't know whether bearing in mind time. Um. Daniel Moss, who's on the meeting from Lincolnshire Fire-Rescue, whether perhaps his comments regarding that meeting, first of all, would be useful to sort of frame the discussion.

01:14:42:13 - 01:14:46:20
I think we'll hear from you first, Mr. Gregory. And then we can invite Mr. Moss to speak.

01:14:47:13 - 01:14:48:19
Good. Okay. Clarification.

01:14:49:11 - 01:15:21:22
Um, so I peer reviewed the outline battery storage system management plan, and this was revised at deadline two. So just to sort of summarize the major sort of safety features and clarifications coming from that, you know, there are four fundamental fundamental components to best safety. Firstly, explosion prevention and protection. Secondarily electronic controls and detection systems. Thirdly, fire suppression.

01:15:21:24 - 01:15:51:26
Various elements boundary cooling from fire and rescue service. And fourth important element is risk assessment and mitigation analysis. Okay. Um and the revised outline plan covers that in a lot of detail. However, just to sort of summarize. Firstly, um, because thermal runaway can initiate both a flaming and a venting reaction. So typically a venting reaction where you don't see fire.

01:15:52:06 - 01:16:32:01
And typically you'll have a higher hydrocarbon content, i.e. sort of a large proportion of hydrogen in that venting thermal runaway. It's very important that the best enclosure design incorporates um gas exhaust and and or deflagration protection systems, and it's designed to withstand the over pressures generated during the thermal runaway event. Okay. And typically the explosion prevention system is designed and tested to NFPA 69 standards, which is the standard on explosion prevention.

01:16:32:11 - 01:17:11:10

And any explosion protection system is designed to NFPA 68 and or N 147 97 standards, and that is integrated as part of the design. Now the applicant is committing that the best design incorporates that sort of protection. And. If the design does not incorporate gas exhaust systems, only deflagration protection, then performance must be validated through full scale free burn testing and the requisite pressure testing required by both NFPA and standards.

01:17:11:13 - 01:17:31:27

Okay. Furthermore, the best enclosure will have completed UL 95 for a unit and or installation testing and or additional third party fire and explosion testing. And, you know, pressure waves must not occur and shrapnel cannot be ejected as part of those tests. So

01:17:33:16 - 01:18:06:10

if the ventilation system is incorporated with gas prevention, then it must conform with 855 2023 standards and NFPA 69 guidelines, which which prevent the buildup of dangerous gases. So gases must be maintained below 25% of the lower flame or explosive limit. And the systems must have redundancy. And also the mechanical ventilation systems should be interlock.

01:18:06:12 - 01:18:37:16

So if the system shuts down on the failure of the ventilation system. So it's very comprehensive, um, methodology to ensure that explosive gases do not build up and threaten the integrity of structures. You know, this is the primary concern for first responders or site operatives on site. Okay. Um. Second element, which is very important with regards to the safety aspect.

01:18:37:18 - 01:19:07:29

For best is the electronic controls and detection systems. And again, the latest version of an 855 2023 um. Stipulates minimum requirements for both the battery management system and the energy storage management system, and the applicant is also committing that data and analytics, if not included in those control systems, will be will be included.

01:19:08:01 - 01:19:42:18

And this again is a very useful tool to spot characteristics that might indicate potential thermal runaway, and also as well as being able to accurately predict end of life time frames and provide maintenance alert for the operators. Okay. Um, on the foreign detection side. And the scheme will comply with NFPA 855 again and NFPA 69. This means that smoke, fire and gas detection system will be installed on site.

01:19:43:04 - 01:20:25:02

And there are a variety of multi-sensor equipment which is in development, which I'm sort of starting to see now in testing and in the field, which, you know, can measure air temperature, hydrogen, volatile organic compounds, overpressure shock and vibration, moisture ingress. And you know, these will be considered for the design if fully tested with the battery system at the detailed design stage. And the gas detection systems will have an external best beacon and audible alert facility. You know, life and safety is very important, and the final fire detection design will be validated by an independent fire protection engineer under responsibility of the operations, engineering and maintenance contractor.

01:20:25:04 - 01:20:29:11

Prior to construction and this will be improved by Lincolnshire Fire Rescue.

01:20:31:01 - 01:21:03:23

And moving on to. For suppression and the various elements and water is considered the most effective fire suppression agent, and therefore, if a fire suppression system is integrated in the scheme, a water based system will be considered for each Bess enclosure, and it will be designed to control a

fully suppressive fire without the intervention of Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue. Okay, it must be capable to operate effectively in conjunction with a gas exhaust ventilation system.

01:21:03:25 - 01:21:18:21

So as well as providing cooling, you're also allowing the explosive gases to be vented from the enclosure and minimize deflagration risks. The system design and the water supply requirements must be fully agreed with Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue.

01:21:19:10 - 01:21:19:25

Okay.

01:21:20:13 - 01:21:20:28

Um.

01:21:22:13 - 01:22:06:18

And he. Furthermore, any fire suppression system conforming to the 855 guidelines will be tested to nine 540 A or the latest standard at the time of the detailed design and under significant third party fire and explosion testing. Fire suppression system performance should be benchmarks against free burn testing, so you're able to adequately benchmark the suppression potential, and an independent fire protection engineer specializing in best applications will be contracted to review all the test data and any additional fire and explosion test data provided by the OEM, and validate the suppression system design gain.

01:22:06:24 - 01:22:49:22

Lincolnshire Fire Rescue will be fully consulted on these matters, so that deals with the internal fire suppression system. With regard to fire rescue service response, the best area will be designed to integrate hydrants and or static water tanks for firefighting from LFR, and the water tanks will be located at least ten meters from the nearest best enclosure. In line with latest guidance, the water access points where the hydrants or tank connections will be located in consultation with Lincoln Rescue, and we will provide redundancy in that water supply.

01:22:50:18 - 01:23:20:24

Safe operating distances for firefighters is typically with the latest research is 30 to 50m from the best enclosure, which is which would be undergoing an incident. You know, this is this place is outside any potential explosion zone, which again, typically what we see in the real world is has been 25m. 30m is, is defined as a as a safe explosion risk. And.

01:23:22:12 - 01:23:54:19

Finally, just with regard to. Water supply itself. Obviously, we referenced the guidance which states that firefighting supplies should be capable of delivering no less than 1900 litres per minute for at least two hours. Lincolnshire Fire Rescue, at the detailed design stage, will be able to view the selected best system fire test data and again, an independent fire protection engineer will validate the final water supply requirements.

01:23:54:21 - 01:24:31:23

So this could exceed or be lower than that dependent on those test results. It will be very much evidence based and at best design which may require direct engagement with. But that's turning hoses internally into a better enclosure will not be selected for the facility. So the site and best design principles and the emergency response plan content will ensure that Lincolnshire Fire Rescue are expected to employ what is a defensive strategy which is basically categorised as boundary cooling.

01:24:31:25 - 01:24:54:21

So this is using sort of hose spray to cool adjacent to comment. If the monitoring equipment is showing that potentially the fire might risk propagating to surrounding equipment. Okay. And this strategy will be finalised with Lincolnshire Fire Rescue and clearly communicated in the emergency response plan.

01:24:55:14 - 01:25:05:04

Okay. Thank you for that. In terms of the water storage capacity, in terms of what you said to me, um, has actually therefore been calculated what the water storage capacity is going to be for the best.

01:25:06:24 - 01:25:28:21

So that's only calculated when the battery system is selected. Because the fire and explosion risk is directly proportional to the best enclosure in the battery systems that you have in there. And there could be a huge, you know, so 750 kilowatt hour battery per enclosure is very different to having a five megawatt hour enclosure, for example.

01:25:28:23 - 01:25:43:12

Okay. But it's a maximum parameter in terms of the water storage capacity because there is I mean, certainly within the chapter there is a battery candidate battery put forward within the chapter. So obviously in terms of the A parameter.

01:25:44:12 - 01:25:55:25

Project for the applicant. Yes. So in consultation pre-application with Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue Services, a maximum parameter for the purposes of the environmental impact assessment,

01:25:57:12 - 01:26:34:29

the amount of storage was agreed with Lincolnshire Fire Rescue as being the 228,000l. And that's referred to in paragraph 4.5.33 of chapter four of this scheme. Description. So that's been used as part of the indicative design. And what I think Mr. Gregory is saying, there's obviously we would need to demonstrate at the point of discharge of the battery storage safety management plan that the water storage capacity or suitable for the final design of of battery energy storage that is put forward at that point in time.

01:26:35:01 - 01:26:48:15

So in the event that a greater degree of water storage capacity was required for that type of facility, then we would have to obviously demonstrate that we can deliver that on site within the parameters. Um.

01:26:50:09 - 01:27:28:17

Approved as part of the application in order for that plan to be approved. And as Mr. Gregory mentioned, the applicant has agreed for an independent expert to be appointed on behalf of the discharging authority so that they have that expertise available to them when when discharging the battery storage system management plan, because we recognize that it's a complicated technical area, and they will need guidance to ensure that the final water storage that's being put forward is appropriate and suitable for the final design of the battery energy storage.

01:27:28:19 - 01:27:30:01

But the.

01:27:31:28 - 01:27:38:07

Water storage that was used for the purposes of the Environmental Impact Assessment, was agreed with Lincolnshire Fire Rescue at the time.

01:27:39:06 - 01:27:39:21

Product.

01:27:39:23 - 01:27:42:15

You just refer to that as the maximum water storage. Do you mean minimum?

01:27:46:22 - 01:27:50:28

Membership fee? Yes. No. It says no less than 228. Sorry, sorry.

01:27:51:02 - 01:27:52:09

Just wanted to thank you.

01:27:55:09 - 01:27:59:29

Okay. Thank you. Think this is opportunity to seek the views of Lancashire County Council fire and Rescue?

01:28:01:06 - 01:28:08:29

Stephanie Hall, you can say yes. Thank you mean I'm going to pass directly to Mr. Moss if he's still present.

01:28:15:02 - 01:28:57:00

Good afternoon to Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue, and thank you for the opportunity to to just give a little bit of input, certainly picking up on Mr. Gregory's points. Um, fire and rescue are following the guidance of the National Fire Chiefs Council, recognising that the new and emerging technology that's associated with the battery energy storage systems changes and evolves on a on a weekly kind of monthly basis, and the standards that that we're adhering to when we set out, um, the, the standard of Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue in the early pre-application stage picks up on nine different areas, and we ask for that for those different areas to be considered as a result of the pre-application.

01:28:57:02 - 01:29:28:14

So we look for information requirements, we look for system design, construction, testing and decommissioning, detection and monitoring, suppression systems, site access, water supplies, emergency plans, environmental impacts and recovery. And we recognise that at this stage they are very much indicative plans. But it's then up to the applicant to, to show and demonstrate to Lincolnshire Fire Rescue that those minimum requirements have been, have been or are being are being adhered to.

01:29:28:25 - 01:30:00:14

And I think it's worth mentioning as well that certainly for this type of incident, um, fire rescue services are very much looking at a defensive tactic if employed and asked to respond. And a lot of that pre-planning and the information gathering will have already been carried out as part of this process. Internally, we gather information to allow us to develop those operational response plans and that operational preparedness. And I think it's also worth noting, picking up on Mr.

01:30:00:24 - 01:30:58:04

Gregory's points, that the standard and the guidance that we offer is very much dependent on the ability for the applicant to be able to demonstrate to us that those minimum control measures are in place. So, Mr. Gregory referenced a number of the standards NFPA 855, which is the guidelines for site installation, NFPA 69 Explosion Prevention, NFPA 68 Explosion Prevention through Deflagration venting all of our plans, all of the baselines are very much predicated on those minimum safety standards being in place in the first place, where there's a suggestion that the applicant will deviate from the minimum standards, it's very much then up to the applicant to be able to demonstrate to us that, um, at least the same level of control is in place and very much based on live test results, that that could be demonstrated certainly to, to us and to ensure fire and rescue.

01:30:58:17 - 01:31:41:21

And the team within Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue is made up of a number of individuals, which allows us to then to have an overview of those applications, considering all the points that are raised, but certainly picking up on the water supplies, that is the minimum standard, as clarified a few minutes ago, and that is very much based then on a defensive tactic that would be employed, but again, very much dependent on those minimum standards that have been considered and and shown to Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue are in place. And those minimum standards of water, for instance of the volume of water is very much then around boundary calling and preventing the further escalation of an incident and preventing the propagation to all the battery energy storage units.

01:31:44:08 - 01:31:50:10

Thank you, Mr. Moss. At this stage, is there any is there anything you've seen causes you any matter of concern?

01:31:52:11 - 01:32:25:25

A domestic fire rescue? No, sir, not at this time. Certainly the information that's been provided. Um, it's reassuring to to to know that the the standards are being adhered to and certainly where we're having those discussions. If there's a suggestion that minimum distance is etcetera, water volumes are being reduced or not adhering to that minimum standard, we've been quite clear to suggest that the applicant will need to demonstrate to us why and how those decisions have been made, and very much then reliant on us agree, and what that would, would be from that minimum standard perspective.

01:32:28:02 - 01:32:43:22

Thank you, Mr. Moss. That was very useful. Thank you. Um. No matter which was raised at the the hearings in September. Let me at you raise this this is issue of funding. So wondered what the what the position is on that at the present time.

01:32:48:01 - 01:32:59:04

So I think it might be a question best put to the applicant for me. So it's definitely holding a chicken to council and to let the examination know where we are with agreement on that point.

01:33:00:27 - 01:34:08:23

The Clare project for the applicant. Yes. Discussions have been ongoing between the Gate Burton project and also the applicant in terms of the inclusion of protective provisions in the draft DCO. And so to ensure to facilitate payment, to cover the costs of Lincolnshire Fire and rescues and attendance at site familiarisation sessions and those sorts of things. So at deadline three, the draft will be updated to include those protective provisions, and they set out an obligation to state a site familiarisation exercise for Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue, um, prior to the date of final commissioning of the battery energy storage system, and then enable ongoing yearly um, site visits, and then the costs associated with undertaking those site visits are being covered by the applicant in the terms of a, um, a larger payment for the first year of operation, which will cover, um, some of the work that Mr.

01:34:08:25 - 01:34:33:04

Moss mentioned in terms of being satisfied that the site is set up and access and the procedures that will be followed, and then an ongoing yearly payments that will be made for every year that the Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue require a further site visit. So my understanding is that the sums of money and the frequency of payment is is agreed, and we'll be including that in the deadline three submission.

01:34:33:20 - 01:34:44:27

Okay. So I think when we had the September hearings, the idea of a section one and six was muted. That's my understanding. That's not the case. It's going to be the protective provisions routes which which that goes along.

01:34:46:13 - 01:35:11:21

A cloud project for the app? Yes. That's correct. We felt that a protected provision obligation to make the payment was preferable and therefore, due to the restrictions on section 106 contributions, we felt that a direct payment to Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue or via Lincolnshire County Council as its in its role as the Fire and Rescue Authority via a protected provision, was the most appropriate way of making the payment.

01:35:13:12 - 01:35:15:04

Does Lincolnshire have anything further to run on that?

01:35:15:20 - 01:35:26:21

Stephanie Hall, Lancashire County Council. Thank you very much. We're obviously grateful to receive that confirmation, and we're very flexible about the mechanism of delivery, whether that's a protected provision or a 1 in 6. We don't comment.

01:35:27:03 - 01:35:32:03

Thank you. Something else. Then we'll raise on battery storage before move on.

01:35:34:01 - 01:35:35:01

7000 acres.

01:35:38:14 - 01:35:55:11

Thank you sir. Mark Pryor, 7000 acres. Just like to bring up a few points. First of all, we put in a request to Lincs Fire and Rescue. And I think it's fair to say, as Mr. Moss alluded.

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To.

01:35:56:03 - 01:35:56:19

They're.

01:35:56:21 - 01:35:57:09

Still learning.

01:35:57:11 - 01:36:06:12

About best systems and the National fire Chief guidance. It is still in a stage of evolution.

01:36:06:14 - 01:36:08:24

Because these systems.

01:36:08:26 - 01:36:09:11

Are.

01:36:09:13 - 01:36:12:09

Relatively new to Britain, and the.

01:36:12:11 - 01:36:13:01

Risks.

01:36:13:06 - 01:36:43:14

Evolve with time. If we look at the current National fire chief guidance, it says that best enclosures should be at least six metres apart. If we look at the draft work number two B and work number three B, they say that they will be more multiple containers joined to each other. So they are certainly not six metres apart.

01:36:45:21 - 01:37:25:24

We've touched on the large amounts of cooling water required in our written submission. We give case studies, for instance, with the 20MW Bess incident in live Liverpool. The local fire hydrants did not supply enough water, so they had to ship in more. We quote a letter from the Yorkshire Fire Brigade where they say for a 50 megawatt Bess, they would need about 5,000,000l of water.

01:37:25:26 - 01:37:57:21

So very large amounts. And with the where this Bess will be located, there are not large local mains, so a lot of that would be stored on site and agree with the applicant the actual amount of water you need on site is directly proportional to the energy that's stored, so that needs to be fixed at some point. So then you can work backwards and work out the actual water that needs to be stored.

01:37:58:12 - 01:38:36:03

You also need to take into account funding to store that. Because if that is used in a Bess, that would be polluted. So there's a large risk of runoff into the local streams onto the local land. So at some point we need to fix the actual capacity of the best and work backwards from there. Another point that's not really addressed the applicants is appendix 17.4 the best fire technical note.

01:38:36:15 - 01:39:05:12

It says a best fire would only produce a short term impact. Well, the evidence we have submitted proves that that is not correct because because these these events can go on for days. And also there is no account taken of the gases that can be released during these best incidents. And that can be.

01:39:08:24 - 01:39:14:24

Both poisonous gases and explosive gases.

01:39:17:11 - 01:39:26:24

So those are just some of the points. So I don't have the same warm feeling that Mr. Moss has.

01:39:27:04 - 01:39:29:13

Okay. Thank you. Wish to respond to those points.

01:39:30:07 - 01:39:40:19

Yes. So the revised fire note submitted a deadline to does contain that data. It also basically.

01:39:42:21 - 01:40:19:13

References real world testing that's occurred in the last sort of 12 to 18 months for cabinet systems between 700 and 50 kilowatt hours through to 1.5MW hours, where typically the burnout time is between 2 and 8 hours, and variety of thermal runaway initiation scenarios. Many of the previous incidents that were referenced either comes around through not having gas exhaust systems and defibrillation protection, and also no emergency response plans with the Fire and Rescue Service.

01:40:19:15 - 01:40:50:29

So fire and rescue service arrive and aren't actually aware of the type of system they're dealing with and the best strategies that should be employed to deal with that. Thirdly, the fire water provision on site isn't for the total energy under storage there because any well conceived and tested system, a

worst case scenario should be that you only lose one bass enclosure. You know, there is no conceivable scenario where you're going to lose every single bass enclosure on site.

01:40:51:01 - 01:40:52:24

So basically

01:40:54:13 - 01:41:33:03

developing water formulas for supply where you don't have hydrant access, which are basically are formulas which are based on actual real life testing with boundary cooling and or direct suppression as well. So as was referenced in the comments there, it is a rapidly evolving field. And in the next 18 months, two years, there's something like between 50, 15 and 20 new safety standards and testing requirements which are coming into place and certainly by the detailed design stage and procurement for the system.

01:41:33:18 - 01:42:09:18

If permission is granted, you know, will benefit specifically from those new codes and standards. And, you know, I have absolute no doubt in confirming that, you know, in 2 or 3 years time, the systems that we'll see will be radically better tested, certified and with far more rigorous standards. And, you know, like every incident that happens, unfortunately, in the field, lessons are learned and they are incorporated into the emergency response planning and sort of the liaison with the fire and rescue service.

01:42:10:26 - 01:42:24:01

Um, in terms of the point in relation to the containers, um, the reference was made there today by 7000 acres of the containers will be joined and not not six meters apart. What what's your response on that?

01:42:24:16 - 01:43:10:03

So firstly the so believe the actual spacing. So it's just a generic indicative design as I understand wasn't involved from the outset of the scheme. However the spacing used was three meters which was the 855 spacing requirement. Okay. So that plan was drawn up before the guidelines came in. And April those guidelines also reference 2017 advice from global, the insurance company that data sheet 533, which references the six meters that has just been revised in some of this year, and for the type of system that was used in the indicative plan.

01:43:10:09 - 01:43:34:14

Spacing is now 1.5m for covenant systems. Um, but again, as we've already stressed with with that at the detailed design stage, the spacing will be appropriate for that system. This is an indicative plan, and it was using best practice at the time of being drafted.

01:43:36:24 - 01:43:37:11

Thank you.

01:43:40:11 - 01:44:05:26

Okay. Obviously time is pressing. And as my colleague said as we introduced this session, we will need to finish by 4:00. So there's two topic areas left. One is waste on its biodiversity in terms of biodiversity pose. The question I'll have in relation to that. I'll put into second written questions, but will do with a couple of matters in relation to waste before we finish. So we have to finish by 4:00. So.

01:44:10:26 - 01:44:12:19

So in terms of waste, is there.

01:44:12:21 - 01:44:37:07

Yes. Claire Broderick, the applicant. Just in relation to to that point. We we have some notes on waste that were written by the chapter author, but the chapter author isn't able to be at the session today. So we can obviously take the questions. And if it's in terms of pointing to where that information is contained. But we do have our biodiversity ecology expert. If you wanted to ask the ecology question, well, in.

01:44:37:09 - 01:44:44:18

Terms of waste, it's any any person present wishes to ask questions about waste whilst obviously whilst we're here.

01:44:48:25 - 01:44:58:07

Okay, well, that base is what I'll do. I'll send you a switch around. What? I just previously said we'll do a biodiversity now, and I'll deal with waste through the written questions.

01:45:04:16 - 01:45:32:14

And and simply I've really two questions in terms of biodiversity. Firstly, the first question relates to what the Environment Agency has set out in its written representation, um, that set out that an assessment should be undertaken in relation to extensive risks to juvenile lamprey and migratory salmon from electromagnetic fields to determine whether the risk needs to be mitigated. Um, in terms of the need for the assessments, what is the applicant's position on that?

01:45:35:09 - 01:45:36:20

Harry Fox for the applicant.

01:45:37:19 - 01:46:13:25

To date, no risk assessment has been carried out. Um, but the position is that the, um. The effects of electromagnetic fields were scoped out of the original of the EIA at the EIA scoping opinion stage, and furthermore, such impacts on ecological features were not identified during the scoping exercise carried out with Pins and consultation with bodies such as Natural England and Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust didn't raise EMF as an ecological potential.

01:46:13:27 - 01:46:22:05

Impact of concern. Um, so that's why that's to date hasn't specifically been addressed.

01:46:22:22 - 01:46:23:08

You say to.

01:46:23:10 - 01:46:28:22

Date. So is that does that mean that signs suggest maybe it might happen?

01:46:28:24 - 01:46:35:22

We acknowledge that there's the request from the Environment Agency. But um, the response to that hasn't yet. Um.

01:46:37:17 - 01:46:41:05

So is the applicant intended to carry out to carry out an assessment then or.

01:46:46:26 - 01:47:23:24

That much of the applicant and the applicants considering its position based on the comments that have been raised, and also in relation to the construction techniques that are proposed and in this location. So obviously, we have agreed with Canal and River trust as part of mitigating their concerns for the cable route to be located and a minimum of five meters below the bottom of the riverbed. So

we're considering, um. The implications of being at that depth, and what that means in terms of whether there's a need for any further assessment.

01:47:23:26 - 01:47:34:20

It's not clear whether when these comments were made, there was an appreciation of the depth of the cabling in this area. So we're looking into the matter further. We'll be responding at deadline three today.

01:47:34:25 - 01:47:49:00

Well, that's really my next question. Obviously, you know, time is ticking in terms of the examination. And if that has a potential effect as well in relation to the habitat regulations assessment, for example, then obviously, you know, we all well, well in the examination period now.

01:47:50:21 - 01:48:03:04

Yes. Think our initial. My understanding anyway is that our initial view is that like the likelihood of significant effects is low, but we are just clarifying our position so we can respond in writing.

01:48:03:18 - 01:48:08:12

And Mr. Porter, are you in discussions with the Environment Agency on that point as well directly?

01:48:10:19 - 01:48:23:05

Harry Fox for the applicant. Yes. The matter is, is one that is currently under discussion with the Environment Agency in formulation of the statement of common Ground. Thank you.

01:48:25:03 - 01:48:44:05

Okay. And whilst on the subject of the Habitat Regulations Assessment document or the information to support it, um, understand from the submissions, the applicant made a deadline. So that is going to be updated. Um, so what is the the latest position with that? And also what would it be updated for.

01:48:45:25 - 01:49:07:09

Terry Fox for the applicant. Yes. The information to support and HRA is we have committed to update that to include the designation of the Humber Estuary Ramsar site, which was omitted from the initial the original draft of that document. Um.

01:49:08:27 - 01:49:35:10

The designation of the site is almost a complete overlap with the the Special Area of Conservation, save for one species, native toad, which occurs far outside of the zone of influence of the scheme. Um. Therefore, it's our anticipation that the conclusion of that document will remain the same, that there are no likely significant effects.

01:49:37:08 - 01:49:40:22

That's a social matter the updates will cover. Is that correct?

01:49:41:04 - 01:49:42:03

Correct. Okay.

01:49:42:05 - 01:49:43:19

And when will that document be submitted?

01:49:44:23 - 01:49:46:10

Understand for deadline three.

01:49:53:27 - 01:50:01:00

We could conceive with a document need updating again. If an assessment is carried out in relation to the Environment Agency issue.

01:50:07:05 - 01:50:22:00

Potentially with Harry Fox for the applicant. Potentially we would we would have to look at that situation as as we form our final response to the Environment Agency in conclusion of this, the statement of common ground.

01:50:23:06 - 01:50:31:21

But obviously, as mentioned, really, really time obviously you know he's ticking in terms of that. So wondered whether any merit in. Between the two at the same time.

01:50:34:17 - 01:50:58:07

Yes. Think based on the information that the applicant currently has. As I said, it's it's unlikely that further assessment work is required and the conclusions will remain the same. But obviously if we become through those discussions with the Environment Agency, if we are given further information, then obviously we would need to address that. But based on the information that we currently have, we're not anticipating any further changes to that document.

01:51:06:11 - 01:51:12:21

And the only other passage in relation to biodiversity that any of the parties would would wish to wish to raise.

01:51:19:12 - 01:51:22:18

Thank you. I'll pass you back to my colleague, Mr. Cridland.

01:51:24:05 - 01:51:35:14

Okay, Darren. Moving on in to item number four, updates on statements of Common Ground, this project. Is there anything to report since deadline two? Because you did provide us with an update then in terms of the statements of common ground.

01:51:39:12 - 01:51:44:01

They say anything? Anything material. It doesn't come from the applicant.

01:51:44:03 - 01:51:58:10

No. The deadline to submission gave the current status, but obviously discussions are ongoing with all of the parties where statements of Common ground haven't yet been signed and so hopeful that progress will be made. Um, and we'll provide another update at deadline three.

01:51:58:24 - 01:52:05:26

Thank you. Moving on then, to. Oh well, does anyone else have any points they'd like to raise in terms of statements of common ground before I move on?

01:52:07:16 - 01:52:15:09

Nope. In that case, moving on to item five. Any other matters? Does anyone have any other matters they'd like to raise within the scope of the hearing this afternoon?

01:52:19:25 - 01:52:20:23

10,000 acres.

01:52:24:27 - 01:52:30:00

Yeah. Peter O'Grady, 7000 acres. And I've got a few points just to sort of.

01:52:31:29 - 01:52:33:11

From today's discussion.

01:52:35:06 - 01:52:38:04

Think, presumably from this afternoon's discussion I.

01:52:38:12 - 01:52:39:01

Guess from both.

01:52:39:03 - 01:52:39:22

Really. But it's.

01:52:39:28 - 01:53:11:16

It's a, it's a I'll keep it brief. Um, at times it has been challenging to to follow some of the applicant's lines of explanation. Um, this afternoon, we've we've heard the applicant carefully describe how a methodology appears to assess the perception of desirability of public rights, of way, with or without the presence of solar panels, but without a clear statement of the obvious, which is that it's far more desirable to walk among fields of wheat rather than towering solar panels.

01:53:12:27 - 01:53:30:01

This morning. We're the applicant. Take extremely careful steps through the description of how there would not be an adverse impact on the landscape in the face of such extensive development, despite the clear reality that hedgerows will take years to grow and will not screen 4.5m of solar panels.

01:53:31:23 - 01:53:53:15

We've also heard how the applicant considers the land to remain farmland. Is by two, its change in primary use and their persistent ambiguity over the use of farming sheep. And deploy, deploying Schrodinger's sheep, which can simultaneously be farmed and not farmed, to maintain the argument that it's not a loss of farmland.

01:53:56:22 - 01:54:08:27

In terms of farmland. The applicant continues to focus on three versus three be agricultural land classification rather than overall land use, i.e. its consideration is to narrow.

01:54:10:18 - 01:54:21:16

I'm sure you'll understand. There's a growing understanding of the colossal challenge land use faces reflected in reports by the Royal Society and also the Skidmore Review.

01:54:23:02 - 01:54:53:09

And the Climate Change Committee has advocated 30 to 70,000 hectares of trees being planted per year for decades for carbon sequestration. And we already use the land here locally for growing food or biofuels. So extensive, uncontrolled solar development will displace those crops and will put additional pressure on land use. The government is is committed to a land use framework.

01:54:54:17 - 01:54:58:13

Um, it's just not ready yet. As with a lot of things in energy policy right now.

01:55:00:21 - 01:55:22:09

I guess what we're trying to say is it's really easy to become lost in the details and the kind of labyrinthine methodologies that the applicant deploys would urge you to where you can maintain a sense of perspective in terms of what you can explain to your children and your grandchildren.

01:55:23:29 - 01:55:28:29

In terms of how we have made effective use of our country's land.

01:55:30:18 - 01:55:37:11

And the practical role solar can play in this country, which is one of the lowest areas of solar gain worldwide.

01:55:39:00 - 01:55:42:29

And therefore what contribution it can make to decarbonisation.

01:55:44:22 - 01:56:15:09

And on that final point in other examinations, there have been issue specific hearings to consider energy and decarbonisation benefits of the proposed schemes. And that does not appear to be the case in this hearing. Now, in some respects, it's these little inconsistencies that that that keep the examination process fresh and keep us all on our toes. But it would be good to. Well, it would be. To be fair, it would seem a significant admission. From the examination.

01:56:15:20 - 01:56:22:11

If the credentials of the scheme in terms of its benefits were not thoroughly examined.

01:56:23:06 - 01:56:57:07

Thank you. So I'll just come back on that last point, if I may. And that's in terms of how we go about the examination. Just because we haven't held hearings on a specific point doesn't mean that our examination is any less rigorous than any of the others. Each examining authority will look at what's in front of them in the application, and come to their own conclusions on whether written representations or oral hearings are best placed to explore those issues. So in terms of the needs, issues and the decarbonisation point that you make, Henley are reasonably comfortable that we can do those via written representations.

01:56:57:10 - 01:57:06:15

I know 7000 acres have made detailed responses on those points. But rest assured, all of it will be taken into account and we will be looking at everything very thoroughly and very rigorous.

01:57:08:20 - 01:57:11:03

Did anyone else wish to say anything at this point? This project?

01:57:11:23 - 01:58:00:27

Clare project the applicant just in response to government policy and priorities. I think it's important to refer to the overarching National Policy Statement for energy, which is one which was published in November and is currently laid before Parliament, as previously said, which has a section in it which is section 4.2, whereby the government has therefore concluded that there is a critical national priority for the provision of nationally significant low carbon infrastructure, and they have, in this published version, specifically stated that all onshore generation, which includes large scale ground mounted solar, constitutes critical national priority infrastructure.

01:58:00:29 - 01:58:17:21

So it is in that context that the examining authority. Should be considering the scheme, and obviously the Secretary of State will be. Regarding those policies as being important and relevant when they come to make their decision.

01:58:18:24 - 01:58:38:25

Thank you for drawing that to attention, Ms.. Broderick. We are aware of the updates that were issued earlier in the year, say earlier in the year, quite recently, in fact, and we will be including some questions on those for everyone to respond to as part of our second set of written questions. Does

anyone else have any comments they'd like to make at this point, or any other matters that they'd like to raise?

01:58:40:25 - 01:58:55:21

I have one. And it's for you, Ms.. Broderick. And it's to do. We had a discussion in this morning sharing around cumulative issues. Think someone may have raised that point and wanted to check. Well, the applicant's representatives be available in tomorrow's hearing as well.

01:58:57:04 - 01:58:58:05

Clever. The applicant? Yes.

01:58:58:07 - 01:58:59:20

Well, yes. Thank you very much.

01:59:01:07 - 01:59:16:13

In that case, can I just remind you all to provide the written submissions that you've committed to? And again, we remind the applicant and all those who have spoken today, if you could provide us with summary of your responses at deadline three. I can see Mr. O'Grady would like to come back in then, Mr. Grady.

01:59:17:19 - 01:59:51:20

Yes. Just a point with regard to the national policy statements that have just been revised. I'm sure, as you said, we'll back this up with writing. Um, and one emerging, um, is really for applications that are to be made, not have been made. And in terms of critical national priority, it's interesting how that definition has evolved in the last couple of drafts. That was originally for describing offshore wind as being the critical national priority.

01:59:52:17 - 02:00:23:14

And following feedback and consultation, much of was lobbying effectively from the solar industry. That has been widened to basically all forms of generation as has been described. So it kind of renders the idea of a national priority being critical as being, um, you know, effectively meaningless because all, um, all are effectively the same.

02:00:23:20 - 02:00:44:08

So geothermal is considered the same as offshore wind. An offshore wind will, um, will provide 70% of the UK's power. So you can't equate them all to be, you know, exactly the same in terms of national critical. They will all contribute in really, really different ways. Okay. Thank you, Mr. Gray.

02:00:44:13 - 02:00:51:23

I'm sure everyone will provide their views on these particular changes to the draft is when you respond to our second set of written questions.

02:00:53:10 - 02:01:27:26

And as mentioned earlier in the hearing this morning, the transcript and recording of the hearing will be published on the website as soon as possible after the hearing itself. And for those of you attending the specific hearing tomorrow morning on cumulative Effects will be starting in this venue at 10 a.m. registration will open at 930, both for those attending in person as well as those coming along on the team's platform. And well, thank you all very much for your contributions today and your assistance during the hearing. It's now 4:00. We've made very good time this afternoon and think we all have to be out of the room in a few minutes, but thank you all very much.

02:01:27:28 - 02:01:31:07

And this issue specific hearing is now closed. Good night. Thank you.

