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FULL TRANSCRIPT (with timecode)

00:00:07:15 - 00:00:40:23

Good evening everyone. Just going to check that we're recording and the live stream has started. Thank you very much. Well, it's 530, and I'd like to start by welcoming you all to this, the second open floor hearing into the application for the Cottam solar project. You can see we've got quite a high turnout tonight. So thank you all for coming. 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 a recommendation. Now, I know we may have some people here this evening who have not attended any of the previous hearings.

00:00:40:25 - 00:01:12:27

So by way of introduction, my professional background is as a solicitor. I've worked as a planning inspector for the last nine years, and this is the fourth nationally significant infrastructure project that I've been appointed to as an examining inspector. As I mentioned at the start, a digital recording is being made and we are being live streamed on the internet, and 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.

00:01:12:29 - 00:01:35:23

And so can I ask you all to avoid referring to information that you wish to be kept private and confidential? If you participate in this evening's hearing, it is important that you understand that you will be recorded and that recording will be published on the internet. I'm going to hand over now to my colleague, Mr. Henley, who's going to introduce himself and then take us through the remainder of the items on the agenda.

00:01:38:24 - 00:01:57:07

Good evening. My name is Darren Henley. I'm a member of the Panel of Examining Inspectors, appointed by the Secretary of State for the application made by Custom Solar Project Limited for an order granting development consents for the custom solar projects. My professional background is in town planning and I'm a chartered member of the Rural Town Planning Institute.

00:01:58:27 - 00:02:32:01

The examining authority. We are holding an examination of this application. We will then write a report to the Secretary of State, with our recommendation on whether consent shall be given. A casing works alongside us throughout the process. They are managed by Simon Ray Ray wood, who is here today. They should be your first point of contact of any queries about the examination process or the arrangements for the hearing. I'll now run through some housekeeping matters. The hearing is a blended event, which means some of you are attending this room and also there are some people taking part via Microsoft teams.

00:02:32:15 - 00:02:35:10

However you are attending, though, you'll deal with you fairly.

00:02:37:06 - 00:02:46:02

Please switch off your mobile phone if you're not using it to join the hearing. And please got anyone joining via Microsoft teams? Please minimize any background noise.

00:02:48:05 - 00:03:10:15

And just a couple other things for those joining us via Microsoft teams. The chat function will not be enabled or in use, so please do not try to use that in the comments. Also, we will only use the raise hand function in teams at the civic points on the agenda when we invite general comments. We would also get people who are not able to use that feature an opportunity to comment at the appropriate time.

00:03:12:27 - 00:03:22:27

If you're watching the live stream, then please be aware that it will be stopped during any adjournments to the hearing. You'll need to refresh your browser page to view the restarted hearing.

00:03:24:18 - 00:03:25:03

Uh.

00:03:25:06 - 00:03:29:07

Firstly, please, can I establish who will be the lead speaker for the applicants tonight?

00:03:37:12 - 00:03:44:01

Uh, good evening, Gareth Phillips, uh, solicitor and partner at Pinsent Masons. And I'll be representing the applicant this evening. Thank you.

00:03:50:06 - 00:04:24:09

I would not invite any other introductions at this stage. The opportunity for you to introduce yourself later when we invite you to speak. The hearing is structured today so that you would have the opportunity to raise anything relevant to this hearing. When we invite you to speak the relevant points on the agenda. Please keep your microphones muted until we invite you to speak. And each time we do so, please give your name and then your organization that you're representing so that it is picked up with the formal record. And we'll cover the points today on the agenda that was published on 29th November 2023.

00:04:24:20 - 00:04:28:11

Um, I think it'd be useful now, please, if the agenda can be shared. Thank you.

00:04:30:04 - 00:04:39:17

I'm so just about to complete agenda item one, but just one final item subject to progress. We intend to take a short comfort break at intervals on around 90 minutes or so.

00:04:42:07 - 00:05:09:18

So now I'm going to move on to agenda item two, which is the purpose of the hearing. The purpose is to give interested parties an opportunity to make all representations about the application. The hearing itself is subject to our powers of control over its conduct, as established by the Planning Act 2008. And to be clear and to be clear, the purpose of this hearing is to sit in our examination. So please do not clap because we want to make sure we can hear all interested parties tonight.

00:05:11:05 - 00:05:16:09

Nor is the hearings for use as a political platform, and any attempts to do so will not be tolerated.

00:05:18:02 - 00:05:23:23

Each interested party has indicated a wish to speak will be invited in turn to speak at the appropriate time.

00:05:25:12 - 00:05:49:18

And these submissions should be based on representations previously made in writing by the speaker where they have been submitted. However, they should not simply repeat matters previously covered in a written submission, but rather provide further detail as appropriate. Explanation and collaborative evidence will help to inform us. And we will, as necessary, ask questions of the speaker and also provide the applicants an opportunity to respond at the end.

00:05:51:12 - 00:05:56:17

Are there any questions about the gender or how the hearing will be conducted before we move on to agenda item three?

00:06:00:03 - 00:06:24:00

Thank you. So agenda item three just confirms the confirmation of those who wish to speak. The speaking will follow agenda item four, but three purely concerns those who have been notified. So we know who is going to speak. And please, yes, our number of people representing a party, then please join at the same time on the screen at the same time. So if you're on Microsoft Teams and then introduce yourselves but one by one.

00:06:25:15 - 00:06:35:18

Um, so I'm now going to go through the list of people who have registered to speak to ensure, firstly, that they are present, and firstly, Sir Edward Lee MP.

00:06:41:11 - 00:06:56:23

Thank you. I'm here. Thank thank you. Thank you sir. I'll come to you in due course in terms of, you know, if you're speaking. But first of all, I'm just gonna establish in the room who wishes, who's going to speak, and then I'll come back to you, sir. So you can. You can speak first. Okay. Thank you.

00:06:59:23 - 00:07:02:03

And then in terms of the parish councils, um.

00:07:04:19 - 00:07:09:12

Firstly um Brampton and Wood Bec Parish Council Anthony Goodman.

00:07:12:21 - 00:07:13:29

Sounds like Goodman Presents.

00:07:18:19 - 00:07:32:07

And president. And do you wish to speak? No, I'm fine. Thanks. You. Sorry. No. No. Okay. And also from Rumson Wood Parish Council, Sue Henshaw.

00:07:35:19 - 00:07:36:26

No, we don't wish to speak.

00:07:39:13 - 00:07:43:22

And, uh, certain by Stowe Parish Council. Uh, Carol Gilbert.

00:07:51:25 - 00:07:56:09

Good evening. No, sir. I don't wish to speak this evening. Okay.

00:07:57:21 - 00:08:01:15

And then Margaret O'Grady from Willingham Parish meeting.

00:08:10:14 - 00:08:16:24

Mildred O'Grady, chair of Filling and Parish Meeting. And yes, I will be speaking this evening. Thank you. Thank you.

00:08:25:20 - 00:08:27:26

Um, and then, uh, Catherine Booth.

00:08:32:28 - 00:08:34:14

Yes. I would like to speak.

00:08:34:21 - 00:08:35:06

Okay.

00:08:41:10 - 00:08:42:12

Simon Skelton.

00:08:49:20 - 00:08:53:16

So I'm a skeleton affected person? Yes. I'll be speaking tonight. Thank you.

00:09:00:11 - 00:09:01:14

Elizabeth Colbert.

00:09:05:20 - 00:09:14:00

Yes, sir. I'll be speaking on behalf of 7000 acres. And I'm also speaking on behalf of a gentleman called Mr. John Park. And you can't be here tonight.

00:09:14:06 - 00:09:25:14

Thank you. Um, just. Mr.. Just on that point, when you finished speaking on behalf of 7000 acres and start on the interested party, can you just kind of let me know where one kind of starts finishes and one starts? Thank you.

00:09:25:21 - 00:09:26:06

Certainly.

00:09:32:29 - 00:09:34:06

Simon Stiles.

00:09:42:04 - 00:09:46:01

Hello, Simon. Stiles? Stiles? Yes, please. I'd like to speak.

00:09:48:06 - 00:09:48:21

Thank you.

00:09:52:15 - 00:09:59:11

And the representatives of the LNT group obliged and part driving centre. Um, we should speak this evening.

00:10:05:17 - 00:10:16:04

Good evening, sir. I think we have dealt with our matters sufficiently on previous hearing. So unless there's something technical that you need to ask. I don't need to speak tonight.

00:10:16:25 - 00:10:18:04

Thank you for that confirmation.

00:10:20:13 - 00:10:22:08
And Alistair Broadbent.

00:10:27:18 - 00:10:30:18
Alison Broadbent, local resident. Yes, I do wish to speak, please.

00:10:32:07 - 00:10:32:22
Okay.

00:10:39:09 - 00:10:40:09
Martin Brown.

00:10:47:25 - 00:10:50:02
Martin Brown. And no, I don't believe I need to.

00:10:50:04 - 00:10:51:22
Speak this evening. Thank you, thank you.

00:10:58:09 - 00:10:59:10
Joseph Cresswell.

00:11:05:00 - 00:11:05:15
I think you.

00:11:08:13 - 00:11:09:13
Michael Dover.

00:11:12:24 - 00:11:13:23
Uh, Michael Dover.

00:11:14:01 - 00:11:17:14
Impacted residents? Yes. I would like to speak. Thank you, thank you.

00:11:23:06 - 00:11:24:05
Andy Johnson.

00:11:32:01 - 00:11:35:12
Indigenes and local residents. And I wish to speak, please. Thank you.

00:11:42:03 - 00:11:43:01
Jeffrey Summers.

00:11:51:19 - 00:11:53:24
Uh. Yes, sir. I would like to speak. Thank you.

00:12:00:10 - 00:12:01:10
Christopher Reeve.

00:12:07:28 - 00:12:08:26
Mr. president.

00:12:08:28 - 00:12:11:19

Of Glenwood. Yes. I'd like the opportunity to speak, please.

00:12:11:25 - 00:12:12:10

Thank you.

00:12:17:28 - 00:12:19:04

[REDACTED]

00:12:28:15 - 00:12:29:00

And keep.

00:12:32:02 - 00:12:33:05

William Rose.

00:12:37:03 - 00:12:41:14

William Rose, local farmer. I do wish to speak, sir. Yes I do.

00:12:47:22 - 00:12:48:19

Uh, Jamie Allen.

00:12:54:00 - 00:12:56:00

Present. But I do not intend to speak tonight.

00:12:56:21 - 00:12:57:06

Thank you.

00:13:01:08 - 00:13:02:06

Victoria White.

00:13:07:19 - 00:13:11:02

Victoria White, local resident. Currently I do not wish to speak.

00:13:11:10 - 00:13:12:27

Okay. Thank you. Thank you.

00:13:16:03 - 00:13:17:00

Ronald Gore.

00:13:23:12 - 00:13:28:13

Donegal chairman, Parish Council. I would not be speaking tonight. Okay. Thank you.

00:13:41:07 - 00:13:42:10

Which should. Felix.

00:13:49:01 - 00:13:50:26

I will not be speaking tonight. Thank you.

00:13:51:15 - 00:13:53:16

Okay. Sorry. So, did you say you will be speaking?

00:13:53:18 - 00:13:54:13

I will not be speaking.

00:13:54:15 - 00:13:55:21

Will not be speaking. Thank you.

00:13:58:04 - 00:13:59:13

And Cheryl Felix.

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

I'm president, local resident, and I probably will be speaking tonight.

00:14:06:15 - 00:14:07:03

Okay. Thank you.

00:14:13:07 - 00:14:14:22

And Sue Bingham.

00:14:18:15 - 00:14:23:28

Lou Bingham, local resident. May I reserve judgment on whether I speak or not? Later.

00:14:24:28 - 00:14:25:13

Thank you.

00:14:31:01 - 00:14:32:05

Peter O'Grady.

00:14:40:04 - 00:14:42:04

Um, I think he's just behind you.

00:14:42:10 - 00:14:42:27

Okay.

00:14:43:14 - 00:14:46:28

So, Grady, that was perfect timing. As we called your name, you walk through the door.

00:14:47:18 - 00:14:51:15

Peter O'Grady, local resident. And he will be speaking when he sits down.

00:15:00:23 - 00:15:02:03

And Callum O'Grady.

00:15:04:09 - 00:15:05:06

Local resident.

00:15:05:08 - 00:15:07:00

I would like to speak.

00:15:07:10 - 00:15:07:26

I thank you.

00:15:15:21 - 00:15:18:08

Is anybody else in the room who would who would wish to speak?

00:15:27:02 - 00:15:34:27

Uh, Councillor Richard Boatwright. I'd like to speak tonight. Uh, I did put my name down at registration, but I think it's probably got missed. Thank you.

00:15:35:10 - 00:15:38:20

So, are you a Lincolnshire county councillor? Is that? Yeah. Thank you.

00:15:50:17 - 00:15:53:00

Ten objects in the room who wishes to speak?

00:15:57:21 - 00:16:00:21

And is there anybody in Microsoft Teams who wishes to speak?

00:16:03:14 - 00:16:12:18

Thank you. And so that now brings us to the end of agenda item three. So now I'm going to move on to agenda item four, which is your submissions themselves.

00:16:14:27 - 00:16:50:03

Just as a reminder, please unmute your microphone when you do speak and if you are joining us via Microsoft teams and are comfortable to please switch your camera on when I invite you to speak. Please switch it off again when I move on to the next speaker. A roving microphone is available for anyone in the room that I invite to speak who doesn't have a static microphone in front of them. Obviously, the front of the room. We do have two microphones, so if you wish to, you can come forward also and sit at the tables and speak. And that actually may help us in terms of obviously understanding, um, you know, your comments if you, if you choose to do that, but if not, there is also a roving microphone as well.

00:16:52:13 - 00:16:58:02

It is important that all contributions are made using the microphone. So? So everything is captured for the formal record.

00:16:59:22 - 00:17:31:14

Please ask that, um, to keep your statements succinct and to the point. Um, taking up to ten minutes, as indicated on the agenda. Uh, we may, if you become repetitious, I ask you to move on or conclude your oral statements, as we do wish to hear from all interested parties tonight who wish to express an opportunity to address this. I'm pleased also direct all comments to us rather than through any other party. Um, we will give the applicant the opportunity to respond to all submissions at the end. Um, and we will take notes as we're going along.

00:17:31:16 - 00:17:43:13

So please do not be put off if we're not looking at you. Um, when you're speaking to us. So I'm now going to move on to the list of speakers. Um, so firstly, please, um, Sir Edward Lee MP.

00:17:50:26 - 00:17:51:24

Uh. Good evening.

00:17:53:03 - 00:18:23:21

So my name is Edward Lee. I'm the Member of Parliament for the Gainsborough constituency. And I'm here in the House of Commons. And I apologize that I can't be present with you. My apologies to those who may have heard my contribution to the open floor hearing on West Burton. And many of the points that I make are similar, but they need to be put on the record separately for each project. I,

and many others have long argued that these projects need to be taken all together, considered as a whole.

00:18:23:27 - 00:18:54:06

If there's another projects proposed or approved the community, the cumulative impact would be massive. It would result in a simply grotesque level of overdevelopment around the town of Gainsborough. For the Planning Inspectorate to consider these proposals individually means there is a threat of lacking the context to understand the customs projects relation to all the others, considering them separately. But organizing the inquiries and hearing more or less simultaneously is probably the worst scenario of all.

00:18:54:11 - 00:19:29:26

It has left local people already under-resourced in comparison to the applicants, with a much more difficult task. There is a huge amount of information to sift through and understand, submissions to be drafted and sent, deadlines to heed, hearings to attend. Constituents are understandably worried that the way the Planning Inspectorate has approached this is tipping the scales in favour of the developers. The inspectorate should take every reasonable measure to prevent its actions from being perceived as biased or as unfair, and I'm sure that this hearing is entirely fair in every single respect.

00:19:30:02 - 00:20:12:02

I fear that this process, though, the way the hearings are heard separately, has massively undermine confidence in the system, and very understandably so. The cotton proposal needs to be understood in context. We are for nationally significant infrastructure projects within just a six mile radius, collectively, that covers some 10,000 acres. 30 different rural communities are affected across Lincolnshire. There are nine SIP proposals Cottam, West Burton Gate, Burton, Mallard, Past, Beacon Fen, phen, Springwell, Foss Green.

00:20:12:04 - 00:20:45:15

In addition, there are non CIP proposals at Stowe Park and Hatton. There is also the Little Crow ship near Scunthorpe. We are frankly being inundated with noise. IP proposals. Nationally, significant infrastructure projects are not the appropriate planning vehicle for these proposals. They were introduced for things like building high speed railways or a nuclear power plant. They were not built with the idea of private sector projects to line the pockets of investors.

00:20:46:05 - 00:21:23:00

Simon Skelton of our 7000 Acres Community group, and I pay homage to his extraordinary amount of work that he's done with very little resources. He's pointed out this in consequence of the Planning Inspectorate, he said, and I quote, one sip is difficult enough to get involved with, but for once would be impossible for most of us. It is therefore undeniably wrong. I couldn't agree more. What's at stake is a huge amount of rural Lincolnshire. If Cottam is approved along with the other proposals, it would result in a massive loss of farmland as much as 15% of the area.

00:21:23:12 - 00:21:54:03

Lincolnshire has traditionally been the breadbasket of England. We're very proud of that here. It's not just our history but our present day, and we very much want to. It wanted to be our future to the national policy. Planning policy framework maintains a strong presumption against building projects of this kind on land. Graded one, two and three A. Ministers have repeatedly assured me in written correspondence and on the floor of the House of Commons. This presumption stands with their full backing.

00:21:54:17 - 00:22:27:07

I've encouraged them to extend it to land graded freebie for growing wheat or grain free beans, just as good and therefore just as important as land graded free a wheat and grain of heightened significance at this moment. Global food distribution networks have been disrupted by the Russian invasion of

Ukraine. Just as Lincolnshire is a breadbasket of England, Ukraine has been the breadbasket of Europe. And indeed now much of the world beyond. Vulnerable places like the Middle East are dependent upon grain supplies coming from Ukraine.

00:22:27:11 - 00:22:59:12

There's been some progress in reaching accommodations to allow Ukrainian wheat and grain to be exported safely, but they have not been uniformly complied with by Russia. In fact, export of grain from the region has been extremely patchy. Approving and other schemes like it would threaten food security at a time when the world's food system is facing severe pressure. This needs to be taken into consideration and is yet another reason why the proposal should be turned down. We have nothing against solar energy itself.

00:22:59:14 - 00:23:32:27

Indeed, it's to be encouraged along with other forms of renewable energy. The more solar power we generate, the better use we're making of our natural resources. No one opposes this, but the way you do it is important. We should be encouraging solar installations on rooftops, not on valuable farmland. Products should focus on industrial, manufacturing and logistics sites with large, flat rooftops. We should also look at how to integrate further solar power into existing housing or housing under development.

00:23:33:17 - 00:24:04:03

The Council for the Protection of Rural England has been arguing persuasively for a national rooftop strategy to do precisely this. They have highlighted the grave threat to farmland that projects like cotton present. See pre estimates that without a rooftop approach, current solar power projects could result in the loss of 280,000 acres of farmland. There are many unforeseen circumstances. For example, we have a fair amount of general aviation in England for smaller aircraft.

00:24:04:05 - 00:24:47:22

Farmland is often essential in ways people might not understand. If you're piloting a single engine plane and your engine cuts out, open fields are often the only safe option for an emergency landing. What assessment have the proposals made of the impact that thousands of several metre tall solar arrays in these fields could have on aircraft safety? Many have raised concerns over the involvement of China's totalitarian government in the production of these solar panels. Can the proposals give us their 100% guaranteed assertion that none of the products or materials used in these projects are made by slave labour in China? Opposition to cotton and the other proposals here in Lincolnshire is both broad and deep.

00:24:47:24 - 00:25:18:04

As a member of Parliament whose constituents will be affected by this proposal, I'm here to convey to the inspectorate the opposition of residents of the Gainsborough constituency. I've spoken to county, district and parish councillors and there is near unanimity of opposition from the most local level up to ministerial level. I think the message is clear. The proposal is unwise. It is an environmental and unsustainable. It threatens our food security. It undermines our rural culture.

00:25:18:06 - 00:25:27:18

It would result in monstrous overdevelopment and is opposed by local residents and stakeholders. I ask that it must be turned down. Thank you very much.

00:25:30:24 - 00:25:32:17

Thank you, Sir Edward. Thank you.

00:25:34:19 - 00:25:35:04

Um.

00:25:36:24 - 00:25:42:26

Counselor, I see you that you're standing up at the back. Do you wish to? As you are. Do you wish to come forward and and and speak now?

00:26:05:10 - 00:26:07:09

Council, you will need to turn the microphone on.

00:26:08:07 - 00:26:12:11

That's it. Thanks. I thought you said there on earlier. That was odd. Uh.

00:26:15:12 - 00:26:56:00

I'm here representing Gainsborough because I'm the local councillor there, but also, uh, as an executive member of Lincolnshire County Council. Uh, only this week, the county council, um, put forward a paper with regards to its. Uh, opinions and and thoughts across Lincolnshire with regards to wind and solar. Uh, it made several recommendations clearly uh, around national infrastructure, uh programs and and how they affect the cumulative effect that they'll have on Lincolnshire.

00:26:56:26 - 00:27:27:28

Uh, I know we're here talking about Cottam tonight, so. Their policy would like to see solar going on. New builds on a. Any of the buildings, uh, carparks, rooftops, uh, on new builds and obviously stay away from agricultural land, whatever grade they, uh. They recognise that Lincolnshire plays a significant role in food production and security of the food production for this Night Nation.

00:27:28:13 - 00:27:58:05

Uh, the council will use the. Uh, we'll use the protection of agricultural land as a starting point for the consideration of insects. Proposals that would include significant land take. Uh. Clearly there are other options. Other things that come in with reference to local environment, landscape, historic areas and community impacts that would obviously need to be looked at as well. Uh.

00:28:00:18 - 00:28:31:03

One of the main considerations is, is the numerous proposals that are going across West Lindsey and the greater area. Uh, and they, they'd like, uh, they, they feel is the same as Sir Edward Lee, that although this is only looking at one proposal, it's very difficult to, to, to not take a cumulative effect across across Lincolnshire and how that would affect, uh, food production and, and wider issues across Lincolnshire.

00:28:32:17 - 00:29:12:03

They would look to object to any solar on, uh, grades 1 to 3, three a and they would look to object of any major solar on freebie as well. Uh, as they, they feel that this may be only be able to freebie would only be able to be accessed uh via solar with regards to go into poorer graded land. So they're they're not proposing and not would wish to support any solar proposals on, on any of the the normal land.

00:29:19:01 - 00:29:46:17

I think that probably sets out Lincolnshire County Council's main proposal with regards to solar, along here and along West Lindsey in Lincolnshire. Uh, I don't think there's there's anything else. I think most of the other points have probably been made by Sir Edward Lee, so I don't feel I support his comments, and I don't feel there's a need to to repeat that. I want to give everyone an opportunity to talk tonight. Thank you.

00:29:47:29 - 00:29:49:07

I think. Thank you for that.

00:30:01:10 - 00:30:02:07

And so if you could just stay there.

00:30:02:09 - 00:30:21:24

For a moment, I just wanted to clarify 1 or 2 points with you, if that's okay. Um, you you firstly, are you speaking on behalf of the council as well as in a, uh, your capacity as a local councillor? Yes, yes. Thank you. And the documents that you referred to. Could you give me the title of those?

00:30:26:02 - 00:30:36:24

Could I come back to you on that? Because I actually took that. I took parts out of that document to prepare rather than trying to read through the whole lot. But I'll, I can let one of the members of staff have that at the back.

00:30:36:26 - 00:30:49:28

Um, yes. If you have a chat with one of the team at the back and they'll explain to you how you could submit them into the examination. My other question is, in terms of the status of those documents, you referred to them as policies. Are they adopted policies by the council at the same time.

00:30:50:00 - 00:30:53:12

They've been approved by the executive this week? Yes.

00:30:54:10 - 00:31:02:05

So they are formally adopted by the council. Thank you. If you could liaise with the case team and we could have that information put into the examination, that would be helpful.

00:31:07:15 - 00:31:10:08

A Marcus O'Grady Ellingham parish meeting.

00:31:24:00 - 00:32:02:24

Good evening. Margaret O'Grady, chair filling and parish meeting. Picture this. It's a fine day. Martin Clunes is smiling out at you and he's going to discover the truth behind solar farms. Get rid of those myths and misconceptions. He's going to show us that standing with a farmer in a beekeeper suit and in a small field with two meter tall solar panels, solar has benefits for the farmer, benefits for diverse biodiversity, and will have no not be invasive, not imposed on communities, and will provide the electricity this country needs.

00:32:03:17 - 00:32:34:27

Well, this is what Island Green would like to present because they commissioned that video. Now picture this not just a few acres across different farms in different areas, benefiting a local farmer who is still farming alongside but concentrated over tens of thousands of acres in one district with 4.5m high panels. Here, there will no longer be agricultural farming alongside. There won't be any land left.

00:32:35:27 - 00:32:36:17

Where will the.

00:32:36:19 - 00:33:07:11

Biofuels be grown? Where will the crops be grown for us to eat or for animal feed? The benefits are limited to a few. Many who don't actually farm on the ground. Now consider this the change to the National Policy Statements on renewable energy. Of November of this year, which puts solar as a critical national priority. Well, who were the lobbyists behind this? Well, strangely, they are here now.

00:33:07:21 - 00:33:45:03

They represent the companies behind the solar projects. They have put millions into persuading us and government that ground solar industrialization is a way to give us energy. That's because they make money. It's relatively easy to construct solar. Of course not here in the UK. They won't create any long term jobs for this region. They will change the landscape for 40 to 60 years a lifetime? Or is that more than a lifetime? They will cause disruption in the building won't provide the actual solar companies.

00:33:45:05 - 00:34:18:07

Imagine. And what actual guarantees are there at the end of its lifetime? But that's okay, because these companies, as we heard yesterday, will have discussions with their topic leads. They will use their professional judgments. Is that not like marking your own homework as a child? Is that not the same as lobbying to ensure that government policies reflect your priorities? Martin asked. Why is it everyone doing this? Well, because it's not.

00:34:18:09 - 00:34:54:07

The answer the country needs here is not the right place to put concentrated area of large ground mounted solar panels. The place for solar is on roofs in small areas where the locals benefit as part of a family of renewables. Did anyone tell Martin Clunes he had half a story? Like we are being presented with part truths and complicated arguments that don't add up. Whilst these companies lobby and belittle us on social media, they are not actually doing this for green reasons.

00:34:54:09 - 00:35:27:20

They aren't actually providing sustainable power for the future. They're over planting the tree, tying up grid connections and the racing to be the company that is allowed to put forward a proposal that's granted. They are here to take the contracts for difference. We are an island and a land is precious. We need to consider carefully its use before we act. Land needs to do so much more than solar to rectify the damage that humans have done to the land and the climate.

00:35:28:16 - 00:36:03:03

And when the companies are long gone but they will sell on, they will evolve, move to the next big project, and their legacy is debated in years to come, when solar should have been placed on rooftops as a policy before we were in crisis, where there is no one left accountable for their actions, what will our legacy be? How will we justify this to our grandchildren, our great grandchildren? I personally can say I tried to protect agriculture as a way of life, my community.

00:36:03:10 - 00:36:16:27

I tried to protect wildlife and habitats. I put solar on my roof. But will that have been enough? Well, I'm praying for others. Thank you sir.

00:36:20:19 - 00:36:23:17

Thank you. Catherine. Booth, please.

00:36:41:13 - 00:37:21:12

Good evening. My name is Katherine Booth and I am a resident of [REDACTED] who have resided here for 30 years. Following on from the concerns raised by myself and my neighbors at the previous open floor hearing, I am thankful that the applicant has requested a change to the cable route, which they propose. Now run to the south of West Farm, away from our properties and the single track access route to these properties. We have received communication from the applicant that the construction compound represented in the area of interest, 14 298, would no longer be required in this original location.

00:37:21:14 - 00:37:52:24

If the request to relocate the cable route is approved, would it be possible to obtain some clarification or confirmation of this change to the location of the compound, as this change is not detailed in the letter sent by the applicant to Mr. Haywood on the 21st of November. Following on from my remarks at the previous open floor hearing in September, if the compound were to remain in this originally proposed location, I would have major reservations about the noise and visual pollution this would cause for those living in the properties surrounding the compound.

00:37:53:04 - 00:38:26:15

Additionally, as the photos submitted by Mr. S and Mrs. C Booth with the submission ID 23817 show, this single track access route has poor visibility onto the main road, which has a 60mph speed limit. The access route is close to the blind bend, where multiple accidents have occurred in the past two years that have required emergency service attendance. We are concerned that if vehicles need to wait on the road for construction traffic to exit the compound, this increases the risk of collision due to the blind bend.

00:38:26:24 - 00:38:57:20

Resultantly, I believe that having the construction compound in the area of interest marked 14 298 would not be the safest or most practical location, particularly if the application to have the corridor cable corridor moved to the south of West Farm is approved. And further to this, considering the document detailing the statement of common ground between Cotton Solar project and other solar projects in the area, I would like to draw attention to figure 17.8230314 on the Tilbrook Solar web page.

00:38:57:22 - 00:39:29:09

This document shows that Cottam Solar Project and Tilbrook Solar Project share a cable route corridor, uh search area and cable route boundary in Normanby by stone. Is there an opportunity for the bridge solar project and its planning inspector to be made aware of the proposed change to the cable corridor made by the Cottam solar applicant? We fear that if the proposed changes to the cable route are not conveyed to this other project, a separate cable corridor would be made by the Taylor Bridge solar project following the old proposed route down our single track access.

00:39:29:11 - 00:39:33:27

Despite the fact that this is not the optimum or safest route. Thank you.

00:39:37:03 - 00:40:05:29

He was with. I just wanted to touch on the fact that you, you raised the issue of the I would call it the potential change request, because we've only received notification. And the reason that those plans haven't been submitted is that I understand the applicant intends to provide the detail when they make the application, which I was notified earlier in the week, would be on the 12th of December at the latest. So once that information comes in, it will then be, um, further opportunities for people to make representations around that in the way that you have to date.

00:40:06:08 - 00:40:07:24

That's great. Thank you, thank you.

00:40:11:15 - 00:40:13:11

I thank you, Simon Skelton.

00:40:29:27 - 00:40:33:05

Good evening, Simon Skelton. Affected person.

00:40:35:21 - 00:41:03:05

The Cottam solar projects. Use of a high capacity 400 kV grid connection in 2029 goes against the nation's need for more electricity. The use of one of the four spare connections at the Cottam Grid substation is a negative and restrictive move in the quest for more power to decarbonize the UK. The UK could require four times more power in the coming decades.

00:41:05:01 - 00:41:18:01

This solar projects electrical output would become a mere rounding up error in these enormous figures, and will do very little, but selfishly displays many thousands of acres of much needed land.

00:41:19:21 - 00:41:46:09

As mentioned before, the cotton solar project would inefficiently use one of four grid connections by utilizing only about 5,015% of the connections full capacity. This would be a retrograde step and must not be understated. It is a waste of important national infrastructure at a time when generation levels need to increase at a rate never seen before.

00:41:48:10 - 00:42:24:09

These high capacity grid connections need to be used effectively. Nuclear energy of all kinds, for example, would offer large quantities of low carbon electricity that we seek and would use brownfield sites or only cover a small footprint of land. I agree with the atomic energies authorities concerning this matter. Promoting solar on farmland is threatening the country's future ability to produce sustainable and reliable energy. All forecasts clearly state much more power is needed, not less.

00:42:25:09 - 00:42:45:29

Cotton Power Station in Nottinghamshire generated massive, massive amounts of electricity and offered flexible and offered flexibility that supported the country's fluctuating, fluctuating demands over its 50 year life. It also employed thousands of local people, providing well-paid and highly skilled jobs.

00:42:47:15 - 00:43:18:08

It outperformed the cotton and solar project in all aspects and at all levels. We will get none of this fast output from solar, nor would we get any generation demand response, both of which we inevitably need. This solar plant would provide very little regard in employment. One of the main reasons why solar is promoted so readily is because it does not have the cost associated with paying local salaries. It is all for operating profit.

00:43:18:23 - 00:43:22:22

It provides no socio economic benefit to the area.

00:43:24:15 - 00:43:56:08

I take offense from consultation, literature and promotion misinformation, stating that the Cottam Solar project would replace 30% of the generation capacity of Cotton Power Station. It would be a small, far smaller figure at around 4% of the generation on six times more land. The public and the nation have been deceived. I'm certainly not suggesting the continued use of coal.

00:43:56:10 - 00:44:31:26

But I object to being preached out for the urgent need for more power when low yielding solar is all that's being offered. Solar power plants engulfing vast areas of farmland is nothing more than the Emperor's new clothes. We know the truth and see through the solar propaganda. Sir. I hope it will be demonstrated during this process the many fundamental flaws regarding this proposal. But if our efforts do indeed fail and the local and national harms remain on scene.

00:44:31:28 - 00:44:48:07

I do not think the following points that are too much to ask. I suggest that we do not create high impact solar industrialized zones in the UK countryside, such as the disproportional 10,000 acres proposed in this area.

00:44:49:25 - 00:45:23:17

We do not foolishly use up all the high power grid connections on solar. We do not allow unprecedented 15 foot high solar panels into our landscape. We introduce fare exclusion zones around all residential property. And that the battery energy storage system, which is which is a totally separate entity, shall be located safely and sensibly on a brownfield site or adjacent to the grid connection which serves it.

00:45:24:06 - 00:45:25:14

Thank. Thank you very much.

00:45:28:16 - 00:45:29:01

Thank you.

00:45:32:11 - 00:45:32:26

Miss Colbert.

00:45:49:22 - 00:45:51:20

Liskeard. 7000 acres.

00:45:53:25 - 00:46:39:16

We live in uncertain and changing times, and while we understand the need to decarbonize, we are in a time of shifting policies. Most recently, the National Policy Statements, last published in 2011, have just been revised. Over the years, we understand more about how we decarbonise and the clearer and louder the calls for strategic coordination to deliver key technologies effectively use our land and what our clear priorities must be. But as well as being uncertain times, these are times of financial opportunity within which huge flows of finance have their own momentum and interests, and drive frenzied lobbying and jockeying for position to influence government policies.

00:46:40:03 - 00:47:10:10

And so we have seen, with the latest twists in the development of the national policy statements, where the critical national priority to deliver offshore wind has been watered down, to become a critical national priority to deliver anything. It renders any effective prioritisation. The term may imply utterly meaningless. Congratulations. The large scale solar lobbyists putting their self-interest first ahead of delivering decarbonisation.

00:47:11:04 - 00:47:53:02

Such jockeying is unhelpful in a world that can ill afford to put a foot wrong on the path to decarbonisation because of shortages of skills, shortages of natural resources, shortages in supply chains and shortages of time. At 7000 acres, we hope the examining authorities are able to see through this latest twist in our chaotic Wild West style version of decarbonisation. Because as this suite of national policy statements were being finalized even before they came into force, there is a serious call for them to be urgently revised in line with the report from the Electricity Networks Commissioner for Strategic Coordination.

00:47:53:15 - 00:48:27:27

For Strategic Coordination, also called for in reports by Skidmore, by the National Audit Office and by Bays Committee, and by the UK Climate Change Committee. So of course, the applicant will reinforce their call for urgency. But with a government ambition for 70GW of solar and 16GW

already installed and 20GW in a consenting process, and 130GW in National Grid's connection register, before considering 30 to 50 further gigawatts of rooftop solar or any other schemes.

00:48:27:29 - 00:49:04:28

But do the math. That's a pipeline of up to 2 to 3 times the government's ambition. So is it any wonder that a developer is advocating for urgency? Their urgency is to get their scheme consented before the government wakes up to what it is presiding over, and the harm of having allowed such uncontrolled, uncoordinated development, which will ultimately impede decarbonization efforts. But by then the applicant will have moved on so their consented scheme and will be hunting for the next investment.

00:49:05:09 - 00:49:36:24

And within this process, the applicant will come. Will continue to oversimplify their submissions and gloss over the difficulties of intermittency, of curtailment, of keeping the lights on of misused land and displaced food and biofuel crops. I could go on. So we agree there is an urgency, but not to act rashly or in a way that will be cause for major regret. We recognize that decarbonization is genuinely difficult.

00:49:36:26 - 00:50:16:15

It is too complex and too challenging to leave exposed entirely to global market forces, which is why the government is scrambling to drive measures to support what really needs to be done, starting with and blocking the queue of grid connection to deliver offshore wind. And so we would like to highlight the examining authority. One of the key points we are seeking to set out at the heart of our argument is the failure of the proposed scheme to deliver a meaningful contribution to energy or decarbonisation, which is a fundamental failure of the scheme to fulfil its core purpose.

00:50:18:12 - 00:50:50:01

This is why we are so concerned that examinee authority has chosen not to hold an issue specific hearing on a subject that is so fundamental to the decision when balancing benefits with harms. We have raised this and has been have been assured by the examining authority that they will have sufficient written material and process to inform the examination and will respect that decision. We respect the examining authority's independence and professionalism in the course of their work, but we understand you must rely on the evidence presented.

00:50:50:21 - 00:51:22:10

Our real fear is that the reams of partial and misinformation presented by the applicant, in the guise of evidence, cannot be sufficiently challenged within this process, and their words will be taken for the truth. We are a small group of local volunteers examining and commenting on what we can face with a tsunami of material from the applicant, and we are not supported by any of the group as Mr. Phillips and Pinsent Masons claimed at a recent hearing for the West Burton solar project.

00:51:22:12 - 00:51:59:28

We are on our own trying to protect the land and environment. But the region for the country to deliver energy security and decarbonisation. This issue is too important to lead the applicant to be trusted to produce their own body of evidence. The country has a much clearer idea of what should be done to decarbonise. Major, sensible, objective reports have laid out the priorities as follows. Coordination and planning of the energy system, solving grid connectivity issues, especially to deliver offshore wind generation.

00:52:00:09 - 00:52:41:10

Accelerating deployment of wind and nuclear power generation. The need to manage any energy flexibility and intermittency of renewable energy sources. There is absolutely no clamour for large scale ground mounted solar. The only voice you will hear pushing these schemes is from the developers themselves. That fact alone should sound and alarm amongst all this noise. The examining authority has to pick a way through and in this moment of turbulence, preside over a decision that will

change the nature and character of the region for the rest of our lifetimes and most of our children's lifetimes.

00:52:41:15 - 00:52:53:18

We must all have faith this decision is right. Lastly, the premise of renewable energy is to protect the environment, not to destroy it in the process. Thank you.

00:52:57:15 - 00:53:10:20

Thank you, Miss Colbert. I just wanted to come back at one point with you. I think this is the second time this week we've heard a request to hold an issue specific hearing into the needs cases. I understand is what you're saying. You can see someone say making.

00:53:12:14 - 00:53:39:25

Gestures at the back so they can't hear me. So I'm just going to move my microphone a little bit closer. Is that better? Thank you. Um, that's the second time this week we've heard a request to hold an issue specific hearing into the, um, the needs case that's been presented by the applicant. What, I wondered, is, is there a particular reason that you don't feel that you are able to express the views that you want in writing? Is there more that you wish to say orally, or would it just be a repetition of what has been presented in writing already?

00:53:40:22 - 00:54:23:25

But we feel that, um, the real need for decarbonisation, as we discussed, is a complex issue. And we feel that it's all been sort of going through. We're going through a process. We really need to have a, um, a hearing where this can be discussed more in depth, um, and in full because it is the core to the whole of this while we're all here decarbonisation. And, um, if we go down this route where the applicant's presenting something, um, that we believe isn't the whole story, um, and issue specific hearing would enable us to, to do so.

00:54:23:27 - 00:54:35:11

Perhaps, perhaps it give us more of an opportunity to do so and give the examining authority more a chance to examine the material in depth and the wider perspective. As I understand it.

00:54:35:13 - 00:54:58:19

Yes, I think my point really is that the process of, um, examination is predominantly a written one, and I think we're certainly and I have already said this week that we consider that, um. Examination of the needs case and these issues. Everyone has put forward their views in writing, and we do have sufficient information to explore those issues ourselves, but we will take that away and give it further consideration. So thank you.

00:55:02:24 - 00:55:06:20

Uh, thank you, Miss Scarborough. Do you wish to now proceed with the second part of, uh, please?

00:55:10:10 - 00:55:15:09

Yes. This is on behalf of a gentleman called Mr. John Park. And who can't be here this evening.

00:55:17:12 - 00:55:50:24

These are his words. Having heard speakers from the previous open hearings, that being gate, Burton Cotton first opened her hearing in West Burton. I was struck by the number of residents who stated how these schemes would affect their mental health and well-being. It is due to their concerns that I felt I needed to address you today in this open hearing. I'm a retired general practitioner and still work for Lincolnshire Integrated Care Board, with over 30 years experience of health in Lincolnshire.

00:55:51:25 - 00:56:23:21

I was also on the board of both West Lincolnshire and Lincolnshire Clinical Commissioning boards. I am the current clinical lead for the West locality, which means that I look after the delivery of healthcare in both Lincoln and Gainsborough and in surroundings. In other words, I serve the people who are attending this open floor hearing tonight. Having read the documents on human health and wellbeing. Most of this is described in terms of the construction and the decommissioning phase.

00:56:23:23 - 00:56:56:01

There is very little around the operators cycle of 60 years. Unfortunately, I'm away on holiday and was not able to attend the session on Tuesday. Having listened to this session on the live stream, I was not confident that this has been addressed. The wider determinants of health need to be tackled as these determinants form the basis of my concern going forward. Both the socio economic and the environmental aspects play an important issue when considering health and wellbeing.

00:56:58:09 - 00:57:36:06

In particular, I am concerned as the cumulative impact which may worsen health inequalities, marginalising already identified areas where deprivation exists, such as in the town of Gainsborough, which has not been mentioned at all by name within any of the documents presented by the gate. Burton Island Green Power. This has the potential to impact on the work the NHS is doing around core 20 plus five and addressing health inequalities within Lincolnshire. Also, depression is increasing in our communities and the impact of change in our environment will only worsen this.

00:57:36:24 - 00:58:12:15

It is well recognised that green spaces are beneficial to mental health and wellbeing in a 25 year environment plan. It states clearly that the natural environment, resident or visitor, improves our mental health and feelings of wellbeing by reducing stress, fatigue, anxiety and depression. Our loss of the countryside will manifest in grief, which is a direct impact on physical and mental health. Also is well recognised that there is a poor mental health in farming communities.

00:58:12:25 - 00:58:45:13

In the UK, there is a high suicide rate amongst farmers and the impact of this and these developments needs to be fully recognised as a possible impact on the farmers in the area that farm to make a living and let down by those who have opted to place solar panels on their fields. This creates inequality between farmers and could lead to a health inequality, for example long term mental health. There is also potential to impact on social care within our communities if these schemes go ahead.

00:58:45:21 - 00:59:21:02

Young adults tend to migrate out of the countryside with further education to the larger cities and towns, whereas older adults, some with children, tend to move in. Therefore, rural communities tend to have above average middle age and older people. There is a concern that if environment is altered with these solar farms. Both this scheme and the cumulative impact of with the scheme stretching from secondary to above Gainsborough, will have the effect to possibly drive more younger people out, leaving a more vulnerable older population.

00:59:21:12 - 00:59:55:27

Here we have predominantly more older people living in our communities who potentially could be further socially isolated by networks breaking down. Furthermore, there is a well recognised problem of recruitment in rural areas of health and social care workers. We already have a health care system that is overstretched with issues around workforce recruitment. The qualitative data within the documents refers to ONS data from two 2011, which is not satisfactory to inform a balanced view as to how these schemes make us feel emotionally, physically and mentally.

00:59:56:20 - 01:00:09:23

I'm therefore asking you to consider addressing this by creating a single session on health and wellbeing within the examination process. Looking at the implications this and other schemes will have on the people who live in the area.

01:00:11:11 - 01:00:48:27

Approximately 40,000 people live in this area. They will be living in what is effectively a soulless city. I am therefore surprised that no health impact assessment has been provided, given the cumulative effects of all the schemes in such a concentrated area and the impact it will have on people. This should have been carried out in partnership with Public Health and the NHS, who work within our communities and who have in-depth knowledge of the health issues that exist in this area. I would like to see this requested and completed as a single document across all the schemes, as one scheme of this magnitude.

01:00:48:29 - 01:01:21:00

I stress again that being all for now, five schemes combined together as one would have necessitated this document as key to the environment impact assessment for your examination and crucial to advise the Secretary of State. Using a desktop search to assess health, in my view, is not satisfactory. A health impact assessment would put the local health and wellbeing needs and priorities into the plan for better decision making by putting people at the heart of the process.

01:01:21:13 - 01:01:59:03

I therefore disagree with the applicant's assessment that they do not feel this is necessary. The deliberate splitting of these schemes into chunks gives them reason for not doing so. However, given as a whole, we have grave implications on health and wellbeing for many years for those who live within it. We must recognise that people choose to live in rural areas and their surroundings should be respected. I am also aware that there is currently a public health opinion around these developments, and should a health impact assessment not be carried out, this should be incorporated into a session on health if permitted as part of the examination.

01:02:00:06 - 01:02:30:14

The gate. Burton document referenced potential workforce of 2000 contractors for all the proposed schemes coming into this area. To put it into context, one full time general practitioner equivalent looks after approximately 2000 patients. Our services are already stretched to capacity. How will this be addressed and resourced? Finally, I was stunned to hear that 1.4 billion was paid back to electricity suppliers last year to switch off supply.

01:02:31:00 - 01:02:43:22

I would hate to think that schemes like this will be paid for non-productive, for being non-productive, where that money could be used for much more effectively in levelling up communities in towns such as Gainsborough. Thank you for listening.

01:02:46:25 - 01:02:47:12

Thank you.

01:02:49:07 - 01:02:50:16

Simon style, please.

01:03:07:24 - 01:03:09:12

Uh, can you send the microphone on, please?

01:03:09:22 - 01:03:47:06

Good evening, gentlemen. Uh, I have come with four points. I think Sir Edward Lee covered almost all of them in a much more erudite fashion than I possibly could. So I would just like to emphasise

two, please, if that's possible. I think the fear which is in the room for my friends and colleagues who live around here, is that we believe that this is one application. It's one application divided into four units to subvert your process. And my appeal to you is that you can find some way in which the four inspectors can sit in the same room and consider the project as one project, please.

01:03:47:08 - 01:04:04:09

That would reassure us massively if that would happen. I like solar, I have it on my roof at home. The only other point I would like to make is it's doing absolutely nothing now, which is when we need the heat and the light and everything else. Thank you.

01:04:07:05 - 01:04:08:03

Thank you, Mr. Steele.

01:04:09:24 - 01:04:10:20

Alistair Broadbent.

01:04:27:06 - 01:04:27:21

For the.

01:04:29:22 - 01:04:31:08

Ulster Bourbon local resident.

01:04:34:19 - 01:05:06:03

For any project to be viable, the benefits have to clearly outweigh the costs. To make that conclusion, one must be in possession of all of the key facts. But for the scheme, it's very difficult because the benefits presented are theoretical and changeable and to be decided at a later date, whereas the costs are all too real. It's also difficult to have faith in the developer's plans when even the key benefit, the energy generation of the scheme, is a wildly inflated estimate of the technical capability of the panels, and not a realistic expectation.

01:05:06:05 - 01:05:39:22

Expected output. A system is fine for conventional power stations that can run at their capacity or nameplate and capacity, but when it's used for solar, it's just misleading. According to a report, um, from the the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. The load factor current load factor currently being achieved by solar facilities in the UK is only 10.2%. Therefore, the actual capacity of this 600 megawatt plant is more likely to be 61MW.

01:05:39:24 - 01:06:17:21

But that is by no means a guaranteed value as applicant has so many caveats such as not specifying the panel, um, type, fixed or tracking, or even the panel technology that they'll use. Um, to make matters worse, generation is an average um, so that generation is an average, with the load factor being heavily weighted towards summer months where where it gets up to 15%, and this reduces down to less than 6% in winter months when the capacity is actually needed. Compounding compounding things even further is the fact that the power generated is all during the day when demand is low, and therefore there's no energy produced when it's actually needed.

01:06:18:10 - 01:06:53:12

Um, this is limited. This limitation is understood by the developer with battery storage as a of unspecified capabilities, being hailed as a solution to bridge the gap. Unfortunately, storing meaningful capacity and battery isn't really feasible and certainly not achievable on a national scale. Right? Um, other stations and could be utilized for this sort of technology is, um, pumped hydro electric energy storage, which store large capacities of energy. Uh, which would be a better idea than batteries from which it would quietly land, something Lincolnshire isn't well known for.

01:06:53:14 - 01:07:24:06

So perhaps there are better locations for this sort of facility without the developers being able to guarantee a minimum generation. I don't see how a fair decision could be made on this application, and therefore I would like to highlight it is the the volume and the conflicting information provided public. Um, there are several schemes, um, making understand and keeping track of them nearly impossible for most people. Um this issue is highlighted by the difference in generation figures given by what should be very similar projects.

01:07:24:11 - 01:08:02:02

Based on information given to me by Tilbrook. They would, um, put panels on 900 hectares and produce 122MW an hour, um, down to 12.2, using a 10% utilisation factor. But um, cotton using 100 and so 1150 hectares, another 250 hectares would get 600MW somehow. Uh, so supposedly cotton will be achieving nearly four times the amount per hectare than Tilbrook. So either cotton must have a much better solution, and certainly should be sharing that with tillage or cotton are extremely optimistic.

01:08:02:27 - 01:08:09:08

It would be awful if this application was approved, based on the belief that it could generate a lot more than it can in reality.

01:08:11:07 - 01:08:50:16

Using toothbrushes, numbers and cotton would only produce 16MW, which is only the same as what a waste to energy plant can achieve using ten hectares of land. One of the main arguments for this and other similar projects is grid security. Um, which, considering the generation isn't, it's not going to have much of a, it's not going to have a significant effect on, but it most definitely will be at the expense of food security. In 2020, the UK imported 26% of the food it consumed, so removing any farmland from production will, um, affect that and make us more independent, more dependent on imports.

01:08:51:00 - 01:09:24:10

In a situation where international relations were to deteriorate and there were shortages, sure shortages. I would much rather have to limit my energy usage than ration food. There are also multiple knock on effects from this scheme that I wonder if being fully considered. For example, the food that would have been grown on this, um, 2800 acres of land will still still be required. So it need to be imported on fossil um, ships being burning fossil fuels and releasing carbon, and which should be offset against the predicted benefits of the scheme.

01:09:25:00 - 01:09:57:20

I have calculated the carbon effect of importing the same amount of wheat that this land could produce over the life of the scheme, to be 90,000 tonnes of carbon. Um, there are many other less, um, less easily measured, um, consequences. As an example, a secondary product of of grain of wheat is straw, which has many uses, including bedding for livestock or um, what green burnt for green power. So with tens of thousands of acres planned for solar, it could result in further shortages.

01:09:57:22 - 01:10:32:06

Uh, or additional imports. Solar panel. So solar panels is a good technology when installed in the right circumstances. In the USA, there are areas that can achieve a load factor of 29% on land that's more akin to desert, uh, which may be a fair exchange. But unlike that situation, we are talking about using valuable farmland to get a third of the benefit, which I just think is ludicrous. Um, we should only be considering to use current technologies that have a minimum impact, um, and minimal impact on our our way of life.

01:10:32:08 - 01:10:59:21

For example, wind turbines, although devices take a fraction of the footprint of solar and still allow the land around them to, to be, um, to be farmed. We accept that. And we're aware that, um, humans are damaging the planet because we're aware of it. It is our duty to make sure we don't inadvertently cause more damage while trying to reduce that impact. The wrong action is worse than doing nothing, which I believe this is the wrong action. Thank you.

01:11:01:17 - 01:11:02:12

But thank you.

01:11:04:06 - 01:11:05:06

At Michael Dover.

01:11:24:09 - 01:11:27:06

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on this custom solar project.

01:11:28:26 - 01:11:51:17

I'm Michael Dover, I'm impacted resident. I maintain my opposition to this scheme and the other planned incidents in the area. And like many others, I believe the cumbersome effect of all these projects should be considered as one huge project. This project, along with the others, are not the slightest bit philanthropic. There's no real neighbors round trees or tides of salt hiding around the corner.

01:11:52:19 - 01:11:53:13

I have no.

01:11:54:16 - 01:12:04:21

Uh, welfare for others in their plan. And they're here for one thing only. And that's to extract the high profits from subsidies and contract for difference from consumers.

01:12:06:07 - 01:12:42:19

The more solar and wind projects that are, the higher the overall cost of subsidies will be, and the higher the consumer energy prices will rise. We are, with the acceptance of every sprawling solar project, weakening the nation's food security. The UK loses thousands of valuable, finite arable land every time, and at this time there's a conflict between Ukraine and Russia, which is now reaching its second year or second harvest, and the two of the world's largest wheat and grain producers, and are struggling to export around the world.

01:12:42:21 - 01:13:03:01

So prices are going to get higher. And on top of that, in Asia, there has been a 33% loss of rice crop yield, thereby putting even greater pressure on the supply of food. And since we import around 60% of UK food supplies, the cost of imports and availability may become problematic.

01:13:04:22 - 01:13:41:11

Solar. Even in such a vast array as these developments, and at a totally inefficient they are to diffuse, too intermittent to dilute and along with wind generation, cannot power the nation. We. And the UK are reliant on gas turbine generation. So much so that alongside the West Burton CC GT plan B. Work begins on a new open circuit plan C, and this open circuit system can ramp up quickly to cover the sudden meteorological dips and in inefficient solar and wind.

01:13:41:28 - 01:14:12:10

But being open circuit, it is more polluting. It is less efficient and requires burning a much higher volume of gas per kilowatt hour. With dismantling proven, relatively cheap, reliable, dense energy

generating stations and replacing them with solar, which is quite the opposite. But in doing so, we are becoming increasingly dependent on China. China controls around 3,093% of rare mineral mining and processing.

01:14:13:19 - 01:14:46:12

Motive which is used in the manufacture of solar. Lithium batteries and associated equipment. Recently, China controlled the export of germanium and gallium to minerals that are vital in the production of semiconductors used in defense electronics, etc.. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Has continued to expand. Explanation its power exponentially. Its power at coal fired power station capacity.

01:14:47:05 - 01:15:20:03

China is responsible for around 33% of the world's CO2 emissions. An increasing amount which is emitted in the production of renewables to be supplanted on a hitherto fertile crop producing land here in the UK. This to reduce emissions. The UK are currently responsible for around 0.84% of Wales CO2 emissions. [REDACTED]

01:15:20:14 - 01:15:32:14

Indeed, several National Security Service had long suspected that the bristling, aerial laden Chinese fishing trawlers that have been busily plotting the coordinates of all offshore wind farms around UK and Europe.

01:15:34:00 - 01:16:08:06

Could well be doing the same thing around the world. Yet, via these developments, the UK are becoming more dependent upon China. And with the oil even more dependent on China than we were on Russia, thus weakening our energy security. The nation does not require this wholesale discussion of nature, farmland, jobs, communities and landscapes in exchange for the may be and sometimes renewable energy source. What is required is a national fleet of nuclear power stations offering affordable, reliable, controllable, dense and low emission energy.

01:16:08:27 - 01:16:39:10

This will ensure food security is more achievable and energy security is more achievable, and the physical security of the sites is also achievable. One fear is that if solar is adapted for the planned periods of up to 60 years plus, it will be too easy for successive governments to stifle investment and science in technology like nuclear fusion and other suitable, reliable technologies. Because we have committed to solar. Of course.

01:16:39:12 - 01:16:51:24

Other topics wildlife, native mental health arose and have already been mentioned. Uh, and so I will leave that there. And and if I may, I will put this in writing to you when required. Thank you very much.

01:16:54:05 - 01:16:55:06

That. Thank you.

01:16:57:02 - 01:16:58:10

Andy Johnson, please.

01:17:13:12 - 01:17:16:13

It doesn't need to press the button and the public comes on that.

01:17:16:17 - 01:17:59:10

Thank you. Um. Good evening. Uh, Andy Johnston, uh, local resident. I only have two small points. They are a slight overlap of what's been said, but I think it's important that, um, these areas are discussed further, uh, in regards to this application. At some stage during this application, the applicant will be providing low level all research impact statements on the effects of this proposal. I am deeply concerned, along with my family, about two particular areas, these being the community's health and wellbeing aligned with the long term existence of the hamlets, villages and businesses.

01:18:00:15 - 01:18:01:28

Based upon the current.

01:18:02:00 - 01:18:03:00

Number of other.

01:18:03:02 - 01:18:09:26

Solar applications aligned with cotton. Many thousands of residents on negatively affected.

01:18:10:17 - 01:18:53:21

Many of us are already having our health challenged by the proposal. I believe that a full health impact survey is required, actually conducted by the National Health Service or equivalent body. Any major infrastructure project naturally leads the displacement of people within and around the development sites. In the area over time, are we going to see a constant reduction of local population and the loss of the supporting infrastructure? Certainly, developments have never been placed around communities on such a scale, and therefore no data is currently available on the long term displacement effects.

01:18:54:16 - 01:19:16:14

A requirement for a fully detailed study covering this area needs to be submitted as part of the application. Or are we accepting an exodus of communities miles of ineffective solar panels, resulting in a loss of food production and a human wasteland is a very real, realistic outcome of this proposal.

01:19:16:18 - 01:19:17:05

Thank you.

01:19:19:21 - 01:19:20:06

Okay.

01:19:26:06 - 01:19:27:16

Uh, Jeffrey Summers, please.

01:19:55:00 - 01:20:00:06

Good evening, everyone, and thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak tonight. Um,

01:20:01:23 - 01:20:16:00

yeah. My name is Jeffrey Summers, and, uh, I've spent a lifetime in agriculture, both, uh, uh, farming and agronomist. And even still, at 74 years, I'm still working on farms when needed.

01:20:18:00 - 01:20:40:14

Uh, Mr. Chairman. I have to question the economic viability of this application and the level of informed wisdom which has been applied so far. I immediately think of HS2. Billions of pounds spent on a project now aborted just to provide a faster thrill on a new terrain.

01:20:42:06 - 01:20:45:21

It's a lot cheaper going to a to a to a fairground.

01:20:48:01 - 01:21:00:11

I have previously. Put to the hearing how desperate someone must be to promote one section of industry. Or else helping to destroy another.

01:21:03:12 - 01:21:07:11

In other words, solar will be destroying agriculture.

01:21:09:00 - 01:21:31:11

As previously stated, oxygen, water, and food are the three essential elements to which sustain life. Why reduce our ability to produce food? An essential component of sustainable life. For her 60 year contract to produce electricity on a precariously spasmodic platform.

01:21:33:11 - 01:21:56:24

Do we really want to put this country into a disastrous position of being committed to relying so heavily on imported food and suffering the unbelievable price hikes in food, as we have seen in in imported energy? All, all, all over the types, either due to conflict or just basic greed.

01:21:59:02 - 01:22:03:12

Empty supermarket shelves as seen earlier this year, are not good.

01:22:05:03 - 01:22:19:19

There are four beneficiaries of this farcical experiment. Yeah. [REDACTED]

01:22:21:07 - 01:22:43:11

Basically due to winter. Winter weather conditions. My solar array has produced absolutely zero. A big fat zero is displayed on the screen. Also the. Battery system that I have, I don't think has been in operation since the end of August and probably won't be again until April or May.

01:22:45:09 - 01:22:51:22

That clearly defines how. Solar panels work throughout throughout the year.

01:22:55:03 - 01:22:55:18

Mm.

01:22:57:11 - 01:23:18:18

At a time when we're all shivering in our boots with cold and consuming energy in colossal volumes, PV panels, uh, stand idle. Um. Therefore, energy is being produced by other mechanisms, the mechanisms we are all familiar with power stations and wind turbines. With much.

01:23:20:13 - 01:23:25:20

With much obviously being imported across the channel at inflated prices.

01:23:27:22 - 01:23:28:19

Mr. Chairman.

01:23:31:16 - 01:23:32:01

I.

01:23:33:21 - 01:23:49:04

Tonight. I would like to. I would like everyone to think about how agriculture is supported by soil has evolved into an industry producing over twice as much food per acre since I was a boy.

01:23:50:26 - 01:23:58:10

An overwhelming feat hard work, dedication, research and development to meet the worldwide need for food.

01:23:59:29 - 01:24:03:02

If you don't have a burgeoning world population.

01:24:05:09 - 01:24:12:18

If the global warming. This year we have seen 1.2 million people displaced from Somalia.

01:24:14:18 - 01:24:30:05

Purely, it makes more sense to grow a surplus of food here and send it to Somalia and other countries in need, rather than have them come to live in the UK or wherever they may find a settle.

01:24:32:15 - 01:25:08:00

I'll give you an example of how agriculture evolves. The UK imports roughly 100,000 tonnes of haricot beans each month from USA, Canada, Ethiopia and China. As you may have noticed recently through TV reports, etc.. Harry, gold beans are used to make baked beans, and the factory in Lincolnshire produces and packs to 264 million tins of baked beans every year from imported beans.

01:25:09:19 - 01:25:18:25

Now. It's taken 12 years at Warwick University for scientists to develop a variety of haricot beans, which can produce a viable crop in the UK.

01:25:20:25 - 01:25:27:06

British grown haricot beans have been cooked and tinned in Lincolnshire for the first time.

01:25:28:29 - 01:25:32:11

This now brings me to the real point here tonight.

01:25:34:18 - 01:25:48:24

Bulk cargo ships create 440 million tonnes of CO2 per year on average. One container ship is equivalent to 50 million cars.

01:25:50:27 - 01:25:56:03

16 cargo ships produce as much CO2 as all the cars in the world.

01:25:58:21 - 01:26:22:01

The main reason for creating solar farms is to reduce our carbon footprint. And if agriculture is allowed to continue its record of applying groundbreaking technology advancements. An even greater levels of CO2 reduction could be achieved by growing our own. Reducing sea miles and keeping Britain farming.

01:26:24:00 - 01:26:27:25

Please come with play solar farms where they do no harm.

01:26:30:06 - 01:26:43:05

It appears quite evident to me German. The sighting of these solar arrays is economically, environmentally and socially wrong. It's a very corrupt form of commercial exploitation.

01:26:44:29 - 01:26:53:00

Today I visited a West Lindsey farmer. Living alongside the solar farm established around ten years ago.

01:26:54:19 - 01:27:01:12

He talked to me. He talked about never seeing any sheep grazing under the panels.

01:27:03:07 - 01:27:16:02

They also commented about the level of weed seeds from thistles, ragwort, dandelions, etc. blowing from under the array and infecting fields for miles around.

01:27:18:00 - 01:27:33:24

It also commented about sun reflection coming from the panels, which has forced him to change his desired direction of travel on his fields because he is blinded by the reflection and finds it intolerable.

01:27:35:22 - 01:27:51:29

He also commented about 33A and three B soils are the most productive soils because they provide a water supply to crops in very dry periods, periods which we are still seeing as very much more common.

01:27:54:01 - 01:28:09:22

When crops on lighter soils can also seriously be affected by drought or even killed the heaviest soils. Three AB. They they have the ability to withstand the drought far better.

01:28:11:29 - 01:28:28:11

So soils which suffer from drought or even die are not the most versatile. All, you guys have versatility. And the question if I have a question tonight, chairman, is.

01:28:30:04 - 01:29:06:13

It will be very interesting if we could see some documented evidence in terms of calculations, as to how much CO₂ is being created by the manufacture of the panels. All of them. Thousands and thousands of miles around the world. Deliver him to the destination and planting them in the ground. Plus removing those panels in 60 years time. Is it possible to see that type of information, to make sure the direction of travel is somewhere in the right direction? Thank you.

01:29:09:28 - 01:29:24:03

Thank you, Mr. Somers, as he posed a question. I will just respond to that. And I think that, um, Mr. Phillips will be responding to all the questions, either verbally this evening or in writing following the hearing. So he may be able to address that question for you.

01:29:25:25 - 01:29:26:18

Thank you very much.

01:29:28:03 - 01:29:43:25

Uh. Thank you. Um, we'll now, um, take a short break. We've been going about an hour and a half or so. Um, so time is now 7:00 and will adjourn until 7:10, please. So the hearing will resume at 7:10.