



Planning Inspectorate  
Arolygiaeth Gynllunio

## Hearing Transcript

<b>Project:</b>	Morecambe Offshore Windfarm Generation Assets
<b>Hearing:</b>	Issue Specific Hearing 3 (ISH3) – Part 2
<b>Date:</b>	5 February 2025

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## **MOWGA\_ISH3\_5 FEB\_PT2**

Created on: 2025-02-05 13:17:51

Project Length: 01:12:26

File Name: MOWGA\_ISH3\_5 FEB\_PT2

File Length: 01:12:26

### **FULL TRANSCRIPT (with timecode)**

00:00:04:29 - 00:00:13:28

Thank you, everybody. Uh, can I just make sure you're all in attendance and that the recording and the live stream have recommenced?

00:00:16:04 - 00:00:30:21

And, yes, I'm being given a thumbs up for nods from the back. Thank you. Uh, so we now continue with item number five, civil and military aviation radar. And, uh, Mister Willis will be taking us through this.

00:00:35:14 - 00:00:36:15

Thank you, Mister Jackson.

00:00:39:04 - 00:00:40:18

Can we change the slide?

00:00:41:28 - 00:01:12:18

Sorry for the hesitation. I was just checking. We were, uh, live streaming. Okay. Um. Thank you. Yeah. So, as we say, the next item, it deals with matters relating to civil and military aviation and radar. Um, again, you'll see from the, uh, items listed on the agenda, there's Is principally three areas we'd like to discuss today, of which includes updates to discussions that have been taking place in the interim period. Um, again, I'm mindful that, uh, we've had submissions not long before this hearing.

00:01:12:20 - 00:01:44:29

So there may be that, uh, things have moved on a little bit. So as we discuss, uh, today's hearings, if people can feed into that would be helpful. Um, so if we can start by looking at the mitigation of effects on Warton Aerodrome, principally, um, at deadline to the applicant added a new requirement to the DCO draft DCO, which was requirement eight in relation to military radar. And we asked questions in our first written questions, notably ten, um, about that particular issue.

00:01:45:02 - 00:02:27:24

And from the responses that we've received, we understand that discussions about a possible radar solution have commenced. But at that time, no solution had particularly been identified. Uh, and that the applicant was proposing to share information about this with the Deo. By the end of January. Um. So before I come on to the applicant, I invite them to update us on that. Um, as I'm sure you'll be aware, the paragraph 5.5501 states that the Secretary of State should be satisfied that the proposal has

been designed, where possible, to minimize adverse effects on the operation and safety of aerodromes, and that realistically achievable mitigation is carried out.

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Subsequently, paragraph 5.57 goes on to say that where suitable technological solutions have not been developed or proven, Secretary of State will need to consider the likelihood of a solution becoming available within the time limit of implementation of the draft of the DCO. So the issue really is, whilst we appreciate the requirement is under discussion, um, both ourselves and the Secretary of State will need to be satisfied that the requirements of NPS N1 have been met, and we need to assure that if the impact cannot be avoided, that the mitigation is, at least in principle, available, it would be deliverable and therefore there are quite any such requirements to secure it, like a normal condition meets the tests.

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So with that in mind, can I just ask the applicant to begin by perhaps giving us an update on whether a solution to the radar solutions at Warton have been identified, whether they've been shared with the D0 in particular, which I think are leading on that matter and, uh, how that's progressing.

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Catherine Nolan, on behalf of the applicant, yes. Just to take that step back, as the panel has noted, the applicant is mindful that the tests that the Secretary of State has to be satisfied on is that if there is any, um, technological solutions that have not yet been proven at sites that they have to come forward within the time limit for implementation under the order, and the applicant has drafted just generally its aviation requirements to follow that two step process of having mitigation solutions required to be agreed before it can take that next step forward to implementation.

00:04:04:23 - 00:04:37:06

We are aware generally that there have been comments from, um, not the Dio specifically on the wording of the requirement we've proposed. They've, uh, confirmed they're happy with that requirement. But from be um, both systems operations systems marine and from Blackpool airport at the wording of the requirements. So there is an exercise of um discussing with aviation stakeholders generally. I will bring in we have um from the applicant's team. We have two aviation consultants. We have, um, Mr. Mike Coleman on the phone who is dealing with some of the mitigation solutions.

00:04:37:08 - 00:04:57:12

So I'll turn to him in a minute. And then we also have Simon Macpherson on the bench on some of the aviation assessments. But on Warton specifically, the technical mitigation solutions have gone across to the Dio. And so those are now in discussions. But I wonder, Mike, if you want to just come in and give a brief update on those discussions.

00:05:00:06 - 00:05:30:21

Yes. Thank you. Mike Coleman, aviation consultant, on behalf of the applicant. Uh, just picking up on what, uh, Kate Nolan was saying. Um, we've had a joint meeting in terms of the statement of common ground with Deo and, uh, BAE systems from Warton. Uh, that was, uh, at the latter end of last year out of that meeting. Uh, the clarity the requirement was clarified by Deo in particular to produce a technical mitigation proposal.

00:05:31:09 - 00:06:04:12

Uh, that was delivered. Uh, actually on the 31st of January. So last Friday, straight to Deo. And actually, that mitigation proposal aims to do all those things that, uh, you actually already mentioned. Yeah. It needs to be a solution that that has been proven. The without going into details, but we have offered something that has been implemented at, about six UK civil airports already. Uh, it's actually undergoing trials at the moment at another Mod unit. So basically the mitigation proposal is exactly with that in mind.

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What we're expecting, um, from Dio on behalf of Mod is that they will review that mitigation proposal. And in conversation, they'd mentioned to us that they might be able to get back to us as quickly as four weeks after submission. Uh, in in reality, they tend to work within six weeks. So that's what we're hoping will happen.

00:06:30:15 - 00:06:57:08

Okay. Thank you. Actually, that was my next question was with regard to that, when can we expect that that update, uh, mindful, as I say, we are nearing a deadline for um, I guess the issue is in what form will we see that as well? Is the expectation to to include that within the statement of common ground, that there is agreement in principle on those issues with obviously there are statements of common ground with different parties.

00:06:58:26 - 00:07:29:02

Catherine Nolan, on behalf of the applicant. Yes, I think that would probably be most suitable within the statement of common ground. It's not envisioned that the technical solutions themselves would be submitted in detail because, as the czar will appreciate, it gets into some issues around confidentiality and specific technology. So I think we will be led by Dio, by BA and others in the approach that they consider most appropriate to demonstrate agreement. And but it's likely to be in the statements of common ground.

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Yeah. Thank you. As you say, I think I think what we want to be confident of and Secretary of State will need to be confident of, is that there is at least a solution available, realistically available, and that there is agreement on that. So I think, you know, yes, we perhaps only see the finer detail of that, but we need all parties if that's the case, to, to agree if that's possible.

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I'll invite if there's any comments. I think the D.A. were on the call today. I'll just. We'll invite them in if there's anything they want to add to that. And similarly to representatives of Bay water. And although I appreciate I think the IO are leading on the radar, if I'm correct.

00:08:06:15 - 00:08:35:29

Yeah. Hi. Laura van der Merwe from Dio. Um, yeah. Um, what the applicant has said is correct. Um, we received a technical mitigation proposal, uh, on Friday the 31st of January. Um, that will now be subject to technical and operational assessments, um, by BA systems. Um, yeah, we we tend to say

give six weeks. Um, but obviously if that's done sooner, we will advise the applicant. Um, and yeah, through the statement of common ground, we can agree to that.

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So just we're just discussing the timeframe. So with that in mind, it's unlikely we're going to get something by deadline for then We're looking at really potentially having something finalised by deadline five.

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So deadline five is the 11th of March, and I think that really becomes a hard deadline as far as we're concerned. The reason being is there's only one more deadline after that. And deadline six is literally for working days before the close before the close of the examination is really for for final responses. So the 11th 11th of March, which is not quite six weeks, is a hard deadline as far as we're concerned. Please.

00:09:26:08 - 00:09:51:15

Kathryn Nolan, on behalf of the applicant, that's all noted. I think we will obviously work to delivering as much as we can by deadline for um, and we will commit to do that, but noted that deadline five is the the absolute stop for that. Um, we will also, um, we're amenable to submitting updates outside of the course of of fixed deadlines. So I don't if that would be amenable.

00:09:53:08 - 00:10:04:04

Okay. Thank you. Um, as I say, I will invite BA ops in particular if there's anything they want to add. I appreciate I think Dia leading on radar, but, uh, just on the radar issue, particularly.

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True for BA systems. Yes, I can confirm that Dio are leading in terms of discussion on on radar. Um, the

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potential mitigation solution put forward by Mr. Coleman. Um, we received, I think, two days ago. So, so we've not really had a great deal of time to to look at that. Um, it's something we will do and that will feed back through discussions with the Dio and the applicant. Um, so we can commit to doing doing that. But in terms of.

00:10:40:29 - 00:10:51:27

How that how that mitigation solution might be considered. Can I can I ask you Mike to to to to comment on that. Yeah.

00:10:54:00 - 00:11:25:14

So Christopher burkett BA systems operations Wilson. Um, as Graham alluded to, it's just a couple of days since we received the technical mitigation proposal through Doe. Uh, we're currently working with our regulator in terms of the Civil Aviation Authority, to define the framework by which we can determine the acceptability of that solution. Um, Graeme used the word potential. It is potential acceptability of that solution, always with primary surveillance radars and other systems. There are, um, environmental factors to be considered in terms of the operating location of the system.

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And that means that you cannot confirm whether a system is effective or not, usually until it's been implemented. Um, so we need to define a framework by which we can determine the theoretical acceptability of that solution. And that's something we're working with the regulator on at the moment. Um, I think the assertion that deadline five is probably a more realistic timescale. We would agree with it.

00:11:52:18 - 00:11:53:13

Okay. Thank you.

00:11:56:26 - 00:12:27:28

Okay. Um, I'll now move on to, uh, issues beyond radar. Um, so obviously we note that the IP's relating to Warton are also proposed to be revised, as well as those relating to Blackpool Airport and Walney Aerodrome. Um, we also know that more recently, concerns have been raised regarding from several IPS regarding potential impacts on VHF communications. Uh, and we'll come on to that particular matter a little bit later.

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Um, and I think Mr. Nolan alluded to we've also seen, um, several submissions made with revisions of drafting proposed new or alternative requirements. Um, I don't propose to go into the discussion around that, particularly today. We've got a meeting at a hearing tomorrow which we'll focus on, on particularly drafting issues. So what I'm what I really want to focus on today is really the broader principles of the mitigation that's been proposed. Um, confirm each party's position regarding this. And then again, similarly updates on any progress.

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Um, so if we can move to look at issues in relation to the IPS and actually, as I say, this includes Warton, uh, Walney and Blackpool airports, we're probably slightly moving into the next item on the agenda as well. Um, I understand from reading the submissions made at deadline three, um, that Blackpool Airport appear content in principle with the required changes. Um, there would be changes required to the IPS, and there could be agreed in principle that discussions with BA system operations regarding Warton are ongoing.

00:13:38:15 - 00:14:13:22

And in relation to Walney, which is a BA systems briefing That they've now received the applicant's IFP assessment. Um, but there does seem to be some concerns regarding to, uh, changes that that may be required to the approach to Walney and the implications of other IFP assessments that are associated with other projects. Um, so before I start, before I come to the applicant, um, can I just ask each of those parties perhaps can confirm that I understand their position correctly with regard to their current status? Um, so if I can start with Blackpool Airport, please.

00:14:19:02 - 00:14:47:06

Susan, last night on behalf of Blackpool Airport says you are correct. We are in discussions with the applicant and respect to the requirement and we'll come to that tomorrow. Uh, the Blackpool airport's position is that there are realistically achievable mitigations required to go much further than the IPS,

uh, although they are happy to start that as the baseline for discussions. Otherwise, your assessment is actually correct. I don't know if Mr. Peter is the chief executive who wants to enter it.

00:14:49:06 - 00:15:23:05

Says Steve Peters, managing director of Blackpool Airport. Um, just in support of what Catherine has just mentioned with in relation to IPS, including um, IPS instrument, flight procedures, including MSAs, minimum sector altitudes and the NDB approach to runway one zero at Blackpool Airport. We are in discussion with the applicant. Um, we believe using the the wording there are achievable, realistic, deliverable mitigations that can be agreed and we would seek to um.

00:15:23:07 - 00:15:57:21

All things being equal, have those agreed at the earliest possible uh, timing at, dare I say it, at developer's expense? The one point I would wish to raise without labouring the point is that the matter of impacts on VHF and D are for very much an unknown quantity at this juncture. The applicant has commissioned an independent assessment of impacts on VHF and DfE at applicant's expense by Nets. What I would say is that assessment is quite right, perhaps restricted to Morecambe wind offshore generation assets only.

00:15:57:27 - 00:16:28:13

Yeah, sorry. Can I just put you on that point because we have got this item on particularly VHF. Sorry. Later on. So I'm just mindful I don't want to jump ahead because obviously that is an issue that relates to just more than just your particular interest. So if you can just hold that particular issue. Um, so yeah, so, so coming back to the issue about if your position is the IPS agreement in principle, that can be amended, but there's a wider discussion around other elements of mitigation.

00:16:29:03 - 00:17:00:02

Steve, is Blackpool Airport correct? Um, the mitigations are deliverable. The technology is in play today. Two of the, um, mitigations or impacts, and arising mitigations arise as a matter of the five year review by the Civil Aviation Authority on air instrument flight procedures, and the one that falls outside of our five year review by the Civil Aviation Authority, is the matter of the non-directional beacon approach to runway one zero, which is critical. Just if I may state the obvious and ensuring the safe and efficient arrival of aircraft on the runway one zero.

00:17:02:00 - 00:17:12:03

Okay. Thank you. Um, can I ask BAE Systems Operations regarding Warton again, just to clarify their position in regard to the IFP particular issue.

00:17:15:08 - 00:17:31:06

Christopher Burkett, PA systems Operations, Warton. Um, we are the position is correct. We are still in discussions with the applicant regarding the IP impacts for Warton particularly. We're confident that these will be relatively straightforward to mitigate and then we can accept any changes required. Thank you.

00:17:32:03 - 00:18:01:13

And finally, um, as I say BA systems marine and in responding um I'd appreciate if you could perhaps expand on, um, if there's any comments with relation to the IFP assessment that you've now received.

Um, and in particular the issue around why you feel the other IFP assessments associated with the projects might prevent or impede the ability to consider proposed revisions specifically to this proposal? So can I just ask BA to perhaps clarify this position on that matter?

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Certainly.

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Paul Pendleton, brownfield.

00:18:04:15 - 00:18:47:01

BA Systems Marine we have now had the, um, assessment from the applicant, and we believe that the procedure and the mitigations can be achieved. The problem we have is the mitigation for the sector. Safe altitude to the south west of Warnie is being held up by another applicant for the Moana project. Sorry, the Morgen project, of which, um, all three um applicants for the North, the Irish Sea, were requested at the same time for the same information and as of last Thursday, the Morgan IFP assessment for Nats has still not actually been placed, and they've identified it's going to be 20 weeks before that report has actually been delivered to ourselves.

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Okay, so. So I understand the position. But again we need to be mindful. We need to look at this particular project. Yes. Um, so and notwithstanding that those projects are obviously looking at mitigation specific to those individual aspects and there will be, you know, undoubtedly, maybe knock on effects. Um, but also we don't know that those projects, one will necessarily get consent or to proceed. So I guess what we need to know is that there is a mechanism, at least in principle, that you're happy with with regard to this particular project, accepting that if there's a need to look at, um, changes to that, that takes into account all the programs that are later date, there's a mechanism for it.

00:19:28:11 - 00:19:44:09

So I accept that point. I will obviously invite the applicant to respond to that in a moment. But so in terms of the IFP, P IFP assessment that's been done specific to Walney at the moment. Do you have any particular comments at this stage on that in terms of what's been proposed?

00:19:44:11 - 00:19:50:23

No, the mitigation that the applicant has suggested is actually acceptable for Warnie.

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Okay. Thank you. Um, I'll invite the applicant and if there's anything that you wanted to respond to, to, to any of the things you've heard.

00:20:02:06 - 00:20:34:06

Catherine Nolan, on behalf of the applicant, I don't think we have much to add, although Mike will come in if he has anything to add further. But I do think the applicant's position is that the mitigation measures for IFP are considered, um, realistic and achievable. It considers that the DCO requirements enable that to take place well in time during the implementation period. And there's been really good



dialogue with all aviation stakeholders to date. And we will obviously come on to the requirements tomorrow just to make sure that they address in full.

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The concerns stakeholders have raised but were in broad alignment. I don't know, Mike, if there's anything further you'd like to add.

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Yeah, just. Yeah. Mike Coleman, on behalf of the applicant. Uh, I'd just like to reiterate that there's definitely a mechanism to get the mitigation. Uh, agreed. The implementation date is is the sticking point, because we can, uh, we can commission, uh, Nats as the, uh, design authority for the procedures at Walney, uh, to do the, uh, the changes eventually have them in draft, even go through a CA approval process.

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But the implementation date will be geared around the first, uh, construction above sea surface construction. Uh, and that would be the critical timeline to have the procedures amended, uh, not just amended, but implemented so we can have all that work done in the background with potentially. Maybe, Uh. It's called an er cycle. The cycle where the documents have to be published is effectively monthly every year. And we'd have that date to implement the procedures. So in the build up to that, we can have all the work done if other developments come before us or get their work done after us, then we have to reassess our procedures based on what changes they're going to implement.

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But their timeline might be before. So effectively it's all it's all it can all be done up front before the timeline well in advance, but it will be adapted and manipulated at the time to fit in with the developments.

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Thank you. Yeah. And I think that that was the point I was trying to get to is that there's an expectation that it will be looked at again if in the event there's subsequent things that come online in the interim period. Um, as you say, I don't want to get into a conversation necessarily about the requirements per se, but with regard to the other matters or mitigations that parties have mentioned beyond, if there's anything you want to comment on that.

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Catherine Nolan, on behalf of the applicant. Yes, that is one of the suggested changes that several stakeholders have made, which is widening those requirements so that they are not limited to specifically just IPS. I am not an aviation expert. So, um, I think it's understood and recognized that we don't want to be too narrow and only having the concern be IPS, and whether we have that be more general to air traffic activities, um, or not. I think that is still a separate discussion, because we are obviously cognizant that conditions must be, um, necessary.

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They must be proportionate and they must be sufficiently detailed. So I think there's just a discussion on how we define air traffic services so that, um, it does link to the development properly and that we

all understand what it means, even the, the non aviation experts among us. But in principle, yes, we agree that those requirements will be widened out, will touch on VHF. I think they will also be widened out to encompass that.

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Okay. Thank you. Yeah. Like I said, I think, you know, appreciate the discussions will be ongoing, no doubt. We'll be back and forth. With regard to the wording and we will touch on that tomorrow. In any way it was just trying to make sure really that. That conversation around broad and mitigation is also being considered, not just the IFP aspect. It sounds like that is the case. Um, just looking at my list then, um, I don't think any panel members got anything to add on this particular item. No. Um, in that case, I think I'd just move straight on to VHF communications, which obviously have been mentioned earlier.

00:24:07:19 - 00:24:42:06

Um, so as I as I mentioned previously, we know that this has been raised as a potential issue by several IPS and that the applicants response at deadline three to our first written question. Car 18, um, stated that it's looking at carrying out assessments, and an update will be given to this at the hearing. Um, now, whilst it's not listed in the title of this agenda item, I should say. I also recognize that discussions are taking place with Isle of Man Ronaldsay Airport, um, relating to their concerns about the cumulative effect of several offshore wind projects, uh, on the radar system, and also matters relating to to VHF.

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Um, I also understand from the applicant submission, um, that they're expecting potentially looking at a new requirement that would be added to DCO at, um, deadline for. So again, really what I'm after really is, um, invite the applicant to provide really a brief summary as to what the understanding issue regarding VHF communications is. Uh, give us an update as to where things are with regard commissioning the assessments that have been identified for Walney, Warton and Blackpool. Uh, as I say, I think Ronalds Way have already commissioned a separate study and again, an update really, as to when we might receive an update with regard to progress on those matters.

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Yes. Catherine Nolan, on behalf of the applicant. We can maybe touch on Isle of Man first. Um, yes. Our position is that we will be adding a DCO requirement for the Isle of Man and Ronald's Way airport. Um, that will go in at deadline. For

00:25:42:26 - 00:26:17:08

my understanding, there is that the Isle of Man wishes to commission their own assessments. So they they want to hold control on that process. So we are looking at ways to ensure that the requirement is drafted, such that if we don't have control on that assessment process being carried out, that we as the applicant are still, um, responsible for assisting with that being carried out. So there are still appropriate triggers there. Um, I don't think we have an update on timings yet on when that's going to take place. I think there's some, um, procurement discussions within Isle of Man as to how that will carry out.

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Um, again, on the VHF assessments, um, those are being commissioned. I don't know, Mike, if you want to come in with an update on the status of those.

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Yes. Mike Coleman, on behalf of the applicant. Um, the VHF assessments for Walney, Warton and Blackpool have now been commissioned that were commissioned last week with Nat's. And that's doing the assessments. Contractually they've given themselves 12 weeks to get those assessments done. However, it is hoped that they will be able to do them sooner. I don't know if they'll be able to comment on that. Um, so yes, they're underway and there's, uh, has had already been mentioned.

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Uh, Isle of Man were going to commission that themselves, but they're having internal discussions about that.

00:27:12:24 - 00:27:18:20

Okay. Thank you sir. I can see a hand up online. If you want to, um, respond, please introduce yourself as well.

00:27:18:22 - 00:27:32:28

Please ask for all the behalf of Nats. Uh, I will be the one undertaking these VHF assessments so I can confirm that it will not take the full 12 weeks. I'd expect a response in probably within a fortnight.

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I'll just say we were just mindful of the 12 weeks and a little bit of panic at this side of the table. So, um, yeah, we're mindful. We need to get that information in as soon as.

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Possible so they'll be right from us and obviously required to be reviewed by Orton, Walney, etc.. But yeah, I expect about about a fortnight before the VHF results are available.

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And it might be a stupid question, but could, um, someone summarize very briefly for me what the issue is with VHF communications?

00:28:07:28 - 00:28:41:16

The main issue is it's shadowing. So as you're in and amongst the turbines the signal. So so going right back to basics VHF is voice communications. This is what's used to talk to the aircraft. So if aircraft are in particularly in close proximity to a large object like that. The signal will reflect off the object and will arrive almost simultaneously with the direct signal coming from the the radio, and there can be interference at that point. So what we will calculate is the strength of that interference signal.

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And there's a the key to define a level of carrier to interference ratio. So how strong the interference signal is compared to the direct path. And if we can calculate we will calculate a volume around the turbines within which that limit is breached. So what we will generally find is that low altitudes in

amongst the turbine there may be a shadow zone where VHF is potentially degraded above that. And beyond that it won't be.

00:29:12:10 - 00:29:25:06

So if we can define that, that volume, that three dimensional volume, pass that back to the air traffic operations, they can determine if having potentially degraded VHF within that volume is significant or not for their operation.

00:29:27:04 - 00:29:58:12

Okay. Thank you. That's that's really helpful. Um, mindful that you said Nats will be responsible for for looking at those particular um from right and saying warning Warton and uh Blackpool. Can I ask what the situation is is probably to, to um, Isle of Man, possibly about the Ronald's way airport. Um, the reason I asked that has been, I seem to recall from written representations, Nats didn't provide any response or coverage with regard to issues associated with Ronald's way.

00:29:58:14 - 00:30:11:11

Airport. Um, and I'm mindful in terms of, uh, Nat's role in signing off some of these schemes. I'm just not clear what the situation is. Who gets signed off for the Ronald's Way? Airport. So I was hoping.

00:30:11:21 - 00:30:28:18

I need to split. So Nat's are here, and my main reason for being here is not to have an objection on our own grounds in relation to radar. And there's a DCO requirement proposed to deal with mitigation in relation to the Nats radar systems.

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The work we're doing on VHF for all of these airports, and I can confirm that we have been asked by volunteers to carry out a VHF assessment for themselves as well. We are doing that essentially as a third party consultant to those airports,

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given our expertise and our own. We do not have any concerns in relation to our own VHF operations. We are merely carrying out consultancy work

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defining these volumes for these other efforts.

00:31:06:09 - 00:31:10:23

Okay. Thank you. Just see what I've next got on my screen.

00:31:24:20 - 00:31:56:16

Okay, I think I think what I really got on that has been addressed. Um, I mean, I think what I would say is obviously it sounds like things are progressing in discussions. Um, we'd obviously I should have perhaps said this before. We'd obviously encourage people, particularly given they're all in the room today, that we continue those conversations outside of this meeting. Um, mindful, as we said, that if there is a need for these assessments, we still need to have those in time so we can be confident

that there is, um, assessments been undertaken. Issues have been identified and mitigation, if necessarily appropriately identified and can be secured.

00:31:56:18 - 00:32:03:10

So just actively encourage everybody to continue that dialogue. Um.

00:32:08:02 - 00:32:21:29

Okay. Um, before perhaps move on to the next item, is there anything else that anybody else wanted to add at this stage with regards to issues on um, civil and military aviation and radar issues.

00:32:22:25 - 00:33:00:07

So if you don't mind, was not at Blackpool Airport. Um, we would just like to and I will hand over to Mr. Peters. Mr. Peters, at the moment. Um, clarify whether the assessment being undertaken in which a respect of VHS assessments is only for the Morecambe windfarms. Um, Blackpool Airport consider it is proportionate to understand the full cumulative effects. That was not and I'm not an expert. However, if I'm sitting here listening and I hear about the respect of the assessment and and respect to the interference signals, then a cumulative assessment does actually look to be proportionate as well as the individual assessment in respect of the wind farm.

00:33:00:09 - 00:33:01:24

I hand over to Mr. Peters.

00:33:04:15 - 00:33:37:06

Steve Peters, Managing Director, Blackpool Airport, just picking up on Catherine's comment about, um, cumulative impacts, we would seek, um, to have a cumulative impact assessment carried out by Um, Cyrus, who is based procedure design organization. Um, we do have that ready to, um, to be actioned, if I can use that phrase. And secondly, the only other point I'd like to make at this juncture is that in terms of mitigations, as you can tell, we're all largely on the same page with regards IPS.

00:33:37:09 - 00:34:09:25

What I'd like to point out, sirs, and to the hearing, is that, in part, the actual delivery of these mitigations is subject to the five year review. My point is that the CAA are quite significantly under-resourced in terms of their ability to carry out the five year review that could push out beyond deadlines four and five. Um, we it's just something we cannot influence. Um, we could go, if you pardon the phrase, we could go and knock on their door at Gatwick and say, can you guys please hurry up? But that's going to have little to no impact.

00:34:09:27 - 00:34:27:10

So I just want the sirs and the hearing to be aware that this could be, um, a pacing item the whole matter of five year review. And just to give you a little bit more context for my review on runway two, eight is in, but we still have to submit our five year review information to one zero to the CAA.

00:34:28:21 - 00:34:30:08

Okay.

00:34:34:17 - 00:34:41:18

Yeah, I think we have got the CAA online. I think they want to add anything in response to that particular question point. Really?

00:34:48:00 - 00:35:11:16

Yes. Good morning. Uh, Andy Wells, Civil Aviation Authority. Um, yes. It's a, um, fact that we have a large number of, um, ISPs to review. Um, we are working on a first come, first serve basis. Um, but I can provide a further written submission on on potential timelines, if that would be useful.

00:35:13:22 - 00:35:36:12

Yeah. And I mean, in terms of obviously appreciate the review. But I mean, again, going back to the point, there's a requirement potentially that would be securing the need for the IFP assessment to be approved, I think. Is that correct? Um, so it's that issue of ensuring that the development wouldn't be able to take place until that assessment has been taking place in any case. Is that a fair summation of the position?

00:35:36:20 - 00:35:51:11

That is a fair summation. I mean, what we what we will do is just to make sure that the, the process that has been followed has been followed correctly, because that's the that ensures the safety of the, of the aircraft in the, uh, using the procedures.

00:35:53:05 - 00:35:54:00

Okay. Thank you.

00:35:55:21 - 00:36:00:29

Is the applicant want to come back on anything that's just been said with regard to the representations made.

00:36:01:12 - 00:36:34:15

Catherine Nolan, on behalf of the applicant, just on the IFP point in the five year review. I mean, the applicant's position then is that obviously because they are reviewed regularly, you can have a scenario where an applicant could agree mitigation well in advance of a project coming up to examination, and then it needs to review the IFP assessment as it comes to develop. So it is something that the applicant is committed to. It understands that it needs to address that on a rolling basis, because there are legal obligations that the airports must satisfy in terms of their own safe operations.

00:36:34:22 - 00:36:54:25

And that is one key reason why the requirements are framed in the way that they are to ensure that while as much detail can be put forward to this examination today and upcoming deadlines to satisfy the Secretary of State that the policy tests are met, but that there is also a mechanism by which that that process would be ongoing.

00:36:58:20 - 00:36:59:20

Okay. Thank you.

00:37:02:02 - 00:37:08:15

Okay. So I proposed to move on really to the next item. Unless there's anything else anybody wants to raise at this time.

00:37:10:04 - 00:37:27:00

Although for BA systems, just a small point of clarification. Um, there's been some discussion about VHF. Assessment, um, in relation to water aerodrome h UHF as well. And I think I'm writing saying that is being considered as part of the the Nats appraisal.

00:37:28:00 - 00:37:48:13

Kathryn Nolan on behalf of the applicant. Yes, it is. So um, I think it's UHF specifically just for Warton. Um, so we have effectively to use the expression we had yesterday, the shopping list of what we need. Um, we have been told by each aviation stakeholder what those VHF assessments need to cover, and it is doing that. So in the case of Warton it does extend to UHF.

00:37:48:29 - 00:37:53:21

And just on that point back cumulative effect is that part of the list.

00:37:55:06 - 00:38:11:03

Catherine Nolan on behalf of the applicant. No it is not currently on the list. And the reason for that is because the Morgan and Mona projects have all done project alone assessments themselves. Um, and so there is already that's our understanding. So ours is being done on a project alone basis.

00:38:21:20 - 00:38:25:19

So just checking my list of questions, there's nothing else I need to pick up.

00:38:29:20 - 00:38:58:08

So, if I may, uh, the Blackpool airport reserved to submit a deadline for in writing. Um, and in respect of the cumulative effect and the proportionality is we aren't certain at this stage that an assessment has been provided in respect of each of the other two windfarms. Um, and I would like this nod and, um, happily to have a discussion with me outside this room. Um, important as to where those assessments are, but we are unable to find them.

00:38:58:10 - 00:39:21:26

Okay. Well, thank you first for the heads up. And two, as we were going to say. Yeah, then certainly continue that conversation. Um, around that matter and we'll await obviously submissions at deadline for on those particular issues. Okay. Um, moving on to agenda item six then, uh, which relates to other offshore infrastructure and marine operations.

00:39:23:20 - 00:39:56:23

So again, there's really, um, three matters that I really want to focus on today. Um, and these primarily relate to access to, um, the oil and gas platforms, proposed buffer zone distances. Uh, we'll touch upon the radar early warning system, uh, and comments and updates in light of the applicant's update, um, to the assessment at deadline three and coexistence and future carbon storage proposals. I can see a few people moving around, so I'll hold to a moment before everyone gets seats.

00:40:00:18 - 00:40:02:21

I think we are now settled.

00:40:04:08 - 00:40:35:24

Okay. Thank you. I work on the basis that people introduce themselves if and when necessary. Um, if I can start, then perhaps with the access to platforms in particular. Um, basic question probably first start off with can I just check my understanding as to what the current rules are in terms of distances should be adhered to from an obstacle, such as a wind turbine generator? I think I read somewhere that it's one nautical mile, but I just want some clarification on that point. I perhaps start with the applicant.

00:40:40:20 - 00:40:58:21

Um, Robin Hutchison for the applicant. I will, um, in a second introduce, um, um, Mr. Mark Pryor from Anna Tech, who is just connecting his laptop. I think he's better as a pilot than a IT technician, but, um, perhaps Mr. Pryor, did you catch the question?

00:40:59:21 - 00:41:14:29

Uh, certainly. Uh, sir Mark Pryor for the applicant, the distance required depends on the conditions by day. In visual conditions, it's 500ft.

00:41:15:27 - 00:41:16:12

And.

00:41:16:17 - 00:41:21:04

Under instrument conditions. You are correct. It is one mile.

00:41:23:11 - 00:41:34:18

Okay. Thank you. Yeah, I thought I'd read something along those lines. So, um, is there anything anybody wants to add to that in terms of spirit, for example. Anybody?

00:41:35:21 - 00:41:47:06

James Gibson for spirit energy. Um, I think this depends on what we're talking about in terms of aviation related buffer distances or marine buffer distance.

00:41:47:08 - 00:41:50:05

To clarify, I'm talking specifically at the moment about aviation.

00:41:52:00 - 00:41:57:21

Thank you sir. Um, it might be sensible for me to pass to Mr. Justice, um, in that respect.

00:42:01:29 - 00:42:19:00

Apologies, sir. This might be one for Mr. Blackstock of aviator. Evotec. His report was appended to Spirit's written representation, which carries reference. Rep. One hyphen, 116. And Mr. Blackstock.

00:42:20:04 - 00:42:21:04

For spirit energy.



00:42:21:06 - 00:42:23:15

Yes, we agree with those distances.

00:42:25:03 - 00:42:26:04

Sorry, sir, I missed that.

00:42:26:13 - 00:42:28:01

Yes, we do agree with those distances.

00:42:28:28 - 00:42:30:16

Thank you.

00:42:35:16 - 00:43:10:20

So with regard the proposed three nautical mile flight restriction, which is currently being considered by the CAA, there's been some discussion and submissions made around that. Again, just really on my understanding of it, as I understand, um, the proposed restriction is not proposed to amend the regulations per se, but rather be reflected in no acceptable means of compliance and guidance material, which, for want of a better term, is to support the regulations. Um, and that if the AMC comes into force, and the operator, if the operator wants to deviate from the rules, they will need to apply for an alternative means of compliance.

00:43:11:08 - 00:43:35:28

Again, just looking for clarification that that interpretation is correct. Um, and if so, in the absence of any current AMC, is it going back to the first point, is it a matter of, um, promoters, offshore wind farms, in proximity to platforms demonstrating access can be achieved. So without any kind of current restriction or the three nautical mile restriction existing, is it to be a negotiated, if you like, position?

00:43:37:21 - 00:43:41:18

Sorry. Can I start with um perhaps spirit first on that matter?

00:43:43:12 - 00:43:47:20

Thank you sir. Um, I'll pass to Mr. Stitch on this point and.

00:43:47:22 - 00:43:48:19

Then stage.

00:43:49:27 - 00:43:50:12

So.

00:43:51:04 - 00:44:17:00

Has been outlined by the applicant. The distances are dependent on, uh, environmental conditions. And through our assessment, we considered both takeoffs and landings in those conditions. But the absence of the current regulations, or AMC or James from Sea, or the calculated distances are more a fraction of what's required to safely take off in those conditions and land.

00:44:18:26 - 00:44:23:09

Thank you. And was there anything the applicant wanted to add in response to that?

00:44:26:27 - 00:44:41:14

And Mark Pryor for the applicant. Just in relation to the AMC, if the helicopter operator applied for an alternative means of compliance, they would have.

00:44:41:16 - 00:44:47:11

To show an equivalent level of safety to their current operations.

00:44:48:10 - 00:45:07:01

Yeah, I think I understand that point. I think the point I was trying to go back a step is in the absence of currently, as I understand it, and acceptable, the acceptable means of compliance existing. There's there's not a need. Am I right in thinking to apply for an alternative means compliance because there's no AMC there currently.

00:45:07:09 - 00:45:12:11

Um. Correct, sir. At this point, there is. There is no need to do that.

00:45:15:15 - 00:45:17:08

Okay. Thank you for that clarification.

00:45:21:15 - 00:45:58:24

My next question really is, um, actually to the CAA in respect of the new CAA, um, the rules, as I call them, um, interested to know whether the CAA would be able to advise if the new CAA restriction is introduced, would it apply retrospectively, and if so, what happens in instances where there are wind turbine generators within three nautical mile distance of an existing platform? Um, in particular, would operators be required to still apply for an NOC? Um and what activities do be allowed to continue until one has been accepted?

00:46:03:03 - 00:46:37:23

Andy Wales, Civil Aviation Authority. Um, typically with these situations, we would specify a date of applicability. Um, that would then mean that those particular acceptable means of compliance are then are then in force. And as you correctly sort of identified in your sort of opening statement, um, acceptable means of compliance are a way in which an operator in this case can show compliance with the with the legislation, the legal or the legal requirements.

00:46:38:14 - 00:47:15:17

But we as CA will consider, um, other um, means of compliance, the alternative means of compliance, the automatic as you've, as you've identified um, on application and I think has already been highlighted, um, that that would require the same. Yeah. There's the safety aspects to. Have been sufficiently covered, uh, within that alternative proposal. Um, so to your point around the retrospective applicability, yes, it, it would apply from a particular date.

00:47:15:19 - 00:47:58:19

So it would apply to all. Um, and therefore that would come in and therefore we would have to look at uh, particular circumstances where clearly that was uh, had an impact on existing, um, situations. Um, now there are a number of options there. We can look at some sort of, uh, grandfathered rights, as we call them, where because of the circumstances. Um, but again, it all comes back to the, you know, the the objective of this is to try and maintain safety and essentially to provide a level playing field under which all operators have clarity on what they're and what they're supposed to be doing.

00:47:59:25 - 00:48:01:06

Does that answer your question?

00:48:02:12 - 00:48:33:15

Yeah, yes it does. Thank you. I think appreciate. My understanding is there's still consultation to be undertaken with the wider sector with regard to that. So it may be that that issue forms part and parcel of the consultation about applicability. Um, when the rules come into play, I guess my issue as well, I'm just curious, is, um, in situations where there are, uh, made, for example, that have, um, agreed protected provisions or buffers that are lower than the three nautical mile.

00:48:33:17 - 00:48:51:20

What implication it may or may not have in regard to those, those proposals that are already exist and or similarly, in the absence of the old, um, those rules come into play. What happens if a scheme is approved with a scheme that's below that? So I'm just trying to get a handle really as to what the knock on effects could be.

00:48:54:09 - 00:49:26:04

I think it's probably very difficult to, to say at this stage without having done the sort of the real groundwork in understanding what the sort of policy object is that we're trying to achieve with the with the new acceptable means of compliance. Um, but essentially, uh, we will work closely with the operators concerns to I mean, ultimately this is about maintaining safety. So but we're not in the business to, you know, you could say that not flying is the safest form of doing things. Clearly, that's that's not our intent.

00:49:26:18 - 00:49:35:27

Uh, we're just trying to maintain the sort of minimum standards of safety that we feel are appropriate, and also to create this level playing field.

00:49:37:05 - 00:50:13:15

Yeah. Thank you. As I said, I think the reason for my questioning really is if we're in, in the absence of the rules coming into force and there's a negotiated, if you like, position that's less than the three nautical miles, then, um, what implication might that have in terms of the future operation of that site. Does. You know? Does it become a barrier? I guess is what I'm saying. Or is it is the expectation is if it's agreed and it's been considered safe at the time that proposal was considered, then that's satisfactory. Um, anything anybody wanted to add in response to the comments? I'm particularly looking at the applicant on that point.

00:50:14:21 - 00:50:50:19

Yeah. Robin Hutchison for the applicant. Um, I would just observe, as I'm sure the panel and everyone is aware, that the the three nautical mile rule that's being proposed by the Sia applies in IMC and night conditions. So flying by instruments rather than visual using the the pilot using their eyes, which is um, uh, the minority of the time when helicopters are, are um, accessing platforms. I use that that word carefully. Um, but certainly I think we're all agreed it's the minority of the time that IMC and night flying is the means of access.

00:50:50:26 - 00:51:09:12

So current agreed buffer zones in existing discos of less than. That will, of course, continue to apply the majority of the time during VMC day flying conditions. It would only affect the the occasions when the pilot is flying by IMC or at night.

00:51:10:06 - 00:51:12:03

And I thank you for that clarification.

00:51:14:23 - 00:51:18:22

Yeah I suspected yeah, I was going to say I want to come back on that point.

00:51:19:00 - 00:51:49:17

Thank you. Uh, James Gibson for Spirit Energy. Um, it might be useful, sir, just to set out what Spirit's position is in relation to this specific matter. Um, we're obviously very happy to have a discussion in terms of the CAA rule and the implications of, of that for, for spirits operations. Um, however, Spirit's primary position is, is unequivocal, unequivocal that 3.76 nautical miles is what is required to continue to use instruments.

00:51:49:20 - 00:52:25:16

So that is Spirit's primary position, regardless of any real change, if it was less than 3.76 as an unobstructed airspace distance between turbines and spirits. Assets that would compromise spirits. Helicopters ability to to to take off and land safely. Mr. Blackstock can obviously elaborate on on the reasons why the three nautical mile limit is obviously something that Spirit's position is that that is a reality of what is coming in.

00:52:25:18 - 00:53:00:15

I obviously will defer to Mr. Wells in terms of that, but certainly the way that operators of helicopters in the Irish Sea are operating at the moment, including Spirit's own operator, NHP, is to apply a three nautical mile limit that is, in one might regard as an absolute minimum distance that is required rather than a maximum. So I think it's just important to have that context that it's 3.76 is Spirit's primary position with respect to an unobstructed airspace requirement.

00:53:00:25 - 00:53:31:14

If this rule came in and it was three nautical miles, then obviously that would stop spirit being able to fly its helicopters at night and use instruments at all. And the implications of that from a safety perspective, I would defer to Mr. Mr. Hepburn to comment on that. And the consequence of those safety implications is that those turbines must be set back beyond three nautical miles as soon as you come within three nautical miles.

00:53:32:14 - 00:54:13:10

Effectively, there is a safety. There is a safety position anywhere from 3.76. But even if we park that within three, there is uncertainty. There's undoubtedly a safety issue. The only mitigation for that would be a knock knock. We can obviously comment on whether spirit could obtain an artwork or not, and have made some submissions on that already. In the absence of obtaining an artwork, the only other mitigation would be to have that three nautical mile distance. So going to your point around what happens from a retrospective position, if the applicant installs turbines within 1.5 nautical miles of Spirit's assets,

00:54:15:05 - 00:54:48:10

effectively that has a severe issue, obviously, in terms of being less than three nautical miles, the the applicant the applicant's position is 1.5 is sufficient. But if there was 1.5 and the CA rule came in and said it's three nautical miles, if those turbines are in situ at 1.5 spirit, we'd have to we'd be subject to helicopter restrictions. And if it's subject to helicopter restrictions, that presents a major safety issue from from Spirit's perspective, which again, I would defer to Mr..

00:54:48:12 - 00:54:49:09

Mr. Hepburn on.

00:54:52:26 - 00:55:24:13

Peter for spirit energy. Um, as James has said, there is a significant impact on safety. First of all, there are three areas I want to cover. First is we would need increased flights. And I do not know if you drove here today, but I'm sure your commute to work is probably the most dangerous thing you do. It's the same for helicopter operations. Getting to an offshore platform. Every time somebody gets on a helicopter, they are taking risks. So more flights, higher probability of something going wrong. So we do have an increased risk from that side of things.

00:55:25:15 - 00:56:05:14

Also it's going to have an impact on how we are able to maintain our assets, particularly the normally unmanned installations or new as referred to. And not being able to get there as often means that we cannot maintain them. If we cannot maintain them, they are effectively not in a safe state. We will not send individuals to an asset if it is not safe, and we have a legal duty to ensure that we maintain those assets in a safe state. So we are going to have an impact on our ability to deliver that maintenance. I'm sure you're well aware of the focus on this as well, and it's an area that we focus on too, as well, to make sure that we maintain the standards that we have in there.

00:56:05:26 - 00:56:36:03

And then finally, the third point is on evacuation of our assets. Um, just the fact is, evacuation is one point. But as a reasonably prudent operator, one of the things we would not do is wait until the situation gets so bad that you have to do an emergency evacuation. We would look to down the installation first, and that has been achieved across a number of assets in the North Sea. The Elgin Franklin previously also 2006. The roof was down behind.

00:56:36:05 - 00:57:09:10

And from my own experience working at inquest, we don't mind the Thistle platform. I know there has been comment in the past about helicopter down man being too slow. I think what was used there

is that it was one helicopter being on the executive team. If we have an emergency situation, crisis management would be invoked and we can therefore authorize additional helicopters and would work with other operators to do that. So it has been shown that demand of an installation using helicopters is the quickest and safest way to do so with that.

00:57:09:12 - 00:57:15:06

So those three areas would be impacted by the restrictions of a 1.5 nautical mile.

00:57:17:24 - 00:57:22:21

Route. Robin Hutchison for the applicant. I wonder if we might have an opportunity just to respond to that.

00:57:22:23 - 00:57:24:21

But I was going to invite you in. But yeah.

00:57:25:27 - 00:58:06:03

No, thanks very much. And I mean, it's helpful to hear the position set out. You know, Mr. Gibson described his position as unequivocal. And the applicant's experience is that it has been quite absolute in terms of the communications that we've that we've received, which unfortunately they have been. Since October, through the written submissions to the panel and the applicant had understood following issue one that, um, that that Spirit solicitors would be holding the pen on protective provisions, which would give us a better feel for exactly what what they requested.

00:58:06:05 - 00:58:55:23

And, you know, we understand that, um, you know, solicitors are acting on instructions and that spirit has a number of concerns and, um, matters which it needs to attend to. But but really, we would press for receipt of protective provisions and discussion between the um, applicant and the and spirit because, um, the national policy statements, you know, discuss and push and present pragmatism and coexistence and, um, we think that that, um, actually a discussion between parties is going to be the way to sort of understand the art of the possible in terms of in terms of pragmatism and in particular, and addressing the points on, um, on access.

00:58:56:09 - 00:59:34:15

The 1.5 nautical mile buffer that has been proposed, um, does allow for full VMC access. Mr. Pryor can present the technical argument that supports that. But I won't necessarily go into that into that now. Um, Spirit's position, in our view, starts from a premise that the access and operation of their, um, platforms that they currently enjoy, um, is entitled to remain unexpected in perpetuity, appreciating that these platforms are, you know, they've been operated for a long time.

00:59:34:22 - 01:00:10:11

There are some of them are moving into a decommissioning phase. In fact, I think all the platforms in question have, in the public domain identified. identify they're moving into a decommissioning phase. And so our position is that the premise that there's an absolute requirement to maintain IMC access, um, isn't the right starting point. And in fact, the parties should be looking to understand how they can coexist with, um, the, the two sets of infrastructure, um, in the, the, the same location or the equivalent location in the Irish Sea.

01:00:10:23 - 01:00:47:21

And of course, the applicant will be taking the same approach when the the shoe is on the other foot. Um, and spirit is moving into its US phase. Um, in terms of the, uh, level of access that would be impeded, uh, under IMC conditions. Um, I would draw attention to the fact that the wind farm exists on one side of the spirit assets. So, you know, 180 degrees is already unimpeded with the full IMC access, and I won't go into the detail of it, but.

01:00:47:23 - 01:01:21:29

But the applicant has proposed a corridor into the prevailing wind, which increases that level of access to 230 degrees and gives additional access into the prevailing wind. Um, I have got very short final comment to make. Um, if that's okay. So, but, but the applicant's position for today is that we very much hear the safety concerns. We've read that. We've understood it. We take it really seriously, which is why we engaged, um, DMV consultants to look at each of the points raised in relation to safety.

01:01:22:23 - 01:01:53:28

And the report is before the examining authority. That report isn't contingent on accepting the benefits or not, of the corridor, or exactly what access under IMC conditions might be restricted. It looks at Spirit's position on access. You know, we've heard that. We've read that we understand what's being said. It looks at analytics position, which is perhaps a less conservative position, perhaps, but it looks at in the round, considers all the points that are raised in safety.

01:01:54:09 - 01:02:05:00

And the conclusions are absolutely clear that the DMV team have reached. And I mean, I would propose that the panel hear from the DMV team, but but I can see that perhaps there's a question or interjection.

01:02:05:29 - 01:02:15:18

No, I'm happy to hear that point. First, there was only a couple of things which you picked up on which I was going to come back to. Anyway, so if you want to address that or add to that, then that's fine.

01:02:15:24 - 01:02:19:19

Yeah. I'll perhaps hand over to to to Mr. Gold on on safety matters.

01:02:22:06 - 01:02:22:21

Mr..

01:02:22:23 - 01:02:24:05

Alex Gold for the applicant.

01:02:25:03 - 01:02:55:10

Uh, the first thing I would say is that the proximity of the of the proposed, proposed proximity to the Markham Offshore Wind farm would not result in any significant increased risk to the spirit installations. It will create a minor operational nuisance. Certainly, that coexistence between the two

installations is eminently feasible. Regarding the issue of emergency response is true, the helicopter evacuation is the preferred means of evacuation.

01:02:55:22 - 01:03:34:02

However, it is not always possible. If an event starts to develop slowly and it is anticipated it would be possible to get people evacuated by helicopter. However, my understanding is there is only one helicopter available at Blackpool that is an Agusta 169, and it is actually shared with other operators. Now, my further understanding is that the maximum PLB on the CPC one installation is around 170 assets.

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

Understanding. Because I have not had access to the spirits safety case. But if you were to use that single helicopter, by my calculations, it would take between 18 and 24 hours to completely evacuate that installation. Now, it is more likely in the circumstances that a prudent operator would request SAR assistance. SAR helicopters operate under different rules to commercial air transport. The 3999 for more details.

01:04:05:28 - 01:04:08:07

However, there is no guarantee that the

01:04:09:23 - 01:04:52:20

uh SAR helicopters would be immediately available in a very rapidly developing emergency. Piper Alpha, The Ocean Odyssey, and the Rough Gas release are three very good examples of that. There simply would not be time to get commercial air transport out there, and SAR helicopters are likely to be impeded anyway because of the nature of the event. Smoke ingestion into the engines, turbulence from the heat, and also a reduction in engine performance from the heat from any fire would prevent SR helicopters approaching, and therefore the members of the installation would need to go to the lifeboats.

01:04:53:17 - 01:05:23:29

Now, I know in the most recent submission from spirit, they mentioned the rough gas release and the rough installation is actually three installations on it. There are three platforms making up the installation. At one end you've got the one that's got the heli deck and the quarters in the middle is the gas compression module where the event occurred. And there is a third platform as well. And I know that some of the, the people on the installation were trapped in the third platform.

01:05:24:27 - 01:05:40:22

The good news is that emergency shutdown valves did the job closed and limited the amount of gas release and therefore the duration of fire. And it's my understanding that there was a helicopter evacuation that did not occur until the fire was out.

01:05:43:26 - 01:06:13:27

Uh, we've heard from the spirit representatives that driving to the transport is the largest risk that might be. So if you're driving to the airport. But it's not the case in relation to offshore installations. I would refer to section 3.4 of the DMV report. And in that we've got a number of installations that we've quoted there have taken the information from safety cases that I've had access to.



01:06:14:26 - 01:06:44:12

And you will see from it that the main risk contributors are rarely helicopter transport. It's quite often fires and explosions. In some cases it's occupational risk that is just the daily slips, trips, falls and dropped objects that we might face in the course of everyday work. In actual fact. Commercial air transport by helicopters is a very safe means of transport. Certainly much safer than driving by road.

01:06:49:03 - 01:06:50:15

It's okay to reply.

01:06:52:21 - 01:06:59:22

Yeah. I mean, I think some of the submissions I've seen anyway in written submissions. Um, yeah, I'm happy to take a short point, but pick.

01:06:59:24 - 01:07:00:11

Up on a.

01:07:00:13 - 01:07:33:09

Couple of points that were there made there. There's three helicopters at Blackpool. Um, so actually, you know, I guess we've just received the the report and we will be providing a rating for the next airline with that. But one of the concerns that we have had that while the maths is right, some of the assumptions are not quite right. So we'll put that into the detail of that. And I guess just an example of that is that there are the three helicopters are really respected individual for highlighting the The design of rough.

01:07:33:24 - 01:08:13:25

It's the same design of CPC, the central platform. We have three jacketed installation. The accommodation platform is separate from the processing platform and the wellhead platform. So as described in that situation, we would have the same luxury, assuming that the emergency shut down valves would work to actually perform an evacuation by helicopter and not evacuate by lifeboat. There is industry data out there I think has been provided in previous submissions about the difference between helicopter evacuation and lifeboat evacuation in terms of the level of risk presented to the individual.

01:08:13:28 - 01:08:26:12

And it is well known that going by lifeboat is far riskier evacuation route as well. So, as I say, respect the points that have been made. We still have to do a reply to it, but I can see a number of flaws in what has been said.

01:08:27:12 - 01:09:02:11

Okay. Thank you. As I say, we'll continue our dialogue. I think I just wanted to come back to one point which Mr. Hutchinson actually touched on, which was a question I had got. And it's to do with, um, the life of the platforms and, um, how long they remain in existence. Um, I was just really seeking some clarity from spirit with regard to what the, uh, decommissioning date is, if that's if that's available. Um, you know, likely to be decommissioning date for the CPC and the code of structures, uh, what it currently is.

01:09:02:29 - 01:09:08:04

I'm not sure if it's been set out anywhere already. And if it has been fairly, you know, identified where that is.

01:09:09:00 - 01:09:45:12

Uh, Peter Hepburn for spirit energy. Um, yeah. So I think, as you know, I had our NZTa, my submission, the current copy date for CPC is 2027, plus or minus two years. Um, we can do the March 2027 minus two years is actually 2025 and we are not in any way, shape or form looking to decommission the asset at this time. Actually, part of my remit from joining Spirit Energy is to extend the life of the asset to 2030 and beyond with that, and we have a strategy and a roadmap that will that will get us there.

01:09:45:21 - 01:10:12:00

And as I'm sure you're aware, um, dictation of a copy, solar cessation of production date is really defined by the macroeconomic factors as well, such as gas price with that. But as per the current gas price curves that we are using in economics that we have, we certainly have a route that takes us beyond 27 and out to 2030 and beyond. And that is the strategy that I am following through at this moment in time.

01:10:12:15 - 01:10:16:17

So just to clarify that that's both structures or the CPC.

01:10:17:02 - 01:10:23:02

That's CPC. And we are working with Harbour Energy to extend the life of their the Calder platform as well.

01:10:25:07 - 01:10:25:22

Okay.

01:10:29:12 - 01:10:41:06

Okay. I think those those points of noting, I say, I think, you know, a lot of what's been said, I have read in submissions anyway, and obviously we'll wait for further submissions in response at do for, um, one thing I'd like.

01:10:49:26 - 01:10:51:03

So we're just debating lunch.

01:11:01:05 - 01:11:13:03

Yeah. Well, just, um, I wanted to raise an issue about the notion of layout, but I think we'll pause there. Um, perhaps break for lunch now, and we'll pick that up after. After lunch? Yeah. Okay.

01:11:13:05 - 01:11:45:07

Excuse me, sir, I mean, James Gibson for Spirit Energy. I'm conscious. Mr. Hutchison also raised some comments on the principle of coexistence and protective provisions. Um, I think we've touched on decommissioning and the DMV report, and there was also some comments on the Ark and there

being, um, 180 degrees of unobstructed airspace. Um, I'm just mindful that we would like the opportunity to, to respond to those comments at a suitable time, sir.

01:11:46:00 - 01:12:14:07

Yeah. And that possibly links into the, the, the notional layout issue as well. So I'm sure there'll be an opportunity to to comment on that after lunch break. Um, so again, I've seen, I've seen representations have been made about disputes, if you like, about the unobstructed airspace and the arc. Um, so I'm happy to hear that. But maybe if we hold that thought then until after lunch, and we can discuss that around that with the notional plan. So, um.

01:12:14:27 - 01:12:22:23

Yeah. So thank you. I think we'll turn it now till for lunch until 2:00. So thank you everybody, and we'll see you again then.