



Hearing Transcript

Project:	Botley West Solar Farm
Hearing:	Issue Specific Hearing 2 (ISH1) Part 4
Date:	09 October 2025

Please note: This document is intended to assist Interested Parties.

It is not a verbatim text of what was said at the above hearing. The content was produced using artificial intelligence voice to text software. It may, therefore, include errors and should be assumed to be unedited.

The video recording published on the Planning Inspectorate project page is the primary record of the hearing.

Simon Says

Transcript Export

<https://www.simonsaysai.com>

Project 10-09-25 05:50 pm

Created on: 2025-10-09 16:48:26

Project Length: 01:38:33

Account Holder: Ryan Ross

File Name: BWSF_0910_ISH2_PT4.mp4

File Length: 01:38:33

FULL TRANSCRIPT (with timecode)

00:00:10:11 - 00:00:45:00

Okay. Thank you and welcome back everyone. This hearing is now resumed. Uh, we're going to come on to the subject of landscape next. Um, we have a few discrete questions in respect of landscape, and then we'll be moving on to traffic and transport. We were due to have a section on socioeconomics, uh, later on. Um, but I think due to my overzealous ness, if you like, this morning we have covered some of the questions and the points we were going to raise under that item. Um, so we'll probably skip socioeconomics and go straight into noise and vibration afterwards.

00:00:45:02 - 00:00:59:10

So if you're here specifically for socioeconomics, will accept your views in writing on that at a later date. But without further ado, I'll just hand over to Catherine to start off with the landscape. Thank you.

00:01:01:19 - 00:01:36:27

Thank you. Um, I have got several questions, but I think I will reduce them because of time constraints. So if there are any outstanding, um, we'll cover them off in, in a letter. But, um, so firstly, just for, um, Oxfordshire host authorities. Um, this is just a request for a clarification note at deadline six. Um, in your submission rep 475, you provided a map of all the areas that you considered that you have considered in depth in relation to both heritage and landscape that you feel should be removed from the application.

00:01:37:10 - 00:02:16:29

Um, this is briefly explained in your response to excuse two point 13.11. Um, and I understand it would take too long to go through these elements now, but in relation to landscape, it would be um, under it would be useful to understand the methodology that you've used to assess these areas, what you consider the impacts to be, and whether they relate to landscape or visual impacts, or a combination of both. So I'd like to make an action point for you to submit a statement that explains these assessments in depth on a field by field basis and and also in relation to heritage as well as I spoke to Mr..

00:02:17:01 - 00:02:27:24

Or earlier, if you could also do the same for the fields that you feel should be removed in terms of heritage. Thank you. So I'll leave that one for now just as an action point. Thank you.

00:02:30:16 - 00:02:55:28

So I'm going to move on to a question regarding residential visual amenity, um, assessment, which I referred to as the VA. Um, this was requested at X Q1 and, and at x Q2 and has not yet been forthcoming. I have four related questions on this matter, and we'll go through them each individually, giving you a chance to respond after each point.

00:03:01:08 - 00:03:38:02

So firstly, in your response to ECS, Q1, which was at rep two oh 25, you said that professional judgment was used to determine a 25 metre buffer zone from individual properties and settlements, and this had been incorporated into the project to minimise any likely effects. You also stated that due to the low level of the project and proposed mitigation, you anticipated that there is no potential for any private views to be adversely affected. To an extent that would result in a level of effect that would trigger the requirement for an VAR in your response to EQC two.

00:03:38:04 - 00:04:31:24

Rep four oh 37 you noted 18 properties that had been looked at during the design process, and noted that the minimum 20 minimum buffer of 25m and additional mitigation were required had been included in the project. Now the meaning of the RV and the methodology used to assess it is outlined in the Landscape Institute's technical guidance. Notes. Tiguan two. Stroke 14. Sorry. Stroke 19. In paragraph 4.7 of this document, it refers to the areas that might be assessed and it states other development types, including potentially very large but lower profile structures and developments such as road schemes and housing are unlikely to require an RV AA, except potentially of properties in very close proximity in brackets 50 to 250m to the development.

00:04:32:18 - 00:04:52:11

Now, I think everyone would consider a solar farm to be a low profile development. Um, you've provided the names of 18 properties that you've considered. Can you tell me how many properties fall into the landscape? Institute's description of very close proximity, which extends up to 250m from the development?

00:04:53:22 - 00:04:59:11

Debates on behalf of the applicant. So for landscape matters, it would be a combination of Mr. Ma and Mr. Lilly.

00:05:08:15 - 00:05:55:16

Good afternoon. Thank you madam. Um, George Lilly, on behalf of the applicant. Um, just in terms of the residential visual amenity assessment of a, um, this is not has not been expressly a requirement. Um, as the and the scoping report, uh, determined that it should be a matter of the outcome of the landscape and regional impact assessment. Uh, now, with the exception of, uh, representative viewpoints, 23, 32, 48 and 50, there are no residual significant Defects that have been identified within the LBA.

00:05:56:12 - 00:06:12:08

It should be noted that these effects relate to viewpoints from footpaths and not residential receptors. It is the applicant's professional opinion that the um.

00:06:14:19 - 00:07:08:24

Impact of the project would not meet the threshold, um, in that it would not be overwhelming or overbearing. Um, and as you've already referred to the, uh, the height of the solar solar panels being at 2.3m, um, and are not, uh, manned structures as solid as such that would be overlooking, uh, residential development. Um, notwithstanding this, uh, we have carried out a more detailed assessment of residential properties, um, affected by the um project, which in fact goes further than the 18 properties you were referring to earlier.

00:07:09:19 - 00:07:16:27

Um, and this has identified a number of significant effects from individuals.

00:07:17:05 - 00:07:27:21

I'm really sorry to interrupt. I'm really struggling to hear. I don't know if anybody else is, and I understand people behind us are also struggling to hear. Maybe a bit closer to the mic. Maybe.

00:07:28:15 - 00:07:33:21

Thank you. Yes, I was just about to say if you could speak up a little bit. We are struggling to hear you.

00:07:33:23 - 00:07:43:15

Thank you sir. Sorry. Um, yes. So, um, as I was saying, uh, notwithstanding the need or otherwise for a.

00:07:45:17 - 00:08:30:26

Um, a separate, more detailed assessment or effects has been carried out, which goes further than the 18 properties you were referring to earlier. And. A number of significant effects have been identified, including from Goose Farm, College Farm, and a number of others. Um, but it should be noted that the um Landscape Institute technical guidance note related to RV's uh, does state that while significant effects may be identified, this should not, um, predicate the need for a separate RV.

00:08:35:14 - 00:08:52:14

Thank you, Miss Levy. I don't think that really answers my question, which was how many properties are within that? 50 to 250 or up to 250 meter buffer? Um, that is mentioned in the Landscape Institute guidance. I wonder if you have a figure for me.

00:09:02:12 - 00:09:20:24

Thank you. George, on behalf of the applicant, I don't have the exact number of properties that fall within that, um, uh, distance to hand. I would have to come back to you on writing on that, but, uh, it should be noted that it is

00:09:22:10 - 00:10:07:14

a residential property can be a very close to the project or a proposed development. Um, but there are a number of other factors which, um, go into assessing the amenity and in this case, the visual amenity. And that is the, the aspect of the property in terms of which direction it looks, uh, the nature of views from upper story windows. Um, and we also have to consider the, the nature of existing vegetation around the curtilage of the properties, which would in itself mitigate the impacts.

00:10:11:26 - 00:10:42:09

Thank you, miss Lily. That's all very. That's all very useful. But actually we don't have that information. You haven't provided a VA survey which actually explains, um, all of that and how you've assessed each property and whether or not the threshold has been reached for any property, which is what we asked for in, um, a Q1 and Q2. Um, so although it's it's useful for you to say this now, it is information that we have requested. Um, Mr.

00:10:42:11 - 00:11:15:20

Mohamed, can I just wait? Um, And I've got four parts to this question. So if I could possibly cover all four parts and then I'll come back to you for further responses. So I'll move on to um, section two of, of my question. Um, so in your response to deadline for submissions, which was rep 505, on page eight, you report that the closest properties to the solar farm would be located at Barrow Court, Castleton, at around 40m from the solar farm.

00:11:16:00 - 00:11:48:25

Your example of Barrow Court is even closer than the suggested range in the Landscape Institute guidance. And yet you still consider that an RV AA is not required without any justification. Um, also, there are other properties that are around 40m or less from the proposed panels and these include Blenheim House, Daunt Ford Cottage, Upper Dunford Cottages and properties at Jericho Barns, and properties at Shipton Slade Farm. Yet some of these are not listed on the individual properties that you have stated and assessed.

00:11:49:01 - 00:11:51:25

Um, could you explain this for me, please?

00:11:53:19 - 00:12:18:09

Uh, George Ingham, the applicant. Um, yes. That's that you are correct. They weren't on the original, um, list of 18 properties. However, as I've said, we have carried out a more detailed, uh, assessment of residential properties. Um, which does include the properties you have just referred to. Um,

00:12:20:01 - 00:12:35:00

but of course, uh, just referring to my previous answer. It is not simply the proximity of the development which needs to be considered in terms of the potential effects. Thank you.

00:12:40:16 - 00:12:41:04

Sorry.

00:12:41:16 - 00:13:22:07

So you're going to have to help me here. Um, during part of this week, um, as well as the company's site inspection, we've done some unaccompanied site inspections, and we'll publish notes of that soon.

And one of those, we went to Barrow Court and, and that section of Jansen Road up Burley Road. And we looked up and the land slowly rises northwards out the back and the back boundary of some properties in Barrow Court is a post and rail fence, brown wooden post and rail fence with some low level sort of hedging in places, but not a sort of substantive area of woodland.

00:13:22:09 - 00:14:03:18

It had first floor windows facing north in the direction of the development. Now, the Landscape Institute note says that the low profile developments and the aim may not be required, except for those properties in very close proximity 50 to 250m. By your own admission, it's 40m to Barrow Court, so if it's not in very close proximity. It's in close proximity. How how has it been determined that an RVI of that property and indeed others, is not required? I'm.

00:14:04:04 - 00:14:05:08

I'm struggling.

00:14:37:28 - 00:15:07:08

Thank you. On behalf of the applicant. Um, we do acknowledge the proximity of the, uh. Uh, some residential properties. Um, and as I say, we have carried out a more detailed assessment which would give further clarification to this. Um, now, of course, this is not in the public domain. Um, but it can be published at deadline six. Thank you.

00:15:09:05 - 00:15:21:25

Wow. Um, sorry. I'm going to go off on one again. Um, so you have done this assessment, but for some reason at this time, you've not yet submitted it. Why?

00:15:27:26 - 00:15:54:01

On behalf of the applicant. So obviously, I'm not a technical expert here. My understanding is that what this more detailed assessment confirms is that a full RV, AA, is not required. and that will be by reference to the technical guidance that you've been referring to and is what's going to be submitted at deadline six. So it's not a full year. It's confirmation and clarity as to why a full RV hasn't been submitted. It's not intended to be submitted.

00:15:54:03 - 00:16:28:27

Okay. And just one further point on this. I don't know where Mr. Le Quint has gone. Um, he was the only gentleman from the applicants team, um, to go on the accompanying site inspection the other day, and I'm sure he would stand by the words that he said whilst we were going round. We were at Goose Egg Farm. We'd been invited up to the upper floor windows, and we looked out of those upper floor windows. There was, I'm guessing, because I haven't got a tape measure, but about two to 2.5m of sort of a construction trench.

00:16:28:29 - 00:17:00:14

And then there was the boundary of that property. I'm guessing about three meters back from the window. And we were told and Mr. Durkin confirmed, that then there'd be 25 metre buffer from the window to that. And in respect of landscape mitigation, when asked, well, what is going there? I was told, oh, I'll have to check that out now. Three metres plus 25. That's 28m from the back of the house. And from what I could gather from what Mr. Quint said, there is no mitigation.

00:17:00:16 - 00:17:32:01

Now, I'm awaiting this document at deadline six. It's a pity that this hasn't come forward sooner, because it's been a continuous theme throughout this examination, and I'm going to be very interested to see what justification there is for not having an Avia. I'll take it on board. I'll be fair. I'll look. And if there's good objective points put forward. Fair enough. I'll stand corrected. I've been corrected before, but I'd be very interested to see this document. Thank you. Sorry, Catherine.

00:17:32:25 - 00:18:11:18

Toby. It's on behalf of applicant. If I can just add from a task perspective. Obviously the technical detail will follow, but this is by reference to the technical guidance directly, where it says that it's not uncommon for significant adverse effects on views on visual amenity to be experienced by people at their place of residence. That's the starting position that it's not uncommon. It then goes on to form a sort of exception to that general position where it says, however, there are situations where the effect on the outlook, visual immunity of a residential property is so great that it's not generally considered to be in the public interest to permit such conditions.

00:18:11:20 - 00:18:49:07

So, again, it balances in expectation that there will be impacts on viewpoints from a landscape perspective against public interest. And that's reflected very strongly in the national policy, which obviously sets the framework within which we're bringing the application for this project. And if I can just for the record, put some clear references to that policy. You've got paragraph 5.10.5 of NPS one, which recognizes that virtually all nationally significant energy infrastructure projects will have adverse effects on the landscape.

00:18:51:10 - 00:19:01:27

And 5.1.3, which continues to say all proposed energy infrastructure is likely to have visual effects for many receptors around proposed sites.

00:19:06:11 - 00:19:39:09

And at paragraph 5.1.35, it continues to say the scale of energy projects means that they will often be visible across a wide area, and the Secretary of State should judge whether any adverse impact on the landscape would be so damaging that it is not offset by the benefits, including need of the project. So those two paragraphs that I've just read align with the technical guidance, which we're considering here for the purposes of Avia, A, where it's saying that the need for the project forms a basis as to whether or not the adverse effects can be accepted.

00:19:40:14 - 00:19:44:25

And that brings me to other references in the national policy.

00:19:51:09 - 00:20:24:08

And this is earlier on in MPs in one. And that sets out a paragraph 3.2.6 and 3.2.7 that the Secretary of State, in making its decision, should assess all applications for development consent for the types of infrastructure covered by this MPs, which includes the project, on the basis that the government has demonstrated that there is a need for those types of infrastructure which is urgent. So again, pulling it

back to that test in the technical guidance as well as the test of the national policy. This is all predicated around the fact that it's not in common.

00:20:24:10 - 00:20:53:01

In fact, it's envisaged that there will be some impacts, but the need for an Avia and the justification for the project in light of that, is driven around the public interest and the need for these sorts of projects. And that's unequivocal in the national policy that there is an urgent need for this type of infrastructure. This is a sort of general background as to the framework within which we're bringing the application and the detail over the specific viewpoints, and the assessment will follow a deadline. Six.

00:20:57:09 - 00:20:57:24

No.

00:21:03:13 - 00:21:34:27

Thank you. I do just want to come back on one point on this is that you're now providing some justification for the VA not being required at deadline six. This was requested at examine at Q1, Q2, and it's really, really late to be submitting this information. So I'm just going to leave that with you for. Um, it's very disappointing. Um, I'll move on with my question, though.

00:21:34:29 - 00:21:35:17

Um.

00:21:37:22 - 00:21:39:23

Apologies. I've lost where I am.

00:21:46:21 - 00:22:09:02

Um, yes. You've described your, um, the. Sorry. You've described the project as low profile, but this is only in relation to the panels. The secondary substations are going to be six metres high, and the PCs units are going to be 3.5m high, which are not necessarily low profile. Um, so how have you how are you accounting for these in your assessments?

00:22:30:04 - 00:23:12:15

Thank you, George. On behalf of the applicant, um, in terms of the. Other built elements, um, these have been taken account of within the landscape of regional impact assessment. Um, and the development has been assessed as a whole, rather than looking at each individual element. Um, and the, the XV, which, as you know, is just a tool to inform the assessment, um, has taken account of, uh, in each individual element in terms of their height, which has informed the assessment.

00:23:18:14 - 00:23:19:21

Thank you. Um.

00:23:22:07 - 00:23:53:18

Final part of this question. Um, in the Response to XQ one. Um, you mentioned a glint and glare study as well. Um, and in this study, 699 dwellings were assessed. Uh, it's acknowledged that this study includes properties up to a kilometer away from the project. Um, but I just wanted to find out

why this report wasn't used as a baseline to understand where there may be potential issues and why the same level of detail wasn't used to undertake, um, the var.

00:23:54:03 - 00:24:01:13

Um, maybe this is the detail that that's coming to us at this stage, but, um, I wonder if you can comment on that please.

00:24:32:10 - 00:24:39:03

Corinna Dagmar. For the applicant, the glint and glare study was done for, uh.

00:24:39:09 - 00:24:40:14

Road users.

00:24:40:16 - 00:24:54:29

Airport users, um, and uh, but not for, um, individual properties. And that was the reason for the glinting glare study, which.

00:24:55:10 - 00:24:56:26

Uh, I believe.

00:24:57:09 - 00:25:01:24

Is going to be discussed later as another that's under aviation.

00:25:05:02 - 00:25:11:29

But that did assess several dwellings, um, as well. It wasn't just road users.

00:25:17:08 - 00:25:22:12

For the applicant. So that was produced by page. And Mr. Plume is here from page about he'll speak to this.

00:25:27:20 - 00:26:01:12

Thank you. James Plum for the applicant. Um, the Clinton Glass study is produced as a separate technical technical appendix and does not, to my understanding, directly inform the Elvia. Um, it's a separate piece of work which, as explained, considers a number of different receptor types, including road users, aviation receptors, and also dwellings. Um, it also considers dwelling receptors, which are placed at locations where there are dwellings, but it's not necessarily done on an individual dwelling by dwelling basis.

00:26:01:14 - 00:26:33:16

One receptor can represent multiple properties, and it's done to give an idea of the distribution of impacts, um, and whether solar reflections will be possible because views of the site do not necessarily imply that solar reflections would be possible. Um, as that depends on the geometry of the sun movement. And so that's specifically what that assessment looks at. Um, and while there are some considerations of visibility, um, it's in the context of this more detailed modeling.

00:26:36:07 - 00:27:08:04

Thank you for that explanation. I think my point was that, you know, that that document provided a baseline of properties that may have some inter visibility, that may be affected to a, to a point where an VAR may be required. And it would have been a very useful document to have used as a baseline document for another study. Um, that's the point I wanted to make. Um, I just, I, I think just for the record, um, on our accompanied and our unaccompanied site visits, as Mr.

00:27:08:06 - 00:27:45:16

Wallace mentioned, um, we've seen several properties where we feel visual amenity would be severely affected. And when no mitigation or extended buffers have been applied. Um, on a general point, overall, we do not feel that the residential visual amenity has been properly considered or assessed despite the two requests for this information and even though it is going to be provided now, is getting very late in proceedings for any effective consultation to take place. Um, having said that, I do urge you to look at this matter and provide the detail using the parameters outlined in the Landscape Institute guidance.

00:27:45:28 - 00:28:08:18

Um, and also not just about the properties that we might have discussed today, but all properties within that 250 metre zone. Um, so I shall leave it there. We've got one. Ah, we had one hand up, up, up. Oh, we've got two hands up in the room and I think we had one online, although that seems to have gone, um, right. Mr. Mohammed, I'll take your question.

00:28:08:20 - 00:28:51:01

I just have a point of clarification before, um, Miss Bolen contributes. We did do an assessment, and we have a table that we will submit for you in relation to the impacted settlement, which parish it's in, the postcode, and then the number of properties that are affected. And you asked earlier on what was the number. We have that at 84 properties that are at the lowest end affected by within about 25m, and the highest end being about 150m and in some cases 25m on three sides, for example.

00:28:51:13 - 00:29:26:07

Um, and then the second point is that one of the things I thought you were being told was that either an assessment had been done and it wasn't put forward, or one hadn't been done up until now, I wasn't quite sure. But the two interesting things that are worth noting is that the changes that were made at the second request involved. Um, obviously the changes to Blaydon and the changes to bed Brook on those two specific changes for Bladen.

00:29:26:15 - 00:29:58:12

That change alone removed the impact to 60 properties and for bed for for big Brook 12. So obviously somebody's done something to think actually what's happening in Bladen which is going to impact 60 properties. We better make a change at stage at the change request point. So whatever that was based on, we don't know. But we certainly know that it's impacted its impact to 60 properties.

00:29:59:03 - 00:30:13:23

Um, was probably one of those considerations. So as a point of clarification, because nobody gave you an answer, we think it's 84 units properties and we'll put this in our submission. But Miss Boland had other some responses to your other bits.

00:30:17:00 - 00:30:55:21

Hi Sarah Bowland, landscape architect for Stop Botley West. I just wanted to bring a couple of references in the Elvia to your attention, where they categorically state that they haven't visited any private properties. So at 8.5.34. So no actual physical visiting of the properties is influenced there. Elvia they make their judgments based on not going to have a look. Now, whether that has happened with this next round of information that we're about to receive, I don't know. Um, only viewpoints 46 and 47, in their table at the end of their Elvia are considered to represent residential receptors.

00:30:55:23 - 00:31:27:00

So for the rest of them, they don't consider any of the 54 viewpoints they've selected to to represent visual receptors. Um, and there is absolutely no evidence to support a 25 meter buffer. It's just plucked from thin air that that might be an appropriate buffer. and their suggestion. So I guess the answer is that all of this information that we've been given in the Elvia is based on assumptions made from not visiting side and just desktop research.

00:31:27:15 - 00:32:05:26

Just as a point of reference, when you were talking about the properties on Johnson Road and at casting two and viewpoint 40 is from further back from the properties, some of the properties that you were talking about. So you can see what you were referring to, sir, about the incline and the solar panels being really apparent in that incline and closing that view down. And obviously that will be more apparent from those properties because as you've described as a 28 meter distance and a viewpoint 40, we're actually outside of the array and closer to the, to the, um, settlement edge.

00:32:05:28 - 00:32:13:12

But given that there's as we've just visited, there's no views to represent the residential receptors. We don't have that information at the moment.

00:32:15:16 - 00:32:23:12

Thank you. And I've got Mr.. All on online. Sorry. I'm sorry Mr. Oxley online.

00:32:27:29 - 00:33:05:02

Hi Sam Oxley for, um the host authorities. Um, just a short point. Um, in response to, um, the point that Mr. Lilley made. So he essentially started out by saying that only three significant effects had been identified. He then went on, um, after explaining, um, some other stuff around residential visual amenity to say that they had looked at in more detail at a number of properties, um, including the 1818 properties.

00:33:05:06 - 00:33:41:20

Um, and said that a number of significant effects had been identified, but That this information isn't provided anywhere. So essentially, um, the inspector and the host authorities don't have that information as to where they expect these significant effects to be. And the purpose of environmental impact assessment, and indeed of the idea is to identify where the likely significant visual effects are going to be. And, you know, we're at this very late stage in the examination, and we still don't know where these likely significant visual effects are going to be.

00:33:41:22 - 00:34:16:16

But having undertaken site inspections with the host authorities, we know that there are a very large number of residential properties within the sorts of distances that we've been talking about, um, up to 200m. Um, we've just heard that that might be 84. Um, we'd expect to see a plan, um, identifying all of those properties. Residential property data sets are very freely available, and putting it on a map together with as a TV is an easy and quick thing to do.

00:34:16:18 - 00:34:49:12

So that information should be. Should be easy and ready. Readily, readily provided. Um, just a further point on the distance. It's not all about distance. So um, in this instance. Um, part of the well, a very large part of the consideration is the fact that properties will. Have a very wide angle of their view affected. So, um, for something to be overwhelming, oppressive. Um, such that the residential visual amenity threshold will be affected, uh, is not just about something.

00:34:49:17 - 00:35:19:17

Towering above a property, it's the fact that it's it's inescapable. It's wrapping around the whole property. 270 or even more degrees of the view may be affected. And so I think that needs to be a very key consideration. Here it's that horizontal Sample angle of affected view as well as the vertical. It can't all be mitigated by virtue of the fact that the property that the panels are 2.5m high.

00:35:19:20 - 00:35:47:25

It's that it's that horizontal view as well. And indeed topography. If the panels are on rising ground and a very large number of these panels are on the hill slopes. Um, as has been noted within the OHA map, setting out where they should be removed. Uh, then indeed, their impact is enhanced because they're on that rising ground and therefore more visible. Thank you.

00:35:49:14 - 00:35:59:28

Thank you for that. Um, if I can do other hands up. I'm sorry. Yes. Um, there's one more hand up. Over. Do you mean me? Oh, you.

00:36:00:00 - 00:36:00:27

Mean someone else?

00:36:02:21 - 00:36:38:24

I'll do that. Yeah. Thank you. Uh, Alex Rogers, Kensington Parish Council. Um, I would add to, uh, barako in Casselton, pretty much the whole of ancient road, uh, east of Elms Road on the northern side of the village. And Jericho Barnes, which you did indeed mention also footpath one five, two, eight, ten, which, despite the fact that we've mentioned right from early on in the examination, seems to have been pretty much ignored.

00:36:38:27 - 00:37:09:28

I would add that how Norwich, who really is an independent landscape expert, unlike many of the opinions we've heard today, um, pointed to the overwhelming impact of the huge scale of the solar farm running up to 25m of the border of our village. Now, the applicants seem to have confused this issue with a heritage issue. It's nothing to do with heritage.

00:37:10:00 - 00:37:41:06

Howe Mockridge clearly felt that the development was far too close to the village. Scale is important here. We're dealing with the development, which is 1400 hectares in size, and I would point out the 25 metre buffer zone is way smaller than that of many of the other large solar schemes we've looked at nationally and is far, far smaller. If you look internationally.

00:37:41:22 - 00:38:01:29

Um, we do not even feel that a 25 metre buffer is safe for various reasons. For the residents of our village. We'll go into more detail of that in D6, but we've already explained many of these things in our previous submissions. Thank you.

00:38:03:15 - 00:38:04:22

Thank you. Um.

00:38:07:27 - 00:38:08:29

Mrs. Williams? Yes.

00:38:09:01 - 00:38:09:16

Thank you.

00:38:09:18 - 00:39:07:17

Carlos Williams. Dustin Dryden I will be as brief as possible, and I appreciate the earlier reference to the accompanied site inspection at goosey in relation to the numerous points I raised when speaking earlier this morning. I've submitted that in writing, and it may help the applicants to identify, in relation to this issue, that I specifically ask for the profound and intense visual impact upon goose eye to be considered at point C in the material I submitted this morning, and I think I'm not familiar with all the properties, but I think Goose Eye may be one of the most outstanding examples of an overbearing and overwhelming effect, with all of the fields surrounding this property coming up to, as has been said, within a few meters of the rear, the side and the, um, the zoom view, as it were, looking out from the property.

00:39:07:19 - 00:39:42:06

I would urge the applicants to consider coming to that property and, um, comply with the VA requirements in respect of that property. It is a remarkable example of this issue. Um, and I would just try and very quickly point out to balance some comments made by Toby Ates for the applicant when quoting from the NPF, um, NPF, the N and the guidance. Um, I just think we should balance that with a comment made by Keir Starmer at PMQs a month ago.

00:39:42:08 - 00:40:06:22

When questioned specifically post-disco about Seneca, where Keir Starmer said the public will always be consulted and we will always listen. Now we cannot have it that that guidance that in some cases was written in 2008 or shortly thereafter 2012 is seen to trump what our Prime Minister actually says in Parliament a month ago. Thank you.

00:40:09:06 - 00:40:11:05

And, Councillor Westcott.

00:40:12:23 - 00:40:43:15

Thank you very much indeed, Chris Westcott. Come to parish council. We welcome your request to the applicant to provide an RV for all properties within 250m. And referring back to one of our earlier points. You'll be aware that jumpers Farm in our parish has the DCO boundary on the west, to the south and the eastern borders of that property. Can also draw your attention to Mrs. Metcalf. It was very helpful when you reminded us all that we're not just dealing with low profile panels.

00:40:43:17 - 00:41:08:25

I think you referenced substations of being six metres and 3.5m high. On those grounds, could we ask the Upper Whitley Farm in the parishes also included, because in the current applicant's proposal, if they were to build the National grid substation, that would be a building 75m long and 15m high. So we'd be very grateful if you would ask for that to be included in the VA as well. Thank you.

00:41:10:27 - 00:41:26:06

Thank you. Um, just coming back to the applicant very briefly, I think, um, we've covered this topic quite substantially now. Um, so I do want to move on. Um, but is there anything briefly that you would like to say in response to the points raised?

00:41:26:26 - 00:42:02:02

Toby, it's on behalf of the applicant. Yeah. Just a couple of. I'll keep it brief as possible. Points of clarity. So firstly, just in relation to, I think, Mr. Muhammad's comments on change request two and the drivers there. So this is by reference to the report CR2 dash 073. And as explained at paragraph 2.4.3 of that report, change one as referred to when Mr. Mohammed was driven by the engagement with Historic England. It was it was that engagement that led to the change and it wasn't driven by the impact on the on the landscape and the visual assessment that's being carried out.

00:42:02:04 - 00:42:34:23

There is a historic environment point that led to that change. And again, not to open the can that was discussed in length before, but it wasn't because it was considered necessary in light of the policy to make that change from a heritage perspective. And that's supported by references in the policy we can give in our written submission that expects there will be some heritage effects as a result of these developments, but it was to reach a no harm scenario in recognition of Historic England's role as statutory consul. T so it's a sort of voluntary offering to bring them entirely on board.

00:42:35:07 - 00:43:07:14

But as Mr. Mohammed recognises, an additional benefit of making that change is in respect of the landscape and visual impact assessment. And again, the applicant's position there is that it wouldn't be necessary to have made that change from a landscape perspective, and that's supported by paragraph .2.15. Event one, which recognizes that residual impacts are unlikely to outweigh the urgent need for this type of infrastructure.

00:43:07:16 - 00:43:41:21

And it continues to say, in all but the most exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely that consent will be refused on the basis of these residual impacts. And that's in the most recent national policy for 2023, which we are bound to comply with through section 104 of the Planning Act. Again, I just mentioned that because the change wasn't necessary for the purposes of the landscape assessment, it's

just an additional benefit of having made that change that Mr. Mohammed says there's now a reduction of 72 out of 84 of the residential properties that have now fallen away.

00:43:41:23 - 00:44:11:28

So that leaves us with just 12 of the residential properties. And then also just to clarify, because I think a comment was made around the 25 metre buffer and how that's secured and whether that's just a throwaway commitment, the legal certainty there is that that's secured under the outline, Layout and Design Principles document, which is rep 4032. And you'll see in that document it says the minimum distance between residential property boundary and table areas is approximately 25m.

00:44:12:12 - 00:44:39:08

And the way in which that's secured. Again we referred to it earlier but is through requirement five in schedule two of the DCO, which when submitting detailed design for approval to local authority, the details submitted must accord with the outline layout design principle. So any final design of the project must submit the detail that has a minimum distance of approximately 25m. So there is that securing mechanism already secured in the DCO.

00:44:41:14 - 00:45:06:24

And then final brief point was just to clarify that the expert has since been to site, and this will be reflected in the assessment and analysis that's provided at deadline six. The expert has now seen firsthand the properties that are going to be captured as part of that assessment. And rather than trying to repeat those myself here, we can just incorporate that into the information that we provided at deadline six.

00:45:08:18 - 00:45:40:08

I'm sorry, Inspector, there was a factual error there in what was just said that requires correction. Um, Mr. Yates said only 84 and the other 60 and 12 are now no longer an issue. The actual figure is 156. If you included the 60 and the 12 that have been removed as part of the change. So what's actually now remaining despite the change after the change is actually 84. So that's just quite an important clarification.

00:45:40:10 - 00:46:21:06

And in on this point about the national policy and residual impacts, the national policy and the national interest for need, and what the policy in one tells us, is not a shield for not having done your assessments. It is not a shield against not having done your proper work. And if you're going to look at paragraphs within N1 that says residual impacts will exceptionally be the reason for pushing something and saying no, you need to be able to reach a view that those impacts are indeed residual, and they haven't produced the evidence for you to be able to do that.

00:46:21:08 - 00:46:31:00

So the national policy is important, don't get me wrong. And nobody's going to be disagreeing. But national policy is not a shield against not having done the proper work you should have done.

00:46:33:00 - 00:46:34:17

Thank you. Um,

00:46:36:14 - 00:46:49:20

we're going to leave. I have got several questions on landscape, but we're very aware of the time. So we're going to leave those for a rule 17 letter. And I'm now going to pass over to Mr. Shaikh for the next agenda item. Thank you.

00:46:50:21 - 00:47:32:21

Thank you, Miss Metcalf. So we're on agenda item three. This is traffic and transport. Transport. I think my first question we sort of just sort of discussed earlier this morning, but I just want to go through it again just to make sure that my understanding is correct from the early discussions. And it's regarding the improvement works on the A40. So the question is to the host authorities. Would I be right in thinking what you're seeking from the applicant is a section 278 agreement. That means that should they, you know, dig up the works during construction activities, what you're asking from them to actually resurface it back on, and that's the commitment you're seeking from them, would be agreed through a section 278 notice.

00:47:33:27 - 00:48:04:23

Thank you. George Gurney, Oxfordshire County Council. Um, I think there's two elements of this. I think the ideal solution for both parties is that, uh, ducting is placed beneath the roundabout in advance of the in advance of the applicants works coming forward, or we're undertaking our works. Therefore, we can resurface the whole roundabout as part of our works, and the road doesn't need to be dug up again. So that's what we're currently working with the applicant on to try and find a solution for that problem. And that might be the same. That might take the form of a section 278 agreement. We haven't quite worked out the mechanism yet.

00:48:05:22 - 00:48:37:00

The the second part of what we're looking for is a fallback position within the DCO. If we can't, for whatever reason, reach that agreement in advance of the decision being made. We'd like some kind of fallback whereby the applicant is required to resurface the entirety of the engine roundabout in the event that they have to dig it up to undertake their work. And that's sort of in the interest of public safety and the issues that might come from the additional maintenance requirements of us of a trench being dug through the resurface roundabout.

00:48:37:02 - 00:48:40:06

So, like I said, there's two elements we're looking for, I think, in this particular issue.

00:48:40:23 - 00:48:44:22

Okay. Um, any comments from the applicant on what we've just said.

00:48:45:19 - 00:49:17:10

On behalf of the applicant, not just to say we agree with what's being said there, and we're working with Oxfordshire County Council to try and secure that mechanism. Um, we have reached out to the council based on a draft section 278 agreement that we've received. That was on the basis that it's drafted when the developer would normally carry out the works, whereas here the the proposals, obviously, the council would carry out the works on behalf of the applicants or in discussions around how that section 278 agreement would look. There's a meeting, believe, the 16th of October in the diary to help us progress that, and we'll take that away.

00:49:17:12 - 00:49:34:12

We've heard the request for the fallback position. Um, as the council have said, we agree our priority would be to secure it through the section two, seven, eight. It'd be better for both parties, but we can look to build in provision as a fallback that if that's not done in time, then obviously we could crack on and do the work ourselves, subject to the controls that we can look to build in.

00:49:35:26 - 00:50:01:17

Thank you, Mr. Yates. So my second question is regarding the construction traffic management plan. So there appears to be some confusion over the trigger point for a new TMP during the course of a panel replacement in the operation phase. Are you happy that the various management plans record that when 30% of the panels are in place, a new construction traffic management plan will need to be produced? That's a question to the host authority. Sorry. Yes.

00:50:02:05 - 00:50:33:12

Thank you. Yeah. I think we outlined in our in our most recent answer to the questions that, um, there was a bit of confusion around that 30% figure. I think we weren't looking for 30% of the scheme in its entirety. We were looking for 30%. If in the eventuality that 30% panels were replaced within any of the project, the three project areas, so specifically the North and central or the southern area, um, that would be the trigger for the requirement for an additional TMP. So it wasn't 30%. The scheme was of a whole. It was 30% of one of those project areas.

00:50:33:14 - 00:50:53:12

I think we proposed wording for a requirement which would sort of capture that, uh, that trigger to that effect. So it wasn't 30% of the panels in total. It was that sort of specific scenario that we were looking for as a trigger. And the basis of that was roughly based on the number of HGV movements that that might require to replace that number of solar panels.

00:50:54:29 - 00:51:02:23

Okay. So what you see before is a new CMP. Should 30% of each of the panels in each of the individual areas. Okay.

00:51:04:11 - 00:51:08:06

So any response, any comments from the applicant before we move on to the next question.

00:51:21:07 - 00:51:51:20

On behalf of the applicant. So not much more to add at this stage. Um, it would just be to flag obviously the commitment that was added into the outline operational management plan at deadline, for which I'm sure the council is aware where we tried to be helpful based on how we understood the the council's concern to be around securing that the applicant will not replace more than 30% of panels in a single year we'll take away and consider that requirement now to see if it can be amended to reflect each of the sites. Obviously again, that will be subject to instructions, but we'll take that away.

00:51:53:12 - 00:52:12:19

Thank you. So turning to aviation question for the applicant. So regarding thermal um flu modelling, has this been firstly has it been completed. If not, when is it likely to be completed. And if it has been completed, are you able to provide a brief summary of the findings, including whether or not it identified potential impacts on radar performance?

00:52:13:26 - 00:52:18:02

Toby, it's, um, half of the applicant. Um, I'll pass over to Mr. Plum here. Thank you.

00:52:20:02 - 00:52:53:05

Thank you, James Plum, on behalf of the applicant. So the, um, thermal plume modelling is currently being finalised. Um, and we're expecting the report to be with us soon. I have spoken to the, um, to the specialists that we're using for the computational fluid dynamics modelling, and they have advised me that the initial results suggest impacts towards Oxford airports flight paths would be minimal. Um, supporting the conclusions of our earlier work. Um, but we have not received the full report yet.

00:52:53:20 - 00:53:09:03

Once we do, we will share this with Oxford airports and also submit, um, to the planning authority. Um, we intend to submit this at deadline six if possible, but that is contingent on us receiving the report from the third party.

00:53:10:19 - 00:53:14:29

Can I ask, did it, uh, show any impacts on radar performance at all?

00:53:17:26 - 00:53:49:23

Times on behalf of the applicant. Um, in terms of radar impacts, the the mechanisms for this are, um, are not. Well, um, they are well understood in terms of atmospheric refraction being a factor, um, in radar performance, it is something which is, um, dealt with over any urban development specifically, um, anywhere where you've got a sort of heat sink, which is going to affect this would have a similar effect to a solar farm.

00:53:49:25 - 00:54:23:08

So, um, just to give some context, in the area of the development, you've obviously got the urban area of Oxford, which would have a similar effect. Um, in terms of any atmospheric refraction being caused, the initial results of the um, of the modelling. Obviously we haven't received the full results yet, but they indicate that the increase in air temperature would be approximately less than one degree Celsius, and this would be unlikely to be significant in terms of atmospheric refraction.

00:54:23:18 - 00:54:47:08

Um, the um, in order to consider things in more detail, would require further information from central affected parties on what they would expect and mechanism for any interference to be um, because As there is thus far no evidence of any radar installations being affected by this issue of atmospheric refraction caused by thermal plume.

00:54:49:02 - 00:55:16:08

Thank you sir. I'll ask my next question and then I'll ask Oxford Aviation if they want to provide a response on what we've just heard. So again, to the applicant, in your response to SSC 216 eight, you

stated that the project seeks to avoid any increase in bird strike bird strike rates through the placement of bird mitigation areas. Can you provide further details on what and where these mitigation areas are, and also what assurances can the applicant provide that these mitigation areas will be effective?

00:55:19:20 - 00:55:20:05

I think.

00:55:20:07 - 00:55:20:22

That's one.

00:55:20:24 - 00:55:22:15

For the applicant. Um, the

00:55:24:14 - 00:55:25:18

bird mitigation areas.

00:55:25:20 - 00:55:26:05

Are.

00:55:27:07 - 00:55:27:26

Primarily to.

00:55:27:28 - 00:55:30:04

Provide habitat for.

00:55:31:03 - 00:55:33:00

The farm and bird assemblage that's present.

00:55:33:02 - 00:55:33:17

Across the.

00:55:33:19 - 00:55:34:04

Application.

00:55:34:06 - 00:55:37:01

Site currently. Um, they are Your.

00:55:37:19 - 00:55:38:04

Uh.

00:55:39:09 - 00:55:40:24

Spread through.

00:55:40:26 - 00:55:41:11

The.

00:55:41:13 - 00:55:41:28

Site, and.

00:55:42:00 - 00:55:42:15

They're not in in.

00:55:42:18 - 00:55:43:05

Any one.

00:55:43:07 - 00:55:46:14

Location. In terms of the bird strike risk.

00:55:46:16 - 00:55:47:25

That's, um.

00:55:48:07 - 00:55:49:01

Uh, the.

00:55:50:07 - 00:55:51:07

Uh, Oxford Aviation.

00:55:51:09 - 00:55:53:01

Have raised concerns about.

00:55:53:03 - 00:55:53:18

We've engaged.

00:55:53:20 - 00:55:55:26

With them. Uh, post.

00:55:55:28 - 00:55:57:01

Previous issue specific.

00:55:57:03 - 00:55:58:25

Hearing on this on this subject.

00:55:58:27 - 00:55:59:18

And.

00:55:59:20 - 00:56:00:05

Have.

00:56:00:07 - 00:56:00:25

Uh, subsequently.

00:56:00:27 - 00:56:01:14

Updated.

00:56:01:16 - 00:56:02:01

The.

00:56:02:13 - 00:56:06:25

Uh, Olymp to include, uh, reference to.

00:56:06:29 - 00:56:08:07

Some, uh.

00:56:08:09 - 00:56:08:24

The use.

00:56:08:26 - 00:56:12:11

Of the CIA's, uh, cap.

00:56:12:13 - 00:56:13:09

772 wildlife.

00:56:13:11 - 00:56:15:23

Management processes in the.

00:56:15:25 - 00:56:16:19

Area surrounding.

00:56:16:21 - 00:56:17:08

Their.

00:56:17:21 - 00:56:26:13

Uh, the, uh, the aerodrome, um, and the, uh, applicants position in terms of the broader.

00:56:26:15 - 00:56:27:00

Bird.

00:56:27:02 - 00:56:29:23

Strike risk for the site as a whole, is that it would be.

00:56:29:25 - 00:56:33:15

Less than the current that is currently present within the.

00:56:33:17 - 00:56:36:22

Uh, an agricultural landscape. Agricultural landscapes are.

00:56:36:24 - 00:56:39:04

Recognized within cat 772 as one of.

00:56:39:06 - 00:56:39:21

The.

00:56:39:23 - 00:56:40:08

Types of.

00:56:42:20 - 00:56:45:21

Land use that is subject.

00:56:45:23 - 00:56:46:09

To.

00:56:46:22 - 00:56:49:29

Where you have to have concern with respect to bird strike risk. And that's primarily.

00:56:50:15 - 00:56:51:03

My understanding.

00:56:51:05 - 00:56:52:10

That that is primarily.

00:56:52:12 - 00:56:56:22

Due to, uh, where you have goals and.

00:56:57:00 - 00:57:00:21

Um, larger species that follow plowing, where you have land use that.

00:57:00:23 - 00:57:01:22

Turns up the mud, the.

00:57:01:24 - 00:57:02:16

Birds are coming in to.

00:57:02:18 - 00:57:03:03

Feed, and.

00:57:03:05 - 00:57:03:20

They come in in.

00:57:03:22 - 00:57:04:07

Large.

00:57:04:09 - 00:57:04:24

Flocks. And that is an.

00:57:04:26 - 00:57:05:18

Aviation cleaning.

00:57:05:20 - 00:57:06:23

The aviation risk.

00:57:07:06 - 00:57:07:23

Um.

00:57:08:16 - 00:57:15:27

The removal of that uh, process from probably.

00:57:16:21 - 00:57:18:18

Uh, two thirds of the site.

00:57:19:24 - 00:57:25:29

Um, would it follows reduce that risk in terms of, uh.

00:57:26:21 - 00:57:27:14

Uh, making sure.

00:57:27:16 - 00:57:30:02

That there aren't, um, large.

00:57:30:04 - 00:57:32:20

Flocks of gulls present within the development.

00:57:40:06 - 00:57:42:15

Do we have Oxford Aviation online?

00:57:43:21 - 00:57:45:01

Uh, yes.

00:57:45:06 - 00:58:17:24

Will Curtis here, on behalf of Oxford Aviation? I'm managing director. Um, if we can start with thermal plume. Um, as yet, of course, we haven't received the applicants to report on this, but we're conscious that we've just about six weeks left remaining in this process. It's going to be extremely difficult for us to get a peer review of that report done. We have prospectively lined up some expertise, but it's all time dependent because they can't guarantee to have time available.

00:58:17:26 - 00:58:57:17

So that's disappointing. Um, and I think the point I'd like to make is that we don't deal with in aviation with there may be no issue. We don't think there'll be an issue. We deal in absolutes of safety. We have to have the applicant demonstrate clearly that there will be no effect. Before we could say we, we would have no objection to the application because clearly, from a safety point of view, if there were adverse effects, then, um, uh, you know, then, um, that would be an issue for, say, turbulence in flight.

00:58:57:19 - 00:59:28:24

Well, aircraft don't generally fly over central Oxford, so that point is null. Uh, and therefore thermal incline over Oxford probably isn't so much of an issue for primary radar returns. But out to the West, it very much is because a lot of gliding activity and gliders don't carry, um, air traffic transponders. We rely on primary returns from the radar, which is basically the reflected radar signal. And a glider is very low profile, made of mainly of fibreglass rather than metal.

00:59:28:26 - 00:59:59:20

So its radar reflection is very limited, and the slightest upset in the atmosphere potentially means that we'll miss those gliders. And I mean, it's you know, it's not an exaggeration to say that the radar will pick up, you know, an echelon of geese, for instance, flying, and that will appear as a blip on the radar as if it were an aircraft. They're that sensitive. So and, you know, they'll do that at ten miles distance from the airport. So we do have concerns about that. But I really can't say more till we've received the report.

00:59:59:22 - 01:00:32:27

Other than that report will need for us to, you know, to not to have any objection. That report will need to make empirical statements that there are no effects. And then coming on to bird strikes, I think we covered last time that bird strikes affect all classes of aircraft, not just light aircraft. They actually have a disproportionate effect on larger aircraft because bird ingestion in the engines will typically destroy the engine. The aircraft will then make an unscheduled off field landing, which, you know, they're big, heavy and it's not a good thing.

01:00:32:29 - 01:01:03:26

And we do put a lot of effort into bird control in accordance with CAA guidance. And the applicants have said they will apply that CAA guidance in and around the airport as it reflects the solar farm. But none of that addresses displacement. So we currently control bird populations and we have times of year when we have more birds, we have times a year and we have fewer, but we're always controlling birds. And I'm looking out the window now. I can see the bird control vehicle out on the aircraft or out on the airfield.

01:01:04:11 - 01:01:36:18

The issue we have is if you put 1400 hectares of Oxfordshire under solar panels, and the birds have to find somewhere else to go, they're going to aim for the green areas. And the airport surface itself is one of those green areas, and the undershoot is one of its green areas. Now, the applicant just said that, um, agricultural land is known to attract birds. But in actual fact, if you read there or as I read their documentation, they say that this land will be returned. The land that's no longer to have solar panels will return to agricultural use.

01:01:36:20 - 01:02:18:29

So clearly there is a risk inherent in returning that land to agricultural use. And the risk is displacement. Now, today, as agricultural land, it has its fair share of birds. But those birds are shared with the other 1400 hectares that will soon be under solar panels. So I suppose our question is how much is the displacement? And none of the reports we've seen address the issue of displacement. And again, I come back to the point where in assessing the risk we face, we need to understand what factor of displacement is likely to occur so that we can assess whether or not that presents a risk because we don't have the luxury.

01:02:19:01 - 01:02:35:25

I'm afraid of taking an assurance. We have to have some evidence based approach to everything that we do in terms of safety and and indeed, that's what the CIA will expect us to be able to show that we have an evidence based risk assessment. Hazard identification and risk assessment.

01:02:38:10 - 01:02:38:25

Okay.

01:02:38:27 - 01:02:42:12

Any comments from the applicant on that? We've just heard from Oxford Aviation.

01:02:43:09 - 01:03:20:00

So on behalf of the applicant I'll pass to Mr. Ibbetson to reply in a second. I just wanted to get the general reminder out there that obviously the attention in this hearings has switched to safety from bird strike, which Mr. Betsy can come back to. But we'd heard from the airport at the first round of hearings that the primary concern for the airport and safety was around the safety zones. And obviously I'm sure they examined authority, are aware. But I just wanted to remind that as a result of change request two, we've now amended that boundary in response to feedback we've had from the airport from a safety perspective, to ensure now that any safety risk has been drastically reduced.

01:03:20:02 - 01:03:22:09

But in terms of bird strike, that be for Mr. Benson.

01:03:25:17 - 01:03:30:29

Ibbetson for the applicant. Um, the, the the land in which the project.

01:03:31:01 - 01:03:31:25

Site sits was.

01:03:31:27 - 01:03:34:17

Studied extensively with respect to its bird population.

01:03:34:19 - 01:03:35:07

We did two years.

01:03:35:09 - 01:03:35:24

Worth.

01:03:35:26 - 01:03:36:26

Of surveys across through.

01:03:36:28 - 01:03:41:11

Two wintering periods, which is double what most solar farm or.

01:03:41:13 - 01:03:41:28

In fact, every.

01:03:42:00 - 01:03:42:17

Solar farm that I'm.

01:03:42:19 - 01:03:43:25

Aware of has done.

01:03:44:13 - 01:03:51:23

We did not find during that time that there were, uh, significant flocks of um, uh, species.

01:03:51:25 - 01:03:55:19

That would be of risk to aviation, such as gulls.

01:03:55:21 - 01:03:57:03

On anything but a.

01:03:57:17 - 01:03:58:18

Um, periodic.

01:03:58:29 - 01:03:59:27

There might be one time.

01:03:59:29 - 01:04:02:29

When a flock of lapwing, for example, landed in a field.

01:04:03:12 - 01:04:07:29

When that field was wet, the displacement of those birds into the surrounding.

01:04:08:01 - 01:04:08:25

Landscape.

01:04:08:27 - 01:04:09:12

They would be.

01:04:09:14 - 01:04:09:29

Absorbed.

01:04:10:01 - 01:04:10:16

By.

01:04:10:18 - 01:04:11:03

The.

01:04:11:05 - 01:04:13:26

Surrounding landscape. And I would be I don't think there's any way that.

01:04:13:28 - 01:04:14:13

You could.

01:04:14:15 - 01:04:15:08

Look at where you would measure.

01:04:15:10 - 01:04:16:19

That. That was the case without.

01:04:16:21 - 01:04:23:25

Tagging those birds, ringing them and tracking where they were going. So from the point of view of being able to provide certainty that those birds Is.

01:04:24:10 - 01:04:30:10

Uh, are being displaced. Um, where they would be displaced to.

01:04:30:22 - 01:04:31:10

Or we can.

01:04:31:12 - 01:04:32:03

Say is that they would.

01:04:32:05 - 01:04:32:20

Be.

01:04:32:22 - 01:04:33:07

Displaced.

01:04:33:09 - 01:04:34:17

Into the surrounding landscape if they chose to.

01:04:34:19 - 01:04:35:04

Leave the.

01:04:35:06 - 01:04:37:00

Site. And species.

01:04:37:02 - 01:04:38:12
Such as lapwing might well.

01:04:38:23 - 01:04:39:10
Stay within the.

01:04:39:12 - 01:04:39:27
Development.

01:04:39:29 - 01:04:40:22
Site, because the.

01:04:40:24 - 01:04:41:28
Even low corridor.

01:04:42:00 - 01:04:42:15
That's.

01:04:42:17 - 01:04:45:10
Being provided within the development is exactly the sort of habitat.

01:04:45:12 - 01:04:50:06
That they like. Um, so if there was any displacement and I point.

01:04:50:08 - 01:04:50:23
That was.

01:04:50:25 - 01:04:51:10
Made at.

01:04:51:12 - 01:04:51:27
The.

01:04:51:29 - 01:04:52:14
Previous.

01:04:52:16 - 01:04:53:01
Issue of.

01:04:53:03 - 01:04:53:18
Specific hearing.

01:04:53:20 - 01:04:54:05

If.

01:04:54:07 - 01:04:54:22

There.

01:04:54:24 - 01:04:55:09

Was.

01:04:55:11 - 01:04:55:26

Any.

01:04:55:28 - 01:04:56:13

Displacement.

01:04:56:15 - 01:04:57:00

It's very likely that displacement.

01:04:57:02 - 01:04:57:17

Would be on to the airfield, because the airfield.

01:04:57:19 - 01:04:58:04

Is managed in such.

01:04:58:06 - 01:04:58:22

A manner that it doesn't make it.

01:04:58:24 - 01:04:59:28

Attractive to birds.

01:05:01:01 - 01:05:01:19

So

01:05:03:07 - 01:05:04:09

it's difficult for us.

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

As, um, as applicants.

01:05:06:13 - 01:05:07:09

To be able to say for sure.

01:05:07:11 - 01:05:08:21

We are not going to put any birds onto.

01:05:08:23 - 01:05:10:19

The airfield. Or we can say is that the airfield do manage.

01:05:10:21 - 01:05:13:07

Their land to be.

01:05:13:16 - 01:05:14:23

Unattractive to birds.

01:05:14:25 - 01:05:15:10

And.

01:05:15:12 - 01:05:15:27

The.

01:05:15:29 - 01:05:16:28

Population of birds that's present.

01:05:17:00 - 01:05:17:19

On the sites.

01:05:17:21 - 01:05:18:06

That.

01:05:18:08 - 01:05:18:23

We've that we've.

01:05:18:25 - 01:05:20:06

Studied is not something that.

01:05:20:08 - 01:05:20:23

Would.

01:05:20:25 - 01:05:21:23

Be that would.

01:05:21:25 - 01:05:26:12

Uh, Pose a risk to aviation in terms of very.

01:05:26:14 - 01:05:31:09

Large flocks of gold. So we're not in a position where we have, um, where we.

01:05:31:11 - 01:05:31:26

Have.

01:05:31:28 - 01:05:32:13

A.

01:05:32:15 - 01:05:33:00

Special protection.

01:05:33:02 - 01:05:35:27

Area. It's designated for its birds, where you have hundreds of geese, for example. We just.

01:05:35:29 - 01:05:36:19

Didn't find that sort.

01:05:36:21 - 01:05:37:06

Of.

01:05:37:08 - 01:05:37:23

Bird.

01:05:37:25 - 01:05:38:25

Population within the development side.

01:05:40:16 - 01:05:47:13

So just just to make sure I've understood correctly. So what you're saying is you believe displacement is not going to be an issue and therefore mitigation is not required.

01:05:50:09 - 01:05:50:25

For the applicant.

01:05:50:27 - 01:05:51:28

Yes. That's correct.

01:05:52:06 - 01:05:54:21

Thank you. I believe Mr. Wallace has a question.

01:05:55:09 - 01:06:24:00

Yes. Thank you. Um, you heard from Oxford Aviation Services that no agricultural land will attract birds. And where you're you've taken the panels out from the end of the one way that the land goes back to agricultural use. And there's the comment about sharing, if you'd like to know, some birds might go into that field, but they shared amongst the other 14. What do you say in terms of the potential for bird strike from that Reinstated agricultural field. If you like.

01:06:26:00 - 01:06:28:14

Best of the applicant. I would think that it would remain.

01:06:28:16 - 01:06:29:12

As it is.

01:06:29:20 - 01:06:37:20

Currently, the chances of, um. As I said, that land was part of the development site that we studied.
Um, so

01:06:39:11 - 01:06:41:01

there wasn't, uh,

01:06:43:00 - 01:06:44:09

large flocks of birds observed.

01:06:44:11 - 01:06:45:09

In that area.

01:06:45:25 - 01:06:47:05

Um, any birds that were.

01:06:47:17 - 01:06:53:27

Observed, um, across the site were um.

01:06:54:23 - 01:06:55:08

They were spread.

01:06:55:10 - 01:06:57:17

Out, spread throughout the site. So I think.

01:06:57:19 - 01:06:58:04

The.

01:06:58:06 - 01:06:58:21

Risk.

01:06:58:23 - 01:07:01:27

Of there being any of the, um, number of birds occurring in that location.

01:07:01:29 - 01:07:03:07

Specifically because it is.

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

Now is being retained as agriculture, um, is is limited.

01:07:09:18 - 01:07:11:12

Okay. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Sheikh.

01:07:13:14 - 01:07:36:09

Okay. So my final question on this topic is to the Defense Infrastructure Organization. I know they're not here, but I'm just going to read out the questions just so we can record it as an action point. So in the second round of written questions. Question 2.1.5 asked the Defense Infrastructure Organization to set out their position regarding the proposed development and potential for interference with military assets,

01:07:38:00 - 01:08:02:11

in particular whether there is any impediment or infringement caused by the proposed development on national security or the ability for national defenses to operate and function effectively. They were also asked if they did have any concerns, what mitigation measures would they be seeking from the applicant? We have to date not received a response from from the Defense Infrastructure Organization to this question, and therefore, we will now record this as an action point for them.

01:08:05:05 - 01:08:06:26

Okay. Any questions?

01:08:12:21 - 01:08:16:16

Are there any questions or comments from anyone online?

01:08:23:12 - 01:09:06:20

Mr. Harrison, a resident in ancient from my local knowledge. Um, there's a great deal of water, um, in this part of Oxfordshire. Gravel pits. And of course, you've got the lakes at Blenheim, um, built by Capability Brown. Um, there are large quantities of geese of various sorts and swans that commute, um, between all these water bodies and during the winter months, um, over the last few years, one cannot escape noticing that a large number of swans seem to roost in the fields.

01:09:07:00 - 01:09:37:04

Um, south of the drive to Purley Farm and, um goose I farm. Um, and they're visible from the the A49 sorry the lower road. And if these are displaced, um, then surely the song being the biggest bird flying in Britain? Um, they do must represent quite a significant additional risk. Thank you.

01:09:40:28 - 01:09:44:19

I believe Mr. Ned in second. Oh.

01:09:46:22 - 01:09:47:07

Uh, yes.

01:09:47:09 - 01:10:19:08

Thank you. And, uh. Oh, in on behalf of Oxford Aviation Services Limited alongside Will. Um, just a couple of quick points and with noting, I think, um, in terms of the applicant position then on, um, the strike risk, I think that the applicant did suggest that they couldn't be entirely sure that they won't increase activity on the airport, but then that's for the airport to manage. But just add there that, and the National Policy Statement at 5.5.

01:10:19:10 - 01:11:02:20

41N1 that is uh, highlights, uh, the very important, um, nature and requirement to consider bird strike risk. And it does state there that it's important that any buildings or infrastructure, as well as environmental mitigation, are designed in such a way so as not to increase bird strike risk at the airport. Um, the so I think when you turn in general, then um, particularly having regard for 5.5.51 of the national policy statement, uh, which requires that the Secretary of State be satisfied that the proposal minimizes adverse impacts on the operation and safety of the airdrome.

01:11:02:22 - 01:11:45:04

I think the comments made by will identify that certainly in terms of bird strike and in terms of thermals, where we sit now is that there isn't the evidence there that suggests to us that there isn't a risk to the operation and safety of the aerodrome, and it's not yet been satisfied. And so then I'd question under paragraph 5.5.51 at this stage where the Secretary state can be satisfied of that point. Uh, and then just finally, there was a point made at the very beginning of the session today about the removal of the land of um, 40 hectares around the airport and it coming during the termination process rather than before.

01:11:45:08 - 01:12:21:22

There was a suggestion by the applicant team, uh, that this couldn't really have been done before, um, in part due to availability of safeguarding mapping. Um, there's one point about what the safe garden zone mapping is supposed to do, and I'm sure Will would be better place to touch on that. But just to be very clear that the area of land that was removed was shared and consulted with the applicant prior to submission of this application and that is referenced within our earlier submissions, but also it's referenced in the applicant's own submissions.

01:12:21:24 - 01:12:53:12

The Technical Area Safeguarding Report, which is Rep 4013, page 134, notes that that report is there to respond to the comments from Oxford Airport given during consultation. So it's not the case that this request to remove the land, um, related to engine failure after takeoff was not known before submission. It was it was chosen not to act on the force submission, but then was acted on during. And the airport welcomes that and it welcomes that.

01:12:53:14 - 01:12:58:23

That land was removed. But I just wanted to clarify that it was known before submission.

01:13:01:03 - 01:13:04:05

Thank you. I believe Mister Curtis next online.

01:13:04:25 - 01:13:40:12

Uh, yes. Will Curtis on behalf of Oxford airport. Um, I fully agree with own statements. Um, the safeguarding map, by the way, for the airport deals only with the vertical extent of, um, building. So it's, it helps the developers and the planning authority identify whether or not they need to engage with the airport in relation to the height of any development. Would it breach the safeguarded the notion of safeguarded slopes at the airport? What the safeguarding map doesn't always deal with, or doesn't deal with at all is it's changes to surface use.

01:13:40:14 - 01:14:11:07

But clearly where a change to surface use might impact the present or future use of an airdrome, the National Planning Policy Framework clearly makes the case that, and particularly in the case of um energy infrastructure, that that there has to be the use of the airport has to be considered. Um, and then in terms of the agricultural land, um, the point I'm making is one of displacement, not not one of, um, returning it to its original use.

01:14:11:13 - 01:14:43:00

If. If we turn 1400 acres of West Oxfordshire into a solar farm, and the birds in the area decide to aim only for green bits or agricultural land, it seems obvious to me there'll be an increase in the density of the population on the green areas because they've been displaced from the solar farm areas. So and actually, we have an obligation under Cap 72 to go out to 13km.

01:14:43:02 - 01:15:19:29

We have to annually consider all the wildlife activity within 13km to the airport, and we have to take into account any development that might give rise to a change in wildlife activity. And that's a function that we carry out internally. Uh, it's quite an exhaustive exercise. Um, it's a bit like painting the fourth bridge, because as soon as you've finished, you have to start again. But this solar farm gives us concerns in that regard. First of all, how would we get into the solar, a live solar farm, to make that assessment? Um, we don't think that's as easy as it ought to be.

01:15:20:01 - 01:15:47:18

And secondly, uh, we have to, um, ask the question of the applicant in advance. You know, what is this going to mean for the displacement of wildlife? Because once it's built, it's too late to find out that there is actually an effect we didn't anticipate. Um, that then puts the limitations on the operation of our business or, um, causes a safety issue. So that's that's why we're focused on it. Um, perhaps, you know, to the degree that we are.

01:15:49:13 - 01:16:19:16

And I noticed that the applicant suggested that we conflated bird strike with safety. But of course, bird strike is very much a safety issue. There's no getting away from the fact that if an aircraft is, you know, makes contact with a bird, say, safety is definitely, um, Under threat, shall we say? In the worst case, it's a you know, it's a catastrophic accident, as was nearly the case with the Hudson River. If you remember, when the 737 swallowed some geese and ended up landing in the river.

01:16:20:04 - 01:16:25:21

Everybody survived, which was a, I think, a happy, a happy result. But it's not always the same way.

01:16:28:03 - 01:16:30:25

Thank you, Mister Curtis. So Councillor Westcott next.

01:16:32:14 - 01:16:52:12

Thank you, Chris Westcott, Cumnor Parish Council. Um, can I just make sure I understood that I heard something correctly? Did I hear the applicant say that over two years, I think of assessments that no large assemblages of birds were found in fields within the Red line boundary. That's what I think.

01:16:52:14 - 01:16:54:22

I heard no large assemblages of birds.

01:16:54:24 - 01:16:55:09

That would.

01:16:55:11 - 01:16:56:04

Be a risk.

01:16:56:06 - 01:16:56:25

To aircraft.

01:16:56:27 - 01:16:58:04

Oh, that would be a risk to aircraft.

01:16:58:06 - 01:17:04:18

Okay, no we did we did find large assemblages. Birds. Absolutely. But not we didn't find that the site supported thousands of geese.

01:17:04:20 - 01:17:05:05

Okay.

01:17:05:11 - 01:17:49:29

That might come as news to the Royal Society of the Protection of Birds, and to the many ornithologists that gather in and around the farm or reservoir and its nature reserves on a regular basis, and maybe to help the applicant. Can I suggest that you pull up BBC iPlayer and watch BBC one Country file, transmitted on the 5th of January this year. It was actually hosted at far more and featured extensive sequences about the birds that live on the fields around that, including photography taken on the field that the applicant plans to put its neat substation on, which showed a very rare breed of white geese, which I understand and originally were blown here many years ago from North America, plus extensive flocks of Canada geese.

01:17:50:02 - 01:17:57:19

It's on BBC one. Countryfile transmitted 5th of January 2025 within the Red line area. Thank you.

01:17:59:26 - 01:18:03:17

Thank you, Mr. Scott. The applicant. I'd like to respond to what we've just heard.

01:18:04:22 - 01:18:43:21

Nick Benson for the applicant. Um, I think that the, uh, the, uh, far more reservoir isn't within the development site. It's not within the area, and it wasn't within the study area. And therefore, products that are associated with the farm or reservoir wouldn't have been recorded. The work that we've done to inform the development in terms of survey work is, uh, as I said, over the course of two years, not that is by its nature a snapshot, but it is in accordance with the sort of with the standard, uh, for this kind of development.

01:18:43:23 - 01:19:16:22

And it's the it's in accordance with the, uh, process that Natural England require to demonstrate functionally linked land with respect to space. If you do two years worth of surveys and don't find large flocks of special interest feature birds, then that is the land can be considered not to be functionally linked to the spa, even if it's in close proximity to it. And therefore, while there may not be, while there may be instances where flocks do occur and I'm sure associated with far more reservoir, that on occasion when a field is particularly damp,

01:19:18:09 - 01:19:51:22

particularly suitable for a particular species of bird, that they will be using those areas. So it isn't it isn't a case that, um, you can. As with everything in ecology, you can never say never, that you're never going to have large flocks of birds in an area. What you can say is on the balance of probability, but based on the information that we've gathered to date, which is based on best practice and based on the guidelines for survey work that you could, um, that Natural England have in terms of their demonstrating use of a land by a particular species.

01:19:52:04 - 01:19:53:14

That is what was found.

01:19:55:01 - 01:20:00:24

Would it help if I sent photographs I personally taken of the birds on the fields within the DCO boundary?

01:20:02:00 - 01:20:08:22

Yes. Any information you want us to consider, please do submit into the examination. And then the applicant has a fair chance to respond as well.

01:20:08:24 - 01:20:10:04

Thank you. Thank you. Will do.

01:20:12:15 - 01:20:15:16

Okay. I believe we have a mr. Sinjin online.

01:20:18:21 - 01:20:20:24

Sorry, I haven't deleted my hand.

01:20:23:24 - 01:20:25:16

We can still hear you, Mr. Sinjin.

01:20:31:28 - 01:21:00:17

Okay. If you are now moving on to the next agenda item, which is noise. So, firstly, to the applicant, can you clarify your response to XQ 2.1.10 rep for iPhone 037. Are you agreeing to the TSA's proposal of having a separate subset of hours? It wasn't clear. So. So so during these subset of hours will you undertake the noise activities and if so, what will these hours be?

01:21:02:24 - 01:21:07:16

Maybe it's on behalf of the applicant. So I've just been joined by Mr. Colbert, who will deal with noise. Thank you.

01:21:11:06 - 01:21:13:04

Hello. Sorry. Could you just just.

01:21:13:06 - 01:21:13:21

Repeat the.

01:21:13:23 - 01:21:16:20

Question? It just was moving between. Between seats. Apologies.

01:21:16:24 - 01:21:49:22

That's right. It's regarding the response to our second round of written questions. And it was ask 2.1.10. So we asked the question whether you were considering a subset of ours. So it wasn't clear whether you agreed to our proposal. Having a subset of ours whereby you carry out the noisiest activities. So is that what you're proposing to do? So when you have your noise activity, you will conduct them during the hours of, I don't know, 730 till, you know, 6 p.m.. Are you agreeing to the subset of hours? And if you are doing so, or will those subset of hours be.

01:21:50:29 - 01:21:51:14

Yeah.

01:21:51:16 - 01:21:58:22

John Watkins, on behalf of the applicant. Yes. We've agreed to the hours that you proposed, which was the 730 till 6:00 for noisy works.

01:22:00:13 - 01:22:31:22

Thank you. That's useful. In second question to the applicant. So following on the response from Oxfordshire health authorities to excuse 2.1.12, which was Retford Hyphen 074, are you able to estimate the reduction in construction period when comparing your proposed hours to those stated by the host authorities, where work ends at 1 p.m. on a Saturday? So you've got two options. You've got one where you work and do your construction to the hours, which is Monday to Saturday, whatever.

01:22:31:24 - 01:22:44:03

The hours were seven till 630. Or if you were then to accept what the host authorities are proposing whereby you you know, you you stop work on a one at 1 p.m. on a Saturday. What were the difference in construction period be?

01:22:47:24 - 01:22:59:18

John Watkins, on behalf of the applicant, we'll have to take that that question around, come back and say what the period will be because it'll be you'll be losing six hours a day For two years on every Saturday.

01:23:01:00 - 01:23:32:10

He said to the host authorities. So in terms of greater impact, so going on to those two options, you've got the two options whereby you work the hours of the applicant proposing, whereby for six days of the week you're working whatever it is, you know, 730 till 6 p.m., and then you've got your proposed hours where you're finishing up 1 p.m. in terms of impacted residents, which is the greater impact whereby if they if you work to the applicant's hours, the construction period is shorter, whereas if you finish at 1 p.m.,

01:23:32:12 - 01:23:37:28

arguably the construction period will be, as an estimate, a few months longer. What would you prefer?

01:23:40:03 - 01:23:42:24

I'll defer that to West Oxfordshire District Council.

01:23:44:13 - 01:24:11:29

We haven't got our environmental health officer present to respond, but, um, yeah, maybe we'll come back to you with the in writing on that. Um, I mean personally. Yes, I should maybe I should say shouldn't. But it's Saturday, regarded as more unsociable as a time to be working. Maybe the, uh, yeah, the prolonged period would be more acceptable to bring peace to people during the unsociable hours of a weekend.

01:24:15:11 - 01:24:18:27

It. Would the applicant like to respond to that? Before I move on to the next question?

01:24:20:06 - 01:24:30:16

Um, like like we said, we'll come back and confirm the exact amount of site. John Watkins, on behalf of the applicant, we'll come back and confirm the exact time period for the extra, um, time frame.

01:24:31:00 - 01:24:35:17

You acknowledge the host authority, which was it's beneficial to finish at 1 p.m..

01:24:37:16 - 01:24:41:05

Yes. We recognise the response. We'll come back on in writing.

01:24:41:16 - 01:24:44:14

Thank you. Okay, my next question. Um.

01:24:46:29 - 01:25:06:19

To the applicant. So following on from your response to the second round of written question, which was EXC 2.1 .103. Rep 4037. Can you provide further details of the noise monitoring exercise you intend to undertake, and how the results could potentially influence design and operation management of the proposed scheme?

01:25:09:06 - 01:25:15:02

Richard Calvert on behalf of the applicant. Could you just clarify that during the construction phase or the operational phase?

01:25:17:13 - 01:25:27:05

I believe um, I think there's a there's a commitment from yourself to do noise monitoring in both phase. I think it's construction and operational.

01:25:28:14 - 01:25:54:09

It's a Richie Calvert on behalf of the applicant. We haven't yet committed to to doing, um, either construction phase monitoring or operational phase monitoring. Um, as it stands, the, uh, both the construction phase assessment and the operational phase assessment do not identify any significant adverse effects. And so there is no justification at this stage to undertake Specific noise monitoring during the stage.

01:25:55:18 - 01:26:11:11

I can't find the specific reference, but I'm sure you did respond by saying that certainly for the operational phase, that you intend to do some noise monitoring for the the commissioning period. As such, just to justify that what you've come up, what you determine during the assessment in the year is going to be correct.

01:26:12:01 - 01:26:20:06

Yes. It's Richard Calvert on behalf of the applicant. Yeah. We we will there will be some commissioning stage, um, noise monitoring. Yes.

01:26:21:15 - 01:26:23:27

And that's the question. So what will that entail?

01:26:24:24 - 01:26:43:01

That will entail, um, undertaking some specific noise measurements of the peaks, units and the substations just to ensure that they are operating to the well within the parameters to which we've assessed and to which we're given by the manufacturer. That will be part of a number of commissioning tests.

01:26:43:12 - 01:26:55:04

So once you've committed, once you've completed that noise monitoring exercise, will you then produce a report with findings, conclusions, Action points. What will happen after you've completed that noise monitoring? What's the next step?

01:26:55:16 - 01:27:15:06

Richard Calvert, on behalf of the applicant. Um, that hasn't yet been decided, but I'm sure we can produce some technical literature, um, that clarifies the exact outputs in terms of a number of parameters of the electrical equipment. Um, so I, you know, that that that is a significant issue. Thank you.

01:27:24:09 - 01:27:46:25

Following on from Mr. Walsh's question on the location of the the N substation substation under agenda item three, A if the location of the next substation is confirmed as being outside the order limits for cumulative noise effects. Explain how this specific location was used in your assessment methodology, and how results have been impacted in the design and layout choices.

01:27:49:09 - 01:28:29:21

Richard Calvert on behalf of the applicant. The n. If I'm understanding your question correctly, the net substation has been included within the order limit in terms of our assessment, and it has been given a noise level. The noise power output, should I say which was which was received from a national grid. So that has been included as part of part of our assessment. I think at this stage there does appear to when I've been following the proceedings today. There does appear to be some possible doubt, I think is maybe the correct word about whether that ingot substation will be within the order limits, or with the outside of the order limits.

01:28:29:25 - 01:29:01:26

Um, if it's inside the order limits, then we're the view that we've assessed the sort of maximum design scenario where we have all of our equipment, if you will, associated with the solar farm and the ingot substation as well, if the substation were to come forward separately, then it would be subject to a standard planning application, which would require full technical assessment in the same way that we have taken undertaking a technical assessment for for the noise emissions from from our site.

01:29:03:03 - 01:29:07:12

Thank you. Any comments from the host authorities on what we've just heard regarding proposed noise monitoring?

01:29:14:05 - 01:29:16:18

Okay. I'll now hand over to Mr. Wallace.

01:29:23:00 - 01:29:23:24

You have a hand up.

01:29:27:22 - 01:29:29:06

I am Hilary Brown.

01:29:29:08 - 01:30:22:28

A resident of Woodstock. Um, we're talking about noise monitoring, and, um, I think at a previous meeting here, at a previous hearing, uh, we spoke about the significant noise from the equipment, the transformers within the solar fields themselves. Um, and I'm pretty sure then and I can't remember the detail, but there was a discussion on monitoring throughout the 40 years because there is pretty significant noise and and it should be monitored now, how frequently I don't know, but but I think everyone who has visited a solar farm will know that the that there is a significant noise and that the siting of those that equipment is quite important in terms of we've talked about the impacts on local residents is is siting of that particular equipment will be very important.

01:30:23:00 - 01:30:32:00

So I'm surprised to hear there would be no monitoring once it's been commissioned. I would thought that was quite an important thing to consider.

01:30:35:22 - 01:30:37:10

Yeah, I didn't like to respond.

01:30:38:02 - 01:31:15:27

Yes, it's Richard Calvert speaking on behalf of the applicant. The I think there was there was a couple of points there. Um, the, citing the equipment is important, of course, as sound propagates in and does reduce as it as it propagates and the equipment is is located away from residential receptors. And that has all been the locations which have been decided upon as they stand, are located at the center, are located away from residential receptors, and they have been included into our calculation noise model and our assessments to show that there is no significant adverse effects.

01:31:16:12 - 01:31:44:10

I think on the second point, that was just about the noise, noise monitoring of them. So we said we would do that during the commissioning stage. And generally speaking, electrical equipment doesn't really change. It's when it's once it's commissioned and you know, it is maintained correctly which, which which it will be done. Of course, the the sound output doesn't really vary that much as it kind of as the equipment ages with, with an appropriate maintenance campaign on it.

01:31:44:22 - 01:31:58:22

Can I just record an action point? Can you provide details in writing in terms of when you actually intend to do the noise monitoring standards to which you can do those monitoring? And again, in a confirmation that you're producing reporting submitted to health authorities for comment.

01:32:00:22 - 01:32:07:05

Richard Calvert on behalf of the applicant. Yes, yes, we will provide that in writing at deadline six. Thank you.

01:32:07:15 - 01:32:14:16

And final question on noise to the applicant in terms of securing this, how will this be secured in the in the DCO.

01:32:16:27 - 01:32:59:21

So on behalf of the applicant. So there's current controls already in the DCO. And again that's through the outline Layout and Design Principles document. Most recent 14032. And that secures the maximum decibel limit from a noise perspective. So in relation to solar I did just have it up and I've lost it 92dB. So that's already secured. And that is from the basis for the assessments, as Mr. Culverts explained. And again, going back to Mr. Phillips points before about the need for requirements to be necessary on that basis, using that maximum decibel limit and the fact that it leads to no significant effects, it's not necessary to impose further requirements into the DCO around noise monitoring.

01:32:59:23 - 01:33:32:21

However, as Mr. Calvert said, we can take away and consider whether voluntarily we'd want to build in a commitment for monitoring during commissioning and that would just be a verification process, only to make sure that the commitments to the decibels in the outline layout design Principles document are being met, and the way that would be secured would be in the Outline Operational Management plan, which is through requirement 12 of the draft DCO. And from a timing perspective, that requirement bites the um, the date of final commissioning.

01:33:32:23 - 01:34:01:09

So effectively before it comes into commercial operation. And there's provisions again already secured in the outline version of the Operational Management plan, which says in relation to noise control measures, that quieter equipment can be selected where available and practicable, and that's a matter that will be reserved for that detailed design stage prior to the data file commissioning. So before it enters the operational stage, effectively at the same time as when that verification process can be carried out in accordance with the outline plan.

01:34:03:16 - 01:34:06:25

Thank you. Mr.. Are there any more hands up.

01:34:08:27 - 01:34:12:11

Should I go to Councillor Westcott and go back to back to the applicant after that?

01:34:12:13 - 01:34:53:17

Thank you. Chris Westcott Cumnor Parish Council. I think I just heard that the answer to your question was providing that the sound power level was not more than 92dB. Um, it's interesting because in the applicant's July 2025 explanatory note for its change request, it quotes a sound power level of 95 DB for the jets substation that it intends to build. And as you know, in our response to your question 214. One we ask that the sound profile of that be included within the consideration of the noise envelopes for the southern site, because at the moment the applicant has only built noise envelopes considering the much smaller and quieter peaks units.

01:34:53:19 - 01:35:12:23

So two things a the the applicant is quoting via quoting 95dB, which is more than 92. Given the logarithmic scale, it's not just a difference of three and 95 as you're aware. Plus, we'd like the noise envelope considered to include the substation, not just the smaller peaks in the southern site. Thank you.

01:35:15:02 - 01:35:16:12

The applicant like to respond?

01:35:16:22 - 01:35:51:05

Toby? Yes. On behalf of the applicant, yes, we can clarify that. So the reference to 92dB is in relation to the power converter stations as part of work number one, which is the solar installation. The same document that I referred to. So the outline layout or Design principles document also secures maximum noise levels for other pieces of infrastructure, including the National Grid substation in that document does have approximately 95dB in relation to work number two, which is the new National Grid substation. And then, just for completeness, it has approximately 93dB for the main project substation.

01:35:51:07 - 01:36:09:08

And then it also has 73 to 86dB because it's a variable limit in relation to the secondary substations, which is where at number three be. So there's various noise limit depending on the infrastructure, as the gentleman points out. And 95 is appropriately secured for the substation and it's less for the solar panels as I've said.

01:36:10:12 - 01:36:16:08

Thank you, Mr. Mehta. I'm not seeing any more hands on this generator, so I'll pass over back to Mr. Wallace.

01:36:17:26 - 01:36:19:03

Thank you very much.

01:36:20:25 - 01:36:58:05

So that brings us towards any other business. And as we start to sort of pull this hearing together, um, there's just one matter that I want to raise. Um, at deadline three, uh, CPR Oxford. um asked for soil sampling plan, soil sampling data and at deadline for the applicant said it's not us. Blenheim Palace did the soil sampling and that did not come in at deadline five. So can I ask that the soil sampling data requested by Cpre is provided to the examination at deadline six, please.

01:37:00:29 - 01:37:08:23

Tell me it's on behalf of the applicant. I'll have to take that away. Based on what you said, I think that might be a question for Blenheim if we've not got it immediately to hand, but we can liaise with Blenheim if that.

01:37:08:28 - 01:37:11:22

Indeed. Did I see Mr. Hare in the audience?

01:37:14:05 - 01:37:44:10

Okay, okay then please relay my thoughts to him. Thank you very much. Um, I do appreciate that perhaps amongst the throng of the audience here, you've all got many more questions that you'd like to ask. Um, but I think we've we've done a good day here. We've got to the bottom of 1 or 2 issues and they've moved across on on some as well. We have a number of action points that we have drafted.

01:37:44:12 - 01:38:22:13

I do not intend to go through them all now because they are very numerous. So we will publish them on the project page of the National Infrastructure website as soon as possible. Just a reminder for anyone who has made oral submissions today to put your submissions in writing by the next deadline. Um, so that we have the full record there. Um, I've got nothing more to say except thank you all for your patience that you've come out today to to be a part of this today. We do have an open floor hearing tomorrow for which some of you have registered to appear, and we look forward to seeing you then in the morning at 9:30.

01:38:22:15 - 01:38:26:06

Thank you very much. This issue specific hearing is now closed.