

## Hearing Transcript

<b>Project:</b>	Springwell Solar Farm
<b>Hearing:</b>	Issue Specific Hearing 2 (ISH2) - Part 1
<b>Date:</b>	15 July 2025

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File Length: 01:16:40

FULL TRANSCRIPT (with timecode)

00:00:19:07 - 00:00:50:04

Good morning. It's now 10 a.m. and time for this hearing to begin. I would like to welcome you all to the second issue specific hearing for the Springfield Solar Farm project. Can I just confirm that everybody can hear me? Correct. Clearly. Yep. Thank you. Can I also confirm with the case team that the live streaming and recording of this event has commenced? Thank you. My name is Ben North. I am a chartered architect, and I have been appointed by the Secretary of State to be a member of the panel to examine this application.

00:00:50:08 - 00:00:53:16

I'm now going to ask the other panel member to introduce himself.

00:00:54:05 - 00:01:01:07

Okay. Good morning. I'm Jonathan Manning, and I've been appointed by the Secretary state to be the lead member of the panel to examine the application.

00:01:03:04 - 00:01:34:21

Thank you. Together, we constitute the examining authority for this application. I'll now deal with a few housekeeping matters for those attending in person. Can everyone please set all devices and phones to silent? Uh, the toilets are through the doors behind you. Down the stairs on the floor below. And there's signs to them. There aren't any planned fire drills today, so in case of a fire alarm, it's the real thing. Uh, please exit through the doors behind you and follow the fire exit signage through the building.

00:01:35:04 - 00:01:44:19

I'm told there'll be hotel staff on each floor directing people to the emergency exits. And the meeting point is outside the hotel near the Bradford Cadets.

00:01:48:02 - 00:02:01:22

This meeting will follow the agenda published on the National Infrastructure Planning website on the 8th of July, 2025. It will be helpful if you had a copy of this in front of you, and I can see that copies up on the screen now as well.

00:02:04:21 - 00:02:34:11

The agenda is for guidance only, and we may add other considerations or issues as we progress. We will conclude the hearing as soon as all relevant contributions have been made and all questions asked and responded to. But if the discussions can't be concluded, then it may be necessary for us to prioritize matters and defer other matters to further written questions. Likewise, if you cannot answer the questions being asked or require time to get the information requested, then can you please indicate that you need to respond in writing?

00:02:36:06 - 00:02:53:18

Today's hearing is being undertaken in a hybrid way, meaning some of you are present with us at the hearing venue and some of you are joining virtually using Microsoft Teams. We will make sure that however you have decided to attend today, you will be given a fair opportunity to participate.

00:02:56:03 - 00:03:24:17

A recording of today's hearing will be made available on the Spring Wild Solar Farm section of the National Infrastructure Planning website as soon as practicable after the hearing has finished. With this in mind, please ensure that you speak clearly into the microphones stating your name and who you are representing. Each time you speak and if you're not at a table with a microphone, there is a roving microphone. So please pop your hand up and wait for one of these to be brought to you before you start speaking.

00:03:26:16 - 00:03:52:01

The recording allows any member of the public who is interested in the application and the examination, to find out what has been discussed at today's hearing. As the recordings are retained and published, they form a public record that can contain personal information to which the UK General Data Protection Regulation GDPR, applies. Participants must do their best to avoid providing any information which would otherwise be kept private

00:03:53:24 - 00:04:27:04

And confidential. If there is a need to refer to such information, it should be in written format at deadline three, although this will also be published. Personal and private content can be redacted or removed before it is made publicly available. Any person who is unclear on this point should ask the case team for guidance before they place personal and private information into the public domain. A link to the planning Inspectorate's Privacy Notice was provided in the notification for this hearing, and again, please speak to the case team if you have any questions about this.

00:04:28:20 - 00:04:47:13

In terms of timings, we'll have a mid-morning break and we'll likely break for lunch at around 1 p.m. for an hour. If necessary, we'll have a mid-afternoon break before finishing no later than 4 p.m., so that there's enough time to have a break before the open for hearing this evening.

00:04:49:23 - 00:05:17:18

I'm now going to ask those of you who are participating in today's meeting. To introduce yourself. When I state your organization's name because you introduce yourself, state your name and who you are, who you represent and which agenda item you wish to speak on. If you are not representing an organization, please confirm your name. Summarize your interest in the application and confirm the agenda item upon which you wish to speak. Can we start with the applicant and any of their advisors, please?

00:05:18:22 - 00:05:46:21

Good morning sir. My name is Richard Griffiths from law firm Pinsent Masons LLP and we are representing the applicant, Springwell Energy Firm Limited. I'm joined by my colleagues, Alexis Coleman and Olivia Hensel, and we will be speaking on all agenda items at this issue. We have various representatives from the applicant's consultant team on all of the topics today, and I suggest I introduce those as we go through the agenda.

00:05:47:02 - 00:05:48:13

Yeah, that'd be great. Thank you.

00:05:51:14 - 00:05:58:11

Thank you. Can we move on to invited parties who are able to attend? So if we start with Lincolnshire County Council, please.

00:05:58:23 - 00:06:20:07

Good morning. My name is John Hunter. I'm Council and I'm instructed to appear on behalf of the county council. Uh, to my right, it's Justine Foster, who is the council's infrastructure manager. And there are various other people who'll be participating in the in particular topic areas of the game. If it's convenient, I'll introduce them at that point or if you wish. Now.

00:06:20:23 - 00:06:25:15

If you introduce them at that point in the agenda, that'd be great. Thank you, thank you.

00:06:27:07 - 00:06:30:21

So next. Uh, North Kesteven District Council introducing.

00:06:31:00 - 00:06:48:18

Good morning sir. My name is Samuel Sheikh. I'm also a council instructed to act on behalf of North Coast District Council. Uh, to my right sits Mr. Nick Feltham, who's the development manager at the council. And to my left. Left, Sylvia Bland, who's planning consultant at the council. And again, I'll introduce those who appear at relevant topics.

00:06:50:04 - 00:06:54:16

Thank you. And do we have anyone from Historic England here today?

00:06:59:01 - 00:07:00:23

Hi. You're on mute, Mr. Allen.

00:07:01:11 - 00:07:11:15

Oh, good morning sir. Tim Allen from historic England. Um, we're here to speak on any question, uh, respond to any questions you have on item four. Cultural heritage.

00:07:12:10 - 00:07:13:02

Thank you.

00:07:18:08 - 00:07:35:12

Thank you. Okay. Now, could I ask if there's anyone else in the room today who wishes to speak today? And if they let me know now and if you could introduce yourself, uh, which agenda item you and which agenda item you would wish to speak on? Yeah. There's roving mic coming.

00:07:43:21 - 00:08:13:13

Thank you very much. I'm Marianne Overton, councillor for the area that includes Nathan B both on the district and the county council. So this this application abuts up to my my actual ward, but obviously a responsibility for both. I sit on the county district council and um, would be really pleased to contribute today on the landscape in particular impacts and landscape, taking a local view. Thank you.

00:08:14:06 - 00:08:14:22

Thank you.

00:08:24:12 - 00:08:26:05

Yeah. Hi, I'm Paul Frost.

00:08:26:07 - 00:08:41:17

Uh, I'm a resident of Scott Park. Uh, I'm on the parish council there. Member of the Springwell Solar Action Group. Today, I'd like to speak on behalf of myself and on your agenda. .5.2 on noise and vibration, please.

00:08:42:05 - 00:08:44:16

Thank you. Could you pass the microphone?

00:08:46:21 - 00:09:02:23

Again, thank you for the opportunity. Mark Williams I'm going to be representing, uh, Scotland Parish Council, the action Group and myself. And the agenda items today will be the landscape and noise and vibration.

00:09:04:20 - 00:09:06:00

Thank you, Mr. Williams.

00:09:13:22 - 00:09:31:03

Is there anyone else in the room that wishes to speak today? No. Thank you. Now, if I could move on to virtual attendees. If you're with us on Microsoft Teams today, please could you raise a virtual hand? And again, if you could introduce yourself and let us know which agenda item you wish to speak on?

00:09:36:06 - 00:09:41:24

I'm not seeing any virtual hands. Uh, so I'll move on. Thank you.

00:09:43:24 - 00:10:18:24

Let me briefly explain the purpose of this issue. Specific hearing. This hearing seeks to consider a range of issues which come under the broad umbrella of environmental matters. This hearing will consider matters relating to landscape and visual effects, cultural heritage, and noise and vibration. I'm sure a number of you will be keen to have your say today. You'll have heard our proposed timings and we're keen to ensure these are adhered to. As mentioned previously, we will finish no later than 4 p.m. and if necessary, any items not considered today will be carried forward into our second written questions.

00:10:19:19 - 00:10:50:24

I have a fairly extensive list of questions which are primarily aimed at the applicant, but questions may also be aimed at other parties, particularly the local authorities here today. Um, the purpose of the hearing is to enable us, as the examining authority, to gain a further understanding of the evidence relating to the topics within the agenda to help the hearing run as smoothly as possible. I will run through all of my questions on each topic before then asking for contributions from interested parties.

00:10:51:10 - 00:11:25:07

Any oral representations from interested parties should relate to the discussion that's been undertaken, and it's important to say that, um, during the day to day, it's not an open floor session. So if you wish to make wider points, um, please make these the this evening at the open floor hearing. Um or provide them in writing at deadline three, which is the 12th of August. Uh, and I should just note that written submissions have the same weight as oral submissions. Are there any questions so far on the purpose of today's hearing?

00:11:28:12 - 00:11:35:00

No. Okay. Now we will move on to agenda item three Landscape and Visual effects.

00:11:38:01 - 00:12:18:16

Just agenda item 3.1 deals with whether proposed development, either alone or in combination with other developments, would lead to large scale solar becoming a defining characteristic of the relevant landscape character areas. In response to our first written questions, Lincolnshire County Council stated that the scheme combined with other solar development, if built, would require the update of any published landscape character assessment, including national level, so as to include large, large scale solar as a defining land use characteristic as well as agriculture, and that this would be a clear and marked change to landscape character.

00:12:19:10 - 00:12:54:11

To start with, I have a few requests for further information from the applicant, which will assist my understanding of this matter in relation to the central plateau landscape, character type and landscape character areas seven. That's the limestone heath and 11 the central clays and gravels. So at um, deadline two, the applicant provided an area of land cover of the above ground structures of the proposed development, combined with the National Grid Navy substation relative to the National Character area NCA 47.

00:12:54:23 - 00:13:13:06

Um, and that was a 1.15%. Uh, so first question is whether a similar percentage area could be provided for above ground structures relative to the central plateau landscape character type and the landscape character areas seven and 11.

00:13:15:04 - 00:13:21:11

Thank you, Sir Richard Griffiths on behalf of the applicant. Yes, we've already done those calculations. We can give them to you now if that's helpful.

00:13:22:03 - 00:13:24:05

Yes, that would be.

00:13:24:15 - 00:13:26:06

Uh, and NCA.

00:13:28:09 - 00:13:31:16

NCA 47, as you just said, is 1.15%

00:13:33:11 - 00:13:42:01

LCT, which is um, this hunt up. He's citing the entire study force in that LCT. That's a central plateau is 1.38%.

00:13:44:03 - 00:13:52:11

LCA, LCA seven, Springwell West and Springwell Central represents 2.48%.

00:13:54:23 - 00:13:57:20

LCA 11 Springwell East.

00:13:59:19 - 00:14:05:16

It's 0.80%. We'll obviously put that in our all summary of this hearing.

00:14:05:19 - 00:14:17:17

Thank you. And that so that is um, the proposed development plus the National Grid Nathan B substation, but not including any other solar development in those areas, which.

00:14:17:22 - 00:14:23:23

Is on par for the applicant. That is correct. There are no other large scale solar, uh, developments within those areas.

00:14:27:23 - 00:14:43:21

Would it be possible to also provide equivalent percentage figure area for all combined solar takings to consideration. Those that those solar developments in those areas which don't meet the threshold.

00:14:46:10 - 00:15:15:09

Which group us on behalf the applicant? Yes, we can provide that if it's helpful. We can also bring up now those those maps that you referred to to show the extent. That's helpful. But in some sense, your question. Yes, we can provide that as part of this response. So we'll provide a column showing Springwell Solar Farm and the Naval Brewery substation. And then we'll add another column, which includes all solar developments both in CIP and Tcpc solar developments combined with Springwell and the Navy substation.

00:15:15:11 - 00:15:16:24

Okay. Thank you. That would be helpful.

00:15:18:23 - 00:15:43:21

Um, and so on that point of the the plans which were provided in appendix two to the applicant's response to XTC, one which show the combined development, Um, plan three uh, which shows that LCT and the LCA seven and LCA 11.

00:15:46:19 - 00:15:47:09

So.

00:15:49:12 - 00:16:07:09

I believe that this plan appears to be missing a few solar developments. So Deepdale Solar Farm, Branston Solar Farm and Ermine Street Solar Farm, which I believe would all sit within LCA 11.

00:16:10:23 - 00:16:22:20

And then Gorse Lane, White Cross Lane and North. I don't know if I'm saying this right, but North Crosby Heath, which would all sit within LCA 11

00:16:24:13 - 00:16:33:18

and so could this this plan be updated to help me understand visually the extent of combined solar and how it spread out within these areas.

00:16:36:04 - 00:16:46:08

Which will give us one path that I'm going to pass over to you at that point to our landscape consultant, Mr. John Ingham, who's a landscape planning director from RSC, to answer. Thank you.

00:16:50:01 - 00:17:22:08

Morning, John Ingham for the applicant. Um, thank you very much. Um, the figures that are shown on screen at the moment, um, were based on the information that we had available to us from the local authority's planning planning portal. So if there are additional solar schemes which are not currently illustrated on those, um, I think um, I think those sorry, is the question about landscape character area plan.

00:17:22:19 - 00:17:54:01

Yes. So plans one and two do show the solar farms which I listed off. It's just that they don't seem to be shown on on plan three. Um, so I have that visual understanding on planned one and two. Uh, but it would just be helpful if that information was also provided to this plan three relative to the outlines, because then it's easier to tell, uh, how the how much of the land area is taken up visually within these areas.

00:17:54:07 - 00:17:57:22

Yes. Jonathan, for the applicant, certainly. That's something we can provide.

00:17:58:00 - 00:17:58:15

Thank you.

00:17:58:17 - 00:17:59:07

Yes.

00:18:03:24 - 00:18:15:05

So can I ask, uh, Lincolnshire County Council to comment on how it's best to measure whether large scale solar. Well. Hang on. I'm just.



00:18:17:17 - 00:18:46:17

Oh, okay. Sorry. Sorry about that. Uh, yes. Can I ask Lancashire County Council to comment on how best to measure whether large scale solar would become a defining characteristic of the landscape, character and if. Percentage. If a percentage of land use or land cover is um is a good measure, what proportion or percentage of the land do you consider would tip the balance of of large scale solar or solar development becoming a defining characteristic?

00:18:47:12 - 00:18:57:23

Thank you. I'll pass that question, if I may, to Mr. Oliver Brown, who sits to my left of consultants who, as you know, been engaged on behalf of both Lincolnshire and North Kesteven.

00:18:58:05 - 00:18:58:21

Thank you.

00:19:00:08 - 00:19:37:14

Thank you. Good morning. Uh, Oliver Brown, um, representing host authorities of North Kesteven and Lancashire County Council. Um, in response to that, I think that the first point would be to urge some caution in terms of taking a percentage approach. Obviously, the extent in terms of the geographical extent of changes is a consideration in landscape change. However, it is not the only marker of what that change will be. So, um, in terms of landscape change, what we'll be looking at really is a change to those key characteristics.

00:19:37:21 - 00:19:43:08

So in this case, it is replacing the agricultural fields with the development

00:19:45:02 - 00:19:54:22

follow up from that. Obviously the extent of this again is a consideration. So looking at a guidance that we have in GLP three.

00:19:57:01 - 00:20:05:15

Looking at this being a major addition, um in a focused area rather than a change across an extensive area.

00:20:07:04 - 00:20:38:12

So I think that's that's just a just a little bit of caution in terms of the percentages, I think. Yes, it is a consideration, but it's not the only it's not a, um, uh, essentially a marker in terms of what is acceptable and what isn't. Um, and then in terms of the response to that, I think the production of the the plans has been useful in us understanding how those character areas will, will be affected by both springwell by itself and also that interaction between the other sites.

00:20:39:03 - 00:21:09:07

Um, and I think maybe come on to this and later later item or maybe some of your follow on questions. Um, but we would like to, um, present, um, one of our main concerns, which is not just focusing on the local character areas, but also looking at district wide, county wide and how we

capture that. So essentially that's that's something that I've indicated. Um, the prior plan within the local impacts report. Um, that's been a concern of ours.

00:21:09:10 - 00:21:26:17

We've had a subsequent meeting with the applicants, and obviously we've got the agenda now. So we've gone away and done a little bit of work in terms of how our position in regards to that, how we would, um, Articulate a method based approach to understanding that change across essentially, the county of Lincolnshire.

00:21:27:24 - 00:21:49:05

Okay, thanks. Yeah, I I've got a couple more questions when I'm coming on to the, um, the national character area scale. So perhaps if I ask those questions, then I'll come back to you and ask you to add anything else that you you'd like to. Um, is there anything that the applicant would like to say in response to that at this stage?

00:21:57:19 - 00:22:21:06

Which was on the applicant? No. I think the key point that Mr. Brown mentioned is that, um, the impact obviously quite focused, uh, rather than on the wider area, which of course is in our submissions, uh, to, um, your written questions. Uh, as to the scale of the impacts that it's localised rather than an impact on the wider area. Um, That's all I have to say in response.

00:22:21:08 - 00:23:00:21

Okay. Thank you. Um, so if we consider the the national character area, the scale of the national character area, um, NCA 47 was southern Lincolnshire edge. So in response to Lancashire County Council source answers to x Q1, the applicant states in rep 2023 that large scale development would become a locally characteristic feature of the national character area, landscape, character type and landscape character areas in a similar manner to which utility infrastructure, RAF installations and mineral workings are recognised in the North Kesteven Landscape Character Assessment.

00:23:01:13 - 00:23:46:13

If we look at the Southern Lincolnshire Edge National Character Area profile, um, which was provided in appendix as an appendix to Rep 1071. The key characteristics on slide five include as a key characteristic bullet point, which bullet point six active and reused airfields prominent on the ridge top. So my question is, if large scale solar development were to be viewed in a similar manner to RAF installations, would it not then become a key characteristic of the national character area? And does this, as Lincolnshire County Council suggest, in response to one result in a clear and marked change to landscape character?

00:23:51:19 - 00:23:55:00

Which group is on the applicant? Mr. John Ingram will respond to that.

00:23:57:07 - 00:24:36:03

Thank you. John Ingham for the applicant. Um, as so you've correctly identified our response. Does that knowledge that, um, the Springwell solar farm would become a locally characteristic feature? Um, with reference to the national character area profile for the southern Lincolnshire edge. Um, that that, uh, character description, um, prepared by Natural England was prepared, um, a number of years

ago, um, prior to, I believe, any of the solar farms in the national character, that national character area being constructed.

00:24:36:16 - 00:25:09:09

So, um, in some regard, solar farms have subsequently become a feature of the national character area. Um, the the applicant agrees that um solar farms would become a characteristic, um, as a, um, a locally um, characteristic feature of the national character area. But, um, we say that that wouldn't become a defining characteristic of the, um, of the character area.

00:25:09:18 - 00:25:31:12

Um, and we say that agricultural land use would by some considerable margin, I believe, remain the predominant and defining land use at all, at all character levels. That national character area level, um, national uh, the landscape character type, and also at the landscape character area levels. But if.

00:25:33:14 - 00:25:57:19

The development was to be considered equivalent to RAF installations as an example. And that is listed as a key characteristic. Are you saying that solar development will be less less of a characteristic in the landscape than than, say, the RAF installations, which are listed as a key characteristic or not.

00:25:59:13 - 00:26:16:14

Growing them for the applicant? Um, no, we're not saying that. So I think we recognize that, um, solar energy will become a key characteristic of the, uh, the character areas. But, um, I think where we stop short is saying that it would become a defining characteristic of the landscape.

00:26:16:24 - 00:26:41:15

Thank you. I understand. Um, so perhaps now I turn to, um, back to Lincolnshire County Council and ask if if there's anything else you would like to raise regarding the question of whether landscape character should be considered to only tightly confines, uh, tracts of land or the wider landscape character area, the county wide and district wide concerns you have.

00:26:43:16 - 00:26:48:08

Thank you. John Hunter, on behalf of Lincolnshire County Council again, I'll hand it over to Mr. Brown.

00:26:51:22 - 00:27:22:00

Thank you. Oliver Brown from the from the host authorities. Um, we will put this in our written response as well, because I just want to cover, um, a process essentially. And I will keep it brief, be mindful of the of the agenda. So as mentioned previously, we've identified the concern that we have about the extent of solar development across both the district north of Stephen and from across the county of Lincolnshire.

00:27:23:02 - 00:28:00:22

When we look at isolated, um, character areas, I think it really tells some of the picture. Um, and what we've done, like I said, is just gone away and, and produced, um, a position and a methodology essentially as to how we can understand what that change will be across these much larger areas. So in the absence of having, um, a summary or a summary assessment of the landscape character across the

county, um, what we've looked at is the, the national character areas that cover the entirety of the county.

00:28:01:22 - 00:28:42:21

Um, essentially, I think there's seven of those, three of those covered the North Kesteven area. So these share common, uh, attributes and characteristics. And the one that we mentioned just previously, obviously the overriding characteristic is agriculture. And whether we're looking at the coastal character areas or the the fenland or areas much further inland, these share very common characteristics. So looking at those, it's just understanding on a county level how those key characteristics are going to be affected cumulatively with Springwell and all the other schemes that are happening in this area.

00:28:43:09 - 00:29:19:04

And, you know, we judge that in the position, is that this this obviously would be it's a predominantly agricultural landscape. However, those key characteristics, those key features that are going to be prominent across all these character areas is going to be the largest development of large scale solar, as well as other renewables that are in the process at the moment, whether that's um, additional, um, overhead headlines or, um, substations that are associated with these sorts of developments. So the three key things that we want to look at is the land use change, the perceived openness and the rural tranquillity across the area.

00:29:20:01 - 00:29:36:12

I said, I've covered a lot there, and it's a very conscious that I don't. It's this isn't about introducing something new into the to the, um, to the examination. This is just an elaboration and description in terms of what that regional county concern that we have is.

00:29:37:07 - 00:29:40:21

Thank you. Understood. Could I turn to the applicant for response?

00:29:41:11 - 00:30:11:23

Thank you so much for the applicant. Um, I just want to make one point. Mr. Ingram wants to respond to that, but I've just put on the screen for you, sir. Um, plan one, which is the National Character Area 47. So I think it's helpful just to highlight the points I made earlier on numbers, that there are no large scale solar projects within the National character area. 47. It is just springwell on that plan. Um, clearly, um, shows that. So I just want to make that clarification point.

00:30:12:00 - 00:30:17:18

I don't know whether Mr. Ingham has anything in response to Mr. Brown at the stage, or whether we'll respond in writing.

00:30:22:04 - 00:30:53:24

Um, John Ingham for the applicant. Um. Thank you. Um, there's just one quick point of clarification I wanted to make on that plan on the screen as well. Um, which is, sir, you may see that the outline of the, um, leader and Foss Green um, project, which are the two projects? It's the brown one and the green one. Um, sorry to say my glasses off for that. Um, the brown one and the green green one. Uh, to the left hand side. Um, the the order limits of those two.

00:30:54:01 - 00:31:26:04

Draft order limits of those two projects do extend, um, to within the national character area boundary. But just to clarify, the hatched areas of those two, To, um, those two projects is where there would be above ground. Visible aspect, uh, features, components of the development. Um. Thank you. I think somebody has just zoomed in on that. The areas which are unhatched, um, but extend up to the proposed, uh, National Grid Navy substation, those are underground components.

00:31:26:06 - 00:31:44:01

So cable routes, effectively of those two projects. Um, so, um, yeah, the, the, the other DCO scale projects, large scale projects sit outside of the national character area. Um, the above ground features of them. Um.

00:31:44:13 - 00:32:08:12

Okay. Thank you. Uh, as I understand it, though, the county council's concern is, is the area wider than just National Character Area 47? It's the it's that they're raising concern about the surrounding national character areas as well. So do you wish to come back on their points regarding that at this point?

00:32:13:07 - 00:32:56:14

John Ingham for the applicant, um, I think I would just like to make one point, which is that the national character areas do follow um, prominent um, topographical or uh, geographical features in the landscape. So the um, western boundary of National Character Area 47 that effectively follows the um, Lincoln um, Lincoln cliff, which is quite a prominent scarp edge, um, between the lower lying ground to the, um, to the west of national character over area 47 and, um, the Heath and then the Fens further to the east within the National character area as well.

00:32:56:18 - 00:33:36:08

So there are quite distinct differences in character. Understandably, they've been identified differently for for a good reason. Um, and I would also say, uh, because of those topographical features, there's very little inter visibility between the two, um, character areas. So, um, talking about the land to the, to the west, for example, of National Character Area 47, because of the scarp slope which separates those two areas, there is no real visual connection between the heath above the cliff and the lower lying land to the to the west.

00:33:37:06 - 00:33:41:06

So there might not be a station. Sorry.

00:33:42:22 - 00:34:10:03

Thank you. Uh, there might not be stationary inter visibility, but travelling through the landscape, that's not a great distance between some of these developments and a a border of a national character area. might as a cut off might not necessarily be the best limit of where combined effects on landscape character are drawn.

00:34:13:01 - 00:34:46:13

I'm John Ingham for the applicant. Um, I think there's two features to that difference between landscape character and visual impacts cumulative visual impacts and cumulative landscape character impacts. So when we're talking about landscape character areas, we're typically talking about effects on landscape character rather than, um, visual impact. Um, so uh, although invisibility between character areas can be a feature, uh, can can be a characteristic of a landscape character area.

00:34:46:22 - 00:35:10:07

Um, in this case, what, uh, the applicant, uh, what we're saying is that there isn't, um, strong visibility between the lower lying grounds to the west of the of the cliff and the heath above the cliff. Um. There are views from the cliff south to the west across that low lying area, but there is very little visibility into visibility between those two character areas.

00:35:12:21 - 00:35:39:13

I, I understand I understand what you're saying. I, I think I'm asking about the effect of how a landscape character is experienced, not from a stationary point, but moving through the landscape. Um, yeah, but we can we can move on, um, to, uh, the next the next item.

00:35:42:05 - 00:36:12:09

So, uh, if we look now at, um, agenda item 3.2 spring, which is spring effects on spring. Well, in the area of spring, well east in year ten of operation in, its initial landscape and visual review, um, on behalf of the local authorities, recommended that the conclusion that the impact around Springwell East is not significant in operational year ten should be considered during the examination.

00:36:12:17 - 00:36:25:11

Um, so I'd just like to invite RH to expand on their concerns raised in paragraph 4.12 of its initial landscape and visual review regarding the significance of effect in year ten.

00:36:27:15 - 00:36:57:17

Thank you. Oliver Brown from the host authorities. Um, yeah. I mean, the the the assessment that's been carried out by the applicant on LCA 11, uh, which we've got a residual, um, effect of moderate adverse would, would, would in agreement with that. I think we're generally in agreement with the, uh, the assessment that they've made. I think, as you mentioned, the disagreement is, is, uh, or the query really is in terms of that significance of that effect and how that should be considered.

00:36:58:14 - 00:37:41:07

Um, this comes back to the point in regards to landscape effects. And we've been talking about invisibility and direct effect. Um, and in landscape terms, um, a change to the landscape doesn't have to be seen to have an effect. Um, so what we're looking at here is the land use change of a key characteristic in LCA 11. Again, the idea picks up on this, but I think the emphasis, um, in determining the significance is, um, weighted more in terms of that sort of the wider effect on the character areas through the inter visibility.

00:37:41:17 - 00:38:22:05

Um, between that. Um, and we've looked at some numbers to try and understand, I suppose, looking at the extent of that effect and based on, um, the, the the numbers providing the es. So if we're looking at um, and these numbers, I'm happy to be correct in terms of some of these numbers, but we're

looking at some, some 1.5 million, um, PV modules across the project or up to. So if we took Springwell East as, say, having a quarter of that, that is still way over 300,000, um, modules in terms of, um, the the generation capacity, a quarter of the 800MW is still 200.

00:38:22:08 - 00:38:37:00

So if we look at the scale of that, that's still in itself. And then CIP scale project. Um, so we deemed these direct changes to a character, uh, a key characteristic in that area should still be significant.

00:38:38:20 - 00:38:42:16

Okay. Thank you. Is there anything you would like to say in response?

00:38:42:19 - 00:39:21:09

Thank you, Sir Richard Griffiths, on behalf of the applicant. Yes. Um, I think be helpful. Um, in response to this Question. Um, if we start before we get on to impact, let's actually go back a step and look at how this project has been designed. That obviously is helpful for you, sir, in terms of the NPS tests, because this project has been, um, carefully designed, uh, from the beginning through the project principles and I think be helpful if we just had to bring more leads, particularly through the three design stages, has gone through quite a heavy design process, which I think be useful for us to explain and then bring in.

00:39:21:11 - 00:39:37:03

I'll ask Mr.. Um, um, Alex, um, Brandon Nelson from LDA design to go through that, and then Mr.. John Ingham will come on to respond to Mr. Brown's point on impact. I think that'll be helpful. Sequential way to do it. That's acceptable.

00:39:37:05 - 00:39:37:20

Yeah.

00:39:37:22 - 00:39:42:04

That's nice, Mr. Nelson, to talk to the designers been released.

00:39:43:10 - 00:40:28:21

Thank you. Uh, Aleksander Nelson for the applicant. So the approach to good design is set out in the Design Approach document. Rep 1056. And that demonstrates how the proposed development will fulfill the requirement for good design and adherence to the mitigation hierarchy set out in N1 and N2. Um, and it also um demonstrates how um it will respond to the Nic guidance. Um, and good design is embedded uh, has been embedded to the project from the outset of the design process via a clear design framework and the application of design principles, which is, um, set out in the National Infrastructure Commission's guidance.

00:40:29:08 - 00:41:19:00

Um, and those the application of those design principles has really guided the decision making throughout our design evolution process. Um, and that's been an iterative process. It's been through multiple stages of design, um, consultation, feedback loops, environmental survey and feedback loops is assessment and technical information that's all fed into that process. Um, and I think in particular in regards to landscape, I'd draw your attention to the principles 2.1 to 2.5, which, um, are specifically

geared towards, um, how the design should respond, sensitivity to landscape, other principles are also relevant, but they're the key ones in terms of landscape and in terms of, um, how that's impacted our response in LCA 11, in Springvale East.

00:41:19:14 - 00:42:13:20

Um, that has really resulted throughout that design evolution process of the emission of, of solar from, um, key areas, key sensitivities breaking up, um, along paths and nearby receptors. Uh, the creation of green infrastructure corridors which run through that area, um, and are aligned to those, um, those sensitive uh users and receptors limiting solar Cellular development, uh, where it is, uh, perceived. Or it could be on, on two sides or of, of a footpath by example, um, putting in new planting to mitigate any impact and making sure that planting is, um, uh, represents or replicates the existing characters that are there, such as, um, Trundle Lane, for example, which has quite strong hedgerows down either side of it, and actually replicating that in our in our response in some areas.

00:42:14:06 - 00:42:30:07

Um, and, and, and embedding uh offsets to slow development in the design commitments and the control documents that are set out within the draft DCO. Um, if I pass over to Mr. Ingham, then to explain how that then relates to impacts.

00:42:33:23 - 00:43:11:18

Thank you very much again for the applicant. Um, so as has already been identified, the, um, environmental statement. And the landscape chapter. Chapter ten. Um, does acknowledge that there would be a moderate, um, adverse effect at year ten. Um, in fact, it I if we take one step further back from that, um, it identifies, um, a significant effect at year one. Um, but by uh, year ten, we say the effect would be moderate adverse, but, uh, no longer significant.

00:43:12:05 - 00:43:49:03

And the reason for that is largely within the mitigation, um, which has been proposed and, uh, just outlined by my colleague, Mr. van der Nelson. Um, there would be a considerable amount of new, um, planting within, um, Springwell East. Um, and that planting would do two things. Firstly, it would limit, um, the extent of effect. There would still be, um, an effect on the fields, obviously, within which the solar, um, solar arrays would be, um, located.

00:43:49:21 - 00:44:21:21

Um, but beyond that, uh, beyond a certain distance, the extent over which they would be visible would be much reduced. There would still be views of, um, of the solar array from certain locations. Um, as reported in the environmental statement. But, um, the extent of the effect on the landscape character area would be reduced. And so that is the first part. Secondly, though, um, it would also notably soften the external appearance of those, um, components of the development as well.

00:44:22:06 - 00:45:08:01

So um, overall, those two, those two things would reduce the scale of the landscape change. And when we're talking about, um, the magnitude of effect, we consider, um, three elements to that, um, in accordance with the landscape, uh, guidelines for landscape and visual impact assessments. There's firstly the, um, the scale of the change. Secondly, the extent of that change, and thirdly, the duration of that change. And um, what we have, uh, what what the mitigation achieves, there is firstly a reduction



in the extent of that of the effect on landscape character area, and secondly, um, a reduction in the scale of the effect as well.

00:45:08:10 - 00:45:37:21

And in that proposed mitigation as, as outlined a moment ago, um, has been designed to complement, uh, the landscape in landscape character area 1111 as far as possible. Um, and I think it was mentioned as an example, um, some of the characteristic features such as Trundle Lane within landscape character area 11, um, would be to some extent replicated by uh, the increased height of hedgerows within that area.

00:45:39:14 - 00:46:22:14

Thank you. You brought up Trundle Lane. Um, but a lot of the paths around spring. Well, east are either they, the paths kind of follow the, the edge of field boundaries. So they're either bounded on just one side by hedgerow or open on both sides. And transit lane is is somewhat of an exception within the spring well east area. So whereas with the proposed development, many of those paths which kind of either opens one side or both sides, would be enclosed on both sides with hedgerows, and you would provide occasional views of the solar development at access points.

00:46:22:16 - 00:47:06:03

And you'd see CCTV posts sticking above the hedge line, as evident on viewpoint three B photo montage. And during the winter months there'd be filtered views of the panels through the hedgerow. So my question is, is this a different enough experience of the landscape character compared to the baseline as to remain a major moderate significant effect at year ten? Or is your position that um, because, uh, the the extent to which those effects are experienced is reduced, that, that, um, significance is reduced?

00:47:10:14 - 00:48:04:00

Uh, Alexander Nelson for the applicant, if I can just respond on the design point and then I'll pass over to my colleague again to, um, pick up on the, the impacts. Um, just to so I guess, again, in the way that I set out earlier, we did have we have specific, uh, project principles which have, have kind of guided the evolution of the design and, um, Principles, 5.3 in particular, and 5.2, um, guide how we have responded to the public rights of way and the stepping out walks and other local footpaths and the Steeples and Spires Trail, and which are particularly relevant to Springwell East, and we have sought to, um, kind of omit soap development and break up soap development where it is along those footpaths.

00:48:04:12 - 00:48:35:09

Um, we've discounted, um, a lot of fields on that basis. Um, and as a result, there are relatively few sections of public right of way where we have, um, solo development on both sides of a public right of way. So we are seeking to retain, um, that aspect where, where one side is, is open, um, or, um, where that's not possible. We are enclosing it with the kind of trundle lane approach for lack of, screening some of those views, it should be noted as well.

00:48:35:11 - 00:49:10:17

But in all cases, for the public right of way, we've we've, um, embedded an offset of at least 50m along those walking routes. So you will end up with what, quite a wide walking route along them.

Um, even where you do have solar PV development in those few locations on both sides, and that will create quite a wide walking corridor that won't feel, um, oppressive and enclosed. Um, and that that is about aligning that kind of those kind of green infrastructure corridors and the recreational, um, um, routes to that.

00:49:11:07 - 00:49:23:11

Um, so I would, I would refer you to, uh, the design approach document where we have kind of set out, uh, under print in section six, under those principles, exactly how we've responded to those.

00:49:25:02 - 00:49:26:15

Uh, I'll pass over to Mr. Ingham.

00:49:29:06 - 00:50:00:12

Thank you, John Ingham, for the applicant. Um, in responding to the second part of your question, sir. Um, a few, uh, figures from the environmental statement, which I think are useful. So by year ten, um, we as I say, we acknowledge that there would remain a moderate adverse effect, but large scale change on landscape character would, um, would occur no, no further than 100m from the above ground infrastructure.

00:50:01:00 - 00:50:32:12

Um, and in fact, um, we say as you, um, move further away from the development, from above ground visible structures, the scale of that change reduces. So, um, the environmental statement reports that, uh, beyond 500m of, of the of the above ground uh infrastructure, there would be no greater than a small scale change in landscape character. I think it's also worth just noting that landscape, character and.

00:50:34:15 - 00:51:12:00

The characteristics which contribute to landscape character extend beyond purely land use. So, um, those are the physical and perceptual characteristics of landscape character, which are important as well. So um, for example, um landform and terrain. Um, now, uh, as part of the development, there would be no impact on landform, um, and the topography of the site, for example, um, and a lot of the structures within the, within the um, within the proposed development in Spring Valley, um, would not be, uh, above three metres.

00:51:12:02 - 00:51:52:07

I understand that that within a few fields there are some at 3.5m. But generally speaking, the vertical scale of those structures is comparable to the the scale of the landscape as well. So, um, with, with the enhanced um management of existing hedgerows, those contribute to, um, offsetting some of the effects as well. And um, well, when considered in the round, um, we feel that that moderate but not significant effect is, um, a sound judgement about the effects on landscape character.

00:51:53:17 - 00:52:26:14

Okay. Thank you. Um, in. Yes, chapter ten, paragraph 10.9 .178, it states that the effect on landscape character would arise principally from a localised change in land cover. Um, and I understand the points you make, but the, the change in land cover isn't reduced and there's still. Is there not still an

awareness of the solo development from those filtered views that I mentioned? And you still see the signs of the solar development in the landscape.

00:52:26:16 - 00:52:34:19

You see the CCTV posts, you see the the access points where you can see into the panels. So

00:52:36:10 - 00:52:46:00

with changing land cover and that and remaining awareness of this about solar development. Does the effect not remain?

00:52:49:10 - 00:53:28:00

John Ingham for the applicant. Um, there is a remaining that there is a residual effect. Um, so that is the moderate adverse effect that we have reported within the environmental statement. But um, a lot of those aspects are visual impact. Again, um, I appreciate that there is an impact on landscape character. But um, when we're talking about glimpses, views through gates, that sort of thing from footpaths, I consider that to be an impact on, um, uses of footpaths, for example, which is a visual impact rather than a one sided character impact.

00:53:28:07 - 00:53:31:01

Okay. Thank you. Sorry.

00:53:31:03 - 00:54:03:10

So just average path. The applicant, um, reference be made to the design access documents. Just want to make sure everyone knows there's a reference number to that is one hyphen 056. And in that document that clearly sets out the design that's been taken and the mitigation uh, the avoidance and the mitigation. So mitigation hierarchy that has been outlined, um, for example, page 65, stage one design, page 73, stage two design.

00:54:03:12 - 00:54:35:08

And page 81 the stage three design all shows, um, the work that's undertaken that's important. Um, for the MPs N1 tests, paragraph 5.10 point six project should be designed carefully. Five point 10.9 applicants should consider landscape and visual matters in the early stages, which that document demonstrates. Paragraph 2.10 .93 of NPS and three applicants for the criteria for good design and minimize as reasonably possible.

00:54:35:10 - 00:55:08:14

Applicant has done all of that, as demonstrated in the Design and Access statement. Public rights of way are, of course, transient in nature. Uh, people walk through them. Um, we must remember there's, um, if you use the word glimpses, uh, and I think that's important in the context of what you've got to decide. Um, and then the secretary of state, um, which is paragraph 5.10 .35 of NPS in one where the Secretary of State should judge whether any adverse impact on the landscape would be so damaging.

00:55:09:00 - 00:55:44:02

That is not offset by the benefits, including need in reaching a judgment. The Secretary of State should consider whether any adverse impact is temporary, uh, as per any MPs three. This is a time limited consent. Empson three confirms that is temporary and therefore you need to take that into

account in your judgment as to whether the effects are so damaging that they're not offset by the benefits. And this is, of course, CCNP infrastructure that has a presumption in favour and has a significant weight to be attached to its needs.

00:55:44:04 - 00:55:57:16

I just wanted to outline those policy tests that you have to adhere to in reaching your conclusions in the planning balance over the impacts that we've just been discussing. Thank you.

00:55:59:04 - 00:56:07:14

Um, so the county council, you've heard what the applicant said and the questions that I've been asking. Is there anything else that you

00:56:09:05 - 00:56:12:21

want to raise on Springvale East in year ten at this stage?

00:56:13:09 - 00:56:32:12

Oh, no, I don't think Mr. John Hunter, on behalf of the county council, um, I think Mr. Brown nodded to me, so he doesn't want to add anything else. I just said in response to what has just been said. Obviously there is the question of design, but there's also been set out separately, the question of impact. And there has to be a judgment ultimately on significance. And you have the parties different positions on that.

00:56:32:23 - 00:56:51:17

Thank you. I can see that there. There's hands at the back. Um, I, I will I will come to, um, representations from my piece at the end of agenda item three. I've got a number more, um, points to run through. Thank you.

00:56:53:16 - 00:57:35:08

Uh, so if we move on to vegetation removal for now, um, in the applicants deadline two submission, uh, response to D1 submissions, that's, uh, rep 2023 states that the vegetation removal during construction will be related to cable crossings, highway works, access, accesses and access tracks. The precise location of which cannot be finalised now. So are the vegetation removal parameters included in schedule 13 of the draft show effectively outline parameters which would inform an updated set of removal parameters.

00:57:38:04 - 00:58:08:07

Which group is on behalf the applicant? Um, I will make one comment and I'll pass over to, um, Mr. Van Nelson from LDA design to comment more on the vegetation removal plans. But the, uh, in accordance with the Rochdale envelope, a like a reasonable worst case, uh, approach has been taken to these. So we have taken into account, um, the potential um, uh, removal from any from the anticipated highways and construction works, including, um, tracks, cable routes and the grid connection corridor.

00:58:08:09 - 00:58:32:00

So we have looked at that, made a, uh, is required a reasonable approach to what we might need. Um, and taking that worst case assessment, uh, that form the basis of the vegetation removal plan. So we

do think it is a reasonable worst case and hopefully be better. Um, but I'll pass to, um, my colleagues to, uh, go into a bit more detail on that.

00:58:33:13 - 00:59:08:21

Thank you. Uh, Alexander Nelson for the applicant. Um, yeah. As with everything, um, in the proposed development, the, um, the location of those vegetation, uh, removal, uh, has been guided by the design evolution process to date, and that's included, um, consideration of the LDA, um, impacts. And as, uh, Mr. Griffiths has just outlined, um, what we present in the Olympe, the reasonable worst case, uh, for the purpose of assessments. Um, and that takes account of, um, highways, construction works tracks and so forth, as you've just heard.

00:59:09:04 - 00:59:47:20

Should the DCO then be granted Consent. Um, the detailed lengths will be produced, um, for the proposed developments in accordance with the DCO requirement in schedule two of the draft DCO 1006 and Vo. Those lengths. And the reason I refer to Lemp or Lems, is that they might come forward as one member. It might come forward as multiple MPs that we that we set out, um, that would require approval by the relevant planning authority, um, before commencement of the construction, um, and that they would be required to be in substantially in accordance with the framework set out in the AU.

00:59:48:01 - 01:00:19:00

And that includes the vegetation removal parameters that we presented in appendix two. Um, you've you've kind of highlighted will that will they change? Uh, could they change I think to give you some assurance on that if, if design choices do need to be made going forward as part of that, um, design development? Firstly, um, we would hope that they are would get better because we're presenting the worst case. Um, but where design choices need to be made, they are going to be guided by the Olympe.

01:00:19:10 - 01:00:57:21

And where, with regards to vegetation, we have brought through those project principles into the Olympe as management objectives. So if you look at section four of the Olympe, you will see various management objectives that reference the Olympics. Rap 1064. Um, and so for example, you've got um, and I'll, I'll shorten these, uh, the retention of existing vegetation cover wherever reasonably practicable. Um, is managing objective one consideration of the local landscape character management objective to um protection of the amenity of public rights of way is objective nine.

01:00:57:23 - 01:01:39:03

I won't go through all of them. Um, but we will have to demonstrate consideration of those when we, um, come to submitting the final lengths. And that will ultimately be approved by the local planning authority. Um, the only other thing I would draw your attention to is we also put controls in the design commitments. Um, app 0138. And that provides further controls in regards to vegetation removal. So for example, uh D1 uh references internal access tracks and cable routes which will use existing tracks or crossings or most importantly in this case gaps in the hedgerows wherever, reasonably, wherever practicable.

01:01:39:06 - 01:01:45:04

And again, we will need to demonstrate that when we come to submit the plans. Thank you.

01:01:45:12 - 01:02:03:19

Okay. Thank you. So could the finalized locations of hedgerow be in totally different areas to that shown on the vegetation removal parameters, or will it be refined areas within the extent shown on those removal parameters?

01:02:05:23 - 01:02:29:08

And the follow on question will be how I understand your points about the objectives in the plan. But but how landscape and visual impacts would be taken into account in finalising those vegetation removal areas if they're in completely different areas to that shown on the parameters.

01:02:32:02 - 01:02:35:02

Sorry, sir. Could you repeat that second question? Sorry.

01:02:35:04 - 01:03:22:19

So we we have the vegetation removal parameters but the precise location is not finalised. So my question is could the vegetation removal be in completely different locations to those shown on that. Those parameters, albeit in the same lot of hedgerow but a so many meters further down the hedgerow? And if that is the case, how are visual impacts assessed and taken into account? Um, because looking at looking at the management objectives, it doesn't necessarily imply that the, the visual impacts of removing vegetation elsewhere would, would be covered.

01:03:23:21 - 01:03:27:22

Thank you so much on the applicant. Um, thank you for clarifying that. Um.

01:03:30:06 - 01:04:09:03

I do think the when you use is completely different. I think that's the wrong phrase. I think they aren't. The answer to the question is there would be refinement in the vegetation removal plan. Um, we've made a reasonable worst case assessment based on the how how at this point in time with the project, the project would be constructed as indeed we are. Uh, that's all we can do. That's all applicants can do on any project is to make a reasonable case before they've appointed the principal contractor. As I'm sure you're aware, there's no obligation on any developer to assess every single permutation that could arise on a scheme that just is not possible.

01:04:09:08 - 01:04:56:20

And case law, of course, uh uh confirms that. But in terms of the, the the, um, test, the, um, the safeguard, um, first of all, it's a reasonable worst case to assume. So we are reasonably confident that is the worst case and hopefully get better if there are refinements. Um, then when we submit the Olympe with the vegetation removal plan for approval to local authorities under schedule 16 of the draft development consent order, we have to submit that document to the authorities with a statement confirming, um, that it accords with the environmental statement or whether there or not there are or whether there are materially new or materially different environmental effects, that will give them a clear statement as to this is the final vegetation removal.

01:04:57:13 - 01:05:42:12

This, uh, hopefully accords with the environmental statement for these reasons. They then judge that to see whether they agree. Um, if, if, um, there is a difference that we couldn't predict it because perhaps the baseline has changed that we couldn't have predicted at this point, then we would submit in that submission that there is a difference. And again, the local authority would be assessing that impact and and be the determining authority as to whether or not to approve that removal. So you've got that comfort in schedule 16, the development consent order that the local authority will either have the confirmation it's in accordance to the ES or or if there is a difference, they will still be able to assess that difference through that mechanism.

01:05:44:17 - 01:05:45:09

Thank you.

01:05:47:14 - 01:05:53:13

Um, are the local authorities satisfied with the applicant's approach to vegetation removal?

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

County Council.

01:06:01:22 - 01:06:10:01

Thank you. Jonathan. We have the county council. I'm sure we'd like to take those points on the hearing on Thursday on article in relation to the draft ordinance. Okay. Thank you.

01:06:10:03 - 01:06:13:08

Thank you. Anything from the district.

01:06:14:05 - 01:06:24:11

City and district council? Nothing at this stage, sir. And there is something I think Mr. Brown will deal with in respect of the question that you've posed to us at 3.5, but I'll ask you to deal with that in a moment once we come to that.

01:06:26:04 - 01:06:27:09

Understood. Thanks.

01:06:43:10 - 01:06:55:11

Okay. We'll go on to agenda item 3.4 and then, um, have a have a morning break after that, a 15 minute break after that agenda item, if that's okay with everyone.

01:06:57:09 - 01:07:32:19

So I'd like to touch on the design process for design, deciding on the appearance of some of the larger structures of the proposed development. So if we take the satellite collector compounds as an example, because they are relatively large compared to the the panels, so the maximum six meter height above ground level and a maximum footprint of 1500m<sup>2</sup>. And these are structures that are proposed in each of spring, well east, central and west.

01:07:33:16 - 01:08:07:16

Um design commitment. The 17 states that satellite collect compounds will be grey or dark green containers, or brick or block buildings rendered or painted to suit local building styles and to be sensitive to the local environment. So there's a number of options contained there. And I do know in response to one, that the applicant confirms that the exact layout and design of these components will have no discernible bearing on the visual impact or outcome of the Elvia.

01:08:07:20 - 01:08:49:15

However, under the criteria for good design Empson, one does say that energy and infrastructure should demonstrate good aesthetic as far as possible, and the paragraphs 4.6.2 and developments should be as attractive as they can be. Paragraph 4.6.1. So my question to the applicant is, has there been a design process to date that can be evidenced to demonstrate that these color and material options are appropriate? For example, um, a landscape color study or a study of local building studies that informs these options that are listed in design commitment to E17.

01:08:54:12 - 01:09:03:19

Which previous on part the applicant I was, um, passed to a design consultant, um, Alexandre Nelson from LDA design to answer that question. Thank you.

01:09:05:16 - 01:09:45:21

Uh, Alexander Nelson for the applicant. Um, I think we will probably have to take that one away and come back to you, um, in written form about why, uh, those colors are appropriate. Um, if that's okay. Um, I think, um, all I would add is that obviously the in accordance with the requirements set out in the draft DCO. Any details on that comes forward? We would need to, um, go through that approval process with the local authority, um, where we would, um, be able to set out the detailed design within those parameters that we set while we, we've made those, um, design choices going forward.

01:09:46:02 - 01:09:50:08

But I'll need to come back to you with regard to the colors, um, in particular.

01:09:51:14 - 01:10:32:10

So just touching on the, uh, the approval process, then a requirement as a requirement five, um, of the draft ACA requires accordance with the defined commitments. And then if the design commitments have listed options of external appearance, where where is the if there's if there's not been a design process that shows that those options are appropriate, um, how is it secures that there will be that process undertaken, Mr.

01:10:32:12 - 01:10:33:02

Griffiths.

01:10:33:04 - 01:11:06:23

Which goes on. I think the key here is design commitment. G17, that you referenced that the, um, design, the satellite collector compounds, um, does say to be sensitive to local environment. So when we submit the detailed design of the requirement, five people demonstrate to the local authority that it's been that color choices, the exact positioning, etc. is being sensitive to the local environment and no doubt we'll discuss that with the local authority before we submit.



01:11:07:08 - 01:11:15:09

And but then you submit it, they um, and they are the approving authority. That's your that's your security mechanism.

01:11:16:13 - 01:11:17:03

But

01:11:18:17 - 01:11:38:24

as has it not by including those options in the 17, have you not determined that those are appropriate so that you can effectively choose any of those options? And because it's in accordance with that design commitment, is that.

01:11:45:04 - 01:12:24:07

Which group was on part the applicant? Um, I mean, they are the appropriate colors that we think are appropriate for this sensitive location. Sure. We wouldn't be proposing in that commitment. Inappropriate. Um, um, colors. Uh, extensive consultation and engagement with the local authorities. Um, what was carried out, which is which I think the design, um, design approach document clearly sets out that this is a design led, um, project and, um, um, the I think the, the, the commitment doesn't restrict us to gray or dark green.

01:12:24:11 - 01:12:48:15

It does say painted to suit local building styles and to be sensitive to local environments. So if for some reason, gray or dark green wasn't appropriate for for that particular satellite collector compound in that location, then there is flexibility in that commitment for us to agree with the local authority and another appropriate color, uh, for example, for that, For that structure in that compound.

01:12:50:04 - 01:12:54:00

And I said, I think Mr. Nelson would also like to make a comment as well.

01:12:55:11 - 01:13:28:24

Thanks. Alexander Nelson for the applicant. I mean, I would give reassurance that that has been informed as part of the that that design process we've gone through has, um, the Elvia has fed into that choice of colors and why we have selected those in terms of, um, uh, character and, and the assessment that's taken place. I think what we, um, where I was trying to kind of providing a written response later was, was, was just giving you the detail of that about how that has informed it and why we think those are most appropriate.

01:13:29:06 - 01:13:35:04

Yeah. So that that would be helpful if you could submit that deadline through then. Sure.

01:13:37:01 - 01:14:00:06

Um, and I'm using a commitment to my commitment to 17 as an example. But the principle of my question applies to all the larger components of the development. So work numbers two, three and four, where the external where the external appearance is not completely fixed by the function of that structure.

01:14:03:17 - 01:14:10:24

Is there anything the local authorities would like to say on this this matter? Thanks so much for North Stephen District Council.

01:14:11:01 - 01:14:41:22

So I probably agree with you in terms of concern about flexibility because as currently drafted and requirement five requires, as you've indicated, a call with a design commitment. We don't think there's quite as much flexibility in terms of what the design commitments currently secure, because they do, say specific colours. So we we'd invite a justification or evidence base for the colour choice. At this stage, we would be concerned that it wouldn't be the flexibility at discharge conditional discharge requirement stage for there to be changes given how the design commitment is drafted.

01:14:41:24 - 01:14:47:05

So perhaps we can review the evidence base and then take that one away and provide any further comments in writing.

01:14:47:17 - 01:14:49:06

Okay. Yeah. Thank you.

01:14:50:13 - 01:14:58:18

So I'm just going to jump in for a second there. Has there been any discussions between the parties or the local authorities and the applicant in terms of colours and materials before now?

01:15:04:09 - 01:15:11:19

Alexander Nelson for the applicant. Ah, I don't think there has been extensive discussion on it. No, not that I'm aware of.

01:15:12:04 - 01:15:13:02

Okay. Thank you.

01:15:15:14 - 01:15:25:20

Which there's been discussion on the design principles. I just want to clarify that there have been discussion discussions on design principles between the authorities, between the two parties.

01:15:26:12 - 01:15:27:09

Okay. Thank you.

01:15:30:10 - 01:15:36:17

Thank you. So did the applicant want to respond directly to anything Mr. Shaikh said then, which.

01:15:36:22 - 01:15:59:10

Is what happened? We understand your question and your point. Um, and we understand the council point will respond in writing and potentially propose if we think it's appropriate to, um. Any amendments to the design commitments, um, to provide additional flexibility, um, to give the necessary comfort to the authorities. Um, so we'll take that away. And in writing.

01:16:00:07 - 01:16:00:24

Thank you.

01:16:02:15 - 01:16:09:16

Okay. I think now would be a good time to take a 15 minute break. So it's, um,

01:16:11:10 - 01:16:23:08

around 11:15 now. So if we reconvene at 11:30, um, and we'll go through pick up with visual impact of highways components at that point. Thank you.