



Planning Inspectorate  
Arolygiaeth Gynllunio

## Hearing Transcript

<b>Project:</b>	Beacon Fen Energy Park
<b>Hearing:</b>	Issue Specific Hearing 1 (ISH) – Part 1
<b>Date:</b>	24 September 2025

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

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

# Beacon Fen\_ISH1\_Session1\_24.09.2025

Thu, Sep 25, 2025 4:28PM • 1:50:53

00:05

Speaker, good morning everyone. It is now 10 o'clock, and it's time for this hearing to begin. I would like to welcome you all to the issue specific hearing number one for the beacon Fen energy Park Project, an application made by Beacon, fan energy Park limited, who will be referring to as the applicant? Can I confirm that everybody can hear me clearly?

00:31

We can, sir. Thank you.

00:33

Thank you very much. Can I also confirm with the base team that live streaming and recording of this event has commenced?

00:42

Yes, I confirm.

00:45

Thank you very much for those people watching the live stream. Can I also advise that, should we at any point adjourn proceedings this morning, we'll have to stop the live stream in order to give us clear recording files. As a result, at point at which we recommend the meeting and restart lives the live stream. You'll need to refresh your browser page to view the restarted stream. Please note this should we need to adjourn,

01:11

as I said, it is now. Is now 10am and it's time for this hearing to begin. I would like to welcome you all to this specific hearing,

01:21

the development proposal consists of 400 megawatt solar in battery storage Park on land approximately 6.5 kilometers north east of Seaford in 2.5 kilometers north of Hackington, Lincolnshire, with a Solar Array area of approximately 529

01:40

hectares. The proposal comprises of above ground solar photovoltaic panels, a battery, ennest energy storage system infrastructure connected by a cable route of around 13 kilometers in length to national grid, peak fan, 400 kilowatts substation.

02:00

My name is Andre Pinto. I am a charter town planner employed by the planning inspectorate, and I have been appointed by the Secretary of State for housing, communities and local government as the single examining inspector to examine this application. I'll be reporting to the Secretary of State for energy security and net zero with a recommendation as to whether development consent order should be made.

02:23

You also hear me being referred to as the examining authority.

02:28

The case manager for this project is Noel margoum. Noel is being supported today by Harry kawort and Sam Stevens. If you have any queries about the examination process or the technology we are using for virtual events, they should be your first point of contact. Their contact details can be found at the top of any letter you have received from us, or on the project page of the national infrastructure website.

02:53

I will now deal with with a few housekeeping matters. Today is a virtual event being held on Microsoft Teams platform in order to minimize background noise, could you please make sure that you stay muted unless you are speaking? If you wish to speak at a relevant point in proceedings, please use the hand up function. Please be patient, as I may not get to you immediately, but I will invite to you, for you to speak at an appropriate time.

03:22

I would also like to remind people that chat function of Microsoft's team has been deactivated, so please do not try to use this if you don't manage to ask your question or raise your point at a relevant time. There'll be an opportunity at the end of the meeting and any other business before we close it.

03:41

I don't think we have any telephone participants today, but if you do, you should, but if we do, you should clearly state your name if you wish to make a comment. Once you have indicated that you wish to speak, please wait to be invited before making a contribution. Please speak loudly and clearly, especially for those on telephone. We are conducting this event virtually, rather than as a physical, face to face event. Therefore the dynamics will be different than those of previous events in other events this. By this, I mean that you may see me looking away from the camera and not looking directly at speaker. This is because I may be writing notes or looking at other material on screens, but I am paying close attention to what is happening. Are there any questions before we proceed

04:32

on any of the above? I don't see any hands raised, so I assume that there are no questions. In addition to the live stream, a recording of today's hearing will be made available on the beacon fan energy Park section of the national infrastructure planning website as soon as practicable after the meeting has finished. With this in mind, please ensure that you speak clearly, stating your name and who you are representing each time before you speak, if you don't want to.

05:00

To be recorded. You can switch off the camera because the digital recordings that we make are retained and published. They form a public record that can contain your personal information into which the general data protection regulations apply only in the rarest of circumstances, might we ask you to provide personal information of the type that most of us would prefer to keep private or confidential,

05:23

therefore, to avoid the need to edit digital recordings, please try your best not to add information to the public record that you would wish to keep private or that is confidential. If you feel that personal information is necessary, please provide this in a written document that we can redact before publication. The planning inspector's practice is to retain and publish recordings for a period of five years from the Secretary of State's decision,

05:51

a link to the planning inspectorate's privacy notice was provided in the rule six letter. I assume that everybody here today has familiarized themselves with this document, which establishes how the personal data of our customers is handled in accordance with the principles set out in data protection laws. Please speak to the case team if you have any queries about this.

06:13

This meeting will follow the agenda which was published on the beacon fan energy Park information page of the planning Inspectorate website on second of September 2025

06:23

it would be helpful. If you have a copy in front of you, I will now ask the applicant to please share the agenda. Thank

06:40

you, sir. Just bear with us. We'll just bring that up on screen for

06:44

you. Certainly. I will continue then as well in hopefully that will be available shortly. The agenda will cover, thank you very much. The agenda will cover. Item one, which is welcome, introductions, arrangements for the hearing. Item two, which is purpose of this issue, specific hearing. Item three, which is general matters. Item four, which is needs site selection and alternatives.

07:12

Item five, which is water environment and flood risk. Item six, which is access and traffic. Item seven, review of issues and actions arising, and item eight any other business. And item nine will be closure of hearing. Does anyone have any comments to make on the agenda that has been proposed?

07:34

If you do, please raise your hand. I

07:42

don't see any hands raised, so I assume that there are no comments on the agenda. So if I could ask the applicant to now bring down the agenda from the screen. Thank you.

07:55

I aim to, I will aim to finish the hearing today by 5pm

08:01

taking a lunch break around 1pm and have a smaller comfort break during the morning and afternoon sessions, please remember to turn your cameras and microphones off during the breaks. We will conclude the hearing as soon as all relevant contributions have been made in all questions asked and responded to. But if discussions can't be concluded, then it may be necessary for us to prioritize matters and defer other matters to written questions.

08:30

Likewise, if you cannot answer the questions being asked or require time to get information requested, then please, can you just indicate that you need to respond in writing and will tell you the best way to submit your response or issue in writing.

08:46

Although it is my aim to finish ish today and cover all matters, please note that TxA has tomorrow, Thursday, the 25th of September, reserved to conclude any matters that might not be finalized today. I will provide you with further instructions later on today, if we are required to continue with this hearing tomorrow.

09:07

Does anyone have any questions on that specific point?

09:14

Please raise your hand if you do.

09:19

I don't see any hands, right? So I assume that no one has any questions. So I will now move us on to introductions. So I'm going to ask those of you who are participating in today's meeting to introduce yourselves when I state your organization's name. Could you please introduce yourself by stating your name and who you are representing in 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. It would also be helpful if you could confirm to us any titles that you might have that might be relevant to today's proceedings, as well as if you wish.

10:00

To be how you wish to be addressed? IE, Mr. Mrs. Miss or missus. Can I start with the applicant?  
Please?

10:12

Mr. Mac, I believe that's right. Good. Good morning, sir. Ian Mac, a solicitor from Herbert Smith, three hills Kramer, appearing on behalf of the applicant, we've got various people in the room with me who I will introduce now, but there may be others who come in later, who I will also introduce and let them continue at that point. So to my right today, we have Mr. Leon cooler, who's also a solicitor with private Smith three holes Kramer will adjust the camera so you get more of his face from where he speaks. So my left, you've got Mr. James Hartley bonds, who's the project development director on behalf of the applicant. Mr. Is fine for all three of us. You've got to Mr. Hartley bonds left, Miss Susan Ray, who is the EIA leads for the project. And then we also have on the line, Mr. Colin Turnbull, who is the projects Planning Specialist, who we will also likely draw in at appropriate points in the agenda. I'll let Mr. Turnbull introduce himself further at that appropriate point, if that suits.

11:16

Sure that's not a problem. Thank you very much for all of that, Mr. Mac,

11:24

and is that it from the applicants team? Mr. Mac,

11:29

for this,

11:32

for that, yeah, for the for this morning session, there will be, we have other specialists brought in for the, particularly for the water and tough exceptions, which I imagine might follow this afternoon as well. I'll introduce those, those persons at that point, if that suits. Yes, that's fine. Thank you very much, Mr. Mac for confirming that right in that case, I will now move to the organizations and individuals that have given notice to of their intention to speak. Can I start please with Mr. Shake,

12:04

yes, good morning, sir. My name is Chev shake. I'm of council instructed on behalf of North Coast even District Council. I'm joined this morning by Ms Sylvia bland, who's an NSIP planning consultant at the council and this afternoon, Mr. Nick Falcon, who's the development manager.

12:29

This afternoon, correct to you. Okay, that's fine. Thank you very much. Mr. Shake, that's very useful.

12:38

Can I then move us on to Miss Stephanie Hall, I believe.

12:47

Good morning, sir. Yes, it's Miss Stephanie Hall Council instructed by Lincolnshire county council. I'm joined online by Miss Mrs. Justine Foster. You should have her name in the participants list, but so be mostly me doing speaking I should imagine. Okay, thank you very much. Miss Hall. That's very helpful. Thank you. Just in terms of items I've got on my list, items, 345, and six from the agenda to to have notes against, right? Okay, that's helpful. Thank you very much. I will make a note of that, Miss Hall, but please do

13:28

raise your hand and bring to my attention at any point if you would wish to participate. Thank you very much. Thank you very much, sir. Thank you.

13:40

Thank you for that. Now, can I call on councilor? Chapman, I believe

13:48

yes. Good morning. My name is Carol. Chapman, I'm representing South Kime district, sorry, South Kim parish council. I'm the chair of the Council, and we have concerns about number four and number six,

14:03

mainly sort of like loss of farmland, visual impact, biodiversity loss and vehicle impact.

14:14

Thank you for that. Councilor. Chapman, in terms of the items that you have mentioned. Can I just say that I am not predicting today to actually go through all of the items that you have just mentioned now, but just to bring to your attention that item four is needs site selection and alternatives, which I assume will fit with some of the issues that you would like to raise today. And then Item six is accessing traffic, which is one of the issues that you have mentioned, as well, in terms of visual landscaping, other issues, I'm afraid that that's not on the agenda for today. So what I would suggest that you do is submit.

15:00

As part of your written representations which will be receiving in deadline, one which I can confirm. The deadline date for you is

15:13

Tuesday, seventh of October. I would urge you to actually bring those issues and your concerns on any of the themes to the access attention via your written representation, please. Okay, that's lovely. Thank you. Thank you very much. Thank you Castle Chapman.

15:33

Now, can I move us to Mr. O'Sullivan?

15:40

Good morning, sir. Yeah, my I'm Joe Sullivan.

15:45

I'm from the south and east Lincolnshire Council's partnership, and today I'm representing Boston Borough Council

15:53

in terms of the gender items. I'd

15:56

indicated that we wish to speak on

16:01

items free,

16:03

five and six more as an more as more as an indication that I saw that you had

16:10

documents down from Boston Borough Council, so I was assuming that you wish to question us rather than something bespoke

16:20

um debt, that is fine, Mr. Mr. Sullivan, thank you for that.

16:27

You are absolutely correct in terms of us mentioning the relevant representation. I believe relevant representation 005,

16:39

no apologies.

16:42

I do not. Oh, here we go. Representation 001,

16:46

from Boston borough council regarding several of these items, if there are any questions that you wish to raise on those items, please do indicate and I can ask you for your comments or observations. So please feel free to do that on any of the items that you have mentioned. But just for reference,

17:09

we referred to your relevant rep as part of our agenda because we picked up and we noticed that you had raised concerns under that specific item. But if you would like to raise the morally that might be useful as well, please. Thank you.



17:29

Now, can I ask Mr. Garden please,

17:36

Good morning, sir, Robert garden of CMS, Cameron, McKenna, Navarro, olswang, LLP, which I'll call CMS for shortness from now on, we're here representing Fedra energy limited, who submitted the relevant representation zero 20, and primarily interested in Agenda Item four on site selection alternatives, particularly in relation to the cable corridor.

18:01

Okay? Thank you very much for that confirmation. Mr. Garden,

18:06

now can I call Miss snowball?

18:12

Good morning, sir. Miss Chloe snowball, planning advisor for the Environment Agency. I'm also joined by my colleagues, Miss Sian Holland and Mr. Philip sale, who are on the call,

18:25

we will be looking to speak on agenda item five.

18:30

Thank you.

18:31

Thank you very much. Miss noble.

18:40

Now, can I ask Ms FIAs to introduce

18:45

yourself, please? Hi,

18:48

I'm Aisha FIAs. I'm representing national highways.

18:53

We are interested in the access and traffic.

18:59

Yeah. Thank you. Item six, yes, okay, thank you very much. Miss fires.

19:05

Now, can I ask

19:11

Miss Hayley James, please? Good morning, Mrs. Haley James from Historic England, my role is Inspector of ancient monuments, but I'm just generally here and on behalf of everyone from easterick England, and I think we're primarily interested in sex selection and also access as well.

19:32

Okay, that's fine. Thank you very much, Mr. James.

19:38

And can I also call on Mr. Mountain.

19:45

Yep, hi morning and thank you, Inspector. I'm Matthew mountain, director of Icj Mountain farms, limited a directly affected landowner with over a third of the cable route. I hope to speak at item number four, need site select.

20:00

National and alternatives.

20:02

Okay, thank you very much. Mr. Mountain, welcome,

20:06

and I believe

20:08

that is all I have called. Now, everyone that wished to participate, can I just ask if there is anyone on this, on this hearing now that wishes to participate that I have not called and asked to introduce themselves yet. If there is someone, please raise your hand.

20:33

I can't see any hands raised, so assume that I have called everyone

20:39

so that then concludes item one from my end, can I ask before we move on, if anyone has any questions on item one, or can I move us on to item two, which is purpose of the issue specific hearing.

20:57

I don't see any hands raised, so I assume that no one has any questions on item one. So I'll move us on to item two. Purpose of the issue specific hearing. The purpose of ish one is to undertake an oral examination of environmental matters in relation to general matters, matters included and the need site selection and alternatives, matters under water, environment and flood risk, and also matters to do with

access and traffic and the transport. Please note that TSA has reserved time on Thursday the 25th of September, 2025 for the continuation of this hearing, in the event that all items are not fully explored by the EXA today,

21:37

as previously mentioned, the agenda for this meeting was published on the beacon fan energy Park Project Information page of the planning practice website on second of September.

21:49

Today's hearing will be a structured discussion led by the examining authority. Please be sure that I am familiar with what you have already submitted, so you do not have to repeat in length anything that you have already put forward to me already in writing submissions carry equal weight regardless of the format in which they are put forward. If you do refer to any documents this morning, it would be helpful if you could give to correct examination Library Reference number. Please do try to avoid using acronyms as people who might be watching might not be as familiar as you with those terms.

22:28

Can I also check that the applicant is happy to take notes of the actions discussed today and then circulate those to me, for me to check by the end of the hearing, or as soon as possible after the close of this hearing.

22:44

Mr. Yeah. Ian Mac for the applicant. So the camera will catch up. That's that's fine. We'll, we'll do so and we'll, we'll aim to get them across to ASAP, more, yeah, after the closer today or tomorrow, depending on when. Thank you. Thank you very much. I will aim also to make it very clear that I wish something to be taken forward as an action, so I will try as much as I possibly can to make that very clear for note taking. Can I also remind all of the participants today that I'll be expecting by deadline one Tuesday, seventh of October, written submissions of all oral submissions made at the hearing. This should include any responses given to questions posed, all allowed by the exci. Are there any questions on item two, or can I move us on to item three? If there are any questions, please raise your hands.

23:41

I don't see any hand raised, so I'll move us on to Item three, then, which is general matters.

23:49

So the purpose of this item is to examine general matters linked to the proposed development, namely, whether all relevant legislation and policy has been complied with, and the applicant's approach to the environmental impact assessment. A list of the key written submissions that will inform my questions on this item has been included in the agenda published in anticipation of this hearing. Instead of going through this list in detail, can I just ask if anyone has any comments they would like to make on the list included in the agenda?

24:21

Please raise your hand if you do.

24:25

I don't see any hand raised, so I assume that there are no comments on the list of documents. However, I would also like to add reference to as

24:38

006,

24:40

in relation to works, to work plans, which were referenced

24:46

with a PP, zero, 10. So both references should actually be included on the list.

24:54

I would then like to start my questions to the applicant.

25:00

Course and I would, I would like to ask the applicant to please explain in broad terms the proposed development focusing on its main components, including the solar array, the proposed battery storage Park and the proposed cable route. And can I also ask the applicant to please talk us through the main components and their location? Please.

25:24

Thank you, sir. Ian Mac for the for the applicant. So before turning to that description of the proposed development, I thought it may assist Mr. Hartley. Bond provided a bit of background to the applicants and self and explains their experience in this field, which provides some of the context, to some of the masses, which we'll come on to. Would that be okay? Yes, that will be fine. Thank you.

25:47

Thank you, sir. Good morning. James Hartley, bond for the applicant, sir,

25:53

as Mr. Mac said, I thought I would set out the credentials of the owners and developer developers of this project, low carbon, as it demonstrates a track record in bringing forward projects of this nature so low carbon is a leading global renewable energy company, headquartered in London, with around 200 employees. We operate in the UK, Europe and North America, with a pipeline of more than 15 gigawatts in development, with one of the largest mature pipelines of UK solar and battery storage at over four gigawatts, with approximately one gigawatt currently in operation or under construction. We also developed the 500 megawatt gate Burton energy Park NSIP, which was granted development consent by the Secretary of State in July last year.

26:43

Collectively, this makes us one of the largest developers projects in the UK with capabilities in taking projects all the way through development and into construction and operation.

26:55

We're also a B Corp business certified for meeting high standards social and environmental performance, accountability and transparency, balancing purpose and profit. As an operator of numerous sites in the UK and beyond, it is important to low carbon to be a good neighbor in the communities we are part of. I myself am a Project Development Director of the beacon Fen energy Park, and I have worked on over one gigawatt of solar PV and storage projects over the last decade or so, including the aforementioned gate Burton project. I'm grateful for the opportunity to be able to speak on behalf of the applicant during the course of this examination. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Hackley bond. I was actually not going to raise this question today as part of today's hearing. But since you have mentioned Kate Burton, I would like to ask

27:50

in terms of this specific project, or any other projects that the company that you have mentioned has been involved in,

28:00

how have these been funded? And have you actually created specific vehicles for that, similarly to what is being proposed for beacon? Fan,

28:13

yeah. Hi. So James Hartley barn for the applicant, yes, the typical model is the same in this case as it is for solar farms that develop so you are correct in your assumption around them being SPV based.

28:30

That is a typical practice, and those projects tend to be vested at the point of which there is a need to start construction of those projects or just before. The route for obtaining the finance can look different in different circumstances,

28:49

but, but ultimately that is, that is the model, as you've highlighted, sir.

28:55

Okay. Thank you very much. I'm satisfied with that answer for now, but just please note for the applicant that I will probably be probing this issue further via written questions,

29:08

and will ask for further information and confirmation and some sort of assurance that finance is actually in place for the delivery and how that can be secured and guaranteed. Okay, but for now, that is sufficient. Thank you very much for clarifying that. Now, if I could ask to then address my initial question, please.

29:35

Thank you, Sir Ian Mac for the applicant. So, so chapter two of the environmental statement, which is a PP, 053,

29:44

provides a detailed description of the proposed development subject to this DCA application. As you've said, I don't expect you want me to repeat the full detail of that chapter in today or today's hearing. So I'm instead proposing to provide a reasonably high level.

30:00

Summary, focusing principally on the areas you highlighted. So the solar array, the battery, energy storage system, and the cable Route Corridor, the bespoke access road corridor, is a subject for a later agenda item. So it might be you're happy to defer that till then, but I'll also quickly cover here, along with the substation connection works elements as well. Yes, Mr. Mac, I'm happy with that. Just to help out your explanation in terms of high level information that I am after as well. It might be useful to try and link that with the description of the works as set out into this CO

30:43

just so that we can actually link those two together.

30:49

That might be useful, because that will be a good way for us reviewing all of the works that are being proposed as part of proposed development.

30:58

No problem, sir. Just bear with me and I will get yes that schedule one to the draft this year. I think so here back to the applicant happily, generally follows in the chronological order that I'll come on to, but it might be just, we just need to to move around. So I should also flag that predictably, I'll be deferring to Mr. Hartley bonds to on matters which he may require any more technical explanation of the principal components, given his comparatively significantly greater experience and authority on the matters you've just heard. I'll also periodically refer to specific references within the PD chapter where additional detail and figures are provided, which which might help bring some of this to light. I know we we've obviously got,

31:44

as you've pulled up as well. We've also got the chapters available to pull up on screen, if that would be helpful at any point. So please do just interrupt me as you consider appropriate. Yes, I just have noticed I just shared works plan as well, just to assist a little bit more as well in terms of your response, but happy for whoever from your side is sharing documents to actually do that as well.

32:12

Sure. Perfect. Okay, thank you

32:16

so, yeah. So if that's it, as you noted at the beginning, the proposals seek development consent for a new solar and battery storage Park connected by an underground cable route of approximately 13 kilometers in length to the existing national grade bffen 400 KV substation, which I'll refer to as the biffen substation from onwards. There's no need to develop a new substation as part of this scheme. However, the window need to carry out upgrades and extension works to that substation. The proposed development will also include a new access road from the A 17 to the silver Ray area to facilitate all phases of the proposed development, and that's referred to as the bespoke access roads within the application.

32:59

The proposed development comprises three principal core areas. So the solar array area, which is where the solar PV and battery energy storage system, or the Bess and their ancillary infrastructure will be located. I'll come on to these elements in slightly more detail below, which is where I'll propose the link to the works numbers, if that sits the cable routes corridor, which is within where, where the cable routes will be located. And similarly, the bespoke access corridor, where the bespoke access roads will be located. Suppose distinct areas are shown on figure 1.3 the site area plan, which is a P, P, dash, 194,

33:40

and then mindful of the specific agenda item on the design parameters and how those have informed the EAS to follow. I won't labor that detail here, other than to know, by way of general overview, the variable design of the proposed development layout emerged as a result of an analysis of the opportunities and constraints detailed environmental assessment and through multi stage consultation and continued engagement with key stakeholders. Figure 1.4 which is the Indicative site layout plan, which is a P, p1 95

34:13

provides an illustration of how the site could be developed in accordance with design parameters, which is set out in the outline design principles and by reference to the works plans, both of which are secured for the DCO so

34:29

sections 2.5 to two point 13 of the proposed development, chapter to the ES provide additional detail, both written and through figures on the principal features of the proposed Development and which are familiar to solar and best schemes of this scale in nature to pick up on the elements that you highlighted, the solar arrays. So as a general overview that the height of those solar arrays has been informed through iterative design, considering flood modeling data, resulting in a height of up to.

35:00

3.9 meters above ground level in fields to the east, and up to three and a half meters above ground level in fields towards the west, south as an isolated field to the north, as shown on figure 2.4

35:12

panel heights, which is a PP 196

35:16

so the work number for the solar array is work number one on the works plans. The

35:23

individual panels are anticipated to be up to two and a half meters long and up to one and a half meters wide, and consist of a series of photovoltaic which is PV, when I refer to that cells beneath a layer of toughened glass. The proposal is for a fixed, a static panel orientation facing due south, which is commonly seen on other existing UK solar farms, and angled, sort of between 10 to 45 degrees from horizontal.

35:52

Each module would have a DC generating capacity of between 608 150 watts or more, depending upon any advances in solar PV technology by the time of construction, the exact number of PV panels that would be used in the proposed development is not yet known. Various factors will help to inform that number and arrangement, and some flexibility is required and is sought to accommodate that future technological development. And again, I'm conscious there's an agenda item later this morning or afternoon, where we're happy to elaborate on that, if that suits, yes, I'll have some questions prepared for Item four on that specific issue. Yes,

36:34

perfect. Thank you. So moving on to the battery, energy storage system, or the Bess, as I'll refer to it, which is work number two on the works plans. So the proposed development includes an associated 600 megawatt battery energy storage system. So the best is located adjacent to the proposed on site substation, as shown on the illustrative layout plan of battery energy storage system and on site substation, which is a snappily named plan. So apologies for that. It's a PP, 012, the

37:10

best is going to be used to store electricity during periods of surplus electricity generation from the solar array and to export it to the grid during periods when electricity demand and see generation.

37:23

The batteries themselves will be placed within individual enclosures, arranged regularly within a compound which vehicular access is available to each unit. The precise number will again depend on the level of power capacity and duration of energy storage that the proposed development will require, and an element of flexibility and approaches therefore adopted us at this stage as the technology, business models and relevant policy all evolve again, I'm anticipating we'll come back to that at the later points in the agenda. So I won't lay at that point forever here. And finally, the dimensions of the best containers are anticipated to be approximately up to eight meters by three meters, with a height of up to 4.5 meters,

38:07

and moving down the way to the cable routes corridor, which is work number four on the works plans.



38:16

As noted earlier, the proposed development is going to be connected to the national grid of the bickerfen substation. The cable Route Corridor is approximately 13 kilometers in length and extends southwards from the solar brave area, crossing Littleworth the road, before turning to the east, then continuing south across the A 17 towards great hail Fen. The route continues in a broadly South easterly direction, crossing great Hale O and South 40 foot terrain before reaching the Vicker fence substation, located on Vickers drove. So again, I'm conscious that a later point in the agenda will explore the cable route appraisal, and which will likely draw out some of the more relevant details. So I wasn't proposing to cover that in more length at this point. But no, no, I agree with that. Can I just ask a quick question then just confirm to set the scene for the development, which is what we're trying to do at the moment, the cable Route corridor that you have explained will all be, it

39:21

will not be at surface, correct? It will be in the ground. It's underground, exactly, sir. So that's that's secured through the outline. I've mentioned outline design principles, which are secured through the draft. Eco,

39:38

okay. Pleased to continue.

39:41

Thank you.

39:42

The bespoke access roads, as mentioned, is the primary means of access to this site, and is a crew of road from the A 17. The bespoke access road is work number eight, sir. It's

39:55

proposed to be constructed in advance of material construction commencing on the solar.

40:00

Area and will facilitate construction in that area. Further detail regarding the construction of the bespoke access road is available in Appendix 2.2, which is the bespoke access road construction method statements, which is a PP, 075, and we'll have our principal transport consultant available to discuss that in the more detail this afternoon, as you've mentioned, is okay.

40:24

And then finally, as we get to the end of the substation, connection work to accommodate the proposed connection works to the southwest of the existing bickerfen National Grid substation that requires which are proposed to be delivered by national grid. So those works will include a new generation Bay, a new generation Bay, control room and a perimeter access road. So national grids have requested that there be a level of optionality within the design of that proposed extension. The two design options have both been assessed in ES and that are included in the application are air insulated switchgear, which is ais and gas insulated switchgear. GIS, again, it might be a point for further technical discussion or could be

provided in writing, given given the level of that. But additional detail on those proposed extension works, on their construction program are variously set out within both the proposed development chapter to the ES and also within the electricity Grace connection statement, which is a PP 285,

41:24

and the grid connection Construction Method Statement, which is a PP 074,

41:30

the latter of which also talks about the extension works necessitated by the separate Packington Fen solar DCO scheme. And the works for that package are work number five within the draft eco. So that's, that's a sort of, necessarily high level end to end run through of the principal components. I'll just pause there before we move on to their sort of location and how the ES has considered them, to see if you're satisfied with that initial run through. And if you've got any any queries on the back of it, yes, thank you, Mr. Mac for that. Can you just, can you just confirm to me works number seven construction and decommissioning compounds?

42:19

If you would like to introduce those as well.

42:24

Thank you, sir. So work number seven are the construction and decommissioning compounds which are acquired in connections with works. Numbers one, two and three, which you'll see are the solar array, the battery, energy storage system, and the proposed on site substation. So principally the construction compounds associated with the works in the main solar array area.

42:45

Okay. Thank you very much. And also, you have mentioned

42:50

the battery energy storage

42:54

system

42:57

and the on site substation, and you have mentioned that those are located close to each other. Could you please clarify

43:09

why that is the proposed location?

43:15

So as trailed, I'll pass this across to Mr. Hartley bonds to respond on our behalf. If that's okay. Thank you, yes. Thank you very much. Mr. Hartley bond, yes. James Hartley bond, for the applicant, sir, I may

let others come in as well around the kind of planning and environmental aspects, but from a technical standpoint,

43:35

typically you will find in the UK that a battery, energy storage system is co located and AC coupled with a

43:47

at the substation. So this is a typical model

43:52

and and there's sort of various technical reasons why we would do that,

43:58

but it sort of provides for I can go to a bit more detail on what some of those are, if you would like, sir. But at a high level, it's the most of the least land intensive way of developing a battery storage project. It keeps all of the components close together

44:16

and and I can pass over to colleagues in respect of the kind of planning and environmental aspects of that as well. But there's sort of a technical justification for that, sir. Yeah, I would

44:29

thank you for that, Mr. Hartley bond, I would like the technical explanation a little bit more, but to frame that, my concern is in terms of any risks that might exist or might be exponentially increased by collocation.

44:51

So

44:53

from that perspective, is there any technical reasons or evidence that you would like to submit?

45:00

It for that proposed specific location I am thinking about, for example, the risk of fires, flooding, so on and so forth, and why that specific location has been identified.

45:18

So we might give you an initial answer, and then see if others from the team want to come in. So

45:26

as you've noted, that the main potential hazard so this is earmark for the applicant, the main potential hazard of best fit is thermal runaway and if not controlled fire. So consultation with Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue Service and relevant legislation has influenced the overall design of the development to ensure

adequate siting of best and grid infrastructure away from sensitive receptors. Battery manufacturers undertake extensive testing and analysis to assess fire risk, and the proposed development will adhere to those manufacturer safety recommendations. You may have seen that an outline, batteries, storage, safety management, management plan, which is a PP 279,

46:07

is included as part of the application and secured pursuant to requirement six of the draft DCO, and specifies the particular safety measures incorporated into the design and considered within the environmental statements as appropriate. So that's the sort of headline answer in that respect. So in terms of how we've considered the design and proposed security measures as safety measures, sorry, and secured them as part of the DCO. So I'll just pause there again to see if that's a suitable initial answer, or if you'd like elaboration on any elements, that I think, I think that's that's clear for now, I particularly take on board the point in terms of it being away from sensitive receptors. So

46:55

I will accept that, however, I am just curious to know

47:02

if

47:07

the collocation of both these works presents a higher risk of any of

47:15

hazards or not, or if the Risk is actually the same with collocation or without collocation,

47:24

thank you. So I'd like for the applicant, so I think we've we note that query and with your question, we'll take that away and respond as part of our post hearing summary of responses and actions. Yeah, that's absolutely fine. Thank you very much for that.

47:40

Okay,

47:43

I will now like to explore the ES design parameters as per the design and access approach document that is a PP, 278,

47:53

in how these have informed the environmental statement in overall design of proposal. So can I please ask the applicant to talk us through those design parameters, their role, how they will be secured through the DCO process, and how they have been used to inform the environmental statement.

48:17

Thank you, Sir Ian Mac for the applicant, so I'll invite Mr. Colin Turnbull to describe that approach to the design iteration,

48:27

and then perhaps bring in Miss Susan rain to talk about it from an ES perspective as well. So as I said, Colin is remote today, so we'll just give him a second to hopefully come on screen and we'll turn our camera and microphone off. Okay, that's fine. Thank you. Mr. Mac, Mr. Turnbull.

48:47

Thank you, sir. Colin Turnbull, from the applicant. I'm a charter town planner. Mrtpi, Since 2009

48:55

I will just take you through the

48:58

topic that you've you've asked about.

49:02

So as we've already said,

49:05

Ian Max already said it's, you know, solar panels and batteries and the associated technologies are constantly advancing in terms of efficiency and durability. So there's a necessity to

49:19

set flexibility at an appropriate level, within the design and layout of the proposed development. And you know, this is supported by national policy as well.

49:30

So in terms of the environmental impact assessment, that means that we adopt a Rochdale envelope approach, and that is terminology arising from some case law many years ago. But the key point there is it's entirely in accordance with the planning inspectorates advice. Note number nine, which is on the planning inspectorates website. So in order to provide appropriate flexibility and ensuring a robust EIA is being prepared and.

50:00

The applicants adopted those principles, and it's assessed maximum and where appropriate, minimum design parameters for many elements of the proposed development. These parameters include the limits defined by the works plans, which are as 006,

50:14

in addition to maximum dimensions for the main buildings and structures set out in table 2.1,

50:19

of ES, chapter two, which is a PP, 053,

50:25

certain other sizing, operational and other matters can be read in column two of the outline design principles, which is appendix one of the design and access approach document, which is document referenced as 019,

50:42

so I'm happy to take you through

50:45

the design and approach document, sort of in a very brief format. If yes, that will be helpful Mr. Turnbull. And can I also ask if it is possible for us to actually share

50:59

on this call the specific design parameters. So I'm really lying at the moment on a PP 278, that is the design and access approach document, appendix one, outline design principles. I believe that this is a document that is listed within the DCO to be certified for this specific issue. So if we could actually go through these, that would be useful linking with several different works for which those design parameters have been developed.

51:35

Thank you, sir. Just yeah, no for the app, and just bear with us. We're bringing that up on screen for you.

51:40

Thank you and Colin temple for the applicant. Could I just

51:45

clarify we made an additional submission of a very slightly updated design approach document, and the reference for that is as 019,

51:55

so I believe it's, it's that version that we should be referring to, please sir, rather than a PP, 278, but I just wanted to make sure that we're looking at the as

52:07

019 version on the screen. I think we are.

52:13

Yes. Thank you, Mr. Turnbull, yes, absolutely it is reference as 019 that was an additional submission accepted. Yes, thank you.

52:29

Okay, great. So I will, I will, just firstly, before we get on to the design principles, just describe some of the earlier sections of the design approach document, if I may, sir.

52:43

So the document describes the setting of design objectives, informed by the context within which the proposed development will sit, along with the opportunities and constraints that are, that are present,

52:56

and it has regard to the national infrastructure Commission's design principles, along with national and local planning policy. So there's a set of design objectives which was set out

53:07

in table 4.1,

53:09

of the design access approach document ASO online, and a overview of the good design process adopted is provided at paragraph four, point 2.5,

53:20

so there's a very brief summary given of that before the document then goes on to explain more detail. And Section Five document describes the iterative design process subsequently adopted. This allowed the applicant to refine and evolve the design during a sequence of internal workshops, options appraisals for the major linear elements such as the cable corridor and the bespoke Access Road, near neighbor engagement, identify, identification of key items of mitigation, such as minimum standoffs from certain features and external consultation on relevant options. And a key consultation that we did was, you know, the statutory consultation stage, we presented quite a lot of information about the options available for the bespoke access road. So we presented several route options for that at section 5.3, of the document, we've identified several specific features of the design that were informed by external engagement and consultation.

54:21

We we continue to incorporate relevant survey and design and assessment inputs at that point.

54:30

And just a word on the document title, the document blends the new approach of design approach document that's sought in the in the sort of current planning inspectorate, pre application requirements with a sort of more traditional design and access statement. And really we wanted to do this because construction and construction and maintaining a project at this scale requires appropriate access

54:59

and.

55:00

And and just Yeah, continuing on that theme of access, the process of identifying access requirements and responding to these, including the bespoke access queries described in Section six, as well as in that document. So that's the design approach document

55:16

we've also in the consultation report, which is a P, P 046,

55:21

at section six describes the consultation that we did with communities under Section 47 of the Planning Act,

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and this included information on bespoke access road options. These can be copies of that information to be seen at appendix 6.9 which is a PP, 048, and table 6.14

55:43

of a p p 046 describes the feedback received on statutory consultation, including in relation to the bespoke access road, and these have informed the design of the bespoke road.

55:56

Mr. Temple, in terms of the design of the access road. I will aim to explore that a little bit further onto item item six. So one might have some further questions on that specific issue. But thank you very much for that. If you would like to continue, then please.

56:18

Thank you, sir.

56:21

So the applicant's vision for the proposed development is set out at paragraph seven to one of the design and access approach dominant as one nine and the

56:31

outline design principles, as we have on screen, they are included at appendix one. So these are based on the design objectives that were from section four,

56:41

and incorporate the operational stage design parameters from the environmental statement, so it acts as a control document for securing those operational stage parameters.

56:53

Thank you.

56:58

Can you provide a



57:01

little bit more detail in terms of how those design parameters were actually fed into the overall environmental settlement in the assess and the assessment carried out. I'm particularly interested in terms of works one in works number two in how these were taken into consideration,

57:27

certainly, sir. So

57:30

Section Five of the document, if I just

57:35

do one second. So at Section five, we provided a description of the iterative design process adopted. So

57:46

I mean, if I just use the example of setbacks, perhaps

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there was a sort of iterative process involving internal workshops of relevant specialists survey information being fed in at various points. Because, as you may know, that you know certain ecology surveys, for example, a seasonal even traffic surveys have some seasonality to them sometimes.

58:08

So, you know, seasonal surveys were fed in appropriate points and near neighbor engagement, which was not necessarily the same time as the statutory consultation, but occurred on a on a more ad hoc basis as to people's availability. So there's those internal workshop new enable engagement and the survey results, and they all fed into the setting of setbacks. We would adjust setbacks, and that's to do with visual impacts,

58:40

general amenity

58:42

and avoidance of noise impacts at those sensitive receptors. So that is documented in Section Five. We'd be happy to follow up. If you would like any more information on that.

58:58

I would

59:00

I'm just interested in terms of general matters, and I'm just interested in setting scheme and actually understanding how

59:08

the applicant went about in terms of its approach on this specific issue, and without precluding and without getting too much into the detail of

59:21

visual and landscape impact, which obviously

59:26

might be subject to further questions, and it might be a matter that we wish to take into consideration more fully at another hearing. But what I would like to really understand is how the maximum heights included within the design parameters, particularly for works number one, which are the ground mounted solar photovoltaic generation panels. Works number two, which is the battery energy storage system, and then actually works number three as well, which is developed.

1:00:00

Development of the on site substation associated works. How does maximum heights, which vary quite significantly from works to works, have been taken into consideration as part of the Yes, particularly in terms of the visual impact. And I want some assurance from the applicant at this point, this is really where I was after that those different heights were taken into consideration, and that the applicant has actually looked at the visual and landscape impact of those different types of works overall on the surrounding landscape and the surrounding preceptors.

1:00:40

Thank you, sir. I'm very clear on that now. So what, what I propose is, if I give a brief overview, and then I will hand back to the room where I believe Susan rain, for the applicant, will be able to give, give more explanation.

1:00:58

So in broad terms, what we did in terms of the setting the heights of the solar array area itself. So excluding the battery for now,

1:01:09

they were set initially with a slightly larger Rochdale envelope height parameter than would be typical.

1:01:20

By typical, I mean a site that has already had its flood risk fully understood. So at the very early stage of the project, we were relying on, you know,

1:01:32

limited or slightly older data from the Environment Agency. So we we've carried out flood modeling since. But at the early stage, we set it a quite a large height, which was 4.5 meters.

1:01:48

It would be unusual, really, to build an entire solar at 4.5 meters, but we we needed to carry out initial assessments at that stage, just in case there was a need to raise panels by around one meter,

1:02:02

you know,

1:02:04

with with them being some 3.5 on top of that. So that was the early stage carried out. Then there was flood modeling work carried out, which took, you know, quite considerable time, because there's lots of sort of engagement that is needed on that kind of modeling exercise, and this allowed us to reduce those heights to between 3.5 and 3.9 meters,

1:02:30

and they have been accounted for in the landscape and visual impact assessment. But I will, if I may, hand over to the room with my colleagues for the applicant.

1:02:43

Thank you, Mr. Turnbull.

1:02:50

Thank Thank you, Sir Ian mag for the applicant. So I'll just introduce Ms Susan rain, who I mentioned at the outset is the projects EIA lead. I should note of this MS grain is not the projects specialist landscape and visual expert, but she can provide, hopefully, some further elaboration, but within the limits of her knowledge, and to the extent you have any further follow ups on the back, could I suggest we take that away as an additional action to give that information to you,

1:03:20

pass across. Now that's fine. Thank you, Mr. Mac for Miss Ray's

1:03:29

benefit as well. Can I just highlight that what I am after is actually how those design parameters will take into consideration as part of the yes in the environmental statement in your approach, I do accept and agree that we cannot get into the detail of the visual assessment for every single receptor that has been identified, but what I am after in what I'm trying to understand is actually the approach, in how that approach was developed, so that we can then have this conversation about the visual landscape impact. So I hope that that helps directing the response that I'm after

1:04:10

the applicant. Thank you. So does. I'll pass across to ms Raine to address that. Thank you.

1:04:17

Hi, Susan Ray, I work for SLR

1:04:21

and the EIA lead for the applicant.

1:04:24

So in terms of the approach, as Colin's covered, we sort of had an iterative design alongside the EIA to develop the scheme and then how that was considered within the ES, particularly, hopefully to address your query in how it's considered within landscape visual. The maximum heights across the site are set out within Chapter Two. Sorry, I don't have

1:04:50

the reference

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ADP, 053,

1:04:56

and then the apologies, because I announced that I'm.

1:05:00

Not have all the references immediately to hand, but will not show any

1:05:05

written responses afterwards. But the landscaping visual assessment in particular, and any other assessment within which it was relevant considered the maximum panel heights across the site

1:05:19

were defined by the panel height parameters plan, which is figure 2.4

1:05:27

which provides the split in the two different heights. And that's considered within the zone of theoretical visibility, figure 6.1

1:05:36

and figure 6.2 which is the sorry figure 6.1 is the bare ground zone of theoretical visibility, and then figure 6.2 is the screen zone of theoretical visibility. Within those the heights of the Bess and substation were also considered the maximum heights which were

1:05:55

selected at points within the maximum parameter area for the Bess and substation areas illustrated on the works plans and the illustrative layout plan,

1:06:10

the Lansing visual and the ztv it may go beyond your point, but also considered the maximum heights in terms of the substation extension at the bickerfen substation.

1:06:21

Thank you very much for that. Miss Ryan. Can I just ask that is very clear. Then, in terms of the solar Orion works number one, and the best battery, energy storage system compound, which is works number two, going back to the ES design parameters, so works, number three, it does state that in terms of the on site, substation and associated works, it does state that this can actually go up to a height of 13 meters.

1:06:54

So how were those specific works taken into consideration as part of the yes,

1:07:04

the maximum 30 meter height was included within the S from abroad. It was the area shown limited center of the site where the best substation will be located. An illustrative layout is provided, but at this time, we're not it may be further to detail design. And therefore it was considered a sort of point mark across that central area, within the zone of theoretical visibility, and from the perspective of

1:07:36

the disciplines, in particular landscape visual, considered that that

1:07:40

3050, meter maximum height could be at any point within that area, and to therefore consider it from a worst case scenario of it potentially being at the edge which is most visible.

1:07:53

If that is the case. Thank you very much for that Miss rain. So in terms of just so that we are absolutely clear here in terms of landscaping visual assessment, when we actually get to that specific theme, it is expected that the maximum height of works number three was actually taken into into consideration as part of the overall assessment is the maximum possible height of the development on that specific location that is identified for works. Number three, correct? Yes, that is correct. Perfect. Thank you very much. Thank you.

1:08:31

Can I just ask then, in addition to

1:08:35

what we have just set out and gone through under the ES design parameters. Is there anything else that the applicant would like to state and to complete their response to my initial question,

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if I could ask perhaps Mr. Mac or Mr. Turnbull, if they would like to add anything else?

1:09:02

Thank you, sir. Ian, now for the applicant, nothing from the room, so I'll just pause and see if Mr. Turnbull has anything else he wishes to say on this particular matter. Thank you, Mr. Mac Mr. Turnbull.

1:09:14

Connor Turnbull, for the applicant. No, I don't.

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Thank you very much. Mr. Turnbull.

1:09:20

Okay,

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I would now then like to move us on to my next point, which is appointed. I believe that the applicant has already covered as part of the previous answer, but I would like to actually question flexibility in terms of being able to incorporate any technical advancements in solar energy as part of proposed development, and how this has been secured through the DCO process. So you have already mentioned that this has been considered and has been taken forward by the applicant. Can you just confirm that that is actually the case?

1:10:00

And if so, where that flexibility is actually secured, and through what systems within the CEO will it be actioned?

1:10:14

Mr. Mack,

1:10:18

thank you, sir. So I think there's a sort of two pronged answer to this. There's the what flexibility and sort of why, which I'll pass to Mr. Hartley bond to give you that sort of general answer, if that suits. And then I think it then falls to me to explain how that is accommodated within and secured by the draft ACO. So we'll just, we'll approach it in that fashion, if that suits. That's fine. Thank you very much. Mr. Hartley bond, thank you, sir. Yeah. James Hartley bond, for the applicant, I think the key, the key thing here, it's been touched on already, is the variation in panel technology. Particularly we see this. This is something which has occurred year on year, but is the increase in wattage of panels.

1:11:06

And that increasing wattage and panels means that ultimately there can be more generation from in, from the site, ultimately,

1:11:18

and and I'll let probably colleagues come back in on specifically how that's been assessed, but, but there is variation assumed within the

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within the assessment.

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So yeah, I might just pause at that point.

1:11:37

Thank you. Okay, Mr. Turnbull, comments for the applicant.

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I'll just give a couple of examples of where the outline design principles

1:11:53

refer to flexibility, if I may. So the outline design principles, to recap, are in appendix one of the design and access approach document as 019,

1:12:05

as you can see on screen,

1:12:08

we can, and I appreciate the focus is on solar and battery technology. But I'll just my first example. Will be on work number three, so you can see that we've got either a rectangular arrangement of 250 meters by 160 meters,

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or a square arrangement of 200 by 200 meters allowed for

1:12:32

and this is because there are just some general,

1:12:36

very variations between configurations and layouts. There's a lot of safety, and you know, technical considerations in the design of substations High Voltage infrastructure is subject to a lot of rules and so on. So that flexibility has been reflected

1:12:54

and being an outline design principle that's secured by requirement five of schedule two of the draft DCO,

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if we could maybe just scroll up to works one and two, I can pick another example.

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So

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another example would be that the tilt

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is angled between 10 and 45 degrees from horizontal. Again, this is optimized at the detailed design stage, so we have allowed for a limited variation in tilt

1:13:36

within that outline design principle. And again, that's secured, like all these principles through requirement five.

1:13:46

Would that?

1:13:49

Would that sort of provide clarity on your question? Yes, yes, that's that's fine. Thank you very much for that. And now if I could, I believe Mr. Mack asks the

1:14:03

part of my question regarding how it's been secured.

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Thank you. So Ian Mac for the applicant, Mr. Turnbull covered sort of the majority of it, in the sense that most of the flexibility that has been sourced and has been reflected in the assessment is reflected within the outline design principles, which are secured pursuant to requirement five of the draft this year, which you'll see, require that when the detailed design is submitted for approval to development planning and priority, such detailed design must be in accordance with the outline design Principles, so that acts as the principal check. The additional spatial check is secured through the individual works numbers referenced on the works plans. Those works plans show the areas in which the various components of the proposed development may be constructed in line with those design parameters and the descriptions of the relevant.

1:15:00

Works within schedule one to the draft DCO, the latest version of which is as 008,

1:15:08

Article Three, two of the draft DCO provides that each numbered work must be situated within the corresponding numbered area shown on the works plans. So together the works, plans and the outline design principles establish the three dimensional envelope for the proposed development to be built and operated. Each is secured through the draft. DCM,

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okay. Thank you very much for that. Mr. Mack, that clarifies the situation.

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Now

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I would like us

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to move on slightly from

1:15:49

this matter. And I would like to ask the applicant to explain in further detail chapter four,

1:15:59

scope and methodology. That is a PP 055

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and I'm looking particularly at appendix 1.1 scoping report. It is a PP 071 in the context of the issues that were scoped out of the yes and why these issues were scoped, scoped out. So if the applicant could set out each one of those issues that was that was scoped out and why they were scoped out, that would be really helpful. Thank you.

1:16:34

Thank you, sir. Ian Mac, for the applicant again at this point, so I'll invite Miss Susan rain to address your queries. Thank you very much. Miss rain.

1:16:44

Susan rain, for the applicant. So chapter four, scope and methodology. Reference a, pp 055,

1:16:52

sets out the general approach to and methodology adopted for the environmental impact assessment undertaking proposed development, including information on the scoping process. A scoping report reference ATP 071 was prepared setting out the applicant proposed scope the EIA to be undertaken in respect to the proposed development. This was submitted to pins in April 2023, in support of a request for scoping opinion. The scoping report was prepared in accordance the requirements of the infrastructure planning EIA regulations, 2017, pins reviewed and consulted on the EIS scoping report and adopted scoping opinion ap 072,

1:17:31

in May 2023,

1:17:33

and in summary, the following aspects were scoped into the ES landscaping, visual ecology, cultural heritage, access and traffic, noise and vibration, water resources, flood risk, climate change, Flint and glare, soils and agricultural land and socioeconomics. Within the scoper report, it was proposed to

scope out air quality initially. However, within their scope, the community's requested that this be included in the AA and therefore including the A and inclusive

1:18:04

pins, agreed to scope out a number of aspects. In some aspects, in some instances, subject to the provision of further information. Information these aspects is detailed within Chapter 17 other environmental topics, AP, E, 068,

1:18:19

and I'll summarize these briefly

1:18:22

so ground conditions were scoped out subject to the results of a desk study. Appendix 17.1, ground conditions desk study, which referenced a, pp 183 to a, pp 188 confirms that the site is

1:18:37

considered percent overall low risk from past land use, surrounding land use, surrounding land use, ground instability and contamination, no potential significant risks or effects were identified that would require assessment. Through the preparation of an ES chapter,

1:18:53

human health was scoped out further to a health screening exercise, which was undertaken in accordance with the central location healthy planning checklist, and included within the scoping report, this concluded that the post development is only anticipated to potentially result in limited impacts on human health during construction, operation, decommissioning, potential effects the proposed development of relevance to human health as health have been assessed throughout the relevant es for example, air quality is considered potential impacts on human health, as in soil gesture and construction

1:19:26

waste was scoped out as a specific es chapter over the scoping opinion requested that the ES should consider the likely significant effects of component replacement and decommissioning waste measures to manage construction operational Waste and the quantities of type of waste we consider considered this information is included with an appendix, 17.2 waste and recycling strategy reference a PP 189 and is considered within the potential impacts that considered within the relevant technical chapters as appropriate.

1:19:59

The.

1:20:00

Topic of accidents and disasters was scoped out subject to potential risks being assessed in the relevant es chapters and any mitigation being secured through relevant mitigate management plans. This is considered within the relevant chapter, yes, and summarized within table 17.3

1:20:17

of chapter 17, other environmental topics at 068,

1:20:21

for example, the risk proposed posed from extreme weather events has been considered in chapter 12 climate change, a P, P, 063,

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and the design and build proposed development was sufficient to withstand extreme weather events in accordance with relevant regulations, building standards

1:20:42

and the aspect of electromagnetic fields, or EMF, which I'll refer to going forward, was scoped out subject to the ES setting out the design measures to be implemented to avoid the potential for likely significant effects, in line with the Department of Energy and Climate Change, voluntary code of practice 2020 12, UK health security agency also advised that, according to the Department of Energy and Climate Change voluntary code of practice, if the table exceeds 132 KV, a calculation or measurement of the maximum fields directly above the table is required to demonstrate compliance with the International Commission on non ionizing radiation detection exposure guidelines. This was considered within section 17.8 of chapter 17 a PP 068,

1:21:33

with reference to relevant sources including national gross website, EMF, s dot info.

1:21:40

Following submission, the UK health security agency submitted a relevant representation. RR, 0616

1:21:47

stating that they did not consider that submit. DS, provided a detailed EMF assessment. Chapter 17 is being updated by further detail on EMF and a measurement of maximum field directly above the cable, the maximum field directly above the table would be 96 micro Teslas, which would not exceed the icni RP reference levels public or occupational exposure. So in accordance with DCC, voluntary code of practice as the maximum value is less than guideline levels, maybe assume that all fields and exposures from that source will be compliant. Therefore, it's considered the post development will not result in significant steps in relation to EMF, the updated chapter 17 will be submitted at deadline.

1:22:34

One the aspect of telecommunications, television reception, utilities, scoped out subject to the ES setting out the findings of the desk based assessment and how this was taking account in the design of the post development. This is information set out at section 17.6 of chapter 17. And the scoping opinion confirmed that significant effects were not likely in relation to the aspects of wind, micro climate and daylight, sunlight and overshadowing. Therefore these aspects are scoped out for consideration within

1:23:05

the EIA. Thank you very much for that. Miss Ryan, you mentioned, I would just want to explore two of the topics that you have mentioned in a little bit more detail. I want you mentioned waste being scoped out. And I believe that you mentioned that that was subject to certain measures being secured elsewhere within the DCO in order to ensure that waste from purpose development is dealt with adequately.

1:23:33

Can the applicant just please confirm that those have been picked up in other documents and what those documents are,

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and yes, just initially as an example. So with the request in the s consider the likely significant component replacement as an aspect, aspect of waste

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traffic estimates were calculated in relation to the likely component replacement, and these were considered in the traffic access and related chapters such as air quality, but we provide a fuller response in writing in terms of exactly where the aspects of waste have been considered throughout the s and where they are secured. Okay. Thank you very much. If I could get then an action for the applicant to provide a full response on this aspect that would be helpful. Thank you very much. And also just in terms of security, if I could get the applicant to confirm one of the issues that you have also mentioned that was coped out was human health,

1:24:42

obviously, I understand the reasons why that was copped out in that is actually set out very clearly within the documents that I have mentioned within my question, however, can I just get some reassurance from the applicant that issues such as in.

1:25:00

Cohesion linked with perhaps stress in mental health might have been picked up and the socioeconomics.

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Ian mag for the applicant, yeah, we know that request so and we'll, we'll take that away and provide that as part of our responses and as an identified sector action. Thank you. Thank you very much. Thank you.

1:25:29

Now I will invite

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others to participate and ask any further questions or comments to me on this specific topic. And can I start by

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checking if any of the host local authorities would like to ask any questions on this specific topic? Topic item number three, so if I could start with North Coast Stephen, please. First of all,

1:26:04

thanks. Session, Norfolk, Stephen District Council, yes. So there's a few points that reflect some of the questions that you've asked already. So the first is in respect of we note that ground conditions have scoped out

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of the ES, we would, however, and it's a point we'll make in our or we have made in our LIR, which will be submitted,

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made a point about the extent to which contamination will be addressed during the decommissioning stage. Because that's not currently a point that's addressed in the ES.

1:26:41

Equally, sir, a point you made about security. Again, we'll provide some example details in the LIR, but we do note that the funding statement doesn't address funding for decommissioning present, and so we either request evidence of funding for decommissioning or some sort of requirement that secures a bond.

1:27:08

Okay? Thank you very much for that, Mr. Sheik. Is there any other questions on this specific item? So the only other summer shifting Norco Stephen District Council, the other, only other point, which will largely be for county, but is in in respect of waste, which, again, is a point we'll make, but we do request that the outline decommissioning management plan includes a protocol for the disposal of solar panels.

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Uh, thank you, Mr. Sheik. Thank you very much for that.

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Okay, can I ask

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the applicant, in light of Mr. Sheikh's intervention, just now, if they would like to offer any information regarding

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ground conditions and why this was scoped out.

1:28:09

First of all,

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thank you, Sir Ian mag for the applicant. So I'm not sure we've got much more to add than what Ms swearing gave in the previous response. I know Mr. Shakes said that those matters would be within nkdc LIR, which will be available at deadline one. So I suggest we respond to those points with the detail as appropriate at the subsequent deadline in writing. Okay. Thank you very much.

1:28:37

And in terms of contamination

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and how that is linked within the commissioning stage, is there anything that the applicant would like to add to what has already been stated? So

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it says that it's the same answer, and if it assists in respect of the additional detail on the funding, and particularly insofar as it relates to decommissioning, then we've noted that point and that that will follow in the LIR as well. And so again, we propose to respond to each of those matters in writing, in response to that with the benefit of the full detail, please. Okay, that's that's absolutely fine. That is acceptable. Can we also add the

1:29:21

other two items that North Coast even has raised them. And I believe that probably you are going to confirm Mr. Mac that you would rather reply in writing, which is understandable, and that would be funding statement in terms of how it address decommissioning and also outline construction plan and disposable of solar panels. So if we could actually get all of those points addressed on your written submissions, please, thank you. So

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Ian for the applicant, just to clarify so I was I was proposing that we we respond with.

1:30:00

Benefit of the published LIR when it's submitted a deadline one respond to each of those points. Deadline apologies, Mr. Mac apologies for not quite getting what you're trying to say there. Can I then in that case, just ask Mr. Shake from North Steven, if all of these points are going to feature in your local impact report. Can you confirm that North Sea District Council? Yes, I can confirm that all the points will be in the LIR. Okay. Thank you very much for that coffee message. Check in that case. Mr. Mac, yes, I'm happy to

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take these is not an action following from my sh one, but actually an action that will naturally fall from the responses that are expected from the applicant to the Lars to be submitted, which I believe is expected at deadline to

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and I'll just confirm that,

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yes, that would be deadline two, and deadline two will be the 21st of October.

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Thank you. So yes, that's, that's, that's the final end. Okay. Thank you very much.

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Now,

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I believe that I saw some hands being raised for this point as well.

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And I believe that we had Lincolnshire county council Miss Hall.

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And then I also see another rent another hand raised by councilor Chapman, and I will ask you to intervene shortly, but if I could start then with Miss Hall, please. Thank you, sir. There are three points that I think have actually now already been covered and will be covered again in our NIR. So they're just points that I put on the applicant's notes, and then to revisit when they respond to our LIR that will be essentially matters scoped out of the environmental statements, public health and waste, are matters that we'll return to in our LIR to say essentially that those are matters which, even if they are not going to form part of the environmental statement per se need to be addressed fully, and we give some suggestions about how they ought to be addressed in further evidence. And no doubt the applicant will want to look at that when they receive our LIR and respond in writing thereafter. So don't propose to take those points any further. The third point, which I think has already been raised, and I'll just add our name to the list of parties raising it is about the absence of consideration or funding for decommissioning. And again, that is the third point that I raise now, but only in headline, because it's returned to in substance in our LIR. And again, no doubt the applicant will will respond at the appropriate moment. But so those are the three things that are going to be raised in the LIR. And I don't need to go into too much detail now, but so I do have a fourth point, which I think probably sits slightly outside our LIR, which is in terms of the scope of associated development and the applicant's consideration of this. So I just raised under the general matters, because you'd put on the agenda for item three that this was an appropriate moment to discuss compliance or not with relevant legislation and policy. So I hope this is an appropriate moment, but essentially so the the applicant considers this point in their planning statement. And the reference so is a PP, Dash 277,

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and the rationale the applicant sets out for why they say the best is associated development properly so called is in and around paragraphs one point 6.7

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and so we raise a query with this because, in distinction to other similar schemes, and you'll be aware there are quite a number now in Lincolnshire. So we're becoming familiar the capacity of the Bess outstrips the capacity of the solar generation, but by a considerable margin, so that the best capacity is 600 megawatts. But the solar generating capacity is 400 for this scheme. And that is an unusual point, and one we say, needs some careful consideration in relation to whether the Bess is therefore properly to be falling within the definition of associated development. So the applicants para 167 says, well, the capacity of the Bess is proportionate as it is sized to make efficient use of the connection. Well, well, that's not the test. So you'll be familiar with the guidance, indeed, that the applicant in the following paragraphs of that the planning statement refers to the Planning Act guidance on associated development applications on major infrastructure projects.

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Issued in April 2013

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but we say they don't give us a compelling case for why that guidance is met. In this case, relevant bullet points include so that associated development should be I should either support the construction or operation of the principal development or help address its impacts. The latter doesn't appear to be relevant. And subparagraph two is associated. Development should not be a name in itself, but quote should be subordinate to the principal development. So and finally, so when, when the guidance does refer to proportionality, it is proportionality to the project, it is not proportionate to a grid connection which is something, something other than the project itself. So we say that that the rationale given by the applicant doesn't address the guidance and doesn't assist you, sir, with reaching an informed decision about whether the best is proportionate to the project, whether it is subordinate and whether it is supporting the operation of I know the applicant said today, so my notes of what was said by I think Mr. Mac, although I do apologize, I've got when I'm on my screen, the pictures are absolutely tiny, and there are several people sitting around a table, and I can't distinguish particularly clearly who's speaking. So with apologies to the applicant, my note was that the best was quote going to be used for excess generate generating capacity from the solar array and then exported to the grid, and that that sounds exactly right in that it could therefore support the operation of the principal development. But that is only so. That is only true to the to the extent of the capacity of the generating station. It doesn't explain the rational that the need for the additional 200 megawatts of storage capacity, in our view, and then, at the very least, something more to be explained. Now I,

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I agree with that question. Miss Hall, and as you have just now, got to the point it is the need for that. And that is something that I was actually going to explore further on next point in item number four,

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underneath, but, but

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I do take your I do take your intervention on board and into points that you have made on board and and the concerns that you have signaled in terms of

1:37:37

associated development. Definition of associated development, then what we can consider as part of associated development for this specific, specific project. However, as per the previous intervention from north from North Coast, Stephen, I suspect that you have you, and you have confirmed that this will be matters that you'll be explaining further in your local impact report. And therefore I was going to suggest that I give the applicant the benefit of seeing your submission fully in writing and then reply to this project to your questions and your concerns by deadline too, if that's acceptable as well. Ms Hall, so just for clarity, the first three points that I raised in terms of the the contents of the environmental statements and funding for decommissioning are all set out fuller in our LIR, and that that is an appropriate timescale for response. The same is not true for the point about associated development. I'm not aware of that being included within our LIR, and so that that would call for a, potentially a different time scale. I'm very happy to put our points in writing, in terms of when we submit our summary of case made at the issue specific hearing. And it might be that when the applicant responds, has sight of that and wants to respond at that deadline, well yes. And it might be that by the time that we finish Item five, we might be in a different position in terms of being able to for you to be able to actually put those forwards, and actually hear the evidence that the applicant will put forward as well in light of my questions in that case, then can I just very quickly, then ask if the applicant would like to comment on Mrs. Hall's comments in terms of associated development now, or if the applicant would rather wait until we have a debt issue more fully under item four,

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sure. So perhaps a bit of a blended approach, because as you flagged, part of this discussion does link to one of your agenda items in the subsequent topic. So we'll maybe defer parts of it to that, but other than just to notice as Miss Hall flies, section 1.6 of our planning statement does address this in in principle, in terms of notifying the the legislative context to what can constitute associated development, and the fact that there's there's not a particular definition around that, since.

1:40:00

So they set out relevant guidelines within the reference guidance and also the precedent that exists for this particular topic. We're not the first solar scheme to have associated best as part of it. Paragraph one point 6.6 of our planning statement addresses the relative capacity and subordination of the best to the solar scheme, as we've set out. So I'd signpost to that. But we will also supplement our submissions, both in response to this and ends on the back of discussion we have later this afternoon, either in our summary of submissions, or to the extent you have any written questions afterwards as well, sir, I'll also just invite Mr. Turnbull in case he has any other further summary responses at that level to give him response at this point.

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Thank you, Mr. Turnbull. Is there anything that you would like to add at this point?

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Yeah, content for the applicant, and at this stage, I would just clarify, and I'm just turning to my site to read it.

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But the the planning statement,

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which is a? PP,

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sorry, planning statement

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is a. PP, 277,

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thanks very much. So,

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yeah, so at one point 6.6,

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which I don't think that paragraph was quoted

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by Miss Hall, that that that considers this point about the battery being subordinate.

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And it talks about the function of the best, and it also talks about it being considerably smaller in footprint than the solar array, and that's secured by the works plans. So our points there are that in terms of both its function and its sizing, which both which are secured,

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it is

1:42:06

by some margin subordinate to the scale and the function of a solar array. Okay, thank you for that, Mr. Turnbull, I suggest, particularly in light of the fact that I would like to revisit this topic under item four, I suggest that actually we we park that specific issue there in terms of comments,

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and then we explore it further if we need to. And now, can I please ask

1:42:38

other participants? Councilor Chapman, I believe that you would like to come in on this point.

1:42:46

Yes, sorry. I understand from the applicant that the largest, the tallest building in the whole array, is going to be 13 meters in places.

1:42:59

I may have missed it, but is screening going to the worst case scenario? The that building could be on the periphery of the development? Would any screening be provided by the applicant to

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because this is a huge development in our area, from looking out onto fields we're going to be looking out onto a sea of solar panels.

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Is any screening, if the worst case scenario is the case where the building is at the periphery of the development, will any screening be provided?

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Thank you

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for that specific intervention. Council. Chapman, I would, I would say that I will go to the applicant in order to provide some sort of justification and clarification for that, but if I may suggest that might be an issue that will benefit from further explanation at another hearing where we actually will look at visual and landscapes effects. So I would encourage you and ask if you can to please also participate on that specific hearing, if it's held on that specific topic, because I think it will be particularly relevant in light of your question. However, I am going to ask Mr. Mack if he would like to provide some quick answers in terms of screening being provided or not to councilor Chapman's question. Please Absolutely sir. Thank you. I'll invite Miss Susan rain just for short clarification, I think, a short elaboration on the screening measures that are in place.

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Susan rain, for the applicant, just as a point of clarification, your 30 meter maximum height relating to the substation would be limited to the substation best area within the center of the solar array area only as shown on the works plans. It would not be.

1:45:00

Be at the periphery of the solar array area. It would be limited to the central area.

1:45:06

Thank you.

1:45:07

And just we'll provide, as commented earlier, we'll provide further detailed screening, but we are proposing screening and planting throughout the site. We've been through a sort of iterative design process in order to identify the most appropriate level of screening whilst maintaining the local landscape character. This illustrated on figure 6.31, landscape strategy plan,

1:45:32

the AP reference off the top of my head, and also the outs the landscape and ecological management plan will ensure and secure the management planting management and nationals.

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Thank you. Miss Ryan.

1:45:47

Now,

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Mr. Sheik, I believe that you have raised your hand again on this topic. Would you like to like to make a further point, Chairman Sheik Norse, Industry Council. So we noted the fact that you're going to raise the point in item four need it was just the point that we had noted the same point raised by Miss Hall for Lincolnshire county council in respect of whether or not the best ought to constitute associated development. I don't need to repeat the points because it's exactly the same reasons, but perhaps just want to add your weight to that specific point melted. Thank you very much. Mr. Shake, right, I am mindful of time, and perhaps I believe that we might benefit from a small comfort break. But can I just check before I close this specific item, if there is anyone else that would like to raise any questions on Item three

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before we move on,

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yes. Mr. Gardner,

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thank you, sir. Mr. Garden, on behalf of Phaedra energy, I appreciate you asked the questions around flexibility in the environmental statement and the DCR around work numbers one to three, but also wanted to raise the issue in relation to the cable corridor. So chapter two of the environmental statement, which is document app 053,

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identify some parameters at table 2.1

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and that's the the maximum working width of the corridor, but also the approach approximate excavation dimensions. And as far as I can see, that doesn't translate as yet to the design and approach documents say, as 019, so

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it's a quite a question there around how those those parameters are secured. Thank you, Mr. Garden.

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And

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can I just

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check as well that your question

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is also linked, perhaps with item four as well, in terms of particularly in terms of alternatives for to link, which will probably focus on that specific topic as well. Yeah, that's correct. So we've got, obviously comments on on the alternatives and post site selection, but this, this specific point does relate to to how matters are secured through the DCO. Absolutely. Mr. Garden, I accept that. So what I was going to suggest is that, actually I asked the applicant to perhaps provide, which with some reassurance in terms of how those matters are provide, particularly within the design requirements that you have set out. That's great. And then if there are any further questions on that, perhaps we can also address those under item four. So if I could turn to Mr. Mac to please reply to this question,

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thank you, Sir Ian Mac, for the applicant, so we understand the point, and we're happy to provide that clarification. And if we need to update a document to to make that more more Express, then we'll do so, and we'll clarify that in writing afterwards.

1:49:03

Thank you very much.

1:49:07

Right? Can I ask if there is anyone else that would like to raise any questions or make any comments under item three before we move on?

1:49:20

I don't see any hands raised, as I mentioned. I am mindful of time. So I was going to suggest that perhaps we have just a short 10 minute break, a 10 Minute comfort break now and resume perhaps at

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12 o'clock, if in if everyone is in agreement with that,

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can I just ask if anyone has any reason why we cannot go for that break to please confirm it to me now, raise your hand.

1:49:59

Now in.

1:50:00

Case, then

1:50:02

I will adjourn this hearing until 12 o'clock. Thank you very much where we will be addressing item four needs, site selection and alternatives. Thank you.