

Hearing Transcript

Project:	One Earth Solar Farm
Hearing:	Issue Specific Hearing 1 (ISH1) - Part 3
Date:	10 July 2025

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File Length: 01:52:45

FULL TRANSCRIPT (with timecode)

00:00:17:12 - 00:00:39:23

Good morning everyone. It's time for me to reopen this issue. Specific hearing. It's now 10:00. We'll continue on from yesterday. Just check that everyone can hear me clearly in the room. Thank you. And for those attending virtually, you can see and hear us clearly. Just if you can use the hands up function or your cameras to confirm.

00:00:41:13 - 00:00:48:11

Super. Thank you very much. Can I also check that the live stream and recording has commenced?

00:00:49:08 - 00:00:51:18

Yes. The live stream and recording have commenced.

00:00:52:13 - 00:00:53:07

Thank you.

00:00:55:17 - 00:01:12:08

Uh, for those of you who are in attendance yesterday, you'll know my name is Edwin Maunder. I'm a chartered town planner and a planning inspector, and I've been appointed as the panel lead for this examination into this DCO. Just hand over to my colleague to reintroduce himself to you.

00:01:14:08 - 00:01:26:15

Good morning. My name is Alex Jacques. I'm a chartered transport planner and a planning inspector, and I've been appointed by the Secretary of State to be a panel on the panel of inspectors examining this application. Thank you.

00:01:28:23 - 00:02:02:12

Now, as far as I'm aware, there is no fire drill proposed today. So in the event that the alarm does go off, please use the exits indicated leaving the room via the stairs. And again, toilet facilities are to the rear of the room along the corridor past the restaurant, or alternatively turn left to down the uh, flight of stairs. Uh, and they're on the floor below. Also check that everyone has switched their phones mobile devices to silent, please.

00:02:03:08 - 00:02:04:01

Thank you.

00:02:12:17 - 00:02:44:19

Uh, yesterday we, uh, commenced going through the agenda onto the DCO, and we concluded at the point, uh, on electricity generation and connections. So I just thought it would be sensible at this point to just go through the action points from yesterday so that they don't get compiled to such a long list that, uh, when we get to the end of today, it's going to be a bit too much to go through. So I'll just ask Mr. Jack to go through those points now.

00:02:44:21 - 00:02:45:12

Thank you.

00:02:47:10 - 00:03:20:16

Thank you. Um, so there's quite a few. I think there's over 20 so far yesterday. Um, most of them are obviously going to be for the applicant. will go through them now. So. Action point one was review. The Oaklands made DCO for the decommissioning definition, definition and approach to phase stroke. Part action point two is consider section the section on materially new or materially different being added to Principal Powers section.

00:03:20:18 - 00:03:23:20

As per the Oaklands made DCO

00:03:25:17 - 00:03:36:13

confirm, section point three is confirmed the relationship consistency between the provisions in the draft DCO and the Olympe.

00:03:40:14 - 00:03:58:02

Action point four is set out how PD rights for statutory undertaker are assessed in the ES. Consider if the whole of the order limit should remain as operational, And that's also a note. Produce a note for the councils to review.

00:04:00:04 - 00:04:18:22

Action point five is article articles 39 and 40. So let's review the wording of those, um, against the Oakland's, uh, DCO and consider if the reference to the British Standard should be in the au limp or in the DCO.

00:04:22:00 - 00:04:42:15

Action point six confirm the approach to veteran trees and whether there are any veteran trees within the order limits. Appendix 11.6 contains chart three and table two of the stage one or borer. Cultural reports in. It suggests that there are 15 veteran trees that were recorded.

00:04:45:10 - 00:05:00:05

Action point seven applicant and the councils to discuss and agree a way forward on article 45 and can consider between you whether to include that as part of a statement of common ground.

00:05:01:22 - 00:05:15:17

Action point eight is to clarify if county councils should be included in schedule to 1B2 of the draft DCO.

00:05:18:23 - 00:05:46:10

Action point one relates to requirements seven, eight, nine, ten, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19 and 20 when they contain the word substantially in accordance with and, the applicant is going to review if it's justified and needed for all requirements. And again, using the Oaklands May DCO as a comparator.

00:05:47:23 - 00:05:54:08

Action point 11 consider the wording for maintenance in requirement eight.

00:05:56:18 - 00:06:06:23

Action point 12 is. Consider amending requirement nine on Beng to ensure that the Beng referenced as deliverable is achieved.

00:06:10:12 - 00:06:30:00

Action point 13 is to change the word permanent to operational in Requirement ten. Action point 14 is to review the mitigation plans that use terms such as may or would consider to, to ensure terminology is actually a commitment to do something.

00:06:31:14 - 00:07:02:09

Action point 15 is the outline comp page 19 as a typo there on digital recorder. So review that action point. 16 on the outline set up section 2.5 working hours. How will it work in practice? Consider if it would be more appropriate for working hours to be specified in the DCO. And again, consider the approach set out in the Oaklands major.

00:07:02:12 - 00:07:26:12

DCO action point 17 is provide evidence, justification or environmental reasons for the use of the ten kilometre search area and the sequential test stroke site selection. Include rationale for discounting land from the selection process, with particular reference to the sequential test

00:07:28:03 - 00:07:37:02

action point. 18 is to provide evidence on whether a Grampian style requirement is necessary for this this DCO.

00:07:39:22 - 00:08:09:23

Action point. 19 is provide a graph showing degradation over time of Solar panels, plus explanation on the over planting threshold also provide a likely generation range and over planting ratio include from year one throughout the operational life of the project, and also how often the 740MW would be generated per year.

00:08:13:05 - 00:08:34:21

Action point 20 is explained. The difference is, if any, for landscape assessment, if different panels are used, and explain how the ES deals with this issue. Action .21. Explain how panel heights vary with the each raised level option proposed.

00:08:37:03 - 00:08:56:13

At the last two action points are for Nottinghamshire County Council and that was to act 1.22 is to confirm the acceptability of article 16. Action point 23 is to confirm the acceptability of the contents of schedules 4 to 7. Thank you. Any comments on those anyone?

00:09:01:08 - 00:09:23:07

Good morning, Simon Betts. New consumer district council. Um, my recollection on Action point six was in the discussion. We were referring to TPO trees as well. So, um, but even if we weren't, can I suggest clarification is provided on presence of TPO trees within the order limit area as well as veteran trees.

00:09:26:24 - 00:09:32:00

Yeah, I mean that sounds that sounds fine to us as a proposition. You got any comments on that?

00:09:34:04 - 00:09:44:14

Would you agree with us on behalf of the applicant? Um, we can do that. But to be clear, as you said yesterday, there were no veteran trees within the order limits and there are no TPO trees within the order limits. But we'll take the action and we will submit that in writing.

00:09:51:13 - 00:10:18:20

I know you tell us there are no veteran trees in the other limits, but that schedule and I rechecked it last night, identifies 15 trees. And you go through your plans and you have to pick out each individual tree to identify it within the overall plan as the trees are identified. They appear to be within the limits. Or if they're not, they're right on the edge. So it may be we need more detailed plans to clarify that,

00:10:20:16 - 00:10:23:19

but, uh, look forward to hearing the clarification.

00:10:32:00 - 00:10:38:12

Okay. So we'll move then on to the agenda. And we're our next item is in respect of decommissioning.

00:10:41:17 - 00:11:07:08

So I'd invite the applicant to provide an explanation as to how requirement 20 on decommissioning and restoration is intended to work, and how in practice, this would ensure decommissioning was completed within a reasonable timescale and restoration of the land undertaken, and what standard of restoration that that would achieve. Thank you.

00:11:09:15 - 00:11:40:11

Thank you sir. Good morning. Richard Griffiths, on behalf of the applicant. Um, so the requirements 20 of the consent order header decommissioning, restoration. The. There was an explanation of how it works in the explanatory memorandum. So for those who are not familiar with the workings of the DCO, you should always read the DCO in the context of the M, the explanatory memorandum as well. That's a document library reference number EP hyphen 008 and paragraph 5.2.

00:11:40:13 - 00:12:26:06

5.2.26 explains how the requirement operates, but I'll go through it. Um, so as we touched on yesterday, decommissioning the requirement, uh, sets out sets out that decommissioning must commence no later than 60 years following the date of final commissioning. And that is defined as we touched on yesterday as well. Uh, the point at which electricity generation is commences on a commercial basis. So after testing has been completed, the requirement recognises that the uh scheme could have um, different phases for um as per requirement three, and therefore the decommissioning requirement allows for the decommissioning to be carried out, uh, in those phases.

00:12:26:08 - 00:12:56:02

After 60 years, the requirement at 21 B distinguishes between the solar generation element, which is work number one, and the associated development of the Development, which our work numbers 2 to 8. And that's the reason for that is because, uh, the associated developments, uh, may apply to more than one phase. It could apply for the whole. An element of associated development could apply for the whole scheme rather than just one phase. That's why the justification for the split.

00:12:58:15 - 00:13:31:11

Then, no later than 12 months before the undertaker undertakes, the um decides to decommission any part of the authorized development. The undertaker, uh, has to notify the relevant planning authorities of their intended decommissioning date. So obviously, importantly, in terms of policing this requirement, the relevant planning authorities, um, will know the phase or phases, um, of the scheme. They will also know the data final commissioning of each phase. And that's all pursuant to their the discharge of requirement three.

00:13:32:04 - 00:13:58:21

They can then calculate the ultimate long stop date of this order by calculating 60 years from that date, which is the date on which generation must cease, and then they can work backwards from that long stop date to 12 months. Um, and that is the date in which they must receive the applicant's notice of intended decommissioning. So all the data will be in front of the relevant planning authorities to police that requirement

00:14:00:18 - 00:14:39:14

there no later than, um, ten working days, um, ten weeks prior to the intended decommissioning, the undertaker must submit to the relevant planning authorities um, the detailed and final decommissioning environmental management plan that must be substantially in accordance with the Outline Decommissioning Management Plan. Um, which is submitted with the application, uh, and, uh, no decommissioning work can be carried out until the relevant planning authorities have approved that decommissioning environmental management plan, which must be carried out in in consultation with both Natural England and the Environment Agency.

00:14:40:01 - 00:15:11:20

Now, in terms of ensuring decommissioning is completed, uh, within a reasonable timescale and restoration undertaken. Paragraph 2.2.2 of the Outline Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan summarises what would be decommissioned and restored back to the landowner. Paragraph 2.4.2 of the Outline Decommissioning Management Plan sets out the time frame of the decommissioning works, and that is set to be between 224 and 48 months.

00:15:12:13 - 00:15:49:08

Both of these will be in the final, uh, um, decommissioning of our environmental management plan for approval by the relevant planning authorities. And so the relevant planning authorities will, of course, be the final decision maker on ensuring the timeframe is both suitable in accordance with the outline decommissioning management plan and the restoration is reasonable and in terms of ensuring the works are Undertaken. The requirement, of course, requires the applicant to carry out the

decommissioning in accordance with that environmental management plan as approved, and that is enforceable by the relevant planning authorities in the usual way.

00:15:49:17 - 00:15:57:19

And as you know, sir, breach of a requirement is a criminal offence pursuant to section 161 of the Planning Act 2008.

00:16:07:06 - 00:16:17:12

Thank you. I'll open that to the floor to see if there are any concerns or comments anyone has with regard to the explanation of decommissioning.

00:16:19:10 - 00:16:20:07

Yes. Thank you.

00:16:21:22 - 00:16:52:07

John Barker, on behalf of West Lindsey District Council, um, as has just been set out, I think the, um, the, uh, DCI year. Requirement 20 work essentially works back from the long stop date as was as was mentioned. But it doesn't look like there's a there's a mechanism, uh, to require decommissioning if Project uh ceases to generate energy before that, um, in which case that the harms would remain without the benefits of the project.

00:16:52:16 - 00:17:31:08

Um, I would draw your attention, uh, to, um, the, uh, relevant decommissioning requirement in the, uh, Oakland's, um, DCO, um, which is slightly, oddly numbered 64 on page uh, 39 of the DCI and um, subparagraph four, um, talks about, um, basically, it says the Undertaker must provide notice to the local planning authority once any part of the authorised development stops generating electricity for more than six months, if by expiry of the period of 12 continuous months beginning from the date of that notice.

00:17:31:10 - 00:17:53:16

Another way is agreed that part of the authorized development does not regenerate electricity. Then within three months, the undertaking must submit to the local planning authority. Um, uh, essentially a scheme for, uh, decommissioning, environmental management, planning, decommissioning, traffic management plan. I think that would be, uh, an appropriate addition to, uh, to this requirement.

00:17:54:16 - 00:18:11:17

Okay. Thank you. Anyone else either in the room or virtually because any further comments that they would wish to pursue. So yeah, there is a hand up, is it? I don't know who. All I'm just saying is initials of D.W., it's David White.

00:18:13:14 - 00:18:18:08

Thank you, Mr. White. If you're able to switch your camera on, that would be helpful.

00:18:20:13 - 00:18:21:07

There we go.

00:18:21:21 - 00:18:22:23

Hello. Good morning.

00:18:23:08 - 00:19:10:23

Good morning. Thank you. I have several questions on decommissioning. Forgive me again. I'm not a planning expert or a solicitor. Or so we're winging it sometimes, I'm afraid in some of this. So do it. I do apologize if I get anything wrong. Um, we do go to decommissioning. Uh, throughout this process, we've tried to highlight the issue of cables, buried cables. And whereas many developments are for solar farms are offering to remove cables at the end to as as they're reporting their documentation to allow the land to be put back to its previous use, as it says in the also in the Ian three National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy.

00:19:11:20 - 00:19:49:03

Um, the developers are wanting to leave what could be 1000 or 1200 kilometres of xlp cables in the ground. Does they, uh, I want to find out what the developer's thoughts are on this. And those xlp Cables. Whether they recognize the fact that leaving them in the ground will eventually allow the cables to decay and, um, release microplastics and all the other compounds that are involved in xlp cables, including bonding agents, flame retardants, and all sorts of other chemicals.

00:19:49:05 - 00:19:58:19

Specifically over farmland and specifically in the drinking water protected area, um, which is not mentioned in any documents for this development.

00:20:01:00 - 00:20:05:20

So my question is, do they recognize that those cables will eventually decay and become microplastics?

00:20:08:00 - 00:20:09:09

Okay. Thank you, Mr. White.

00:20:11:05 - 00:20:17:08

Before I go to the applicant, I just checked there are no other, uh, questions or. Sorry, Lincolnshire County Council.

00:20:17:20 - 00:20:53:05

Thank you, Sir Stephanie Hawley and your county council. It's just a drafting, uh, point about the, um, length of time given to relevant planning authorities and the identity of those relevant planning authorities. In relation to the latter, I don't think we're after being the relevant planning authority, but we would like to be a named Consultee for the decommissioning, um, plans. And in relation to the time periods provided in uh requirement 23. Um, we don't consider that there's such a compelling requirement for this to be so short as the ten weeks.

00:20:53:17 - 00:21:24:02

Um, as to pre pre commencement, um, uh, requirements that need to be approved, obviously, before the development commences, you've got the need for, for project to be implemented speedily, etc.. None of that applies when, um, the developer has been able to give us 12 months notice of what

they're doing. And so we would therefore, in those circumstances, consider that a longer time period should be given to authorities to consider the decommissioning plans. Um, so I think those are my two points.

00:21:24:04 - 00:21:24:19

Thank you.

00:21:26:08 - 00:21:33:19

So is there a particular time period that you would prefer to be included rather than the current one?

00:21:35:15 - 00:22:11:10

Stephanie Hall, Lancashire County Council so obviously the, um, the Oaklands farm project, um, it talks in months rather than weeks. Um, and uh, requires um, within three months of the date, the undertaker decides to decommission any part, um, and or no later than six months before the 40th anniversary. Those documents are to be submitted. Um, that seems to us to be a reasonable starting point, although, um, obviously happy to discuss what a reasonable timeframe might be to the applicant, but we would say ten weeks is a little bit on the short side.

00:22:13:11 - 00:22:20:01

Not giving us an indication of what what what your preferred choice would be if you're saying that ten weeks is too short.

00:22:20:08 - 00:22:24:02

So as well as an opening gambit at Oaklands. Allow us three months. So.

00:22:29:20 - 00:22:30:12

It's Ferguson.

00:22:31:24 - 00:23:22:04

Thank you so much. Griffiths. On part of the applicant. Um, various points there. Just on the on, um, the first point from West Lindsey. Um, so 21 is the is the is the long stop date that is the time limited um consent point, um, as is required under N3, uh, paragraph 2.1.147, where the a consent for a solar farm is time limited, the DCO should impose requirements. So 2120 um, little bracket one um, basically, uh, is that time limit pursuant to policy? So that's the long stop in terms of, um, should we decide to not cease generation earlier than the 60 years, then 22 um, states that no later than 12 months prior to the date the Undertaker intends to decommission now.

00:23:22:07 - 00:24:02:17

I hear everyone is talking about the Oaklands decision as that is the latest drafting. There are, of course, numerous DCS out there, not just one. And each project is different with that caveat. But we'll look at Oaklands and we'll look at whether we maybe put some wording in the either in the requirement or in the outline decommissioning environmental management plan. Regarding clarity that should the scheme, uh, finish prior to the uh 60 year time limit, then within a certain time period, we would then submit to the relevant planning authority, um, the relevant, uh, plans, which would cover off with Lynn's point.

00:24:02:19 - 00:24:17:03

So we'll take that away as an action. Um, in terms of, um, the question on the on the screen, the decommissioning, uh, policy, I've forgotten the gentleman's name. Um, the, uh, the white apologies.

00:24:17:05 - 00:24:17:20

Mr..

00:24:17:22 - 00:24:18:14

White. Mr. white, thank you.

00:24:19:04 - 00:24:21:20

And I apologize. I called you the wrong name earlier.

00:24:22:17 - 00:24:23:15

I didn't hear that, sir.

00:24:23:17 - 00:24:28:10

So you got away with that. And I couldn't remember Mr. Lawrence's name yesterday. So.

00:24:28:21 - 00:25:01:19

Yeah. Uh, so, Mr. White, um, uh, asked about the cables. Um, so, uh, in the, um, outline decommissioning environmental management plan, um, we state that, um, buried on site, low voltage cables would be removed. So would. So going back to your questions yesterday, that's a commitment. Buried interconnecting cables, medium voltage, um, would either be removed or left in situ, providing the depth of installation was below 0.9m and would not interfere with normal agricultural operations.

00:25:02:09 - 00:25:42:14

Then at paragraph 1.1.6, we do make it clear that the mode of cable decommissioning for the grid connection and other underground cables will be dependent upon government policy and best practice at that time. We're talking about 60 years or hence currently the most environmentally acceptable option is leaving the cables in situ as that avoids disturbance to overlying land and habitats and to neighbouring communities. Alternatively, the cables can be removed by opening the ground at regular intervals and pulling the cable through to the extraction point, avoiding the need to open cuts the entire length of the cable route, so balance has to be had between the environmental damage of opening up the ground versus leaving them in situ.

00:25:42:16 - 00:26:13:07

But what the does the outline decommissioning environmental plan does is to leave that in terms of the cable cord or the higher voltage cables that commitment open. If I can say that for discussion with the relevant planning authority at the time to discuss what is the most environmentally appropriate way to deal with the decommissioning of that cable, which I think is the right approach given this area and it is moving. Um, turning to Lincolnshire County Council's point on the time frame.

00:26:13:13 - 00:26:48:21

Um, I think you're talking about schedule 15 timeframe here. The ten weeks I mentioned is for us. Um, that, um, uh, no later than ten weeks prior to the intended age of decommissioning. We must

submit to you. Um, so you want that to be longer? Yes. Well, we will take that. Um, we'll take that point away with the wording of, um, um, with the wording we said, well, look out for West Lindsey in terms of, um, uh, the, uh, if we decommissioned, um, earlier than 60 years as it all kind of goes in the round.

00:26:48:23 - 00:26:50:02

So we'll take that point away.

00:26:51:21 - 00:27:03:01

Thank you. I understand what the, uh, outline, uh, plan is saying in terms of leaving things open for the future to consider in due course, the,

00:27:04:20 - 00:27:42:13

uh, most appropriate response for cable removal or not, as the case may be. Um, but obviously Mr. White's making a specific, Um, point with regard to whether leaving cables in the ground, you would accept that they degrade over time and consequently then release either microplastics or chemicals into the ground. Do you have any evidence? Uh, one way or the other, on on those points that he's making now, he's obviously made those in some quite detail in his relevant representation.

00:27:42:24 - 00:27:55:09

And so you may prefer to give us a detailed response at deadline one, but, um, as he's raised the question here, I think it's appropriate that we consider that.

00:28:00:12 - 00:28:16:20

Sir. Um, I think I'm not the right person to answer that question from a technical perspective. I need, um, uh, um, colleagues who aren't here. So I think we'll take that as an action too. Um. Oh, yes. Thank you for pointing that.

00:28:20:02 - 00:28:21:00

Yeah, whatever.

00:28:24:12 - 00:28:55:18

Yeah. So this is for the applicant. I can answer some of those questions. Um, maybe not all of them. I'm certainly no expert on the degradation of plastics in the environment, and I couldn't comment on the risks to groundwater or anything like that. But in relation to soil health and quality of land restoration, we use plastics as a matter of formality. In in land, anywhere, we put our plastic pipes under ground and, and they're designed to a certain standard to last for years and not worry about them afterwards.

00:28:56:00 - 00:29:29:04

Also the cables will be underground in the in the mineral soil, not in the topsoil. So they won't be contaminating the area that gets cultivated. So they won't be mixed and ingested by humans consumption. So it won't have any effect on on human health. There is some research to say it might affect or microplastic might affect the plant's ability to uptake nutrients and absorb rainfall and all the rest of it. But the the scale of the cables across the area of only a sort of very narrow trenches across the whole scale of the farmland.

00:29:29:06 - 00:30:00:08

And if we're talking about land quality, we consider the whole field as a whole. And if there's for any one reason, there's a tiny little bit in that middle, that field which is less or better quality than the rest of the field, we still farm that field as one unit if it's also grade two, but there's a bit of grade one in the middle, we still have to farm that field as grade two, and we're not worried about that little bit in the middle. And so the scale of the cables and the down, you know, at a hell of a depth. So we're not worried about them being left in an agricultural perspective.

00:30:00:21 - 00:30:33:09

Um, in fact, in many ways, from a restoration point of view, we would rather they get left in than ripped up. Because if you every time you handle and disturb soils, you're at risk of causing more damage. So the act of lifting the cables out is more risky to soil, uh, condition than leaving them in. And there are ways you could maybe if they wanted to remove some. I don't know how the cables are laid, I say, but sometimes you could put a duct in with the cable through the duct, and then you can just pull the cable out and just leave the duct in the ground after, as well as to avoid a bit of land disturbance.

00:30:33:11 - 00:30:42:22

So the different ways of doing things, but from an agricultural perspective, we're not worried about these things being left in. They're better left in than taken out in many ways.

00:30:43:24 - 00:31:01:22

And reference was made to them being laid at 0.9m in depth. Yeah. And that's sufficient. Is it for all agricultural activity to ensure that there is no disturbance in due course? If plowing of various types were to be undertaken.

00:31:02:07 - 00:31:35:20

It wouldn't affect plowing. The only thing that depth that would affect it as if any other cables or water pipelines came across there, but the laying of land drains would potentially come across and rip through them. And so you don't really want a cable getting caught up in the trench when you're trenching a new land drain in which a landowner is laying a new bit of plastic pipe to improve the soil drainage characteristics, and in this catchment or in this wetland boundary, we've got a lot of the best and most versatile land. Won't rely on land drains anyway because it's freely draining, so you won't even be putting them in in those instances.

00:31:35:22 - 00:32:06:04

So it wouldn't do any harm in those areas even at all. So we tend to plough. The maximum cultivation depth we do in any soil would be depending on the soil would be 600mm, but usually only about 450. And year on year, it's often only trying to get a metric or imperial 4in or 6in, or 100 mil or 150ml 300 mil tops. If you're inverting plowing in most cases in these these soils. I can't remember what the top soil depths were, but you're only plowing the organic layer at the top, Not the mineral.

00:32:06:07 - 00:32:07:05

Silent. Neath.

00:32:08:10 - 00:32:09:14

Okay. Thank you.

00:32:09:23 - 00:32:10:13

Okay.

00:32:10:19 - 00:32:18:21

Mr. white, I notice your hand is is still up. Have you a further question or a point that you're wishing to make here?

00:32:20:15 - 00:32:50:14

Excuse me, I do actually, um. Uh, I would like to respond to the gentleman, uh, who have just spoken. Both of them. Um, uh, because I have several points which I think are crucial, critical, important. Uh, and they need to be addressed. Uh, and I would like them to make a, uh, a public record of them, if I may.

00:32:53:19 - 00:33:10:17

Oh, please. Please proceed. Because obviously we're on this particular topic now. So if there are points that you you're wishing to make, then please do so. Just just want to pause at the moment. Um, is your camera on at your end? I'm wondering whether it's been disabled at our end. Uh.

00:33:10:19 - 00:33:16:07

It does. It sort of keeps popping. I get disabled automatically. Apologies. I switched it back on.

00:33:16:10 - 00:33:23:03

It may well be someone here taking control. Yeah. Uh, but, you know, we can see you now. Thank you.

00:33:23:05 - 00:33:57:15

Okay. Thank you. Um, I have so many issues with what they've been saying about this. It's hard. It's hard to know where to start. To be honest. Um, I think the the consensus is, uh, it's better to leave them in the ground, which, of course, is nonsense. Again, nobody's talking about microplastics. People are speaking on behalf of developers, but in their own admission, they're not experts. Uh, it's we're still not talking about drinking water protected areas, which this is, uh, practically the whole of the Earth.

00:33:57:18 - 00:34:33:17

So the site is in a drinking water protected area. The gentleman who spoke. Uh, did. There were some contradictions in there. Uh, which, uh, producing. Writing. Uh, we have no information on how long the cables will be. Uh, we do. The developers plan to provide a list of all the cables that would be left in the ground. Would. Uh, we've estimated there will be 1000 to 1200 kilometers, which is massive. Uh, the gentleman who spoke first said that the cables, uh, some cables would be removed.

00:34:34:09 - 00:35:06:10

Uh, uh, as a sort of, uh, needed congratulations, but then said some would remain. And we believe it's the majority of the cables that will remain there, particularly the xlp cables. And that's because they're

more difficult to read and costly to recycle. So it's cheaper for them to leave them in the ground. And particularly if the site was sold, uh, because it would be cheaper for, uh, for the decommissioning fund. And we believe that's why they're being left in the ground. We dispute the fact that the reason for that is to stop disturbance.

00:35:06:12 - 00:35:40:17

The whole site, the whole 4000 acres, is massively disturbed and will be when they start pulling out all the all the sort of frames and everything for these solar farms. So disturbing. They say that they're narrow trenches, but then they don't want to disturb them. So there's a lot of contradictions going on here. Um, we believe there'll be about a thousand tonnes of plastics that will be left, uh, not including all the heavy metals. And again, all the binding compounds and, uh, flame retardants and all the different chemicals in the cables.

00:35:40:20 - 00:36:19:21

So there's no good answer to this apart from not putting them there in the first place, to be honest. We've heard them talking about we don't want to disturb the cables as they just it's a very blunt process. They basically grab the cables and pull them out. So of course, they're one of the arguments I've heard is they don't want to disturb the plastics, but surely this is a major issue waiting to happen. And again, I can't stress this strongly enough. This is a drinking water protected area. Uh, the chap who spoke about farming. We dispute the fact that point nine metres is deep enough sometimes, particularly on land where they're doing serious, uh, flood uh, plans.

00:36:20:09 - 00:36:52:00

Uh, they often have to plough deeper than that and create trenches deeper than that. So that's a problem where the cables could be dragged out and damaged. And, uh, and that's going to cause issue for years. Um, so, yeah, again, the chap who spoke said these cables last for years. Well, of course they're leaving them in the ground forever. So eventually there will be a massive problem. Uh, and to say that a little bit in the middle. Well, no, it's not a little bit in the middle of land.

00:36:52:02 - 00:37:26:03

It's spread, crisscrossed throughout 4000 acres. And again, it's over 1000km, so it's not going to be a little bit in the middle. Now the cables, when they do start decaying, and it's a matter of scientific fact that they will, uh, decay. Spread is worse in sandy soils and flood prone land, which is both what, uh, which is the exact issue, uh, and the type of soil that all this is on sandy soils and flood prone land. So, of course, all these, uh, decaying cables and everything are going to spend all that spread, all their microplastics and compounds, uh, throughout the land.

00:37:26:05 - 00:38:06:06

And, uh, they'll, they'll, uh, they will be able to sort of move vertically and horizontally a lot easier in flood prone and and being flood prone land as well, uh, often disturbed the cables in lots of other mechanical ways as well, which can damage the cables. And then you get water tripping and all sorts of issues due to the, due to the cables. So we're strongly disputing what they're saying. And we believe that it's being the fact that this is a drinking water protected area has been completely ignored. It's been completely ignored that this will be a microplastic issue when the world is trying to rid, uh, you know, the seas and, uh, and the land of microplastics.

00:38:06:08 - 00:38:40:14

And I've also heard an argument that plastics are often used in agricultural land. Well, not in this, uh, not in this sort of, uh, size. We know that microplastics are often used, uh, and they can, unfortunately get into agricultural land through, uh, covers over, you know, the plastic covers they put over certain crops or even on the, on the seeds themselves. But using our calculations and using a thousand tonnes of plastics, it the amount of pollution will be, uh, over 10,000 times more than what it would be under a natural issue.

00:38:40:16 - 00:38:47:16

And we're also not convinced the Environment Agency are doing what they can. And we'd like to discuss that at some point, if we if we may as well.

00:38:49:17 - 00:38:50:16

Thank you. Sorry.

00:38:51:04 - 00:38:52:21

No, thank you very much, Mr. White. right.

00:38:58:09 - 00:39:02:05

There anything further you would wish to say in response?

00:39:02:11 - 00:39:29:24

Thank you, Sir Richard Griffiths on the applicant. Obviously there's a lot in that all submission. So I think the best uh uh uh position is that we see, um, Mr. White's, uh, written submission and his evidence, and we will respond to that evidence, um, accordingly, rather than me trying to respond, uh, at this point, given the technical nature of that. So I look, I think, um, deadline one, I presume, uh, will be when we see that evidence.

00:39:31:21 - 00:39:43:11

Yeah, obviously he's made reference in the relevant representation already. So, um, look forward to seeing the detailed response and your submission, Mr. White. Thank you.

00:39:46:05 - 00:39:47:16

Thank you. Thank you very much.

00:40:08:00 - 00:40:26:01

If we go on to point two, um, of the agenda under item seven, um, you've made reference, um to the land returning to the owner at the end of the, uh, project. Um,

00:40:28:01 - 00:40:40:02

can you explain, um, how the Secretary state can have confidence funding would be in place to undertake decommissioning at a time where any receipts for electricity generation would have ceased.

00:40:43:02 - 00:41:13:08

Thank you, sir. Richard Griffiths on the applicant. I think it's very important that we first of all start with policy tests on this. Uh. Paragraph 2.10 .146 of Ian three states that the Secretary of State should

ensure that the applicant has put in put forward outline plans for decommissioning the generating station were no longer in use and restoring the land to a suitable use. We have done that. Paragraph 2.10 .147. When the consent for a solar farm is to be time limited, the DCO should impose requirements setting that time limit.

00:41:13:13 - 00:41:46:08

We have done that. Paragraph 2.10 .148. Such a requirement should also secure the decommissioning of the generating station after the expiration of its permitted operation. We have done that too. So in terms of the policy tests, which is obviously how you judge whether requirement is necessary and reasonable, we are in accordance with the NPS tests. Uh, the DCO secures the submission of an approval of a decommissioning environmental management plan.

00:41:46:10 - 00:42:31:22

We have to carry that out. And, uh, as I've said, um, the requirement. Uh, breach of that requirement is a criminal offence. Um, and because of that obligation, uh, an applicant and undertaker are fully aware of their liabilities, not just under this one requirement, but, of course, across other requirements such as maintenance of landscaping, of course, costs money. And they will therefore any applicant would make provision for um that necessary in this case, uh, decommissioning and make financial provision for it during the life of the scheme so that when they cease operation, uh, then they have the funds during that process, during that the life of the scheme to carry out the decommissioning.

00:42:31:24 - 00:43:07:22

So throughout the project, uh, an undertaker would make provision. Um, I'd also refer to, um, the fact that, uh, as I said, the criminal offence points. You've also got a guarantee regarding the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 that acts as a further deterrent on an undertaker. Um, all the elements of the solar farm will be a valuable asset to the applicant, and so it's in their interests financially to do to decommission the site in order to recycle and sell those components. Um, uh, and, uh, the Proceeds of Crime Act helps in that, um, gives reinforcement to that.

00:43:08:02 - 00:43:40:04

So our position is you don't need, um, any form of other security in this DCO. The, uh, the guarantee from to the secretary of State, as per the policy is the requirement itself is the decommissioning management plan. Is the fact that how an undertaker would carry out its undertaking, uh, throughout the life of the scheme. So there are no policy, uh, requirements for any fund. And, uh, I would also, you know, refer you to, um, uh, as we're in the business of providing to meet orders.

00:43:40:07 - 00:44:11:24

Uh, I'll give you an example of Mallard Pass, um, where the Secretary of State Estates agreed with the examining authority where it said that, uh, and I quote. Um, there's a paragraph 7.4.73 of the examining authority's report. Uh, the requirement includes the need for approval of a detailed decommissioning environmental management plan. This includes a decommissioning program, compliance with which would be enforceable under the DCO. We do not consider it necessary for any further controls to be imposed on the time frame for the decommissioning program.

00:44:12:13 - 00:44:35:04

Whilst there are suggestions by interested parties for provision to be made for a financial bond consistent with the other made series with solar projects, we do not consider this to be necessary given the controls that are already in place via the requirement of the DCO, and that is the point necessary, uh, and reasonable. And we would submit that it's not necessary given requirement 20.

00:44:40:07 - 00:44:40:23

Thank you.

00:44:43:05 - 00:44:50:03

I just opened that up to the floor. Does anyone have any concerns or comments that they would wish to make? Yes. Mr..

00:44:53:07 - 00:45:31:02

Simon Benson, you ensure district council, um, do not necessarily, um, wish to directly disagree with what's just been said, only to make the comment that it is, in my experience, relatively common practice, uh, perhaps for smaller scale, uh, solar or renewable schemes to, to put a fund a bond in place such that if the, um, the applicant or their successor goes into administration, administration, there is an opportunity to, um, restore the site to its former use.

00:45:31:05 - 00:45:39:19

So, um, I wonder whether there's some further, further sort of evidence that can be provided in that regard.

00:45:59:10 - 00:46:04:11

Thank you. I'm not seeing any other. Hands up. So I'll come back to the applicant.

00:46:04:13 - 00:46:44:05

Thank you sir. Richard Gibson, the applicant. Um, well, as I said on all made on, um, on all solar development consent orders for nationally significant infrastructure projects. That is not the case. Um, and, uh, indeed, that was the case in the most recent order that, uh, we seem to be relying on Oakland's, um. So, uh, I will, I will, I will, um, and our position is one is not required in the DCO test. We do not believe it would be reasonable or necessary. And, um, should the undertake of the order go into liquidation, then, uh, the administration administrators would sell off the assets of the um, of the solar farm, which, as I said, are valuable.

00:46:44:12 - 00:47:01:23

And, um, uh, that would, um, be there to assist in the decommissioning of the project alongside any funds that the the Undertaker had already put in place. I've said, um, so our position is not required and, um, uh, and not required in policy.

00:47:03:23 - 00:47:04:14

Thank you.

00:47:22:10 - 00:47:38:10

Okay, then I think that moves us on to, uh, next item, uh, item eight, where we start to consider the various environmental matters. So I'll pass over to my colleague to commence, uh, dealing with the flood risk, uh, drainage in the water environment. topic.

00:47:47:09 - 00:48:10:03

Thank you. So, um. First item on the agenda is around drinking water supply. So can the applicant please explain the methodology used to ensure that drinking water supplies will remain safe, taking into account the water protected area. That's within the order limits. Please.

00:48:12:07 - 00:48:15:11

It's common for the applicant. Um, our experts actually online.

00:48:15:13 - 00:48:22:17

So I'm going to introduce Mr. Craig Thwaites, um, associate director at Logica, who can assist with the question. Thank you.

00:48:24:09 - 00:48:55:23

Thank you very much. Um, yeah. Craig Thwaites, on behalf of the applicant. Um, with regards to drinking water supplies, um, as set out within chapter eight, Land and soils of the environmental statement. Um, a nice document reference app 037 and chapter seven Hydrology and Hydrogeology. Um, document reference as 053. Um, there are a number of receptors with regards to water supplies. Um, I'll just list them quickly so that we can talk around each one to some degree. Although I appreciate the comments that Mr.

00:48:56:00 - 00:49:27:21

Griffiths has made. Um, and Mr. White and I think that the suggestion that we respond to those on a point by point basis is, is helpful from the oral submissions. Um, however, yes, the the receptors are that we have a secondary aquifer across the majority of the, the study area, and we have groundwater source protection zones, um, to the north, which are outside of the order limits for clarity. Um, we have the whole water reservoir slash water treatment works, which is Anglian Water asset to the east of the River Trent. Um, again, which outside of the order limits.

00:49:28:00 - 00:50:10:14

And then we have a number of private, uh, groundwater abstractions in a number of locations within the order limits. So that's both on the east and west of the River Trent. Um, for clarity, these, uh, the uh, receptors mentioned are all illustrated within is figures 8.2 and 8.7. Um, within uh chapter uh, within sorry app 053 with regards to mitigation. Um, yes. You know, without mitigation in place, in theory, these receptors could be impacted, um, from by pollutants, from surface water runoff, um, or by pollutants that are mobilized in a flood event, which obviously will come on to as well, because that's another agenda point.

00:50:11:04 - 00:50:52:14

Um, however, there are some inherent mitigation sort of measures already in place. So that's items such as topography of the land, um, and being outside of the flood zone extents, um, which I'll talk about. Um, and then also some mitigations that we're actively putting in place to minimize the potential from contaminants to, to those sources. Uh, to those receptors. Sorry. Um, so with regards to

each of those receptors that I've mentioned. So the whole water reservoir, um, is located within flood zone one and therefore is away from any potential flood risk, um, from a fluvial source, um, and therefore would not be impacted by, uh, any potentially mobilized contaminants in a flood event.

00:50:53:04 - 00:51:28:19

Um, with regards to the source protection zones and the groundwater abstraction, um points, um noted that some of these are located within flood zones two and three. Um, however, we've set out mitigation measures, um, within the oh camp. So that's app 176, the OMP app 177 and the o DMP, um, which is app 178. Um, the idea of these mitigation measures are to be protective of groundwater as a whole. Um, and we'll also have the effect of protecting any, any, uh, groundwater that's abstracted, sort of inherently.

00:51:29:02 - 00:52:07:14

Um, just for clarity, these measures are. Just summarize them. I won't go through in infinite detail because I don't think this is the appropriate time to. However, what's been suggested within those documents, um, plans is the safe storage of materials, um, use of containment measures for any fuels or oils, um, emergency spillage plans, uh, assigning designated areas for mixing and handling of materials, um, the management of um site runoff. So surface water and fowl, um, and also protocols will be put in place, um, if there's suspected contaminated material sort of encountered during construction.

00:52:08:09 - 00:52:40:02

Um, so that covers off, I guess during the, uh, the source protection zones and, uh, groundwater abstraction points during construction with regards to, um, operation. Um, so within uh, section four of the Fra and that is document referenced as 051. Um, potentially polluted surface water runoff. Um, is is essentially assessed. Um, and for clarity, that includes and again, I'll list them fairly briefly.

00:52:40:04 - 00:53:13:06

Um, rather than go into infinite detail calculations because I don't think that's appropriate right now. Um, but detention essentially we're incorporating a number of sustainable drainage systems within the site. Um, specifically associated with the battery storage and substation areas. Um, this includes, um, permeable paving or, excuse me, permeable subbase, um, as well as detention basins. Um, now for clarity, these, um, basins have been sized to accommodate the 100 year plus 40% climate change, um, rainfall event.

00:53:13:20 - 00:53:45:16

Um, and these have also been located outside of the design flood risk extent. Um, as as illustrated in appendix A7 of as 051. Um, so by placing these by sizing these appropriately and I'm placing them outside of the flood zones. Um, or the design flood extent, I should say. Um, this minimizes the potential for any mobilization of contaminants. Um, from the Bess and substation areas, there'll be no infiltration of surface water to ground that to to the ground.

00:53:46:06 - 00:54:20:01

Um, and an impermeable lining will be explicitly included, um, to prevent that infiltration and potential contamination to groundwater. Um, we've incorporated as mentioned previously, we've incorporated Suds, um, within the scheme. Um, and the pollution hazard and runoff treatment, um, is

quantified within the Fra. Um, just to clarify, that's A051. Um, and within that set out within tables 4-8 and 4-9. Um, just to add on to this, and it's a point that we come on to later anyway.

00:54:20:04 - 00:54:50:08

Um, but fire suppression has been considered within the design. And should that occur. Um, we have incorporated a stock valve downstream of the basins, and that will automatically will be automatically triggered to essentially close and isolate any potentially contaminated discharge in that scenario. Um, should that occur, the contaminated water would be held, um, tankard away and treated accordingly off site. Um, and just to reiterate, the detention basins will have an impermeable lining.

00:54:50:10 - 00:55:28:06

So there wouldn't be any infiltration to to groundwater. And that those measures also prevent, um, any potential discharges to ordinary watercourses, which is where the, uh, detention basins ultimately discharge to. Um, in addition to those measures, um, we have also assessed the potential for a fire to occur at the same time as a rainfall event. And that's been assessed and sort of quantified with in table four seven of the Fra, um, as 051. Um, and what the essentially the basins have been sized to provide sufficient storage to attenuate a 1 in 10 year rainfall event.

00:55:28:09 - 00:55:38:17

Plus um plus fire water at a rate of 1900l per minute. Um, for a two hour time period. Thank you sir.

00:55:42:09 - 00:55:43:02

Thank you.

00:55:52:01 - 00:55:57:10

Does, uh, any of the anyone else in the room or online got any comments? Yeah.

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

Mr. white, please.

00:56:03:12 - 00:56:33:20

Hi. Uh, yes. Thank you. Um, I have a few questions about what this gentleman has just been saying. Um, one of the ones that was said that the North Clifton Reservoir and the water treatment plant was outside the development zone. We're looking at plans. Um, the plans I have, it's actually in the zone. Um, outside the order limits. It's actually inside the order limits. Or at the very worst, just a few meters from the order limits.

00:56:33:22 - 00:57:09:03

But to us, it looks like it's within the order limit. So we're disputing that, uh, the reservoir and water treatment plant are outside the order limits. And I think, uh, because they're to us, they look like they are inside. Uh, and if not, they're certainly just within a few meters. So, uh, they need to be closely studied. And we do need to know specifics on how, um, for instance, uh, best fire, large vessel substation fire so close to the water treatment plant and the reservoir would be being handled.

00:57:09:05 - 00:57:43:23

It's not just about surface runoff. If there's a large best fire, then there's a lot of airborne particles, which could end up both in the water treatment plant and the reservoir. Uh, and those airborne particles will contain a lot of nasty chemicals, which definitely shouldn't be anywhere near these. Uh, water sort of, uh, infrastructure. So there's a big issue there. And again, we've put some of this in our submission, but we'll we'll add a few more. But I'd be interested to see what the gentleman says about whether, uh, these are very close to the outer limits or, or even inside.

00:57:44:00 - 00:58:19:05

And what about airborne particles? The other issue is concrete runoff from, uh, building some of these things. It's not just about, uh, of course, sort of the operation phase during the construction phase. Uh, and this has happened different solar farms. And again, we'll provide some information to the Planning Inspectorate about specific solar farms. Um, there's a lot of concrete runoff happened when they've been building access roads, for instance, and flat, uh, flat standing. And those concrete runoffs have got into ditches and dikes and caused serious environmental concerns and damage.

00:58:19:08 - 00:58:49:08

And again we have examples of this, particularly in the US. There is, for instance, a Orsted owned, uh, solar farm, uh, called Muscle Shoals. Uh, in the US that was implicated in a large flood event where, uh, several houses, uh, in that area were flooded due to, uh, what was how this solar farm was being built. Uh, and we're particularly concerned about that.

00:58:49:10 - 00:59:25:14

That could happen here. So, um, we're talking about if there's a fire at the substation or the Bess and how, uh, the, uh, runoff from any firefighting, etc. could be being handled. But there's 196, uh, shipping container size, uh, solar inverters that are crisscrossed across the site. But what are the plans, uh, for firefighting runoff? Should they catch fire and they do catch fire. And there was a fire event not far from here last year when a solar inverter caught fire.

00:59:26:13 - 01:00:01:15

Uh, depending on the solar inverters, with the liquid cooled or air cooled, there's all sorts of, again, nasty chemicals in the inverters. And again, we're dealing with, uh, a drinking water protected area here. So what are the plans if an inverter catches fire? Uh, we've we've also spoken to, uh, quite senior members of the local fire services, uh, about this. And unfortunately, we're not convinced that, uh, the information that is being provided to these agencies is completely up to date or appropriate for the risks involved.

01:00:01:17 - 01:00:32:05

And we've actually written both to the Environment Agency and Robert Jenrick about this RMP. So, um, in short, what happens if an inverter catches fire? What about concrete runoff from hard from the wind building hardstanding and and the access roads. Um, and, uh, about the uh, northwestern reservoir and the water treatment plant being inside the older limits or just a few meters from. Thank you.

01:00:34:11 - 01:00:37:16

I'll kick it off. And Craig Thwaites on behalf. Oh, sorry.

01:00:39:17 - 01:00:40:09

Thank you.

01:00:41:06 - 01:00:44:05

Yes. Should I should I start? Sorry. I jumped the gun there I think. Yeah.

01:00:45:03 - 01:00:45:18

It's fine.

01:00:45:20 - 01:01:21:09

Carry on. Uh, yes. Craig Thwaites, on behalf of the applicant. Um, firstly, just to address the point regarding the order limits. Um, the. Yes, the the whole, um, water reservoir is very close to the order limits, and I believe technically it's outside of the order limits, however, but is within the study area. Um, just to clarify, uh, David. Sorry, Mr. White, I appreciate that. Um, you know, the the scale of the plans sometimes looks like perhaps it is within, but I think there's a kind of a rectangle which, um, delineates it being outside of the order limits. Um, with regards to best fire, obviously I've touched on touched on the mitigation in place.

01:01:21:16 - 01:02:02:13

Um, generally um, for, for for best fires. Um, just for clarity with regards to the whole water reservoir. Um, that is topographically much higher than the, um, than the locations of the substation and best areas and compounds. Um, so any overland runoff, um, wouldn't, would not end up within that reservoir. Um, with regards to, uh, construction stage, obviously, I've made reference previously to the O. Kemp, um, which, uh, will set out, um, specific measures which would be, which will be put in place to manage any, um, spillage and any, uh, surface water site runoff.

01:02:02:19 - 01:02:38:11

Um, essentially, um, so those measures will be committed to within the, within the camp once it's produced. Um, I've had a note here. And forgive me, I'm not an expert, so if Pinsent Masons want to jump in. Um, however, er with regards to airborne particles, it's not my field of expertise, but I've been informed that that has been looked at within appendix C, unplanned emissions assessment of the OOB SMP map 183. And that confirms that there and then there is a figure in there which shows the plumes, contours, um, from the fire outside of the reservoirs due to the prevailing wind direction.

01:02:38:23 - 01:02:55:07

Um, we can address that in further detail within the written responses. Um, with regards to an inverter fire, um, I think that's something that we'll have to take away and address. Um, unless anyone else within the application applicant team would like to cover that off.

01:03:01:03 - 01:03:13:03

I'll just confirm. Yes we will. We will do that in writing. We can share a picture of of the master plan on screen, if that's helpful, just to confirm where that reservoir is outside of the outer limits. Yes, please. As Mr. Thwaites has explained.

01:03:28:15 - 01:03:30:16

Am I okay to speak about this image?

01:03:37:21 - 01:03:39:02

Yes. Go ahead, Mr. White.

01:03:39:22 - 01:03:49:19

I just, I I'm confused. I thought the red line, uh, was highlighting the order limits, and we can see there's a red line around the reservoir.

01:03:51:08 - 01:04:01:24

Uh, and as you can see, the water treatment plan to the north east is just within a few meters. So I think it I think it

01:04:03:13 - 01:04:26:22

to us, it's in the zone. Uh, I think it would be wrong to consider outside the outer limits, to be honest. And I would hate that. Uh, calling it Outside the Outer Limits might, uh, change some of the, uh, studies and, uh, risk assessments and impact assessments, uh, with regards to this infrastructure.

01:04:30:02 - 01:04:31:01

Okay. Thank you.

01:04:31:18 - 01:04:37:02

About the red line at the top. Doesn't that show it's inside the outer limits, top of the reservoir?

01:04:37:11 - 01:05:08:00

I think what you'll find is that it's specifically excluding it. Um, if we were to zoom in slightly further, I think you'll find that there is, um, a second line. And it is very, uh, challenging to, to to discern the difference, the distinction. But I think, um, whilst it is outside and the, um, plant on the other side of the road is also outside.

01:05:08:12 - 01:05:30:20

Everyone, I think, agrees that it's clearly immediately adjacent to, and that the study that have been undertaken have included both sites within those study areas. So I don't think we have any concern that they've been excluded. Um, even though they are actually outside the order limits.

01:05:31:15 - 01:06:10:03

Okay. Um. Thank you. Uh, I'd also, uh, the point about the reservoir is much higher, uh, than, uh, the best and everything I it is higher. Uh, but again, we're talking about, uh, airborne particles, which can get quite high. Uh, and we've been looking at studies of those, but also, uh, of course, that infrastructure pulls in water from the surrounding area. So anything that would land outside the reservoir, uh, could eventually be involved in the getting to the water systems.

01:06:11:01 - 01:06:48:20

I'd also want to make a point, if I may. Uh, and this seems to be a, an ongoing, uh, point that, like the previous chapter was talking about, um, the soils and, uh, and the farmlands and everything, this chap repeated. Uh, what David said is not an expert. So what's going on? And, uh, why are there seem to be people who are not experts in this, but, uh, quite heavily involved in this, in this process?

01:06:52:09 - 01:06:53:05

Thank you, Mr. White.

01:06:53:07 - 01:06:55:04

With with respect. With respect.

01:07:05:02 - 01:07:40:11

Sorry if I can just come back on the last point. Um, Mr. Thwaites is an expert in the, um, topic on the agenda, which is flood risk and water. Um, he mentioned he was not an expert in terms of airborne particles, as he should have qualified. Um, and he was just conveying, um, the one point about the plume assessment there, um, to be very clear. Similarly, I think, um, when, um, Mr. Hill was talking again, sticking within his own expertise and noting, as he should when he was moving outside of them. So they're very much experts in their fields. And the, um, qualifications of all our experts are included in the environmental statement as required by the regulations.

01:07:42:08 - 01:08:14:18

That we understand very much the situation. Thank you. I've just got one follow up point. If Mr. Thwaites is still on online, um, you've addressed the concerns in respect of, uh, ground source protection and individual, um, Abstraction points, but I don't think you made reference in your response to the issue that Mr. White and others have raised about the water protection areas.

01:08:14:20 - 01:08:21:06

So I wonder if you can just give us clarification as to what the situation is on that, please.

01:08:23:24 - 01:08:30:17

Thank you sir. Craig Thwaites, on behalf of the applicant, I think that's something that we will take away and provide written responses on.

01:08:32:10 - 01:08:33:10

Okay. Thank you.

01:08:53:06 - 01:08:56:15

Are there any other questions or comments on that topic?

01:09:17:13 - 01:09:35:04

Moving on to the next item. Um, can the applicant, I mean, please explain the methodology for the flood risk assessment? Um, including, uh, the use of the most up to date data sets and the impact of construction activities on flood risk. Thank you.

01:09:36:22 - 01:09:38:24

Thank you. I'll. I'll pass back to Mr. Thwaites.

01:09:41:01 - 01:10:13:16

Thank you. Craig Thwaites, on behalf of the applicant. Um, yes. So with regards to the production of the Fra. Um, just to clarify, um, document reference as 051. Um, this has been prepared in line with

the requirements of the following. Um, so MPs, um, one with particularly inference on paragraphs 8.18, 5.8, 2.15, which sets out requirements for phrase um. MPs Ian three. The NPP Planning Practice Guidance pkg. As well as local planning, policy and guidance.

01:10:14:01 - 01:10:54:21

Um, with regards to data sets. Um, so the Fra has been prepared, um, using the following um Environment Agency flood mapping, including the flood map for planning, um, long term flood risk mapping, surface water reservoirs. I mean by that um, and historic flood mapping. Um, we've also obtained the Environment Agency's hydraulic modelling from the River Trent and the tidal River Trent, I should say. And that is the 2023 model, um, Environment Agency asset information with regards to defences. Um, and then final two things a British Geological Survey mapping and with regards to ground um geology uh and mapping from Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire um strategic flood risk assessments.

01:10:55:09 - 01:11:26:15

Um these data sets have been. Have informed the baseline flood risk at the site, as well as future flood risk, which incorporates climate change. Um, these have in turn informed the master plan layout and any environmental measures slash mitigation, um, measures that we've incorporated into the design. Um, just for clarity, the Fra has also been informed by a number of meetings with the Environment Agency, um, and the lead local flood authority, um, LFA. Um, and we've included meeting minutes.

01:11:26:17 - 01:12:02:16

Agreed. Meeting minutes from these meetings within appendix A3 of the Fra. Um, that's 051 with regards to the latest mapping. Um, for clarity, the original Fra. And that was submitted with the application, um, which was EP 095, um included the latest surface water flood mapping. Um and an updated Fra was submitted um in April um which is document reference as 051 um as an additional submission, which includes the latest um Environment Agency flood map for planning.

01:12:02:19 - 01:12:39:05

Um, if you refer to figures 3.4 and 3.5 within the document. Um, and the reason this was submitted as an additional submission is that the flood map planning was released from the Environment Agency, was released in March 2025. So it was um, subsequent to the original submission. Um, discussing the methodology of the Fra is, I guess, slightly vague. Um, so I thought, but please stop me if you would like. Um, I thought I'd do just a very quick summary of, um, mitigation sort of proposed, kind of the fundamentals, um, within the flood risk assessment.

01:12:39:14 - 01:12:42:19

Um, is that helpful? Um, to the inspectorate?

01:12:43:04 - 01:12:44:21

Yes. That's good. Thanks.

01:12:44:24 - 01:13:23:01

Perfect. Great. Um, so, yeah. So with regards to, um, the, the fundamentally what the mitigation is because obviously we appreciate that the, um, you know, large areas of the site are within flood zones two and three. Um, so with regards to the site layout and the masterplan layout, um, we've taken a

sequential approach, um, to this by locating sensitive equipment such as uh, substation and best areas within, uh, the low risk flood areas. So flood zones one um, and our outside of the design flood extent, I'll explain exactly what the design flood extent is in a second or right now actually, um, then mitigation of anything.

01:13:23:03 - 01:13:58:18

Um, so really the, the solar panels and some inverters, um, which are located within the design flood extent. Now for clarity, that is um, set out within the PPG and to be the one in for a fluvial, fluvial dominated um, area which we are in, um, the design flood extent is the 1 in 100 year plus 39% climate change flood event. Um, those climate change, that climate change, um statement is in line with the higher central allowance, which is what we are required to look at for essential infrastructure and is in line with the latest climate change requirements.

01:13:59:06 - 01:14:40:16

Um, so we have raised panels and inverters where they are located within the design flood extents to be 300mm above the design flood levels. Um, and that's wherever, wherever possible. Um, so just for clarity, that means that the, the panels themselves are raised up on frames and we've ensured that there is a 300 mil gap essentially between the the top water level and the, um, the base of the panel itself. Um, however, I should clarify that there are localized positions, um, where it's not been possible, um, to raise the, the panels, um, above, uh, within that sort of 300 millimeter freeboard, um, or above any higher than that.

01:14:41:02 - 01:15:11:20

Um, and where that's uh, so just to quantify that, um, I guess that there are some panels localised which will, um, be submerged to a maximum depth of 600mm. But to quantify it, that equates to 3% of the solar panel areas that could be affected in that situation. Um, the above these these mitigations and principles have, um, been agreed with the Environment Agency. Um, but we are still in some minor discussions.

01:15:11:22 - 01:15:16:00

Um, to bottom out any final comments that they have, um, on the mitigation strategy?

01:15:19:03 - 01:15:24:02

Shall I move on to construction or is this a suitable stopping point for questions?

01:15:24:23 - 01:15:37:17

I've got a couple of questions, if you don't mind. The you mentioned reference there to a 3% of the panel area being affected by the, um, potential flood event

01:15:39:09 - 01:15:55:04

in your document. ISO 51. Um, you make reference to the freeboard of 300 mil across the majority of the site. So are you telling us that 97% of the site is, uh, above that level?

01:15:56:17 - 01:16:27:22

Uh, yes, but I will. Let me just clarify, actually. So the the 3% is the, um, the panels that would actually be submerged, so would experience some flooding at the base. And we have also broken

down, um, the, uh, some of our figures. And I can bring them up and if helpful. Um, so the 3% is just the ones that would specifically flood. We've also broken it down into areas that, um, would would still have a freeboard, but it would be less than 300mm, so it might be 100mm.

01:16:28:08 - 01:16:34:11

Um, so the 3% is just on the flooded the submerged panels if that clarifies it.

01:16:35:03 - 01:16:53:14

Yeah. That's helpful. I mean, the within the documentation at paragraph 3.5, it actually says you shared a figure with the Environment Agency, but then the figure isn't. We aren't told what that figure is, so it'd be helpful to know what that figure is. Um, and also to have

01:16:55:13 - 01:17:08:22

probably a plan showing us where the freeboard is not achieved. If maybe there is one, and I haven't quite identified it, but it would be helpful to visualize what it is that we're talking about.

01:17:11:01 - 01:17:38:01

Thank you very much, sir. Yeah. Craig Thwaites, for the on behalf of the applicant. Um, if you refer to figure 310 of the Fra, um, and that is, uh, as 051. Um, we have a figure titled Summary of freeboard allowance and panel flood depths for design fluvial event. Um, we can potentially share that on screen if it's helpful. Um, to quickly look at, I can share or. But I'm not sure I have. I don't think I have sharing rights.

01:17:40:12 - 01:17:43:24

Okay. Someone shared it. That's helpful. Thank you.

01:17:44:06 - 01:18:15:02

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Um, so yes, this this essentially, um, summarizes the free board allowance that we have. Um, so the light yellow, um, indicates areas where we have at least a 300ml or greater freeboard. Um, and you can see that that covers the majority of the, of the site area, um, for clarity, the gray um, areas of the solar panels themselves, um, the gray blocks, um, where we have colors of between, I guess yellow through to orange, but not the pinks. Um, that's where we have.

01:18:15:04 - 01:18:41:22

We still have a freeboard. Um, but as I say, it's not 300mm, so it goes down to 100mm or less, but it would technically be above the, the flood level. And then the pink area is predominantly on the western side of the, um, sorry, the eastern side of the site, um, are areas where we sort of localized areas where there would be some flooding to the panels themselves. And it's those pinks through to purples which represent the 3% of the total panel area.

01:18:44:24 - 01:18:47:02

Now that's helpful. An explanation. Thank you.

01:18:48:20 - 01:19:02:09

Um, but I would still ask that the figure you refer to in that documentation is shared with us. So, um, is that something we add to the action list at this point, or is it maybe maybe simplest?

01:19:03:23 - 01:19:04:16

No problem.

01:19:06:01 - 01:19:06:18

Thank you.

01:19:31:04 - 01:19:50:03

So you you mentioned, um, the number of panels or, you know, or an area of panels that and other equipment, inverters that could, um, suffer flooding up to 600mm has the impact of their location being assessed on the flow of flood water if they are submerged.

01:19:53:23 - 01:20:26:23

I Craig Thwaites on behalf of the applicant. Um, yes. This has been um, addressed and discussed with the Environment Agency. It's a point that I was going to come on to, um, in one of the further agenda points, but I'm happy to, to run through now. Um, so, yes. So as set out within the Fra, um, the raising of the panels will be achieved through the use of, um, slender frames, um, meaning that any potential um, for sort of debris blockage, um, is kept to a minimum. Uh, and even if there was to be some minor obstruction, um, flood water would still continue to flow around because of those sort of slender frames.

01:20:27:00 - 01:20:59:22

Now, that deals with the frame specifically. Um, furthermore, the frames will be designed to withstand, um, debris impact. So minimise their potential for um failure essentially, and causing a greater obstruction to flood flows. Um, now within the sites, operation and maintenance strategies and details for those maintenance actions. Um, will be taken. Uh, will be set out, sorry, and will obviously be undertaken at regular intervals. Um, however, within the Fra, we did set out kind of what we would expect to be in there.

01:21:00:03 - 01:21:31:20

Um, and what maintenance activities we would expect following a flood. Um, just in high level. That would be, um, the clearance of any debris collected on fences, path roads between the panel supports, um, and inspection of the panel supports um and fences to ensure their structural integrity. Um, and if there were any any issues observed or in particular failures. Um then remediation replacement as well, and will be implemented as soon as possible following the flood event. Um, just for clarity with that.

01:21:31:22 - 01:22:06:05

So that deals with the panel frames themselves. Um, with regards to the panels. Um, we've been in recent discussions with the Environment Agency in a meeting last Thursday, which is the 3rd of July, um, where we've agreed that we will undertake, um, a a comparison of flood flow velocities, um, the locations where the submerged panels are, um, sorry, where the submerged panels are, um, to understand the potential impact on conveyance of flood water. Um, and this has been as I mentioned, this has been actively discussed and, um, with the E to get to a resolution.

01:22:08:12 - 01:22:09:04

Thank you.

01:22:36:14 - 01:22:39:16

Mr. White. Have you got a question or comment?

01:22:41:10 - 01:23:17:06

I have, thank you. Uh, it's a question for Mr. Thwaites, if I may. Um, you're responsible for or as part of the team working for flood mitigation and flood plans for this development. Is that right? Okay. Um. Are they are you telling us that, uh, most of the inverters are above the maximum flood levels that could happen in this area? There are 196 shipping, uh, uh, shipping container sized, uh, industrial inverters that are very heavy.

01:23:17:08 - 01:23:17:23

And,

01:23:19:09 - 01:23:23:22

um, so are you telling us all those inverters are all above the maximum flood levels?

01:23:25:10 - 01:24:02:05

Yes. Um, sorry, Mr. Craig Thwaites, for the, uh, on behalf of the applicant. Um, yes, with regards to the inverters, um, where they are located within the design flood extent. that we are raising them up. The inverters on, um, well, I'll let it come to that, but we're raising them up to be 300mm above the, um, above the design flood level. Um, the method of which that raising will be undertaken, um, is on, uh, essentially on voided structures. Um, now, that is something that we've been again discussing with the Environment Agency last Thursday, um, to discuss exactly how that will be.

01:24:02:13 - 01:24:36:02

Um, provided um, at detailed design stage. At the moment, what we've discussed is that at this outline stage, we don't know exactly where every inverter is going to be within the site. Um, so as we go through detailed design, um, a site by site basis, um, or a location by location, um analysis will be undertaken to determine whether, um, those features can be raised up on raised ground rather than voided structures to minimise the potential for, um, any constraints to flows. Um, However, the fallback position is on the voided structures.

01:24:37:04 - 01:24:58:17

Okay. Um, how will that equipment be maintained? Serviced? Uh, any fire events? Uh, if there's a flood, uh, are there sort of, uh, are there some, uh, plans, some, uh, disaster contingency details in, uh, in the documents if there's a flood in the water as a problem.

01:25:01:01 - 01:25:09:11

Mr. white, thank you for the question, but I appreciate if you can address them to us in the first instance. And then obviously, we'll consider whether we need to, uh.

01:25:09:13 - 01:25:10:03

Of course.

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

We don't.

01:25:10:24 - 01:25:12:19

Apologize. Yeah, no, I apologize.

01:25:12:24 - 01:25:19:00

No, don't don't worry. It's it's a system that's complex to get used to if you're not done it before.

01:25:19:02 - 01:25:21:14

So thank you. Thank you for your understanding.

01:25:21:18 - 01:25:27:06

Yeah. Um. Mr.. Are you able to provide an answer to that question? Um.

01:25:29:17 - 01:25:38:06

I thank you, sir. Um, that's not something within my area of expertise in terms of the maintenance to them. There may be someone within the applicant team.

01:25:41:05 - 01:25:44:07

Okay. Uh, again, I have another question.

01:25:44:09 - 01:26:15:13

Hang on a second. Let's not repeat what we've we've just done. If we can avoid that. Uh, before I come back to you, Mr. White, there's just a couple of points I'd like to raise with Mr. Thwaite. Um, the. You made reference that you don't know at this stage, uh, exactly where the inverters are going to be placed, uh, or how many would be potentially within the area at flood risk.

01:26:15:21 - 01:26:17:05

Is that correct?

01:26:20:01 - 01:26:20:20

That's correct.

01:26:22:11 - 01:26:34:07

So if you don't know the number or the location, how can you say within your documentation. There is no loss of floodplain storage.

01:26:37:07 - 01:26:44:06

And that's at paragraph 4.1 of page 73 of As 051. You don't actually know that, do you?

01:26:46:07 - 01:27:29:19

That's a point we'll have to take away and clarify. Um, we have so we have undertaken a volume assessment, um, for the solar panel frames. And we are currently undertaking one for the solar panels that would be submerged. Um, however, the inverters haven't been assessed, um, in that level of detail at this point. Um, on the basis of what you say, um, however, we have been in discussions with the

Environment Agency to, uh, agree, as I just mentioned, that on a location by location specific, um, basis, the inverters will be assessed to determine what the, uh, potential implications are of them and if there is flood compensation Required due to land raising.

01:27:30:09 - 01:27:35:05

If that was a potential option, um, then that would be quantified at detail design.

01:27:37:00 - 01:27:44:14

But one of the tests that we need to be confident in answering is that there is not, uh.

01:27:47:02 - 01:27:59:19

If there is a loss of blood space that it doesn't adversely affect land elsewhere. And if you're still reviewing the position, how are we going to answer that question?

01:28:01:17 - 01:28:05:10

Thank you sir. Great. Thanks. On behalf of the applicant, um, that's something we can take away and assess.

01:28:08:01 - 01:28:41:24

Um, Mr. Cohen, for the applicant, I'll just add just in terms of the sort of lock around the, um, the effects from those inverters, because you're right, it doesn't we don't specify the, um, the number or the location. Um, there are some design parameters around that. But going back to, um, several of the points you made yesterday when we are discharging details under the requirements, including the detailed design requirement, for example. Um, when we we need to confirm under schedule 15 that the result of what we having approved doesn't result in any new or materially different effects to those in the ES.

01:28:42:01 - 01:28:56:12

So again, I come back to the sort of that lock in terms of those outcomes, which is, is um, is the comfort you can have in terms of that. There wouldn't be so many, um, inverters to the extent that that would change the effects that we've assessed.

01:28:59:14 - 01:29:11:06

I understand the backstop, but I remain concerned that we're not going to have the information during the examination of knowing whether there would be.

01:29:14:06 - 01:30:00:14

Uh, what degree of effect, if any, there may be on flood storage within the site. And, um, I don't know whether you're going to be able to progress the to design sufficiently during the examination time to, for example, confirm to, as the inverters would not be within the flood area, which would be the perhaps the simplest way of doing, if that were possible. Because obviously, whilst we've seen that within your documentation, there was discussions about this, the Environment Agency's relevant representation since would appear to question whether, um, it's appropriate to have these within, uh, the flood zone and you should be avoiding it in the first instance rather than seeking to mitigate the situation.

01:30:00:16 - 01:30:22:03

So there's obviously some work to do in in resolving that and providing clarity on the question of flood storage. And I go back to the the point I don't think the statement is correct and accurate in saying that there is no loss of floodplain storage. You cannot say that and convince me that that that's not wrong. You don't know?

01:30:23:06 - 01:30:30:22

Now, I definitely take the point on the, um, the floodplain storage point. And as Mr. Thwaites says, we'll take that away and we can and we can come back on that one.

01:30:32:01 - 01:30:32:19

Thank you.

01:30:36:13 - 01:30:37:23

Mr. white. Um,

01:30:39:17 - 01:30:43:23

is there a further point you wish, wish to make, uh, on this topic?

01:30:44:17 - 01:31:23:17

Uh, there is, if I may, uh, again, apologies if I'm, uh, not getting things through, uh, exactly as you might expect. Um, it was more, again, to do with flood risk and inverses. Uh, one would be, uh, we haven't been able to see any studies, uh, that have been done on, uh, what flood damage would cause and chemical release, uh, to the inverters if indeed they are in danger of being flooded. And also, uh, I'd like to, if I may ask, whether, uh, which solar farm flood events have been studied when they've been coming up with their plans.

01:31:24:06 - 01:31:39:15

And importantly, has the Orsted owned Muscle Shoals flooding event in Colbert, Alabama, being studied? Because that would to us would have been an ideal opportunity to learn from possible mistakes.

01:31:43:19 - 01:32:20:13

Thank you. Mr.. I'm not going to pursue that question because I think we have specific tests that we need to pursue under the National Policy statement, rather than in respect of events that may have happened in America. Um, I don't dispute the the general lessons learned point that you're making, but I think for us in progressing the examination, we need to make sure that the applicant is demonstrating clearly to us that they've meet the tests of national policy. And, um, will obviously seek to involve the Environment Agency as we continue through this debate.

01:32:20:17 - 01:32:21:09

Thank you.

01:32:21:19 - 01:32:22:10

Thank you.

01:32:31:09 - 01:32:49:24

Um, so next question was just still on submerged panels. Um, will I remain functional if they're submerged? Um, and what if they won't? What is the maximum generation capacity of the areas affected by flooding?

01:32:51:10 - 01:33:26:21

Thank you, sir. Miss Coleman, for the applicant. Um, I think using the language of N1, 5.8.7, which I understand to be the test. So the, um, development is designed and constructed to remain operational in times of flood. So in terms of that sort of 3% that we're looking at in terms of, um, that 1 in 100 year plus 39% allowance for climate change, um, that's designed to be operational, um, during that such a flood event. Um, it may be in practice that just from an overly precautionary approach, it's not necessarily utilized, but it is definitely designed and constructed to be operational.

01:33:27:16 - 01:33:55:21

Um, the I think we need to take away the point about the exact sort of generation capacity, just using a very rough, um, calculation of the 3%. It's probably in the region of about, um, 20MW, although that's probably the maximum potential that that can generate given the likely, um, irradiance conditions in the event of a flood event. It's probably slightly less than that. Um, if you want more technical information that I will definitely pass on to someone else.

01:33:57:07 - 01:34:06:20

No, I think that's fine. No, it's just a confirmation as to whether the panels can operate when they're submerged. I think is, uh, is the question.

01:34:11:21 - 01:34:23:17

Just before we move on. Mrs. Fox, I think you had your hand raised briefly. Um, we afraid I didn't notice it at the time. Is there anything that you wish to raise at this point?

01:34:24:00 - 01:34:30:24

So my name is Heather Fox, resident in North Clifton for 38 years, and I'd like clarity.

01:34:31:05 - 01:34:33:19

Hang on a second. Have you got a microphone, Mrs. Fox?

01:34:42:02 - 01:35:12:12

The. My name is Heather Fox. I'm a resident in North Clifton for 38 years. And I'd like clarity, please, on the flooding assessment. You've got the flood risk. You've got the climate change, and you've included the volume of structures and the additional panels. A 613m³. I'd like to know if there's a scenario for failure of the solar panels themselves being demolished, and they become debris, leading to restrictions in flood flow.

01:35:12:22 - 01:35:17:14

Because if that's the case, I don't feel it satisfies the exception test,

01:35:19:03 - 01:35:40:19

in my humble opinion. And, you know, being polite about it, um, because it's not increasing the flood risk elsewhere and the flood risk overall and in guidance from the NPP, in the event of such damage, the site has to be quickly brought back into use without significant refurbishment.

01:35:42:16 - 01:36:13:14

I live in one of the 12 listed buildings in the area, and I'm usually in normal times, 600m from the river. In the 2000 flood event, when the river level at Toxie, which is the government level where it's measured, was 7.31. In the flood event of 2024, it was 7.42. In these scenarios, my cellar steps, of which I have four in my house.

01:36:14:10 - 01:36:46:21

Therefore, in both events, those cellar steps were above level two step in the January of 2000. In the November, I was woken at 2 a.m. in the morning by the roar of the river coming over the banks. So I'd like to know if you feel that your structures are so sturdy they can withstand the tremendous force of a river flooding. I'd like to know.

01:36:47:20 - 01:37:01:08

I mean, we are dealing with extreme events here and we are dealing with worst case scenarios. So I want to see evidence, please, that you have included the failure of the solar panels on the floodplain.

01:37:07:02 - 01:37:07:20

Thank you.

01:37:10:09 - 01:37:24:09

I'll pass to the applicant and see whether you've been. You have evidence to demonstrate that the design is going to be resistant to a flood event, or perhaps even worst case, a breach event.

01:37:31:05 - 01:38:02:13

Is common for the applicant. Um, so as I've said, they're designed to the 1 in 100 year flood event plus the 39% climate allowance for climate change. I understand the 2024, um, flood event was not of that level. Um, so they're very much designed to be able to be operational and, um, and to continue operating in that situation. Um, and, and we say meet the exceptions test in that respect in terms of not having any, um, impact from the panels being there, um, on from flood risk.

01:38:03:21 - 01:38:34:00

Um, I think that that's the basic point in terms of that exception test point. Um, maybe what we'll take away from writing is to have a bit more engineering technical input into sort of a wider point in terms of the, um, the I understand, um, what Mrs. Fox is saying about sort of the force of that water, which I don't have that detail to hand at the moment, but I understand the point. So we can come back on that aspect of that. But definitely, um, it's been designed with that in mind and with an event worse than the 24 one, as I understand it.

01:38:34:19 - 01:38:35:10

Thank you.

01:39:08:15 - 01:39:18:16

Hi, Mr. Mont, this is Deborah Allen from the planning inspector. I don't know if it would be appropriate, but Heather Fox has indicated a wish to comment further. If you would like to make a decision on that. Thank you.

01:39:19:03 - 01:39:28:15

Yeah. By all means. Sorry I didn't see your hand at your. You're hidden from me by the various pieces of kitten people, so please proceed, Mrs. Fox.

01:39:28:17 - 01:39:47:21

Sir. Thank you. I'm referring back to the levels it talks in 20 2024. Being in the region of 7.31 or 7.42, and you're 1 in 30 or 1 in 100 years, you are at 8.55. At that, I'm thinking North Clifton will be demolished.

01:39:55:13 - 01:40:01:16

I'm sorry, I'm not understanding the point you're making. Are you able to clarify a bit more? It is.

01:40:01:22 - 01:40:29:21

Folks talk. Say the government has a place where they measure the river height. And in 2000, when my cellar steps were over the two mark, it was at 7.31, and in 2024 it was 7.42. I'm thinking on your, you know, events in 1 in 100 years or 1 in 30, you've got it down 8.55.

01:40:33:00 - 01:40:34:09

Yes. So

01:40:36:05 - 01:40:49:16

is are you seeking clarification that the applicant scheme has, uh, undertaken an appropriate assessment relative to both the flood risk event and climate change?

01:40:50:04 - 01:41:21:04

Oh, no, I appreciate that. They have got flood risk and climate change and the volume of structures on the, uh, floodplain. But what I don't see is a failure of those solar panel panels, Mr. Jack already alluded to. How will they cope? But if they themselves become defunct, they get smashed. In my garden, you can understand the force of the river when it floods the roar of it.

01:41:21:13 - 01:41:52:10

And I'm 600m away. Woke me in the night. It's so powerful. You've only to see episodes of Texas. It can move to articulated lorries. So I'd like to know if they have demonstrated anywhere. What force their panels will take before they themselves become debris and contribute to the flow of water. And in that respect, I don't feel it satisfies the exception test part B.

01:41:53:07 - 01:42:27:04

No, I think the applicants agreed that they will take that away and come back to us to provide more detailed engineering explanation as to the design of the the panels and the frames that they sit upon. I'm sure to try and give us reassurance that they can provide that evidence that they would withstand, um, a flood event or, as I say, a breach event, which would potentially be a a worst case scenario, I think. So the applicants are going to come back, I think, at deadline one.

01:42:27:14 - 01:42:33:15

And so I think we all would look forward to seeing that response and the the detail that they provide.

01:42:35:18 - 01:43:08:22

So thank you. But I will be submitting further requests about how come flood, uh, flood defences are not mentioned. They're not saying they're going to help us by improving the flood defences. There's no mention. They scoped out the flood defence assets in their first proposal and they didn't scope in um or they scoped out flood defence flood possibility in construction and they didn't scope in our flood assets, flood defence assets.

01:43:11:04 - 01:43:39:23

I think that's because that's the way they are required to undertake a flood risk assessment, as if the flood defences were not there. And so, um, I'll leave the applicant to respond in more detail. But that, I think, is, uh, the approach that they're required to take in undertaking a flood risk assessment. So I'll just come back to the applicant to make sure I'm not, uh, making a wrong conclusion there or misleading anyone.

01:43:40:23 - 01:43:44:00

I might just, um, ask Mr. Thwaites to respond.

01:43:46:00 - 01:44:01:15

Yes. Craig Slates, on behalf of the applicant. Um, just so I understand the question clearly. Um, so the question is, have we considered the flood defences when assessing flood risk at the site and my understanding it correctly.

01:44:03:23 - 01:44:46:21

It seems to me you've paid no heed to our flood defence assets, and so who in the event of a flood would be responsible should you? Assertions that we won't be significantly affected by your proposal in terms of having a flood? Who will be responsible? Should we flood? Have you made the measurements to see how much water we would need, or the way the rain would fall without your solar panels, so that if we do flood, we'll be able to assign the cleaning up process to yourselves or to the Environment Agency.

01:44:52:11 - 01:45:23:21

Thank you. I'll respond on that basis. Yeah. Craig Thwaites for the applicant. Um, so the yes, the baseline flood risk has been assessed and that's assessed within the flood risk assessment. Um, the purpose of the flood, one of the purposes of the flood risk assessment is to ensure that there is no increase in flood risk as a result of the development. So that covers off as a result of the solar panels themselves and inverters, etc.. Um, being within the floodplain, um, that is a point that we have already touched on.

01:45:24:00 - 01:45:46:01

Um, and we've already mentioned that we will take away the assessment with regards to the inverters. Um, so I think there's no more that I can specifically, uh, sorry. And um, and with regards to, um,

panel failure, um, for example, on structural integrity of the panel frames, um, that's something that we've said we would take away. So I don't think there's anything further I can add at this point.

01:45:50:24 - 01:45:52:00

Thank you, Mr. Thwaite.

01:45:57:02 - 01:46:04:12

Uh, Mr. White, you you have your hand raised again. Is there a further point here on the. The flood storage or flood risk?

01:46:05:04 - 01:46:35:05

There is. Thank you. Uh, and it's, uh, it's in relation to what, uh, Heather was saying. Uh, who's one of my close neighbors? Um, there's a specific issue in some of these villages, uh, that I'm not sure has been addressed, and I just wanted to check. Uh, when there are large scale flood, flood events, obviously, there's a lot of sort of, uh, flood banks and everything involved keeping our villages safe. Part of the issue of this is, uh, what called the Environment Agency gates.

01:46:35:21 - 01:47:18:17

And the gates are, uh, to allow runoff from the land to go into dykes and then into the Trent. Now, when flood events happen, those environmental agency gates have to be closed to stop the water from back, uh, draining from the flood into the villages. So when the Environment Agency gates are closed, the it changes the, uh, the aspect of how water is drained from the land. And indeed, last year, I believe, uh, and maybe two, uh, 2 or 3 times in the last 20 years, it's caused issues in our village where, uh, the Environment Agency gates have had to be closed.

01:47:18:19 - 01:47:50:11

But the runoff from the land and from the drainage drains in the village, uh, cause backfilling, uh, and actually overwhelms the, uh, the, the drains and then starts to come up in the village quite close to myself, quite close to Heather. Um, and also, uh, this is part of a submission that we made. There's a field, uh, near, uh, the North Clifton Reservoir, uh, that will be contained, solar panels. And the way that they're facing, which would be south facing would presume.

01:47:51:02 - 01:48:24:16

Uh, we are worried. How very concerned. That, uh, that channeling that can happen apparently with, uh, solar farm arrays, uh, will drain land into the village into an actual low point is, um, and that's hugely concerning to us. And we don't understand. It's quite a small field really. And we do believe they shouldn't be building solar panels there, uh, when there's so much, uh, that they're already doing, uh, and specifically to try and mitigate against this.

01:48:24:18 - 01:48:43:10

What could be an issue if they have to close the Environment Agency gates in the village? The other part of this was have the has uh, Mr. Fritz's team, uh, uh, also detailed, uh, what could occur through through heaving.

01:48:47:16 - 01:48:48:24

Okay. Thank you, Mr. White.

01:48:53:20 - 01:49:13:11

Mr. Thwaite, are you able to confirm to us that the flood risk assessment has, uh, included the operation of the Environment Agency's gates in during flood events and how that, um, has a broader effect, uh, during those flood events.

01:49:14:18 - 01:49:25:08

That's not currently set out within the flood risk assessment. Um, and I appreciate there was quite a lot of information there from Mr. White. Um, so I'm happy we're happy to take that one away.

01:49:26:15 - 01:49:27:05

Okay.

01:49:27:07 - 01:49:27:22

Thank you.

01:49:28:20 - 01:49:29:10

Can I just.

01:49:29:12 - 01:49:42:03

Ask just on that, um, Mr. White's reference to begin writing in the relevant reps? I can't see a relevant rep from Mr. White himself. Is it? If he can direct it, if it's come under a different organisation, for example.

01:49:42:16 - 01:49:44:18

Mr. White's representation is in the name.

01:49:46:08 - 01:49:49:08

Yes. In the name of Sheila Pumphrey.

01:49:49:17 - 01:49:54:17

So I may have that quite slightly wrong, but I'll give you the reference because I do.

01:49:57:21 - 01:49:59:08

That in the name of Sheila.

01:50:01:19 - 01:50:02:21

095.

01:50:03:09 - 01:50:04:03

Thank you.

01:50:05:01 - 01:50:06:08

So just bear with me.

01:50:40:08 - 01:50:43:04

I do apologize for going AWOL.

01:50:47:14 - 01:50:48:19

Don't worry, Mr. White.

01:50:50:18 - 01:50:51:24

The address of heaving.

01:50:54:07 - 01:51:00:11

Sorry. I'll just, uh, come back to the applicant to seek to respond on, on on that question. Thank you.

01:51:05:14 - 01:51:30:18

Um. The applicant. Sorry, I might need to ask Mr. Thwaites, but I don't know if, um, if he's able to do so or not, but having now that we've got the reference to the relevant rep, obviously there's quite a few detailed points in there. So we can we're in the process of responding to those for deadline one, in any event. And I can see now that there's there's quite a bit of detail now on that. So um, I will pass it to Mr. Thwaite, but equally um, mindful of the agenda. So um, if and the detailed points, it may be better that we come back in writing.

01:51:31:14 - 01:51:33:04

Oh, that would be fine. Thank you.

01:51:33:18 - 01:51:34:17

Okay. Thank you.

01:51:54:20 - 01:52:25:04

I think we've been going for quite some time already this morning, and it may be suitable just to take a break. Um, so it's 10 to 12 at the moment. Um, if we reconvene at, uh, 12:10 and hopefully that gives everyone sufficient time for, uh, refreshment break and stretch of legs. So adjourn for the moment and, uh, return at ten past.

01:52:25:06 - 01:52:25:23

Thank you.