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**FULL TRANSCRIPT (with timecode)**

00:00:06:03 - 00:00:09:03

Did I ask you to return to your seats? Please, everybody.

00:00:16:04 - 00:00:33:14

Okay. Just just moving on. Um, we've had four more people registered their interest in speaking to us this afternoon. Um, we are, uh, we are happy to do so. Um, so can I please invite Alan Ward to to come up to the table?

00:00:39:20 - 00:00:41:03

Do we have Alan Ward?

00:00:43:28 - 00:00:45:06

Is Alan Ward here?

00:00:54:08 - 00:00:59:03

Okay, not not sure about that. I wonder if, um, Brian Ward is here.

00:01:05:21 - 00:01:12:25

Okay. I'll try the third name on my list. Councilor Stephen Burnell. Burnell.

00:01:14:18 - 00:01:16:10

You're here. Thank you.

00:01:22:10 - 00:01:23:18

Would you like to introduce yourself?

00:01:23:20 - 00:01:38:24

Uh. Good afternoon. Um, I'm not a counselor, but I'm here of Edmonton. Uh, parish meeting. My name is Stephen Burnell, but I'm here as an individual. Uh, since Mr. Aylsham represented the parish.

00:01:40:17 - 00:01:58:10

Um, my objection to this particular project is the undue extent and unnecessary impact on the landscape in general. Area. Uh, arising from the proposed arrangement of panels and associated Infrastructure.

00:02:00:07 - 00:02:28:00

It is unacceptable and extremely concerning that the developer has elected to position solar panel fields in a ring, which effectively creates an enclosed and affected area. The majority of these panels are sited some way from the power station at Stadthalle, the furthest of which, at about 14km away, is shockingly distant.

00:02:30:10 - 00:02:54:29

Given that the applicant has either made very, has made very generous offers to landowners to rent their fields for panel use, the final arrangement is either one an unfortunate outcome of that, or two. Taking a less generous view, is the result of a deliberate policy to create a huge ring of panel field.

00:02:57:15 - 00:03:05:09

I believe that the planned arrangement of panel fields is quite wrong, and that the project should be rejected in its current form.

00:03:08:15 - 00:03:37:05

To repeat what others have said, the panel arrangement is to the north west of Newark, roughly oval in shape. Of people have said, and bounded on the eastern side by one or other of the A1, the East Coast Railway or the River Trent. It has proposed a 1.5 million solar panels occupying 4000 acres, which is 16.2km<sup>2</sup>,

00:03:38:25 - 00:03:57:05

and other measures of energy production, some of which others have have mentioned. These details undoubtedly whet the appetite of those who would view the finished product as a significant contribution towards it, to achieving net zero targets in the UK.

00:03:59:26 - 00:04:37:13

The 4000 acres, or 16.2km<sup>2</sup>, which the panels will occupy, are, per the applicant, quite small in the context of the general countryside. However, the unusual and arrangement of these panels fields is such entirely relevant and necessary to take into account the enclosed area within the physical boundary of the panels. These dimensions are roughly north to south is something like 14.25km west to east.

00:04:37:18 - 00:04:41:25

Uh, something like 12 are just over 12km.

00:04:43:26 - 00:05:08:00

Uh, the enclosed area of land within these rings is somewhere between 140 and 160km<sup>2</sup>, and given that the panels occupy just 16km<sup>2</sup>, the enclosed area is 800% larger than the panel area.

00:05:09:26 - 00:05:41:00

To view this in a wider context, the enclosed areas of approximately 7% of the area of Nottinghamshire, which is stated to be 2160km<sup>2</sup>. This is just for one project. It's completely out of kilter and quite unacceptable by any measure. I must choose to assess matters. It should be plain to see and appreciate.

00:05:42:16 - 00:05:48:08

One must question why the applicant has chosen this pattern of panel. Uh.

00:05:49:00 - 00:05:49:21

Mr. Bonnell.

00:05:51:00 - 00:05:51:15

I.

00:05:53:26 - 00:05:56:21

The affected area, uh.

00:05:58:03 - 00:05:58:21

That I've.

00:05:59:05 - 00:05:59:26

Um.

00:06:05:26 - 00:06:41:16

Unfortunately, with this project, things are never really so simple in the business world. This is a green energy project, but it's also a financial instrument with a huge guaranteed income stream. I'm convinced that when this moneymaking venture changes hands from the applicant, the new owners and managers would have no obligation to keep to any previous guarantees made by this applicant. Therefore, I feel the only way to hold the applicant to proper account is to insist the panels are located close to and around Stanthorpe Power Station.

00:06:41:23 - 00:06:53:14

It could keep the same number of panels and generating capacity, but would not ruin a vast swathe of the landscape. Thank you very much for your time.

00:06:54:02 - 00:06:55:24

Thank you, Mr. Burnell. Thank you.

00:06:59:24 - 00:07:04:05

But I invite Julie Storer to come forward, please.

00:07:07:21 - 00:07:17:15

Understood. Thank you. Just. Just for the microphone. And Judy has indicated she doesn't need to. She doesn't wish to speak at this time. Unless you. Unless you'd like to make that.

00:07:24:10 - 00:07:25:15

Yes. Yes, please. Yes.

00:07:25:17 - 00:07:45:05

What I said was that I think those who have spoken have spoken very adequately about the detriments, and also that the consultations are considerably faulty and therefore a lot of consultation money which has come from the taxpayer is wasted. Thank you.

00:07:45:21 - 00:07:46:22

Thank you very much.

00:07:49:10 - 00:08:05:16

So I'm just going to check to see whether Alan Ward or Brian Ward are with us. So I don't think so. Okay. So thank you very much. Just can I just check? Is there anybody else who wishes to say anything to us? We do have a few minutes now. Yes. Mr. Williams, would you like to come forward?

00:08:17:09 - 00:08:19:01

Thank you. This will be brief.

00:08:19:23 - 00:08:23:27

All right. Are you representing the Norwell Farm Steering Group? Is that okay?

00:08:24:01 - 00:08:56:01

Paul Williams, Laurel solar farm steering group. And this is housekeeping, basically. But it wouldn't it didn't fit into, uh, the ish, um, situations this morning and yesterday afternoon. Um, so on the housekeeping issues, I can ask a few things of the applicant not expecting they provided today. It can be provided in due course. Um, one is, as you've noticed, the design of the panel fields has changed drastically.

00:08:56:03 - 00:09:36:23

They've lost, in effect, a third of the panel fields, but there's been no change in the distance for, um, fencing, fence posts, trenches. Um, so we've asked if they can provide updated specs for the fencing and trenches, especially the the illustrative design puts the maximum trench width, um, in the ES as two meters. Now, I've spoken to the applicant staff and has even commented that yes, that some of the workspace for trenches is 60m wide and some of the trenches are going to be ten up to ten meters wide.

00:09:36:25 - 00:10:12:25

So we could do with more details about the spec and cross section for the trenches. Um, and that's that issue. The second one. Um, on their website, they're saying we're committed to running our business in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, International Labor Standards, and the United Nations Global Compact Principles, amongst other international standards. Uh, I've spoken to one of the most senior people in the applicant's firm who has confirmed that they do have a modern slavery statement.

00:10:14:01 - 00:10:54:08

I have been unable to locate that modern slavery statement. So I'm asking applicant, if possible, if it is published, where is it published? If it is not published, would you mind publishing it? Um, the reason I ask is that on technical appendix A15 one, which is Ape 285 uh, page 13. Um, yes, it could be a Rochdale compliant, um, statement, but they are at this stage looking to source panels from the Xinjiang province of China.

00:10:55:07 - 00:11:20:19

Um, now that has received considerable, um, publicity over the last 4 or 5 years, including the report by Professor Lawrence Murphy, which has now become quite famous, the Sheffield Hallam University report regarding, um, slave labor with the Uyghurs. Um, there have been other reports since then. So

00:11:22:10 - 00:12:07:24

I understand that it is probably too early for the applicant has decided which actual panel they are going to choose in 18 months time or whatever. But given the research that's been done, I'd be interested to know which companies they have excluded as potential Suppliers. Based on the evidence provided regarding modern slavery. Um, the FSA, which ones are going to pick but which ones are really not possible? I say that because in app 285 they mentioned Trina, Sunway and Canadian Solar, and two of those three are mentioned in the Sheffield Hallam report.

00:12:08:07 - 00:12:24:26

Uh has been linked to slave labor. So that basically is the trenches modern slavery statement if it exists, and exclusion of any potential suppliers who are linked to slave labor. And that's it. Thank you very much.

00:12:25:28 - 00:12:27:07

Thank you, Mr. Williams.

00:12:31:04 - 00:12:36:21

So I understand that Councillor David Clark has indicated his wish to speak.

00:12:50:06 - 00:12:50:21

Still on.

00:12:54:00 - 00:12:54:15

Okay.

00:12:54:20 - 00:13:12:08

My name is Councillor David Clarke from Nottinghamshire County Council. However, I'm here to representing um parishes that I look after in the course of my duties, which is uh Laxton, Edmonton, Moorhouse um, and surrounding.

00:13:14:05 - 00:13:46:17

For me, I'm not going to add any more technical detail to what you've had already, because there are people here who have, you know, got VCs and MSCs and in whatever, whatever. However, for me, it's

about the people. It's about the people who are, um, impacted by this. So I'm, I'm here to speak on behalf of of them, the ones who face the real impacts of this solar development.

00:13:47:09 - 00:14:22:26

So I'd like to ask everybody in in the room, and I see a lot of nicely dressed people over here who were probably on, you know, really nice salaries. And they'll be buying the dream house soon or they've got it already. I want to ask them and people to think about. Imagine you're safe for your dream house. You've put your heart and soul into it, and you work through the tough times to keep it. And there's been some tough times over the years. That's the reality for many families in Edmonton, Morehouse, Laxton and surrounding villages.

00:14:22:28 - 00:14:47:07

And now, through no fault of their own, they face a development that put fundamentally change the safety, stability and the character of their place that they call home. This proposal brings excessive HGV traffic through a quiet, Quiet, rural village, raising serious concerns about vibration and safety and even the potential risk to foundations that we heard earlier.

00:14:49:10 - 00:15:22:15

Residents are also deeply worried about the increased flood risks, and I've seen pictures of those houses that, um, have these issues. Year after year, they combating these flood issues and the proposed works will make that worse. Um, and beyond the technical issues, there's simple human impact. Um, looking out of your window each morning and no longer seeing the countryside that you've invested in, but instead a large scale industrial structure.

00:15:23:06 - 00:15:54:06

So this is not an anti renewables statement. This is about proportion, location and protecting the community that stands to bear the brunt of harm while the company is backed by government incentives. Get the benefit. I urge you to consider the reality for these residents and the community of impacts, and whether this development truly belongs so close to these villages. Thank you very much.

00:15:56:28 - 00:15:58:10

Thank you, Councillor Clark.

00:16:00:17 - 00:16:12:18

All right. So I'm now going to invite the applicant to respond briefly, orally if they wish. Um, I would certainly to make a statement about how they wish to respond. Overall.

00:16:35:29 - 00:17:11:29

Thank you. Madam, this is Jelena Sarajevo for the applicant. Um, um, I'd like to thank everyone for their presentation this afternoon. We will respond to some of the points raised now and then. Some of the points will address in our written submissions for the next deadline. Um, there was a representation made. The development solely delivers solar energy. Um, I'd like to add that, yes, this is the principal purpose of the development, but there are a range of other benefits that the development will contribute.

00:17:12:01 - 00:17:44:08

So first and foremost, it's the meaningful contribution to the UK's legally binding net zero commitment. Um, the development is anticipated to have a generation capacity of 800MW AC by 2028, which is critical for the clean power delivery for 2030. And just for context, to reach the 2030 targets, six gigawatts per year for the next five years are required.

00:17:44:10 - 00:17:55:21

So in this context, the development brings a significant benefit in respect of both clean power but also net zero. Um.

00:17:58:12 - 00:18:33:12

In line with this benefit, uh, there is a provision for energy storage facility which will optimize the solar generation. And also, um, yeah, optimize the project in general. Um, as discussed earlier today and yesterday, the project brings significant biodiversity, net gain and, uh, benefits such as 64, uh, over 64,000 trees, 31 hectares of woodland and um, 49km of hedgerow.

00:18:33:16 - 00:18:34:01

Um.

00:18:36:00 - 00:19:03:04

And other um other benefits are associated with enhanced public public access to greenspace as well as permissive footpaths, as discussed and on the socioeconomic side. There will be temporary and permanent jobs created. These are all set out in the socioeconomics chapter of the Environmental Statement. Um.

00:19:05:06 - 00:19:48:08

There have been a few, um, uh, representations on the, uh, homes power, so I'd like to explain how we've calculated it. So we have 800MW, uh, AC generation capacity. Our oversized ratio of AC to DC is 1.4. That results in DC capacity of 120MW. We have then taken our yield, which is calculated at P50, which is specific to the project, and this is 1005 kilowatt kilowatt hours over kilowatt peak per year.

00:19:48:20 - 00:20:20:09

And this results in annual yield of 1125.6GW hours. We have then divided this by 2.2 thousand 700kW kilowatt hours per year of electricity generation for typical household, and this is how we arrived at approximately 4000 400,000 homes. It's just a bit over that, but we've rounded down.

00:20:20:11 - 00:20:55:20

So hopefully this provides clarity. And there was also a representation made that um, uh, or rather misunderstanding that the development will contribute to cheaper energy bills locally. Um, I'd like to clarify that the development will contribute to the national energy security and low carbon energy generation, and this is beneficial for the entire country. So I think this is an important point to just, um, hopefully clarify for everyone.

00:20:55:22 - 00:21:31:09

Um, and then there were a few notes on one matters. Uh, we will deal with them, uh, potentially at another hearing and also, um, through written submissions. Um, and then there were various, um,

representations on various environmental matters. Um, I just like to emphasize that the environmental statement that we have submitted deals with them in detail, as discussed today, and we'll discuss in the forthcoming hearings.

00:21:31:16 - 00:22:03:11

So I would like to also emphasize the chapter five of the environmental statement sets out the parameters, but also explains how the development will be delivered. Uh, both consent and pre-construction. Um, and important to emphasize that the county council and the district council will actually have the final sign off of those details before the development commences. So there's this security. The the final design will go through scrutiny and approval process.

00:22:03:29 - 00:22:12:28

That goes for both the technical aspects, but also the, um, the landscape mitigation and enhancement areas as well.

00:22:14:15 - 00:22:46:20

Um, on flooding, uh, we understand this is a very important issue in the area. So one of the key considerations has been to take out all the above ground infrastructure associated with solar and substations outside the flood zones two and three. And importantly, the development, as it says, doesn't cause a flood risk elsewhere and it's safe for its operational lifetime. Um, agricultural land.

00:22:46:27 - 00:23:19:17

Um, impact on farms and socioeconomics are also assessed in the environmental statement under the respective chapters, and we're happy to provide a written note on, um, sugar beet and the sugar industry. Um, traffic and transport. Um, again, I'd like to reassure the public that there will be a comprehensive construction traffic management plan. Uh, one is submitted in an outline form, but the final one will follow prior to construction.

00:23:19:21 - 00:23:52:05

And in respect to the north east, uh, changes that we've made in the area. These were in response to the statutory consultation whereby we in fact propose the whole road, and that was to direct a lot of the construction traffic within the order limits, which was to alleviate traffic around Ossington. Uh, again, noise and vibration, uh, including vibration during construction that is assessed in the environmental statement.

00:23:52:20 - 00:24:27:10

The one scape masterplan also will secure the benefits associated with the planting, both mitigation and enhancement. And again, the the local authorities will have the final sign off of this. But also um, Natural England and other relevant consultees will will have input and consult on it prior to its implementation and all cumulative effects um have been Being considered in in the environmental statement as well.

00:24:28:01 - 00:24:46:24

As we discussed earlier today, and finally on decommissioning, there is a specific DCO requirement which clearly sets out the decommissioning process. And again, this will be subject to final signoff by the local authorities. Um thank you.



00:24:48:26 - 00:24:50:06

Thank you, Mr. ABBA.

00:24:53:26 - 00:24:55:19

Okay. So, um.

00:24:58:08 - 00:25:30:26

In terms of next steps, for those of you that would like to provide, um, written submissions on terms of what you've been saying this afternoon, we ask that you do so by deadline one that is, um, Wednesday the 10th of December. So I'm just going to draw this open floor hearing to a close. And I'd like to, to to thank you all for contributing so and so fully and so usefully to. To this meeting this afternoon. It's always very helpful to hear these these comments.

00:25:31:04 - 00:25:35:24

Um, and just to reassure you that we will consider all submissions very carefully.

00:25:38:10 - 00:26:12:14

And so just before we close, I'd like to thank our case team, particularly Tracy, Romeo and Harry, who have been managing events for us here in person this week. And I'd also like to acknowledge our colleagues who helped us manage the virtual meeting from afar, and also like to thank the audio team that have kept our livestream running. So just to say that the time is now 5:11 and this open floor hearing, one for the Great North Road Sole and Biodiversity Park is now closed.

00:26:12:16 - 00:26:13:13

Thank you.