

## **Steeple\_ISH\_12 NOV\_PT1**

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### **FULL TRANSCRIPT (with timecode)**

00:00:06:11 - 00:00:36:12

It is now 10:00 and time for this issue specific hearing. To begin, I would like to welcome you all to this issue specific hearing on environmental matters for the Steeple Renewables project. Before I continue, can I just confirm? Can everyone hear me clearly? Excellent. Okay. And can I also confirm with Mr. Berryman that the live streaming and recording of this event has commenced? Thank you. I see a hand up. Thank you. So my name is Andrew Robinson.

00:00:36:14 - 00:00:48:23

I am a chartered town planner and a planning inspector. I have been appointed by the Secretary of State to the panel to examine this application. I will now ask my colleague to introduce himself.

00:00:52:00 - 00:00:54:20

Good morning everybody. Um, my name.

00:00:54:22 - 00:01:03:15

Is Max Wiltshire. I'm a chartered civil engineer. I've been appointed by the Secretary of State as the lead member of the panel for this examination.

00:01:06:12 - 00:01:37:15

Thank you. Together, we constitute the examining authority for this application. For those who are present in the room, you may have already spoken to or heard from Spencer Berryman, who is our case manager for this project. Mr. Barham is supported today by Harrison calls our case officer. For those of you who have joined us virtually, then you will have spoken to Jessica Dunlop. Together they are the case team for this project. And if you have any questions or queries about today's events, they should be your first point of contact.

00:01:38:10 - 00:02:09:18

I'll now deal with a few housekeeping matters for those attending in person. Can everyone please set all phones and devices to silent? Um, to get to the toilets, turn left outside this room. Um, there is a single toilet on the ground floor under the stairs, and the ladies and gentleman's Gentlemen's toilets are located on the first floor at the top of the stairs. No fire test is planned for today. Should an alarm sound, it is an emergency and we will need to vacate the building.

00:02:09:21 - 00:02:46:26

An emergency exit is located to the side of the room, where you can see the green sign above. The fire assembly point is in the front car park. If anyone needs assistance, can you please let the case team

know? As far as I'm aware. No requests have been made for any special measures or arrangements to enable participation in today's hearing, such as needing to take a break for medical reasons or needing to leave at a certain time. But if anyone does need a break or extra support, then please do let the case team know and we're going to aim to take a break approximately every 90 minutes or so.

00:02:48:08 - 00:03:05:23

So this meeting will follow the agenda published on the National Infrastructure Planning website on the 21st of October, which was examination library reference Eva 2001. It would be helpful if you have a copy of this in front of you.

00:03:07:29 - 00:03:38:22

And at appropriate points, I'll probably get the applicant to display the agenda or any documents if that's okay. The agenda is for guidance only, and we may or may add other considerations or issues. As we progress. We will conclude the hearing as soon as all relevant contributions have been made and all questions asked and responded to. But if the discussions can't be concluded, then it may be necessary for us to prioritize matters and defer other matters to further written questions.

00:03:38:28 - 00:04:20:05

Likewise, if you cannot answer the questions being asked or require more time to get the information requested, then can you please let us know that you intend to respond in writing? Today's hearing is being undertaken in a hybrid way, meaning some of you are present with us at the hearing venue and some of you are joining us virtually using Microsoft Teams. We will make sure that however you have decided to attend today, you will be given a fair opportunity to participate. The recording of today's hearing will be made available on the Steeple Renewables Project section of the National Infrastructure Planning website, as soon as practicable after the hearing has finished.

00:04:20:09 - 00:04:57:27

With this in mind, please ensure that you speak clearly into a microphone stating your name and who you are representing each time you speak. If you are not at a table with a microphone, there is a roving microphone. So please wait for one of these to be brought to you before you speak. A link to the Planning Inspector. Its privacy notice was provided in the rule six letter, which contained notification of this hearing. We assume that everybody here today has familiarized themselves with this document, which establishes how the personal data of our customers is handled in accordance with the principles set out in data protection laws.

00:04:57:29 - 00:05:05:14

If not, please speak to Mr. Barrowman if you have any questions about this. I'll now hand over to Mr. Wiltshire.

00:05:07:26 - 00:05:39:15

Thank you. Um, I'm going to move on to introductions, and I'm going to ask those of you who are participating in today's meeting to introduce yourself. When I state your organization's name, could you introduce yourself stating your name and who you represent and which agenda item you wish to speak on? If you are not representing an organization, please confirm your name. Summarize your interest in the application and confirm the agenda item upon which you wish to speak.

00:05:40:03 - 00:05:47:22

It would help us if you could also state how you wish to be addressed. In other words. Mr.. Mrs..  
Miss. Miss,

00:05:49:15 - 00:05:54:05

can we start with the applicant, please? And then any of their advisors.

00:05:56:12 - 00:06:27:01

Thank you sir. Good morning. My name is Patrick Robinson. I'm a solicitor and a consultant with the firm of Burgess Salmon. Um, I'm joined today on the table by the people of my right. I'll ask to introduce themselves that they're here for agenda item three. Um, which is the principle of development for the other agenda items. We have a number of other experts. They're not on the table with me now. We have given their names in the response to procedural deadline.

00:06:27:03 - 00:06:37:07

A I could go through that. Now. I'm suggesting be better. They just introduce themselves as we do a handover of people as each agenda item changes. If you're happy that we handle it that way.

00:06:37:16 - 00:06:40:01

That sounds eminently sensible.

00:06:40:03 - 00:06:44:10

Thank you sir. So I'll ask the microphone to carry on to my right then.

00:06:46:05 - 00:06:46:24

Morning, sir.

00:06:46:29 - 00:06:52:27

Um, my name is Will Wil Bridges. I'm a chartered town planner and I am a project manager for the applicant.

00:06:54:26 - 00:06:56:14

At morning Matthew Salmon.

00:06:56:16 - 00:06:57:28

Um, I'm an associate planner.

00:06:58:11 - 00:06:59:00

Town planner.

00:06:59:02 - 00:07:02:18

Um, and I'm representing the applicant. Um. On lead.

00:07:06:10 - 00:07:18:00

Morning. Says, uh, Douglas Haycock, solicitor at Burgess Salmon for the applicant. I'm not intending to speak today, but I do have sharing rights on the team so I can share documents as and when needed. Thank you.

00:07:19:26 - 00:07:21:10

Thank you very much.

00:07:23:10 - 00:07:37:02

Okay. And we then move on to the organizations and individuals that have given notice of their intention to speak. Um, starting with the local authorities and Nottingham County Nottinghamshire County Council.

00:07:40:22 - 00:08:10:22

Thank you sir. Uh, my name is Stephen Pointer. Uh, team manager planning policy? Uh, my team coordinates the response of, uh, Nottinghamshire County Council to all CIP projects. Um, and I'm accompanied today, uh, by colleagues who will be speaking on specific items, particularly landscape and visual. Uh, we have appointed consultants to assist in our consideration of landscape issues.

00:08:11:00 - 00:08:47:22

Uh, and Mr. John Brody is online. Uh, to respond on behalf of the Council on Landscape and Visual Matters. Uh, and on my right is Matt Adams. Uh, Matt is the Arc County archaeologist and will be responding on matters regarding buried heritage. Uh, and on my left is Jason Morden, who's historic buildings manager at Nottinghamshire Council and will be responding on other matters regarding the historic environment.

00:08:48:13 - 00:09:01:27

I'm also have my colleague Nina Wilson online as well, who is assisting me and may wish to speak. Um, on the any other matter which needs addressing. Thank you.

00:09:02:26 - 00:09:04:06

Thank you very much.

00:09:08:15 - 00:09:15:21

And I check whether we have anyone from Bassetlaw District Council, um, in the room or online, please.

00:09:18:23 - 00:09:19:13

Thank you.

00:09:19:24 - 00:09:20:21

No hands.

00:09:21:11 - 00:09:24:29

Are there any other local authorities present?

00:09:29:23 - 00:09:41:27

Thank you. That's none. Turning to the other statutory organisations that we have been advised they wish to participate. Starting, please, with the Environment Agency.

00:09:45:04 - 00:10:10:18

Good morning, sir. My name is Liz Locke. I'm a planning specialist in the national infrastructure team for the Environment Agency. And with me are my colleagues, John Bayne, who will be speaking on Flood risk, and Susie Beatson, who will be covering groundwater and contaminated land. And those fall under agenda item seven.

00:10:12:09 - 00:10:13:06

Thank you very.

00:10:13:08 - 00:10:13:25

Much.

00:10:21:24 - 00:10:26:23

Could I move on to Historic England, please?

00:10:28:21 - 00:10:39:23

Good morning sir. Haley James, on behalf of Historic England and my brothers, I'm inspector of ancient monuments. Um, but I will be covering both archaeological impacts and built heritage.

00:10:41:24 - 00:10:42:09

Thank you.

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

Very much.

00:10:47:27 - 00:10:57:00

Moving on. Please. To his. Sorry. I've done historic England. Um, do we have somebody from National Grid here, please?

00:10:58:03 - 00:11:13:29

Good morning sirs. My name? I'm online. My name is Jonathan Welch. I'm a barrister instructed by DLA Piper on behalf of National Grid electricity transmission, or net, as I will refer to them. And I'm here to assist you on agenda item four.

00:11:15:23 - 00:11:16:29

Thank you very much.

00:11:21:11 - 00:11:52:07

I'll now move on to other organisations and individual parties that have advised us that they wish to participate in today's hearings, starting with police fields for farmers. Sorry, farmers fields, farmers for fields, I do apologise. Slip of the tongue. Good morning, Mr. Chairman. Um, my name is Robert Fleming. I am a representing field for farmers, and I will be speaking on the. Any other business matters I could be referred to as Mr..

00:11:52:09 - 00:11:53:01

Thank you.

00:11:54:01 - 00:11:54:26

Thank you.

00:11:57:24 - 00:11:58:09

Okay.

00:11:58:11 - 00:12:28:15

Uh, I'm also the name's Gibson, Andrew Gibson. Um, I am also representing fields of farming. I will be speaking on, uh, agenda items three principal of the project, six historic environment and eight land use and significance. We have other members of the fields farming team who are sitting behind us. And so we will be interchanging and they will introduce themselves for each relative item, if that's all right, sir.

00:12:28:17 - 00:12:31:25

Thank you very much, Mr. Gibson. Thank you.

00:12:33:18 - 00:12:40:00

Moving on to other organisations, starting with North Leverton Windmill Charitable Trust, please.

00:12:42:12 - 00:12:43:08

Good morning.

00:12:43:10 - 00:12:44:18

My name is James Barlow.

00:12:44:20 - 00:12:54:15

I'm here representing North Leamington Windmill. It's a charitable trust. I'm also a resident in Stewarton and a farmer in the parish of Stoneleigh Steeple. Thank you.

00:12:56:05 - 00:12:57:07

And presumably.

00:12:57:09 - 00:12:57:24

You'll.

00:12:57:26 - 00:13:00:26

Wish to speak on the landscape and visual item.

00:13:00:28 - 00:13:06:17

Yes. I'll be supporting fields for farming. Thank you as well. Thank you.

00:13:07:21 - 00:13:08:11

Um.

00:13:10:21 - 00:13:12:02

There's a hand up.

00:13:12:04 - 00:13:16:15

Further back and microphone will come to you a few. Um. Wait.

00:13:17:03 - 00:13:27:05

Uh, good morning sir. My name is Karen Hodgson for fields for farming, and I'll be speaking on any of the business. Thank you.

00:13:27:26 - 00:13:29:03

Thank you very much.

00:13:32:06 - 00:13:38:18

Just remind me how you'd like to be addressed, please. Karen. Thank you very much.

00:13:48:27 - 00:13:49:19

Thank you.

00:13:49:29 - 00:13:50:23

I'm

00:13:52:19 - 00:13:53:13

Julie Barlow.

00:13:53:15 - 00:13:55:23

I'm, um, supporting.

00:13:55:25 - 00:14:06:00

Uh, North Laverton Windmill, but I'm also, uh, representing fields for farming on agenda, um, and agenda item for betel nut swap seats.

00:14:07:19 - 00:14:08:18

Thank you.

00:14:14:19 - 00:14:29:01

To we have um, thank. Do we have any other organizations, um, present who wish to speak? Yes. We've got two more at the table. Um, if you'd like to introduce yourself, please.

00:14:32:18 - 00:14:34:22

I'd certainly staple parish council.

00:14:35:11 - 00:14:37:21

I'm not sure where I'll be speaking just yet.

00:14:39:18 - 00:14:40:22

Thank you very much.

00:14:42:17 - 00:14:55:17

Good morning sir. I'm Lynn Clapperton from Steeple Parish Council. Um, I'd like to speak on historic environment, but that also will cover a little bit into landscape and visual as well.

00:14:56:17 - 00:14:57:28

Okay. Thank you.

00:15:07:24 - 00:15:14:09

Do we have anyone from, um, Fusion Solutions Limited, please?

00:15:21:02 - 00:15:28:11

Hi, my name is Pippa Waterman. I'm from UK. I offer step fusion. I'm not here to participate. Purely observation today.

00:15:28:26 - 00:15:33:00

Thank you. Sorry, I I it's my hearing. Could you repeat your surname, please?

00:15:33:02 - 00:15:33:27

Waterman.

00:15:33:29 - 00:15:35:18

Waterman, thank you very much.

00:15:44:15 - 00:15:55:14

Before I move on, is there anyone else in the room today who is requested to participate today? Who I've not identified. There's a hand at the front. The microphone will come to you. Thank you.

00:16:01:24 - 00:16:03:28

Good morning. My name is John Bowler.

00:16:04:08 - 00:16:20:27

I'm here to represent fields for farming, particularly in relation to the the land drainage elements of the of the schemes, which obviously will be led by the Environment Agency and Nottinghamshire County Council. But I'd like to just maybe here for a few points of clarity. Thank you.

00:16:21:22 - 00:16:23:20

Thank you very much, Mr. Barlow.

00:16:24:14 - 00:16:27:21



Bowler hat or cricket bowler?

00:16:28:22 - 00:16:36:19

My writing's awful. I am sorry. I will remember now. Anyone else in the room?

00:16:38:07 - 00:16:47:14

Anyone else? Virtually. Who I haven't spoken to. I can't see any. Hands up.

00:16:53:26 - 00:16:59:26

Okay, there's one GP. If you could put your camera on, please. And introduce yourself.

00:17:00:21 - 00:17:15:14

Hi. Good morning. Gareth Phillips, solicitor and partner at Pinsent Masons. Um, speaking on behalf of the West Burton Solar Project Limited and interested in agenda item for relationship with other projects. Thank you.

00:17:15:16 - 00:17:19:29

Thank you. Just, just. It must be my ears. Can you say your surname again, please?

00:17:20:01 - 00:17:22:00

Phillips. Gareth. Phillips.

00:17:22:03 - 00:17:24:07

Phillips. Thank you very much, Mr. Phillips.

00:17:26:26 - 00:17:30:04

Anybody else? virtually who I've not seen.

00:17:31:21 - 00:18:04:04

Thank you. We'll now move on to agenda item two, which is the purpose of the meeting. Let me briefly explain the purpose of this issue. Specific hearing. Today's issue specific hearing is being held at our request, because we want to explore and discuss a number of matters based on our reading of the application documents and submissions received so far. This is to ensure that we have all the information we need to make our report to the Secretary of State.

00:18:04:27 - 00:18:36:25

Today's hearing will be a structured discussion led by us based on the published agenda. I'd like to remind everyone that the examination is predominantly a written process. You'll see an examination timetable that there are opportunities for the examining authority to ask further written questions, and we can also hold more hearings if they're needed. I'd like to reassure you that while we may not ask a question on a topic, it doesn't necessarily mean that we believe this matter has been fully addressed.

00:18:37:06 - 00:18:42:16

It could be that we'll be examined at a later hearing or through further written questions.

00:18:44:18 - 00:19:20:07

We're familiar with all the documents that have been submitted. So when answering a question, you don't need to repeat at length something that you've already written about. If you want to refer to information that you've already submitted, it would help if you could use the examination library reference for that document. We're expecting that most of today's contributions will be from parties that have already requested to speak. This is a public examination, though, and if there's a point that you want to make, please do. Raise your hand if you're in the room or raise your virtual hand and switch on your camera.

00:19:20:09 - 00:19:43:06

If you are attending virtually so that we can hear from you. I'd like to remind everybody that this is not an inquiry, and unless we specifically request it, there will be no formal presentation of cases or cross-examination. This means that questions that you have for other parties need to be asked through the examining authority. That's through myself and Mr. Robinson.

00:19:45:02 - 00:20:09:09

This hearing will allow the agenda that was published on the. This hearing will follow the agenda that was published on the project page of the National Infrastructure web page on the 21st of October, 2025. A copy of this can be found in the examination library at reference EV 2001, and is now being displayed on the screens in the room. If the applicant could do that for us, please.

00:20:12:05 - 00:20:46:00

Today's agenda is for guidance only and we may add other issues as we progress. Should this take longer than anticipated, it may be necessary to prioritise matters and defer some matters to written questions. Finally, it is important that we get the right answers to the questions that we ask. Please remember that the examination is a predominantly written process. If you cannot answer the questions being asked right now or require some more time, then we'd rather you tell us that you need to respond in writing than giving an incomplete or incorrect answer.

00:20:46:12 - 00:21:22:09

We can then defer the response either to an action point to be submitted at deadline. One provisional scheduled for Tuesday, the 25th of November, or to a later written questions or another hearing as referred to yesterday. All participants will be asked to provide a post hearing written submission of their oral cases made during today's hearing on or before deadline one which is provisionally the 25th of November. Are there any questions at this stage about the procedural side of today's hearing? If there are, I just raise your hand, please.

00:21:24:18 - 00:21:28:24

I can't see any in the room. Anybody? Virtually.

00:21:31:16 - 00:21:44:18

No thank you. Regarding action points, when a point we discussed today requires further action, we will make this clear. We will also compile a list of action points for circulation following this meeting.

00:21:46:05 - 00:21:57:12

I'll now hand back to my colleague, Mr. Robinson, for agenda item three. No, I won't, I'm doing this. I do apologize. Just to keep you on your feet.

00:21:59:11 - 00:22:44:28

The large. This is the principle of the proposed development. The large volume of documentation supporting this and other national infrastructure applications was highlighted at hearings yesterday. In order to assist the examining authority as well as interested parties, I'm going to ask the applicant to describe the principle of the proposed development and its components, including the need for site selection and approach to considering alternatives, the size, overall generating capacity, grid connection, battery energy storage system and technology.

00:22:46:00 - 00:22:46:28

Thank you.

00:22:50:09 - 00:23:14:27

Thank you, Sir Patrick Robinson, for the applicant. And we're going to ask Mr. Sandeman to start with on the question of need, uh, which obviously is uh, to a large extent is a sort of national issue, uh, rooted in policy. But then when we get to site selection onwards and we move to more technical subjects, Mr. Bridges are going to take over, uh, and take them out from there. So, Mr. Sandman, to start, please.

00:23:16:22 - 00:23:53:00

Good morning. Um, in terms of need, the policy context for the proposed development comprises the national policy statements for energy Infrastructure and in particular, m one overarching national policy statements for energy, Ian three National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy infrastructure and the N5 National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks infrastructure. This detail is set out in sections 4 to 7 as well as appendix C, the NPS at coordinates. Table of the planning statement that examination reference AIP 182 as well as relevant chapters.

00:23:53:02 - 00:24:02:15

The Environmental Statement, which is the Examination Authority Library Reference AIP 058 to AIP 075.

00:24:05:01 - 00:24:45:23

The principal need for the proposed development is centred on significant contributions it will make to three important national energy policy aims of decarbonisation. Security of supply and affordability. This need is also in the context that the above objectives will need to be delivered during a period where there will be an increased level of demand for electricity. Section 3.2 of MPs and one outlines the need for a range of different types of energy infrastructure to meet the government's objectives of a secure, reliable, affordable energy supply, which is consistent with net zero emissions in 2050.

00:24:47:29 - 00:25:20:23

Paragraphs 3.2. 6 to 3 .2.8 of NPS in one state. The Secretary of State should assess all applications for development consent for the types of infrastructure covered by the NPS. On the basis that the government has demonstrated there is a need for those types of infrastructure which is urgent, as

described for each of them in this part. In addition, the Secretary of State has determined that substantial weight should be given to this need when considering applications for development consent under the Planning Act 2008.

00:25:21:22 - 00:25:51:26

The Secretary of State is not required to consider separately the specific contribution of any individual project to satisfy the need established in the MPs. The proposed development will help deliver the UK's government objectives of secure, reliable, affordable net zero energy supply. Furthermore, the proposed development is a type of infrastructure covered by an NPS which should be given substantial weight. The need for different types of electricity infrastructure covered in paragraphs 3.3.

00:25:51:28 - 00:26:25:26

4 to 3.3, 12 of MPs and one sets out the need for different types of electricity infrastructure, and this includes additional generating plants, electricity storage, interconnectors and electricity networks to deliver our energy objectives. Highlighting that each type has a role and cannot meet objectives in isolation. The proposed development would provide new generating low carbon electricity infrastructure as well as new storage infrastructure to provide flexibility to the national electricity grid.

00:26:27:09 - 00:27:07:01

There was a critical national priority, known as CMP, for the provision of national significant low carbon infrastructure. It sets out in paragraph 3.362 of NPS and one. Underpinning this urgency is paragraph 3.3.63 of NPS and one that states subject to any legal requirements. The urgent need for CMP infrastructure of achieving our energy objectives, together with the national security, economic, commercial and net zero benefits will in general outweigh any of the residential impacts not capable of being addressed by application of the hierarchy.

00:27:08:01 - 00:27:13:23

Government strongly supports the delivery of CMP infrastructure and it should be progressed as quickly as possible.

00:27:15:23 - 00:27:44:14

This confirms that the first development should be considered on the basis that its need is established as CMP, and the urgent need for this infrastructure should be given substantial weight in decision making process in order to bring forward CMP infrastructure as quickly as possible. The evidence points to the development of proven technologies such as large scale solar. It also states that such developments should be brought forward with urgency to make tangible and essential advances in decarbonisation in the near term.

00:27:46:02 - 00:28:04:12

Finally, paragraph 5.1.3 of NPS one states. Given the level of urgency of need for infrastructure of the types covered by NPS sets out in part three of the NPS, the Secretary of State will start with a presumption in favour of granting consent to applications for energy assets.

00:28:06:03 - 00:28:08:09

I've finished there if you've got any questions.

00:28:13:11 - 00:28:14:12

No. Thank you.

00:28:15:00 - 00:28:19:15

Thank you. So we'll go on to Mr. Bridges now, and he'll take us on from site selection onwards.

00:28:21:17 - 00:29:06:22

When he says we'll. Bridges, project manager for the applicant. Um, site selection is the next item. And, uh, rather than go, as you said, repeating. Contents. Document is chapter three, app 061. Um, sets out the site selection process that has been, um, has gone through this project. Um, in summary, there was a five stage process adopted by the project. Um, identifying appropriate area of search 15km around a viable point of connection, then considering environmental constraints, uh, consideration of other consented or other developments were added in and then consideration of land size, shape, and topography on that point.

00:29:06:25 - 00:29:43:19

Um, things worth explaining in considering suitable land parcels. Um, approach was taken where, um, we considered three parcels of 150 acres adjoining parcels of 150 acres. And then three of those within five kilometres of each other to make a suitable site that would be viable and deliverable. That's explained in the documentation. Um, and at that point, um, I think it's maybe worth showing, uh, the alternatives plan, which is app 146.

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

We thought to come up.

00:30:04:06 - 00:30:06:27

It's quite a big plan, so it takes a little while to load.

00:30:21:11 - 00:31:02:24

So this geographically shows the various elements I've just described and the constraints that have been put on the plan. And as a result of that, three sites had been identified site A which is to the in my county, but on the pink outline to the west site B which is in the middle, and then site C over to the east. Um, I won't go through the ins and outs of those sites and how they were considered, but it is set out in the in the chapter how they performed in the various aspects of those particular sites, but essentially.

00:31:02:26 - 00:31:18:15

Conclusion none of the sites identified performed any better than the application site. Um, and therefore the application site had been progressed to the development. I.

00:31:23:25 - 00:31:32:22

Don't have anything else particular to say on the sites that I can go on to the site development. Um, but I just want to pause. Okay. Any questions on that aspect?

00:31:33:28 - 00:31:34:24

No, I'm all right.

00:31:35:04 - 00:32:06:26

Okay. So moving on to, um, in terms of the alternatives within the site itself, the application site. Um, clearly it's an iterative process. And whilst not exhaustive, key changes are detailed in paragraph three, six, four versus chapter three, which I would have given the app reference for the site selection in the iterative design process. I won't go through every design change, but I will summarize those into key themes.

00:32:07:17 - 00:32:40:06

Um, so as the moving from the scoping to the peer stage. Um, since sensitivities were identified, for example, the scheduled ancient monument, um, was um, more information came forward on that and that was removed from the application site. Um, there were mitigation areas identified which are clearly shown on the application site, which weren't, um, specifically identified as mitigation areas at the at the scoping stage.

00:32:40:24 - 00:33:13:07

Um offsets were applied to known constraints such as badger sets, existing trees, hedgerows, back roosts, um ancient and veteran trees, and buffers to watercourses and um drainage channels, and also things such as utilities and offsets and easements were incorporated within the site design. At that stage, the order limits reduced from approximately 943 hectares down to 888 hectares.

00:33:16:14 - 00:34:02:05

And then moving forward from the peer stage to the um, the site that was considered in the yes and therefore forms part of the application. Um, again, in terms of themes, responses to consultation, there is the removal of a um reserve access site into North Lebanon that was presented at the statutory consultation that was taken out of the scheme because of the responses that we heard. Um, we removed infrastructure from an area within the western half of the site and a smaller area within the eastern half of the site, um, due to, uh, in response to the geophysical physical surveys that have been identified for archaeological reasons and, um.

00:34:02:08 - 00:34:12:00

Removal of infrastructure from a 40 to 50 meter corridor along the western side of the site to reduce visual impact on the edge of the settlement.

00:34:14:20 - 00:34:20:19

We also incorporated the design of attenuation basins, two of them within the um

00:34:22:14 - 00:34:55:18

western half of the site, to in response to consultation. And we heard yesterday about, uh, surface water flood issues within the settlement and certainly a staple in an attempt to, um, alleviate those by creating attenuation ponds. And we'll come onto that in the flood risk side of it. I haven't listed every single change, but they are stipulated within the the document I just referenced. But just to indicate the the themes that we considered when progressing the detailed design of the project.

00:34:58:24 - 00:35:04:12

Don't have anything more to add on that unless you do. I've gone to the size aspect.

00:35:05:12 - 00:35:14:00

Oh that's fine. That's that's giving a good overview to help people, um, get a sense of how you've approached this. Thank you. Okay.

00:35:15:17 - 00:35:17:25

The next item on the agenda is size.

00:35:19:15 - 00:35:38:17

So as I've mentioned, the application site, the order limits are three. Sorry, 888 hectares. Um, the proposed development is for a 450 megawatt solar array with a battery energy storage system of 150MW.

00:35:40:06 - 00:35:46:19

Clearly, that is above the 50 megawatt threshold for an end chip. So that's why we are going through the CIP regime.

00:35:49:04 - 00:35:52:21

In terms of just to give a.

00:35:55:00 - 00:36:33:03

Overview. In terms of, um, the number of acres per megawatt, which is a, a cram line or a guidance that is set out in three as a comparison, if the mitigation areas that are identified on the order limits are taking out of that, the order limits, um, are around 701 hectares for development at 450MW, that's 3.84 acres per megawatt.

00:36:35:04 - 00:37:04:04

If you were to, um, refine that down to the areas within the works plans for solar PV, there's substation and trackway. So excluding the landscape buffers and the surroundings of the fields. That would come to approximately 475 hectares and around 2.62.7 acres per megawatt.

00:37:06:16 - 00:37:19:18

Whichever of those, um, equations you utilize, the site is firmly within the 2 to 4 acres per megawatt that is used within Eon three.

00:37:29:19 - 00:37:35:02

Is there anything else on the size part of this element that you would like to understand?

00:37:35:26 - 00:37:36:25

No thank you.

00:37:44:08 - 00:38:14:27

And the next item was overall generating capacity. I've already mentioned that the solar element is 450MW and the bed is 150. That's a 600MW generating capacity. Um, we have a note on scheme efficiency document app 185 that sets these matters out in more detail, more technical basis.

00:38:15:02 - 00:38:15:19

Um,

00:38:17:18 - 00:38:46:18

we have in essence, the ground coverage ratio is 0.65. That's explained in more detail in terms of how that's arrived at. And the implications are that in the scheme efficiency document. But essentially in layman's terms, the proposal utilizes the land efficiently, generates 450MW and is an efficient design of a solar farm.

00:38:51:12 - 00:38:56:00

There was nothing else I wanted to highlight on generating capacity unless you had a question.

00:38:59:25 - 00:39:30:22

Moving on to the next point on the agenda was grid connection. We have a grid connection statement at app 056 that sets out the detail of the applicant's grid connection and the agreements in place with National Grid. In summary, we have a connection agreement with National Grid, um, to connect to the West Burton 400 kV substation in October 2029.

00:39:32:06 - 00:39:51:18

In terms of connection route or cable, um, from the proposed location of the substation, our substation to the national grid 400 kV substation, Station. We're talking potentially approximately 700m of 400 kV cable.

00:40:00:28 - 00:40:04:08

I don't have anything more to say on grid connection unless you have a question.

00:40:05:06 - 00:40:07:22

Could you just confirm what your connection.

00:40:07:24 - 00:40:08:11

Agreement.

00:40:08:13 - 00:40:09:03

Is in terms.

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

Of megawatts with National Grid?

00:40:11:13 - 00:40:30:20

It's a 600 megawatt, 600 megawatt agreement. There isn't. It is. We have divided that for 5150. There isn't a stipulation within that agreement. Two before 51 150. It could be 400. 200 because there is no um, as I say, split stated in the connection agreement, it is for a 600 megawatt connection.

00:40:31:02 - 00:41:06:23



And when you've done your site selection process, have you literally trying to find every area of parcel of land that will make sure that you fill that 600MW? So what I'm trying to ascertain here is, is there a point where you've you have searched every single site and you've built you've actually sited the development on the site to make sure that you get that 600MW. Or is it the case that when you've done your site selection process, you have discounted you have to discount sites because they might just not be suitable to do that?

00:41:07:15 - 00:41:39:23

Yeah. In the you'll see in the sites A, B and C. And also actually when I referred to the site, the three parcels, the three times three parcels that's mentioned in the site selection document, um, if you multiply those areas up, um, but if you used four acres per megawatt, if we're talking about the, those, those guidance in the N document, you would be looking at a solar array of about 337MW. If you did, went down to two acres per megawatt.

00:41:40:12 - 00:42:20:17

The area that we were looking for. Using those stipulations would generate 675MW. So we looked at a size of sites that could deliver a range. And if we could deliver a as I say, the split isn't stipulated. So if the site was available and suitable and we could have delivered a 400MW, a solar farm, then the difference could be. But that is all subject to siting, design, suitability of the site for those particular elements of the scheme. So, um, as just a demonstration, the the range of densities could be reflected to the suitability of the site, if that makes sense.

00:42:26:23 - 00:42:33:27

So grid connection to the next element was battery energy storage system.

00:42:38:15 - 00:43:11:17

As I've stated the battery energy storage system that is being applied for is 150 megawatt. Element. I think it's important to note that overarching National Policy Statement for energy M1 outlines the important role of energy storage and balancing services and renewable energy generation. Solar energy, by its nature, does not respond to demand. It responds to the environment. Energy storage addresses the impacts of the inherent intermittent nature and functions associated with renewable energy generation.

00:43:12:12 - 00:43:16:04

The primary purpose of the battery energy storage system, or bears,

00:43:18:00 - 00:43:22:24

in this proposed development, is to take the electricity generated from the solar panels.

00:43:25:09 - 00:43:40:24

At times of low demand and when the sun is shining and send it and it put it back into the national grid at times of need. And as I say, it's a 150 megawatt scheme. And, um, unless Anything else on that I can help with?

00:43:42:02 - 00:43:43:24

I haven't anything further on that.

00:43:43:28 - 00:43:44:15

Okay.

00:43:47:14 - 00:43:52:27

So the final point on this agenda item is, is technology.

00:43:55:03 - 00:44:16:25

A little unsure in terms of what specific elements of technology you would like me to refer to the scheme efficiency. Note as I said, app 185 sets out the types of technology that have been utilized in designing the scheme in terms of the panel types, etc.. Um.

00:44:19:09 - 00:44:33:24

The scheme is for a fixed solar array. So you're seeing that document. It discusses tilted array. That's a different form of technology. But that is not what this Apple scheme, this scheme is seeking. It's a fixed array that's been assessed as part of the scheme.

00:44:38:13 - 00:44:42:12

Unless there's anything particular about technology that you'd like me to answer.

00:44:43:09 - 00:44:58:03

It was really just an opportunity to just expand a little bit about on the type of panel you've selected. And, um, I suppose improvements in technology going forward. Yes. So do you have any thoughts on that?

00:44:58:05 - 00:45:36:06

Yes. So the panel that's been referred to in the scheme efficiency note, as you say, selected that that was utilized for the design at the moment. That isn't it isn't um, confirmed that that is the panel that we would use because as you say, technology is moving forward. And when it comes to the time of construction, should we get consent? There may be a different panel available. Um, the site will the development will utilize the most appropriate and um, form of panel available on the market, which doesn't always mean it is the highest run of these.

00:45:36:09 - 00:45:40:29

Sorry. It could be a lower rating, but it's the most efficient panel on the market.

00:45:46:13 - 00:45:47:15

Thank you.

00:45:50:13 - 00:46:01:22

Thank you very much. That's been very helpful. Um, I'll ask, um, Nottinghamshire County Council whether they have any comments they wish to make on, on what they've just heard.

00:46:06:17 - 00:46:07:22

Yeah. Thank you sir.

00:46:07:24 - 00:46:13:12

Um, you know, we recognise, um, the need to move to green.

00:46:13:16 - 00:46:14:01

Energy.

00:46:14:03 - 00:46:17:01

Sources and, uh, secure.

00:46:17:04 - 00:46:17:24

Affordable.

00:46:17:26 - 00:46:21:09

And safe energy. Um, and.

00:46:21:11 - 00:46:22:10

Nottinghamshire.

00:46:22:12 - 00:46:27:11

County Council has been an active promoter of the transition.

00:46:27:13 - 00:46:27:29

Towards.

00:46:28:01 - 00:47:10:20

Green energy. Um, especially taking account of the available availability of power station sites in the Trent Valley, particularly at West Burton, where we have actively sought and bid for that nuclear fusion projects, and we are actively working to bring that about and support it. Also at Cottam and, um, hymenium, uh, where the county council and the East Midlands Combined Authority are working jointly to promote the Trent Valley as a as a cluster for green energy.

00:47:11:17 - 00:47:53:15

So we are certainly not against a transition to to clean energy and green energy. Um, I'd like to put on record, though, that the administration of the county council, which took effect in May of last year, Um, has has issues with net zero. Um, and, you know, the, um, there's at a, at a political level and clearly that, uh, the drive towards, uh, solar is, is about delivering on those targets to, uh, to move quickly towards those targets.

00:47:54:09 - 00:48:26:08

We have, however, been, um, concerned at a, at a leadership level regarding the loss of farmland and the development of large scale solar. Um, we note that the National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy does advise that solar farms should be sited on previously developed and non-agricultural land.

00:48:27:07 - 00:48:35:06

Obviously, it does not prohibit the siting of solar farms on agricultural land. But, um,

00:48:37:02 - 00:49:08:13

the combination of of available um, grid connections and the, uh, Trent Valley has clearly been a magnet for, uh, major sites to be put forward. Um, and this is, uh, a proposal is one of a series of sites, some of which already have permission, um, beginning at gate Burton. Um, at Cottam solar project.

00:49:08:15 - 00:49:27:12

Uh, West Burton solar project. Tilt bridge solar project, which has just recently been approved. And we are currently active in the examinations of solar projects at One Earth Solar Farm and at Great North Road east west of Newark.

00:49:30:19 - 00:50:18:23

This is in combination with the range of solar projects that are being considered each month, each year, by the local planning authorities. Um, if Bassetlaw were here, they'll be able to echo the, uh, the concerns at a district level regarding those applications. So, um, we have prepared a map, a composite map of all, uh, applications, all approved applications, both at town and country planning, uh, at consideration and asset level will be appending that to our local impact report because it does show the significance of the scale of this, uh, uh, these developments in, in total.

00:50:20:01 - 00:50:58:08

So, uh, I just want to say that the county council does support the move to green energy, but it has been at a leadership level, at an administration level, extremely concerned about the loss of farmland and the change of landscape that it will will result in. Some of our representations will will cover those in detail. So, um, but clearly I recognize the national policy statement, and this is a national matter and will be determined, uh, ultimately by the secretary of state.

00:50:58:18 - 00:50:59:11

Thank you.

00:51:00:00 - 00:51:01:28

Thank you, Mr. Pointer.

00:51:06:28 - 00:51:40:10

I'm now going to ask other parties if they wish to comment on what they've heard. Um, what I would caution is, though, remember the agenda we've got for the whole of today. And if some of those points are within those items on the agenda, because we've done a broad overview of the of the proposal in what we just heard. If they sit more closely within those particular headings, I would encourage you to reserve your question for that point when we'll have the relevant expert in front of us.

00:51:40:12 - 00:51:51:24

So within the room, um, any other parties who want to comment on, um, the proposed development? Yes. Um, if you'll introduce yourself, please.

00:51:53:08 - 00:52:28:23

Hello again. It's James Barlow, north London windmill. Um, thank the applicant for trying to clarify exactly what the applicant is putting forward. But again, it confused me, um, very simply with the mixture of units. Sometimes the applicant is using hectares. And I think he said that this is for 888 acres, more or less. And then when he looks at alternatives, he's using acres, which was 150 115 acres, is never going to provide the same energy as 800.

00:52:28:25 - 00:52:54:03

It's like asking a football team to play on a tennis court. They're just not comparable units. And then again, when we talked about the output of solar panels, we're talking about output per acres. Everything else these days is in Si units in hectares. Could we just not have a simple system so that we can all try to understand it without trying to confuse us by using different units? Thank you.

00:52:55:06 - 00:53:00:21

Thank you, Mr. Barlow. It's a point well made, and I'm sure the applicant will, um, take that on board.

00:53:02:19 - 00:53:06:23

Um, the applicant does wish to, um, comment, so. Yes.

00:53:07:13 - 00:53:07:28

Yeah.

00:53:08:00 - 00:53:09:05

Probably just a will produce.

00:53:09:07 - 00:53:32:05

For the applicant. Just to clarify. Um, I completely understand. Yes, it's 888 hectares. The 150 acres I referred to, um, is the three by three parcels. So if 150 acres three times within proximity, that total, that is 60.7 hectares, 150 acres. So it's that three times.

00:53:35:06 - 00:53:41:00

Within, within close proximity to each other. So that's a 182 hectares.

00:53:43:17 - 00:53:46:26

Times up is 546 hectares.

00:53:52:22 - 00:53:58:20

I mean it's set out in more detail in the, in the, in the document. But I was just trying to explain

00:54:00:17 - 00:54:20:18

and, and then the, the units used for megawatts. The reason it was in acres is because that's what Ian three stipulates is 2 to 4 acres. So I completely agree. I mean, it's unusual, but the government needed to should have published that in hectares. But I was doing it because that's the that's the units used in the language in the in three.

00:54:21:13 - 00:54:54:20

Thank you. We could get lost in this. Um, I suggesting we we we part that for the moment. Um, it is a point well made. And if, if in further analysis of the documents, we think that there's further clarity needed, we will ask for that. So thank you for the comment. Um, but we are dealing with national documents and some of them do work in strange units. Thank you. Any further comments in the room, please? Yes.

00:54:54:22 - 00:54:56:08

If you could introduce yourself, please.

00:54:56:12 - 00:55:38:23

One, uh, from Andrew Gibson from, uh, fields of Farming. Uh, again, it's just a matter of trying to get clarity here. I understand from what you were saying that the obviously, the outline permission to proceed with this project, uh, pre-dates your final selection of the actual technology to be used. Does that mean that in selecting the panels and the, um, mounting for the panels and the orientation of the panels, we could actually see something that is much higher, much larger, but spacings that we're talking about.

00:55:38:25 - 00:56:01:14

It's without having a better idea of that. It's very difficult for us as laypeople, particularly how whatever our education might be, um, to look at the actual impact on the ground. So what you've done, I've seen some drawings of typical how typical is typical? How far away from typical are you likely to drift?

00:56:02:09 - 00:56:33:18

Thank you. Mr.. Um, Gibson's Gibson. Um. It's fine. Um, addressing the point to the, um, the applicant as you were, but, um, just just a point of Disappointed clarity. I'm just going to say, please address the points to us because we are supposed to adhere to assessing whether it's absolutely fine. And I see what was happening, and I would do the same if I was in your shoes. But, um, we've heard your question about, um, the selection of the panels and the evolution of technology.

00:56:33:20 - 00:56:39:03

I'll ask the applicant if they want to comment any further on that at this point.

00:56:39:27 - 00:56:57:19

Thank you sir. The only point I was going to clarify is the obviously the the development is controlled by parameters so that the height stated etc. cannot go above certain elements. The three metres that stated so there's an envelope would be consented and things cannot exceed that envelope.

00:57:01:03 - 00:57:20:28

Thank you, Mr. Bridges. Anyone else in the room who wishes to comment on the principle of the proposed development? And there's a hand up at the front. Your microphone will come to you. If you could just state your name and who you're representing, please.

00:57:24:08 - 00:57:25:09

Sensing the

00:57:26:26 - 00:57:39:18

campaign for the protection of rural England, whose belief is that active farmland, productive farmland should not be used for solar maximum.

00:57:39:20 - 00:57:42:18

Can I just ask your name before you carry on? Thank you.

00:57:42:20 - 00:57:43:12

Ruth Edwards.

00:57:43:14 - 00:57:43:29

Thank you.

00:57:44:11 - 00:57:45:03

Thank you.

00:57:46:29 - 00:58:04:23

And the Cpre has a firm belief that active farmland of this type should not be used for solar installations. When solar could well be placed on many, many other surfaces. All built surfaces. Thank you.

00:58:05:26 - 00:58:17:22

Thank you very much. Um. Ruth Edwards. Anybody else in the room? There's a gentleman at the front. He's got a microphone. If you could just introduce yourself again, please.

00:58:18:00 - 00:58:46:13

Philip Appleyard certainly, Steve. Parish council. I hope this is the right place. It's regarding the best battery storage arrangements. I read a document referring to, um, a best storage at Fakenham, and it suggests the target for 30, 30, 20, 35, 28.7GW was already met. Um, also, there was a deliverable of another 52.99, sorry,

00:58:48:07 - 00:59:04:19

deliverable of 52.99 and a panel of 44GW. This would suggest no further bet is required given the dash for Bess. It is concerning the apparent lack of regulation and guidance in regard to the best insulation. Um,

00:59:06:16 - 00:59:09:07

yeah. So that's that's my concerns. Sense.

00:59:09:20 - 00:59:15:15

Thank. Thank you, Mr. Apple. I'd just just, um. Remind me where you've, um, obtained those.

00:59:15:24 - 00:59:24:14

It was from a, um, an appeal at Feckenham. That's f e c k e n h a m

00:59:26:05 - 00:59:28:15

as opposed to Fakenham, which is what you think.

00:59:31:01 - 00:59:50:13

Okay. Um, I've made note of your your comment. Um, I think, well, I'm assuming the applicant won't have, um, had access to that information, and I'm assuming that they won't be able to respond, um, directly, but, um, they will have the opportunity to at deadline one.

00:59:50:17 - 00:59:51:24

That's fine. Thank you.

00:59:51:26 - 00:59:55:06

Thank you, Mr. Yarde. Anybody else in the room?

00:59:57:21 - 00:59:59:21

Anyone else? Virtually.

01:00:11:19 - 01:00:22:00

I'm not seeing any further hands, so I'll now hand over to Mr. Robinson to lead us through the next few agenda items, please.

01:00:24:13 - 01:00:55:13

Thank you, Mr. Wiltshire. So turning now to item four. Um, we are aware from the Community Schemes plan, which is examination library reference app 142 and the submissions we have read and heard by interested parties of the number of projects that are either consented or proposed in the vicinity of the proposed development. So we're going to explore the interrelations between interrelationships between some of those schemes in more detail as part of this agenda item.

01:00:55:22 - 01:01:10:17

I think firstly, I'm just going to ask the applicant to provide just a very brief update on your preparation of preparing the report on the Relationships with other projects that we've requested from you in our rule six letter.

01:01:12:24 - 01:01:44:20

Thank you, Sir Patrick Robinson, for the applicant in giving you that update. Well, we were um, yes, we're preparing such a document, but we're going to take you through Mr. Bridge, going to take you through the main, um, to understand the main interaction in SIP interactions that we see, which very quickly step, um, Holcim, Wood Lane, West Burton and North Humber. So if you're happy that we were going to move to do that, just give a brief description of where each one is.

01:01:44:22 - 01:01:50:12

And I think we're going to also do that by reference to a plan which helps people see what we're talking about.

01:01:50:14 - 01:02:16:06



Okay. I think yes, that's fine to provide a brief. And then what I was going to do was probably focus, just bearing in mind the times day on on three of the projects in particular being the North Humber to high mining projects, um, the Step fusion project, which was referred to yesterday, and also the West Burton scheme, and then very briefly, any other projects that may be. But if you can just provide that brief overview to begin with, that would be very helpful.

01:02:16:08 - 01:02:16:24

Thank you sir.

01:02:20:28 - 01:02:54:15

Thank you sir. We'll release project manager for rest. I think throughout this description I'm going to take if we could display um A.S. 022, which was submitted and accepted into the examination library for this examination started. Uh, this is a set of plans that we prepared to hopefully assist the visualize the other projects that we're talking about. Very briefly. We'll take you through those. So this this plan is regarding the Step fusion project at West Burton Power Station.

01:02:54:17 - 01:03:51:27

This was selected by the Secretary of State in October 22nd to build a prototype fusion plant. Um, the interaction with the steeple solar farm order limits will be the access road, the existing access road into the power station for access to the national grid 400 kV substation, which is sited within that the Greenland there. Just to briefly explain what the colors are being trained and the consistency through these plans, the pink solid shading is the land and the consideration that the Steeple Renewables project presented in October 2223 and then the red line is the order limits, as we are part of this application now with the green elements, the mitigation areas, the solid darker green at the top is the land owned by EDF, that is the West Burton, currently the West Burton Power Station.

01:03:53:28 - 01:04:27:04

And the west, the 400 kV substation within that site, which is um um operated by National Grid will be will remain throughout the redevelopment of the project. It is needed as part of the national grid, and is needed for step themselves to export their power that they are proposed to generate. Step will need its own DCO to to construct and operate, and it is expected to be operational in the 2040s.

01:04:29:10 - 01:04:38:15

The Step site will be protected through protective provisions and or a side agreement with ourselves that is currently being discussed.

01:04:40:24 - 01:04:46:16

Moving on. The next project is the Holcim Quarry. Um.

01:04:48:26 - 01:05:21:18

The quarry. This is shown by, uh, brown shading to the east of the site. On this plan, the quarry planning, as we heard yesterday, the Quarry Planning Commission is a historic one. Originally granted in October 2008 by the then applicant, tarmac, the permission for development of a sand and gravel quarry included the construction of a new access road leading to the west end, which you can see the plan is shaded in brown as well.

01:05:21:24 - 01:05:54:26

The permission was extended in 2012 to extend the implementation deadline to March 2017. In May 2016, a further permission was granted to enable the access road to be constructed in two stages. An initial section of 500m of access road off Gainsborough Road was subsequently constructed to implement that permission, and then at some point in 2023, tarmac relinquished their lease and Aggregate Industries obtained the lease.

01:05:55:06 - 01:06:13:17

Aggregate industries is now known as Holcim and they have constructed the full access road and, as you've heard yesterday, are in the process of commencing operations. And then as far as I'm aware, they are looking to commence extraction in spring 2026.

01:06:16:01 - 01:06:51:25

The construction and operation of the Stable Renewable Renewables project will not have any material impediment upon the operation of the quarry. It is proposed a horizontally directional drill under the access road with our connection cable that we talked about. Um, and the lay down access diverting from the quarry access road as soon as practicable. A cooperation agreement is under discussion with Holcim alongside protective provisions or and or a side agreement.

01:06:53:01 - 01:06:58:22

Just on that. Is that something that would be taking place through this examination or something at a later date.

01:06:58:24 - 01:07:00:04

Which which elements are.

01:07:00:06 - 01:07:02:06

The side agreement that you've just referred to.

01:07:02:08 - 01:07:02:23

During this.

01:07:02:25 - 01:07:03:19

Process? During this process?

01:07:03:21 - 01:07:04:29

During this process, yes.

01:07:07:17 - 01:07:45:13

Moving on to the next project. Woodland solar. We heard about this yesterday. This is a solar array and substation. Granted planning permission at the local planning authority level by Bassetlaw District Council in August 2020. The applicant was Elgin Energy, who subsequently sold the development to ScottishPower renewables as part of a portfolio. Um, it is understood that, uh, the notice was served on Scottish Power by the landowner, and the control of the site is now back within the landowner's control.

01:07:46:10 - 01:08:22:15

Uh, the landowner completed the discharge of the planning conditions and constructed a section of internal trackway that was recorded and the permission has been implemented. And is, as far as we're aware, a live permission. The construct the access to construct Wood Lane solar farm would be via Wood Lane. The the blue access going to the north from there. Um, this is a byway that is proposed to be used for steeple renewables project as well to access the north westernmost parcels of land within the order limits.

01:08:26:09 - 01:08:58:08

Moving on to West Burton Solar, developed by Island Green Power. This was a this is a solar um DCO approved on the 24th of January, 2025. Steeple renewables and IGP have had ongoing discussions and a form of cooperation agreement was discussed in early 2024 post the West Burton DCO approval and then the submission of this DCO.

01:08:58:25 - 01:09:17:04

And discussions have recommenced regarding a cooperation agreement between the two parties. It's important to note the pink on that plan is a buried cable essentially. So the element of the project that is West Burton is a cable corridor.

01:09:20:12 - 01:09:57:14

This has been accounted for in our design. We were aware of this, um, as we developed our project. So you'll see on the layout plans, there are standoffs from that cable corridor. So we've accounted for the design of that cable corridor in our design. And the potential for interaction between the two projects is in the area immediately south of the quarry access road, where the pink balloons outwards. That is essentially West Burton work numbers four, five A and five a Roman numeral seven.

01:09:57:23 - 01:10:29:27

The West Burton proposed temporary lay down in that area whilst the construction of the cable corridor, and that overlaps with work orders in the steeple renewables energy project for the substation and part of the PV arrays. There is a potential overlap in terms of the construction in 2728 and construction programmes again, but to reiterate that construction programme that I'm aware of for West Burton, it's for the whole of their project.

01:10:29:29 - 01:10:48:06

We are only talking about the cable corridor of the project overlapping with us. Discussions on a cooperation agreement are well advanced with Ireland Green Power alongside protected provisions to manage this interaction. And again these hope we envisage these will be concluded within this examination.

01:10:53:07 - 01:11:00:04

Finally is the North Humber to Hyman project by National Grid or Njit.

01:11:02:19 - 01:11:03:19

I am.

01:11:05:24 - 01:11:31:23

Sorry the North Humber to Hyman and project was first made public in early in the early summer of 2023. The first non-statutory stage of consultation was held during the 1st of June 23, and the 27th of July 23. You'll see on the screen there the green shaded corridor that was the corridor that was consulted upon at that stage by Njit.

01:11:35:29 - 01:12:03:26

And the applicant consulted on their first stage of an early informal stage of consultation on the 23rd of October to the 4th of December the same year, 2023, which was the pink shading on that plan. From this point on, the two projects have been aware of each other and there has been direct communications ongoing since the 24th of November, 2024.

01:12:07:20 - 01:12:31:08

The extent of land that formed the first stage of consultation for this application has only ever reduced. And as you can see, between the pink and the order limits has substantially, essentially unchanged within the area that we're talking about for the North Humber to Haim Arnhem line.

01:12:35:08 - 01:13:10:09

The in July 2024, the 9th of July 2024 to the 6th of August 2024, Njit consulted upon what was termed the Western Corridor, which is the next plan. This is indicated by the blue shading. This was a localized consultation on an alternative corridor for the 400 kV overhead line.

01:13:10:20 - 01:13:15:10

Again stated in July to August 2024.

01:13:22:04 - 01:13:38:04

The applicant provided a response to this consultation, suggesting objecting to the proposal, acknowledging the need for it but stating that a route further to the west would be preferable.

01:13:42:06 - 01:13:59:07

Finally, in terms of the development of the project and Get undertook statutory consultation on the 18th of February to the 15th of April 2025. That is shown as the blue patching on that plan.

01:14:03:19 - 01:14:04:17

Just to.

01:14:06:25 - 01:14:09:02

Outline again that

01:14:10:21 - 01:14:30:09

the applicants informal consultation was in October to December 23rd, and the applicant's statutory consultation with the 20th of January to the 3rd of March 25 was in Gets was 18th of February to the 15th of April 25. So there was an overlap in the statutory consultations.

01:14:33:09 - 01:14:35:06

In terms of setting the scene.

01:14:38:17 - 01:14:43:06

So, Mr. Robinson, just to conclude on that and get to matters.

01:14:44:02 - 01:15:34:15

And thank you, Mr. Bridges. So, um, so the that's very much been, uh, looking to do what we've understood. The purpose of this agenda item is to provide a broad overview of the issue, and here particularly to try and get clear on the physical characteristics of both schemes and how they've, um, evolved over time. Um, I mean, it should be apparent from the slide, it's up, uh, in front of us now that there's the potential for a very major impact on the developable area of the steeply scheme, quite simply illustrated by a sort of purpley blue hatched area going through the middle of a very pink, unbroken area to the western side of the site.

01:15:34:28 - 01:16:17:26

Now, beyond that and appreciate, we have and get our representative today. And, uh, we'll be speaking the, um. Um, we accept both parties need a fair opportunity to bring whatever material they feel is appropriate, uh, before the examination. And we really don't think there's any point today trying to go further and say what the potential impacts are. One reason being that I expect the answer would inevitably be, well, you do need to speak to each other and see what accommodation could be achieved between you, and that is a process that is underway.

01:16:17:28 - 01:17:11:15

It is starting. The active arrangements now being made for meetings to be held, which will be looking to discuss that. But right at this early stage, when we raised it yesterday in the preliminary meeting, we believe there's enough of a concern here to be making. um, timetable provision for an issue specific hearing to deal with this. I'm not asking you to to make any further comment on that today, but it's obviously a matter with like and get to be aware of and have raised with them because for you to make a potentially make a recommendation on this matter, we believe you would need to understand quite a lot of detail on both schemes, and that's our introduction to it to help that process start.

01:17:11:21 - 01:17:12:09

So

01:17:14:03 - 01:17:43:17

okay. Thank you for that. At the minute, I think that that sort of covers quite a lot of the questions I was going to ask at the minute. There will be some some more. But before I go to probably both parties on this, I'm going to bring in is it Mr. Welsh from um from Njit to provide an initial response on what you've heard, and then I've. If and then I may have some questions for you. And based on what you respond with.

01:17:43:27 - 01:18:14:00

Certainly, sir. Thank you very much. Um, and I will be led by you as to what will ultimately assist, um, as Mr. Richards and Mr. Robinson correctly identify, there is a significant interaction between North Hammond to Heinemann and, um, and the detailed plan that you've been seeing, you've been shown, I think, from um, Lund that was submitted on Monday or at least uploaded on Monday. Um, is helpful with our with our representation, which is RR 049.

01:18:14:02 - 01:18:33:20

We have also put in a plan that shows the interaction in some detail and shows, um, shows the towers. Uh, it also shows. Just to give you a moment to get that, because I think that is helpful to orientate this discussion. Um, it shows the proposed. Net scheme Northumbria to high mining.

01:18:36:02 - 01:18:48:23

It also shows the existing infrastructure that I can get. Um, owns or has rights over to the east. So you can see if you've got the plan up in our relevant representation. But you can see.

01:18:51:23 - 01:18:53:03

If it's going to come on screen.

01:18:53:11 - 01:19:04:05

Just check. Is the applicant trying to display that plan. Yeah. So I think the applicant is just in the process of trying to display that. So it is in the process I've been doing good.

01:19:07:12 - 01:19:08:28

I think it's appendix B.

01:19:38:18 - 01:20:12:07

There we go. That's the one I'm very grateful to. Put that up on the screen. On behalf of the applicant. Um, that shows to the west, on the left hand side, um, the north hand behind mine and, um, scheme outlined there. And to the east in blue existing and get infrastructure. So what we're talking about today I think under agenda item four is only that towards the West existing infrastructure towards the East. Um, protective provisions are, as I understand it, being negotiated in respect of that.

01:20:12:24 - 01:20:44:09

Um, and that is a perhaps a more ordinary aspect of, of this. Um, so I'm not going to cover that in any detail, save to say that, of course, the applicant has chosen a scheme that already has significant interaction with existing and get infrastructure. Um, just for your note. Um, so I won't ask us to turn it up, but app one for two is a very helpful cumulative schemes plan, which it's a zoomed out plan shows, um, a number of these schemes.

01:20:44:11 - 01:21:16:11

And just for your notes, um, that shows part of the Northumberland um, scheme in yellow and the present application, it shows the red line boundary. So you can see from that high level plan that the North Humber high scheme is what number one, very big and linear as you'd expect, but also interfaces with other projects as well as this project, including in particular one Earth Solar, which is to the south. I think the examination for that is either concluded or shortly to conclude.

01:21:16:29 - 01:21:57:09

So just by way of opening, before I get into any more detail, I think I want to preface everything by saying m get remains in dialogue with the applicant has been holding regular meetings. And indeed Njit has invited the applicant to a further meeting, which I understand has been scheduled next week for further discussion and get very much hopes that this is the last you see of me, and that the issue is

resolved between the parties amicably and outside of the DCO hearings. Just before we get into perhaps some substantive matters on procedure, I note what the applicant proposed in, um, procedural response four points, essentially a statement of common ground.

01:21:57:15 - 01:22:22:29

A further ish um, further info from Njit and the applicant at Deadline's one and two, and then potentially another ish later after deadline five. We're entirely content with that being timetabled, although as I said, um, very much hope matters can be resolved outside and you won't need to be dealing with this in another ish. So I'll hand back to you, sir, and be guided by you as to as to what further would assist.

01:22:24:18 - 01:22:55:03

Okay. Thank you. That's that's a useful summary. So in your, um, relevant representation, you've you've stated that your, uh, project there's likely timescales for the submission. You're you've noted that it is at an advanced pre-op stage, um, and that your program to commence in 2028, subject to obviously obtaining a development consent. Have you actually gotten a targeted submission date for this application at the moment?

01:22:55:06 - 01:22:57:15

It is summer 2026.

01:22:59:00 - 01:23:08:26

I can I can come back to you in writing, or perhaps those instructing me will be able to give me any more crystallized detail than that. But as I understand it, is summer 2026.

01:23:14:22 - 01:23:18:15

Thank you. I'm just adding that as a as an action point at the moment.

01:23:21:02 - 01:23:53:02

Whilst I'm doing that. Um, so we note your objection to the to the proposal that's applied for. And it's from reading. It appears to be on the fact that it does not include suitable protective provisions for the benefit of NGOs. I don't want to get into the detail of those protective provisions at this stage. Um, is your objection solely in respect of the lack of protective provisions, or does it also include objections to the physical footprint of the proposed development?

01:23:55:01 - 01:23:56:13

Is that a combination of both?

01:23:56:15 - 01:24:34:07

Yeah, it is not an objection to the principle of the scheme. And then get the position is that with suitable protection provisions, when more detail comes forward, frankly, on behalf of both parties, the detail of both schemes can be finessed to avoid a clash. And to the extent there is any sterilisation of the land on a permanent or temporary basis, says in the applicants scheme that can be discussed and, as I understand it, and yet has provided a land sterilisation plan to the applicant this week or last week for discussion.

01:24:35:07 - 01:24:36:15

I hope that helps.

01:24:39:02 - 01:24:57:23

Yeah, that does help. Um, just just for, um, that just just for my understanding. Um, is it possible to control the layout of a proposal by protective provisions, or would that have to be done via a change to a site layout?

01:24:59:09 - 01:25:09:21

Well, I think protective provisions can govern the way the site will be laid out by protecting the undertaker's ability to to have a say on that.

01:25:15:11 - 01:25:25:27

Just and just finally for for me, um, is this route that your this on the plan in front of us. Is this finalized or is there the potential for this to change at a later date?

01:25:26:05 - 01:26:09:25

That is the preferred option that is promoting at the moment. It obviously hasn't submitted its DTO. So to that extent, as with any DCO, there's potential for minor changes. But I should say without getting to too much detail following n get stuck on on its scheme, um, it carefully considered the objection made by this applicant and considered a design change request and went through its own, uh, ordinary processes for that and ultimately, uh, discounted the request that was, that was provided to and yes, I think it has considered the change request that was made and has decided to proceed with, um, what you see before you, uh, in that light.

01:26:09:27 - 01:26:17:00

So you can take that as being the preferred option. As things stand, subject to the fact that SEO hasn't been submitted yet.

01:26:19:02 - 01:26:41:13

Okay. Thank you very much. I think that's that's helpful. And as far as we need to go, for the time being, I will turn back to the applicant, um, for any comments that you have on what you've heard and particularly in relation to that question about the protective provisions and managing of the site layout and whether that is possible or whether it's some of the process that needs to be done.

01:26:45:06 - 01:26:48:27

But thank you, Patrick Robinson, for the applicant. The, um,

01:26:50:18 - 01:27:24:25

that is very interesting question as to the point to which a protected provision, uh, can effectively, uh, start to change the design. I think the answer is, um, is very hard to know in detail until we really get into more detail about, realistically, what is being proposed between the parties on protective provisions. Again, we don't want to get into too much detail, but effectively the protective revisions largely just require National Grid consent.

01:27:24:27 - 01:28:03:27



Now, anyone would say National Grid statutory undertakers consent to work is usually simply about the method of working. And it's about coordination, of working to make sure that basically you don't get in each other's way, but consent to alter the actual development would if that is the way the discussion would go, I agree, would start to raise different questions about, well, is it the same development? Although obviously we are talking here, potentially you would be reducing development rather than going outside of any boundaries, but I think you'd be raising a very real question.

01:28:03:29 - 01:28:11:07

There are the peoples seeking to change the development if if that is supposedly the method by which accommodation could be reached.

01:28:13:19 - 01:28:19:25

Okay. Thank you for that. I think that's, um, I'm just going to hand over to Mr. Wiltshire for for a moment. Um.

01:28:20:24 - 01:28:22:04

This isn't a very well-defined.

01:28:22:06 - 01:28:22:21

Question.

01:28:22:23 - 01:28:24:15

But I, I just, um,

01:28:26:06 - 01:29:10:15

what reassurance can you give us about, um, tracking the, um, evolution of this, um, discussion that's going on between yourselves and how it's resolving itself, I suppose. In other words, when when will we, um, how will we get to a point where we think, you know, this is not a serious issue? Um, how will you update us? I know we've got deadlines, but is there a mechanism that you're aware of within what's already set up in, in terms of documents and correspondence that will give us a fairly live take on, on whether we've got a serious problem here or whether it's resolving itself.

01:29:12:06 - 01:29:45:00

Thank you, Sir Patrick Robinson for the applicant. Um, yes. There are various, um, uh, documents. The, um, uh, there is the land use tracker. Um, although in actual fact, as Mr. Walsh pointed out, we're talking about now the western side of the site where land isn't actually owned by National Grid at the moment, compared to the east of the site where they do, although tend to find since you're reporting on negotiations with one party. It's quite possible to continue to report on negotiations of all all of their interest.

01:29:45:02 - 01:30:15:20

There is a document which we will need to produce, which is, uh, the report on section one, two, seven and whatever that number is, one, three, five, probably forgotten whenever the statutory undertaker powers, uh, that you're required to to see. That is something which updates can be given

on. Um, I suspect at each deadline you will want an update on, um, negotiations as well on Statement of Common ground.

01:30:15:22 - 01:31:09:27

There will be a statement of common ground. So that is another way it can be reported on. But what I expect goes to the heart of your question is it's very easy in examination processes for every uptake to be said. Negotiations are continuing. Which doesn't especially doesn't help you if they continue. But you're not going anywhere. So I, we accept entirely that effectively there may be a slightly enhanced level of reporting needed where you need greater clarity on. Is this issue actually closing out now, or is it actually remaining at an impasse to give you the maximum amount of time, I think, to direct us on what information you need? If there is a basically a decision on recommendation for you to be made on a non agreed position between the parties by the time we get to the end of examination.

01:31:12:05 - 01:31:30:14

I think that would be helpful. And if you don't mind, if I put an action point against yourselves to think about, um, a suitable mechanism for giving us a realistic update rather than some of the documents you've talked about where it gets a little bit lost. Thank you very much.

01:31:33:08 - 01:31:42:14

It is 1130. If Mr. Robinson is all right, I think it might be a single time for a 15 minute break. What do you have you got for I.

01:31:42:18 - 01:32:02:09

I think we'll try and finish item four if we can. Maybe because I think the applicant has covered quite a lot of the questions. And I appreciate that there will be some people who will have some questions in the in the room. I think that's everything on on this particular project and on just very brief. And Mr. Welsh, you would like to come back in?

01:32:04:13 - 01:32:37:11

Yes. Sorry, sir. It's probably it's probably my fault for misunderstanding, and perhaps partly because I'm here virtually, but I just anticipated I might have an opportunity to address you on on a couple of points. Um, without getting into the weeds. Um, really, to facilitate these discussions between ingot and the applicant, if I may, I shouldn't imagine I'll be particularly long, but just to just to set the scene of it and hopefully help with the process that your colleague has, um, identified, we need to be doing in earnest rather than rather than dragging our heels.

01:32:38:29 - 01:33:10:29

Thank you. So I mean, there is a bit of a blockage, frankly, I think in as things stand, based on the applicant's response, latest response to to the procedural deadline, because I think there is a point of principle here between us on whether protected provisions can cover future infrastructure projects or not. And I think I'll be corrected by Mr. Robinson if I am wrong. But the applicant's position is that they cannot or for some reason should not. And yet position is is firmly to the contrary.

01:33:11:01 - 01:33:49:23

And I just think it would be helpful now if I can stress y and get takes that position and encourage you to give us whatever being along and direction is required to move things in the right direction. So NJ

has provided its relevant Rap reference to another DCO that has such peace protecting future infrastructure projects. We've given an example there. I can give you another example today, which is the Outer Dowsing Offshore Wind farm DCO um, in relation to for the benefit of and gets Grimsby to Walpole scheme.

01:33:49:25 - 01:34:25:16

So that's another example. Um, we also have an example closer to home, which is the one Earth solar DCO to the south, and that also interacts with North Humber to high Mannum. And their net is enjoying a good working relationship with that promoter. As you can see, if you if you care to review the statements of common ground for that scheme and that promoters engaged in the detail and made allowances within that DCO both in the plans and by way of protected provisions. For example, in the plans leaving a corridor within the solar panels to allow for the overhead line route.

01:34:27:01 - 01:34:57:02

Um, and there's no reason why the applicant in this case can or should not do exactly the same. It would obviously have significant benefits in terms of reducing cumulative impacts. And I note that that is something that has firm policy support in any one at 4.11 and N5 at 2.7. Those are the provisions that cover the benefits of coordination and holistic planning.

01:34:57:26 - 01:35:00:27

And that's that's simply what Angot is seeking here.

01:35:02:23 - 01:35:41:00

I think the position at the moment is, is the applicant, um, object to some extent to and gets scheme. Um, but clearly the examination before you two inspectors is not, um, is not the place to be having a debate about and get auctioneering for its own scheme. Um, and we would encourage the applicant to engage in the detail and not simply say, well, we object to the principle in that regard, and that has already provided quite some considerable suggestions as to how construction interface might work for the benefit of both parties.

01:35:42:08 - 01:36:24:19

Um, and we hope that that produces some positive response from the applicants. Um, and we know they have promised to come back to us on construction phasing. I think we're still we're still waiting to that. Waiting for that. I, of course, appreciate the pressures of examination on applicants and their teams, their very considerable Physical pressures. But, um, we hope very much now that the applicants will engage and we look forward to a positive working relationship. And to the extent that you, um, sirs, are at all, um, concerned by the fact that, well, one scheme is coming before the other that shouldn't in my, you know, respectful suggestion really make much of a difference given the policy context that requires coordination.

01:36:24:21 - 01:36:32:13

In any event, given the precedent of one Earth solar working proactively and positively within get in relation to Northumberland.

01:36:35:10 - 01:37:07:04

And also given that it is for the benefit of all parties, including one including the applicant in this case, to to the extent there are any losses or any sterilisation, uh, to mitigate such losses through coordination. So I say that all hopefully in a positive spirit, bearing in mind these are two projects designated as Critical National Importance projects. And whilst of course they both are. It's fair to say the solar scheme is a generation project.

01:37:07:06 - 01:37:53:20

But of course without transmission network we simply can't have the clean generation projects that the government so desperately wants. These are all ultimately funded through the transmission project, are all ultimately funded by customers. So Net has that duty to drive value for them and to deliver these projects in the national interest on time and cost efficiently. So to sort of sweep all that up into your question, perhaps what is end gets concern here. And to finish, the concern is, um, that if there is no coordination between these parties, it will, um, potentially affect the ability of it will hinder potentially net in delivering North Humber to high margin.

01:37:55:18 - 01:38:05:19

And that's why. That's why we hope that this process will be a positive one going forward. Thank you. I'm sorry for taking a little bit longer than five minutes, I promise, but I hope that is that is helpful.

01:38:06:23 - 01:38:19:13

Okay. Thank you for that. Um, I think the applicant, you'll be responding to the relevant representation anyway at deadline one, so I don't unless you really feel the need to know to respond to anything.

01:38:19:20 - 01:38:52:06

Um, so if I may, but really, in the briefest terms, I'm grateful, Mr. Welsh, for going into detail, though we have those notes. Um, I won't, uh, go into detail on this now. It's quite clear there is a very real issue to be discussed. Parties are engaging and having engaging. There is no question of, uh, a lack of engagement here. I think the parties fully understand what the issues are here and the potential mechanisms available to deal with them.

01:38:52:08 - 01:39:05:06

It's a question of whether, um, an and accommodation can be reached. So I think I really have to leave it there. Otherwise, we really will be getting all of the documents out to understand the position we we don't need to do today. So. Okay.

01:39:06:00 - 01:39:37:10

Thanks very much. I think that that we can draw a line in under this for the time being and let you continue those negotiations. Um, you've already sort of explained the step fusion project interaction, so I don't need to sort of ask any questions on that. I know we've got a representative from from Step Fusion in the room on an observational capacity. Do they wish to say anything at all on what they've on what they've heard, I think, is Miss Waterman. No, that's fine. So I won't ask any more questions on that.

01:39:37:12 - 01:39:58:20

And just briefly on on the West Burton scheme, I know we have Mr. Phillips online. Um, is there anything you want to say, Mr. Phillips, on what you heard on the applicant's, uh, comments on the West Burton scheme and And the relationships between your scheme and the proposed development.

01:39:59:28 - 01:40:33:16

And good morning, Gareth Phillips for West Burton Solar Project Limited. You'll be relieved to hear that that I agree with the helpful summary that Mr. Bridges gave on, um, in terms of the interface between, uh, the projects. Um, it's quite straightforward, really. The the DCO for West Burton project includes the cable corridor. Uh, there is a pinch point for a simple term between that and the battery energy storage system work.

01:40:33:18 - 01:41:05:28

Number two, I think, uh, in the project before you, um, but there has been dialogue between the parties. Um, the applicant has provided my client with a draft agreement. Um, and that is with us to, to look at and comment upon, and I believe that. That it's agreed between the parties that that agreement, plus some updated protective provisions will deal with with the interface between the cable and and the project.

01:41:06:00 - 01:41:41:01

It's true that Mr. Bridges is right. It's true to say there was some accommodation of the cable in the project, but the distance between the export cable, which is a high voltage transmission line and the battery energy storage system, is insufficient at this stage. But the detail of it, I'm confident, can be worked out in the agreement, with some slight changes to the protective provisions that the applicant has already included in the draft DCO for for the benefit of of my client.

01:41:41:12 - 01:41:54:17

And I also agree with Mr. Bridges that, you know, based on experience and the nature of the interface and the discussions so far, this is something we should all be able to take. Confidence can be dealt with within the course of the examination.

01:41:56:09 - 01:42:27:24

Okay. Thank you very much for that update. I think, um, I suspect there might be some people in the room who may want to make some comments. So what I what we'll do is we'll adjourn for a break. And then what? When we return from the break, I will before we move on to item five, I will allow those of you in the room who wish to make comments on what you've heard to to, to say any points that you want to say. So at the moment it's the time is 1142 and will allow 15 minutes to 1157.

01:42:27:26 - 01:42:43:01

Well, we will resume at 1157. So this hearing is now adjourned. In fact, actually, we will just make it 12:00. I think that would be a lot easier. So it is it is here. It is now adjourned until 12:00.