



Planning Inspectorate
Arolygiaeth Gynllunio

Hearing Transcript

Project:	Lime Down Solar Project
Hearing:	Issue Specific Hearing 2 (ISH2) - Part 3
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FULL TRANSCRIPT (with timecode)

00:00:10:27 - 00:00:43:12

Okay. Good afternoon everyone. It is now 2:10 and time for, um this issue specific hearing to resume. Um, so we will now pick up on agenda item four, which is landscape character. Um, and starting with landscape character receptors. Uh, I'd like to talk about the limestone lowlands first. So starting with the limestone lowlands landscape character type.

00:00:43:23 - 00:01:46:09

We questioned that at Q1 the approach, we questioned the applicant at Q1, um, around the approach of assessing and reporting, uh, landscape character effects relative to a study area that is a distance offset from the auto limit, and I note the applicant's response. However, given the response also from which counsel to the same question and other representations that the Council has made about their concerns regarding the effect on the limestone lowland landscape type, in particular, it would be of assistance to the AXA for the applicant to provide a commentary of how the limestone lowland landscape type and its subdivided landscape character areas would be affected, and this, um, should include reference to the key characteristics, inherent landscape sensitivities, and the broad management objectives set out in the landscape.

00:01:46:11 - 00:02:01:21

Character type. Description. Um, I suggest this is taken away as an action point in writing rather than, um, expecting you to provide that right now. But is there any response you'd like to make on that?

00:02:03:23 - 00:02:19:05

Chris Jackson, on behalf of the applicant, um, I think I've expressed opposition as you've referenced today, sir. And I think if we, um, if we do take that away as an action point to, to respond to, um, that would be probably most appropriate.

00:02:19:27 - 00:02:33:18

Thank you. And Wiltshire Council, is there anything you want to add to this point? Do you consider that what what I've asked for there of the applicant would address what is missing in the assessment of landscape character effects.

00:02:33:20 - 00:02:56:26

Um, Odette Shelby, Wiltshire Council. Um, yes. I think that the Wiltshire would be fully supportive of the applicant doing an assessment against the limestone lowlands light and the AES within it. Um, and I think that would definitely go a long way to addressing the council's concerns. Is there anything else either Mr. Goodwin or Mr. Harley want to address, though that that that would be good. Thank you sir.

00:02:58:19 - 00:03:03:22

Thank you. Thank you. Was there anything that I wanted to add to that point? Thank you.

00:03:04:08 - 00:03:10:16

Sir. Daniel Kosaka, stop lying down. Um, no. So I think we said in our response that we would welcome it if it were to become available.

00:03:10:18 - 00:03:44:12

Yeah. Okay. Thank you. Um, so then if we move on to, uh, the setting of Norton Village, uh, so in response to XQ one LV 1.8, uh, the applicant uh, stated that the wider setting of the village is only perceived on the minor roads leading to and from the village on higher ground, and also that on higher grounds on any of the minor roads leading to and from the village.

00:03:44:14 - 00:04:11:05

The official assessment acknowledges that there are some significant adverse effects to amenity. So the question for the applicant is does the combination of the significant visual effects on approach to the village, as well as the significant landscape character effects to the study area that includes the area of Norton Village. Does that suggest that the setting of the village would experience significant adverse effects?

00:04:34:23 - 00:04:59:12

Chris Jackson on behalf of the applicant. I would just like to question the use of the term setting here, sir, in regards to the fact that typically we define heritage assets or recognised defined areas such as the national landscape as having a setting. But I would question does a village or a individual property? Have a have a setting and if it has a setting how would we define that that setting. So.

00:05:05:25 - 00:05:49:13

Okay. Perhaps can I, can I ask the applicant to display figures 34342 and 344.1. Um, so that's uh rep one uh 029 and rep 3031. And maybe that's then a discussion in the room we can have about whether a village has a setting that should be assessed. Um, but it would be it would be helpful to have it shown on the screen how the village sits in relation to, um, the proposed layout of the development.

00:06:14:25 - 00:06:24:15

And for the applicant. In your response to LV 1.8, um, you do refer to

00:06:26:09 - 00:06:27:15

you you do

00:06:29:10 - 00:06:53:21

talk about the village having a setting and its setting being constrained by the topography. So I think it I think it's, it is useful to understand the effects on that settlement group in terms of the effect of the setting, the approach to and from. Um. Yeah.

00:06:55:07 - 00:07:25:13

Chris Council on behalf of the applicant. Um, yeah, absolutely. I suppose the point I was more making so was, was how to I think we should be we should be careful of, um, defining settings in particular when it comes to settlements, when we do have settings of heritage assets that are also then recognised within um, the heritage assessment. Um, the Norton village is located within essentially a fold in the landscape.

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So the it drops down into, into a, into a shallow valley which, which predominantly holds the village itself, although there are some arterial roads that stem away from it where there are some more, um, typically rural, um, farm buildings and sheds. But the nucleus of the settlement is focused in the lower lying valley fold, which is predominantly surrounded by woodland. It's on a confluence of four roads that come in and out of the settlement. And it's those roads that we've assessed as having a, um, an effect associated with the delivery of the lime dam project within its area.

00:08:01:20 - 00:08:11:18

And then, as you rightly pointed, we have within the study area, identified a significant adverse effect to the character of landscape surrounding the settlement of Morton.

00:08:14:08 - 00:09:03:29

Okay. So potentially setting of the village might be the wrong terminology, but I guess what I, what I'm looking at is the effect on the character surrounding that village. Um, and so which council in your written representation, you expressed concern regarding the potential dominance of solar panels in and I believe you refer to the village's landscape setting, um, and recommends that areas both to the north and south of the village should, should, should be pulled back from the settlement edge to reduce their visual dominance.

00:09:04:17 - 00:09:06:08

Um, as well as

00:09:07:28 - 00:09:26:16

an addition to the landscape boundaries to reduce potential views. But could you give your view on how how we should assess the effects to Norton Village, whether it's helpful to think of the setting of the village, how that would be defined?

00:09:30:11 - 00:10:02:06

Uh, will Holly for Wiltshire Council? Yeah. Uh, it's commonplace to, um, define a setting to a village. And anyone who's, um, produced neighbourhood plans knows full well that the setting of the settlement is an important feature, an important aspect of that. And it doesn't have to be constrained to within 100m or whatever. When I've just done 3 or 4km because of a scarp slope at the back of it.

00:10:02:08 - 00:10:34:05

So, um, constraining it in that sort of way, I don't think is a helpful way to, to deal with, um, I deal with the issue, even if it does help the applicant's case. However, um, in a case such as this, if on approaching the, um, the settlement, you are from all four directions, obviously you are, um, confronted with the, um, potential solar development.

00:10:34:07 - 00:11:04:23

And from that point of view, it is a reasonable assumption to They're to look at the effects that these some solar panels. So at this stage we don't know whether they could be up to 4.5m in height. Um, are going to actually affect that, that landscape setting and the visual effects on, um, on the village.

00:11:05:05 - 00:11:36:23

Um, we've also to the southeast got the base. Um, yeah, it's a structure as well. So what we would suggest is that, um, yeah. Without putting up a quantifying it, that the, um, the applicant should look at a, a reasonably wide setting so that that entire setting is not changed by the proposal.

00:11:37:12 - 00:12:02:10

Um, it's very difficult, but a put a, um, an actual figure on it. What we've suggested is pulling the pulling the, um, development areas back from the, the village itself, which means that the rural setting and the rural, um, effect of the village, a character of the village can be maintained without the, uh, um, without the, um, solar.

00:12:02:26 - 00:12:18:25

And is that it's that, um, a case of, uh, removing or reducing the, the visual effects on approach to and from to a distance away from the village, or.

00:12:19:07 - 00:12:48:15

It would, it would have to it would have to do that. It would, it would be a character effect and a visual effect. Yeah. And a lot of the visual effects from public receptors could probably be achieved by pulling it back from roads, footpaths, that sort of thing. Um, So that um. And also, um, possibly the, the type of panels that are put into that area as well.

00:12:52:11 - 00:12:54:14

Um, and so

00:12:56:00 - 00:13:20:14

there, there's, there's this plan on the screen now shows the relationship of Norton to line down B. So perhaps we could start with just talking about that. Um, can you, can you describe which which fields specifically you think should be reduced removed?

00:13:20:16 - 00:13:42:24

I think it's where you've got the, um, uh, going out towards the northeast isn't so much of an issue. It's the, uh, the route going up towards the Fosse Way, which is the, the biggest issue, which is going vaguely northwest so that, um.

00:13:46:05 - 00:13:49:23

I think I think. Would that be field B, b9?

00:13:54:05 - 00:13:58:09

So B9 is the is the kind of chunky L shaped.

00:13:58:12 - 00:14:00:09

Yes. That's that's the one.

00:14:00:11 - 00:14:10:00

And what what would what what are you proposing would need to happen that removal of that field from the scheme or pulling back from the edge to.

00:14:10:02 - 00:14:15:09

Pulling stuff back and, and possibly considering what type of panels could go.

00:14:15:11 - 00:14:15:27

Outside.

00:14:16:09 - 00:14:37:08

And pulling it back from the road boundary. Because if you've got to grow at the moment, there is an open view out across the landscape there. Um, and it's it's quite a broad open view. If you have to grow the boundary hedge to 4.5m, you're changing the character Why?

00:14:37:20 - 00:14:38:05

Okay.

00:14:38:07 - 00:14:58:21

In what is some buy. What are the mitigation measures as well? Right. It is a possibility. Um, obviously we haven't gone into this in huge detail at the moment, but. But by pulling development back from the, uh, from the road in May, he could reduce the impact. Quite substantial.

00:14:58:24 - 00:14:59:09

Okay.

00:15:00:05 - 00:15:13:02

And also at the, um, at the southern end of it as well. But obviously, whatever happens, you are still going to affect the affect the the views out over that open landscape at the moment.

00:15:13:11 - 00:15:21:25

Yes. Understood. I'm wondering, um, what the best way for us to fully understand the.

00:15:24:00 - 00:15:34:12

Reduction in the in the or the change to the layout that you would be seeking is whether it would be a marked, marked up plan.

00:15:36:19 - 00:15:40:14

Can we defer and actually draw it out on a plan?

00:15:40:21 - 00:15:42:28

That would be. That'd be very helpful. Thank you.

00:15:43:12 - 00:15:45:06

Had a chance to have a look at it.

00:15:45:15 - 00:16:16:04

Yeah. Yes. So so perhaps we if the applicant could bring up the plan that also shows, um. Norton in relation to line down D this is so Norton is in the top left of that. Um, that plan as helpfully circled there and then as, as you mentioned, there is the, the best and substation

00:16:17:20 - 00:16:40:14

at the kind of bottom left of the area shown at the bottom left of the screen there. That's correct. Yes. And there's the road from Norton to Lovington, um, which runs kind of initially a field away from the solar development, but then runs adjacent. So if I.

00:16:42:22 - 00:16:55:15

If you take away the action point to mark up a plan, but also if you could just describe for the purposes of discussion with the applicant here as well, um, what kind of reduction you might be looking at there.

00:16:55:17 - 00:17:31:08

We'd be looking at the, the northern edge of the, uh, um, the area where it is bordering on to, um, it's very close to the, uh, the edge of the village there. So pulling, pulling the development areas back from the, uh, um, the village boundary. I don't think there's a huge amount we can do if, uh, in respect of the B. S um, uh, but it is obviously something which must be taken into consideration.

00:17:31:11 - 00:17:39:14

and there may be a further mitigation that can can be shut in to um, to address any issues in that area.

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So so would that be the northern end of fields, d20 d20 one, which are the kind of long, perhaps, perhaps if you could zoom in. Yeah, yeah. Okay.

00:17:52:02 - 00:17:54:20

Understood. Okay. Thank you. Uh,

00:17:56:09 - 00:18:08:29

so stop. Line down. You've also raised concern about the routes into and out of the village. Um, and the effect that has caused. Is there anything you'd like to add?

00:18:11:11 - 00:18:23:02

Um, thank you, Sir Daniel Gazelka, for. Stop lying down. Um, I know, I mean, that basically covers that. I mean, we'd welcome that if it were to be done. But ultimately, you know, you have our primary position on.

00:18:24:04 - 00:19:16:18

Yeah. Understood. Okay. Thank you. Um, so if I, if I turn to the applicant, Um, uh, does that provide, um, provides a better understanding of of what the concerns are when, when, uh, parties are talking about the setting, their concerns about the effect on the setting of the, of the village. And also we'll receive that plan from Wiltshire Council. But I wonder if you have any initial comments, um, in relation to the types of changes they would be talking about, whether, um, that you feel those are effects that do, uh, that, uh, what am I trying to say? I'll let you respond to the first bit and then I'll reword my question.

00:19:16:20 - 00:19:17:09

Thank you.

00:19:18:22 - 00:19:21:01

Chris Jackson, applicant. Um,

00:19:22:17 - 00:19:55:21

we seem again to come back to the setting point, and this was, I suppose the point I was was making and just to. I suppose to rebut counsel ever so slightly. I wasn't suggesting that we can't define the setting. My question was it's it's open to interpretation. And whilst clearly defining settings for settlements or residential properties is part and parcel of what we do as a landscape architects, it's um, it's more nuanced necessarily than, um, what we've been asked to discuss at the moment.

00:19:55:23 - 00:20:37:18

Um, I think when we when we talk about setting again, continuing from the conversation we had this morning when we were talking about indivisibility, um, I reiterate the point that there is no indivisibility from the core settlement of Norton to the solar scheme. So the, the which is, you know, one of the key factors that we looked at with the justification for the juxtaposition of the scheme in relation to the settlement. Now, the when we looked at site B as we originally looked at, and field B9, we've got an existing quite strong hedgerow that runs along there at that point.

00:20:37:22 - 00:21:13:10

Um, save for the occasional access, um, farm access point that is within that that hedgerow and that the proposals then include for um, hedgerow reinforcement along that, that hedgerow strengthening obviously to, to grown out to to 4.5m. And now again, the VA acknowledges this and recognises the the major moderate significant adverse effects would happen to users of that that road as as they passed by. Um obviously that's the the entire length of that section of highway, not just that immediate point as it passes B9.

00:21:13:12 - 00:21:17:00

And then turning to the

00:21:18:24 - 00:21:51:16

example that we've just discussed within site D, um, the initial two fields along the Norton Road are outside of the order limits, as demonstrated on the screen here. So there's there's two white fields to the southeast of the scheme are not within the order limits. The road is um, the, the, uh, I don't know if someone could point with the, with the cursor if possible. And if we're able to do that, that's the road there. Exactly, exactly. So the the hinterland that surrounds the settlement to the south is separate from the scheme.

00:21:51:18 - 00:22:24:13

And until obviously you come alongside field D 19 which, which we acknowledge. So again I would query what is it within the settlement as we're looking at the settlement here, not road users, but the settlement that would be adversely affected by panels within the north of of D20 and d20 one. Again, particularly particularly considering that there is a there's quite a large ridge. I say large, but there's a ridgeline that runs along sort of north, east, southwest across that point, um, again, screening views and closing the settlement.

00:22:24:15 - 00:22:53:27

So it's it's trying to work out again given the the vegetation cover that surrounds Norton, as we can see on the, on the screen in front of us. Um, the existing offset, the push back away or the, the, the um, the lack of the old limits alongside Norton Road in this location. Um, but recognizing that there are going to be adverse effects until the mitigation measures have established alongside those roads in and out of Norton. However, the the core of Norton itself shares no indivisibility with the scheme.

00:23:00:01 - 00:23:02:17

Okay. I yeah I,

00:23:04:05 - 00:23:07:17

I think I understand um hang on.

00:23:15:07 - 00:23:18:04

So the the council

00:23:19:21 - 00:23:45:09

did touch on not just into visibility with the panels themselves, but the as I think in relation to the routes to the north west, out of Norton alongside the B9, um, the hedgerow, it was they, they, they expressed concern with the high hedgerow. Yeah. B9 having

00:23:47:02 - 00:24:04:00

effects on character as well. So am I right in understanding it was a reduction in to so to not have not have high out of character hedgerows and instead to pull that development back from the edge of the field?

00:24:04:06 - 00:24:07:15

Um Odette Shelby Wiltshire Council. That's. Yes, that's exactly right. Thank.

00:24:12:02 - 00:24:48:18

The applicant. One thing just to mention, obviously we we have an existing hedge line along that position. So the the embedded buffers are in play as well. So the part the the fence line in that location around field B9 would be a minimum of 15m away from the hedgerow. And then there'd be a further minimum of four metres between the fence line and the nearest panel infrastructure to allow the maintenance and management access around the edge of the array. So at the at its closest point, the panels would be um, 19m from the from the hedgerow.

00:24:50:19 - 00:24:54:06

But it's the hedgerow not 4.5m. That's the intention.

00:24:56:15 - 00:25:19:17

That is correct. My, my my response was really into it to Wiltshire Council decision to to push back the infrastructure away from the road. And what I'm suggesting is that it's already pushed back 19m from the road and that by the time the hedgerow has been reinforced and established and growing up to 4.5m, then that would be mitigating the appreciation of the array to the north east of the road.

00:25:20:09 - 00:25:31:16

I think some of the point Wiltshire Council wanted to make, however, it was about almost the height of that hedgerow is a change to character and I'll let Wiltshire Council come back, but I think that's the point you're making.

00:25:32:28 - 00:26:11:09

Uh, Will Holly, Wiltshire Council? Um, yes, that is that is one of the points, but another point which has just been raised by the applicant, of course, is the fact that they are putting other infrastructure between the, um, between the panels and the hedge lines. So there's going to be the access track or road fencing, etc.. The whole lot needs, in the council's opinion, needs to be moved back from that boundary so that we can have a lower hedge so that we can maintain more of the open views across that, uh, across the landscape.

00:26:15:02 - 00:26:39:10

Okay. Thank you. And, um, there's there's a similar approach. Well, there's another approach to Norton. Uh, or if you were to exit north and going north east past B10, is there similar concerns with that, that field that. Yeah, that's the one. The one that's circled.

00:26:49:00 - 00:26:58:15

By dirt shall be for Wiltshire Council. I don't understand. That's the point that the council has raised specifically. So I don't I don't think that is a concern to the same extent as the one we've just discussed.

00:27:02:11 - 00:27:23:12

I, I, I guess I was just trying to, to understand if, if the feasibility of the scheme from the road going northwest from Norton is a is a concern. Why not? The roads go to the northeast. What's the difference there in terms of character?

00:27:24:03 - 00:27:43:12

Mark Goodwin, what's your council? Um, I think the field you've just highlighted, sir, is in a in the field is slightly raised. Okay, so the hedgerow is slightly higher. Anyway. Um, it doesn't offer the same aspect of openness in views. The field you've just just highlighted there, sir.

00:27:43:14 - 00:28:08:03

And you said. Okay. Thank you. Um, so I'd now like to briefly touch on the existing field pattern and the impact that proposals might have. And to help with this. Could the applicant display figure 341, which is the similar plan but for lying down a um.

00:28:12:05 - 00:28:13:01

And

00:28:14:21 - 00:29:03:07

what I want to ask about is there's the proposed fence line around the areas of solar panels is shown on this plan as a black, uh, dashed line. You might need to zoom into the area of where panels are proposed. Um, and the fence line is in line down a is. Yeah. That's helpful. The fence line, if you zoomed back out again to show the whole of line down A is shown to group several fields together into one or into fewer number of larger fenced off areas, such that nine separate fields of solar panels are grouped into three fenced enclosures.

00:29:04:08 - 00:29:35:19

Um, and I've identified line down a as an example, but this is a similar approach seems to be taken across the line down A to E, where number. A number of fields are combined into one area, one fenced off area, and this raises a few questions. Um, so firstly, whether the effect on the historic field pattern has been of doing this has been considered.

00:29:36:12 - 00:29:37:02

Um,

00:29:39:02 - 00:30:03:21

maybe if I just if I'd just give my three questions and then let you respond and whether there would need to be a physical break in the hedgerows for this fence to pass through. And practically, would that then lead to different maintenance regime inside and outside the fence line, which would undermine the hedgerow being read as a visibly continuous field boundary?

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So it's all linked to how does this approach Affect how the character of the landscape, the field pattern of the landscape, is understood.

00:30:42:20 - 00:31:18:10

From the applicant. My colleague, Mr. Broderick, I was just discussing, um, to come to the the point regarding the the historic, um, hedgerow pattern. The the installation of the fence line wouldn't remove the, the hedgerows in their entirety if you if you were to imagine and given the fact that the hedgerows Assuming that grown to the worst case at 4.5. The fence lines are the maximum parameter of 2.5, so the hedgerows are always going to be taller than the fence line.

00:31:18:18 - 00:31:45:19

If you were to imagine an example where you have the the fence line and a hedgerow crossing at 90 degrees to each other, the the fence line would essentially go through the hedge and then the hedge would grow around and over the fence line. Now again, with the hedge line being taller essentially than the fence, it would be expected to be more dominant and therefore the historic pattern would be retained, which I think is what you're asking, sir.

00:31:46:29 - 00:31:53:00

Yes, that that is what I'm asking. But the fact that there is a fence line that prevents.

00:31:55:18 - 00:32:17:03

Being able to tend to the hedgerow as a continuous hedgerow, will that have a undesired effect of a different maintenance regime practically happening. And for that, that, um. Difference between inside the fence line outside the fence line to be exacerbated.

00:32:17:18 - 00:32:50:12

Chris Jackson, half the applicant, um, I think a, uh, we're able with the position of the fence line. So as I, as I discussed earlier, with the embedded buffers in at the fence line is always going to be 15m away from an existing hedge. Other than the parts where, where it, um, where, where it breaks it. And so where we have the external boundary hedge lines, they're able to be maintained both externally from the fence and onto the essentially the, the site side and the external side so they can be managed and maintained.

00:32:51:03 - 00:33:00:06

Okay. Where it, where it, where it breaks the uh, existing hedgerow pattern. Then it can be, um, maintained up to the fence line.

00:33:00:17 - 00:33:03:08

Plan project for the applicant. Just to clarify that the the.

00:33:03:10 - 00:33:03:25

Management.

00:33:03:27 - 00:33:04:23

Plans.

00:33:06:14 - 00:33:11:27

require management of all of those areas. So both within and outside of.

00:33:11:29 - 00:33:12:16

The fence line.

00:33:12:18 - 00:33:41:00

Where we're saying that we're maintaining buffer areas and things like that. So the nature of the maintenance activity may be different, but they, um, they the requirement to do a management activity is set out in the management plans that the it may be that those buffer areas are maintained to a

different, uh, different criteria than the planting that's been placed. The other side of the fence sign, for example. Okay.

00:33:42:09 - 00:34:09:12

Understood. Um, is there from a site security point of view, is there a possibility that, um, the hedges would need to be kept? You mentioned that the fence would just pass straight through the hedge, but is there a possibility that security requirements would mean that it would need to be cut back from either side of the fence line so that there wasn't a.

00:34:11:14 - 00:34:21:28

A reachable point. A point where the fence could more easily be climbed over due to the hedge being right up against it.

00:34:34:10 - 00:34:54:21

The applicant I think we'll need to take that point away just to confirm, we take on board your point in terms of whether you would need to have, um, an additional gap in the hedgerow to facilitate a continuous fence line, which I think is what you're saying, or whether the fence, whether the hedgerow itself provides sufficient, um, security for the applicant.

00:34:54:23 - 00:35:34:28

Well, it's more so I understand the intention of just of having the fence line run through the hedge. I just, uh, I want to know how we can be sure that that's. There's not going to be a larger chunk of hedge taken out on security grounds in the future. Um, and so, so just to clarify, can you, can you just reiterate what your position is on the effect that, um, this parceling of a fenced off enclosures has on the historic field pattern?

00:35:43:27 - 00:35:50:22

On behalf of the applicant. Um, our position that the historic field pattern is retained as a result of the scheme.

00:35:52:28 - 00:35:54:01

Okay. Thank you.

00:35:56:03 - 00:35:56:24

Um,

00:35:58:12 - 00:36:01:07

other parties want to comment on

00:36:02:24 - 00:36:07:27

this at all? No. Okay. If we move on to

00:36:09:14 - 00:36:14:21

legacy landscape. So sorry, Mr. Gazelka.

00:36:14:23 - 00:36:51:29

Yes, please. Thank you. Sarah. Apologies, Daniel Kusaka, for. Stop lying down. Um, we, um. My mistake when you were talking about not. And I thought you were just talking about, um, roads, and I just wanted to flag that. We did also have a concern about the setting aspect related to Norton on the footpaths around there. Um, and in, in our view, um, that is another aspect of the traversing into and out of Norton. So if you I'm not going to suggest we pull them up. But if you look at rep 1029, which is the most recent lamp, which shows Norton one, which is a footpath that goes off to the north east out of Norton.

00:36:52:01 - 00:37:31:13

You'll see there. But we understand why this is done. But the footpath walks past fields where you will just be able to clearly see the solar infrastructure through the fence, which is due to the fact that the applicant has made a decision about using fences rather than hedge lines to maintain the historic hedge hedge lines on the field patterns. But obviously that does have effects on how people experience entering and exiting. Uh, Norton. Um, so you can see it there circled. Yes. Um, and then there is a similar issue with and you'll remember, I spoke about it yesterday at the H naught ten and Hull one, which is on rep 3037.

00:37:32:26 - 00:38:05:19

Um, which has the same effect. But that's on your walk down towards Bradfield Manor and ultimately Hull Abington. Um, and just because we've dealt with the roads entering and exiting, um, Norton, um, we have that concern and certainly for my understanding at least, is for naught ten hole one, the applicant accepts that all stages of the scheme, there is a significant effect on that footpath. I suspect there's no way of fixing that because it goes through the very middle of the site. So, you know, we can't suggest a removal that would fix that problem.

00:38:05:21 - 00:38:40:00

But I just wanted to draw your attention to those as well. Um, and then just one final thing. Um, just a slight, possible, slight point of disagreement between us and the council. You have that road going out north east, which is sometimes shown as Honey Lane out of, um, Norton. You may just want to take a view if you've not been up there already, on how high those fields are next to that road. And I think we'd be of the view that you can see the sole of it's going to be there. So the concern of the council has about leaving north west out of Norton, we would say equally applies north east out of Norton.

00:38:40:10 - 00:38:45:21

Um, hopefully that very quickly summarises all the points that I wanted to get out.

00:38:46:04 - 00:39:16:23

Yeah. Thank you. That's helpful. And, um, the examples you gave of where, uh, where a footpath is right up against or or passes parallel to a fence line with panels. Um, we have asked the applicant to provide typical cross-sections and typical, uh, photo montages to so that we can understand what that experience is.

00:39:16:25 - 00:39:26:17

And I believe, um, I, I can't remember which deadline the applicant said they were going to provide them, but they they are going to be provided. Yes. Mr. Jackson.

00:39:26:19 - 00:39:32:22

Um, thank you, Chris Jackson, on behalf of the applicant. And yes, I think we've agreed to submit those five.

00:39:35:18 - 00:39:36:03

Sorry.

00:39:53:00 - 00:39:54:04

On five, I believe, sir.

00:39:54:13 - 00:39:57:01

Okay. Yes. Um, and then

00:39:58:29 - 00:40:12:27

on your. And then you also, Mr. Gazelka. You touched on what I now would like to come on to, um, which is to do with, um, the proposals

00:40:14:15 - 00:40:22:07

in relation to both the legacy landscape and, uh, mitigating impacts. So, um.

00:40:24:09 - 00:40:56:27

Uh, yes. Chapter eight states that where significant long term effects on public receptors remain at year 15. This is primarily due to the examples, uh, pointed out by stop line, stop line down. But where mitigation is not proposed, as it wouldn't be appropriate to the long term landscape, character and legacy landscape. Um, on the other hand, in response to concerns around heights of hedgerows and detrimental impact to the landscape character.

00:40:56:29 - 00:41:22:18

The applicant suggested that these could be, um, reinstated back to a position closer to the baseline at decommissioning. So, and I, I note the comments you made earlier about hedgerows, um, at the point of decommissioning would be protected by the legislation at the time. But

00:41:24:13 - 00:41:36:17

what consideration has the application, has the applicant given to any mitigation measures that could be removed, reinstated to a baseline condition at decommissioning point?

00:41:38:17 - 00:41:45:06

Chris Jackson, on behalf of the applicant, um, I think obviously we touched on the, um,

00:41:47:00 - 00:42:18:15

the requirement within the decommissioning strategy. So within rep one 100 and the details in the outline lamp 283 early this morning. About headway management post decommissioning and how that would take place within that two year period, um, following removal of the panels, um, and that, you know, all hedgerows and all limits would be assessed to consider best ecological land management practices applicable at the time of decommissioning. So we've got that in there at the moment. So which looks at how you can best manage the hedgerows.

00:42:18:17 - 00:42:58:27

Whether they're returning back to the baseline position is it's a day or whatever that baseline position may be at the point of decommissioning. Um, and then what we've, what we've looked at and it was, it was touched on earlier by, by Mr. Gazelka, I believe, um, is that we've got um, we've been mindful of the layout of the mitigation so that the scheme post decommissioning isn't left with a fragmented landscape pattern or field pattern that was based on the need for visual screening now or during the operational time of the scheme.

00:42:58:29 - 00:43:29:04

But beyond that would be, um, a relic of a removed infrastructure. So what we've tried to avoid is to fragment or break up fields by using, say, it's a diagonal hedgerow that might run through a diagonal plate right away. So if you've got a square field and a footpath runs straight for the middle of it, we could by mitigation, you could you could then plant the new hedgerow along either side of it, screen of use the fields. But at the point of decommissioning the infrastructure would be removed.

00:43:29:06 - 00:44:00:25

And as we discussed, you know, we expect the legislation to be in place to protect that hedgerow. And you'd be left with a wide tram track essentially for the middle of the field, fragmenting that that field at the point it's returned back to agriculture and then in itself could be perceived to be as a as a incongruous element within a landscape that is disrupting the the fabric and the character of the landscape at the point of decommissioning. So what we've what we've tried to do is by using those wide buffers, those offsets, um, away from, from the infrastructure 15m for rights of way to the fence line.

00:44:00:27 - 00:44:32:04

And we've tried to create wide margins that and recognise the visual harm. And those, those significant adverse effects that you've just identified are predominantly associated with those public rights of way here within the order limits, where they are passing directly through fields and infrastructure and panels and wherever we've had that, that long term view of, it's more important to maintain the long term landscape, character and legacy landscape rather than to mitigate the short term harm that we may have for the operational phase of the scheme.

00:44:34:07 - 00:45:10:21

Okay. Thank you. So let me point out an example where that has been done. So in line down D it appears that a field? D13 16 and 17 do have an additional proposed hedgerow um on the landscape and ecology mitigation plans, separating the public right of way from the array. And D13 in particular. Does the public right of way cuts diagonally across the field and a new hedgerow is introduced.

00:45:10:23 - 00:45:12:09

So I just want to understand.

00:45:14:12 - 00:45:25:00

Firstly is the is would this be permanent? Would this be left at decommissioning. And why was this considered appropriate in this location but not elsewhere?

00:45:25:25 - 00:45:59:24

Chris Jackson, the applicant. Um, yes. Thanks, sir. I mean, it's a great example really, where we have the course Brook and what we've what we've looked at is obviously we've got the the existing public rights of way and a proposed, proposed permissive path coming in along, along the brook itself. and what we are seeking to do along the river corridor is to increase what we call the riparian planting. So the wet, wet woodland and and wet tussock grassland. And that would help widen that margin and and expand it out.

00:45:59:26 - 00:46:36:14

And so there's a slight, um, rise in the land where that, where the, where the footpath is and where the hedgerow is going in. And in this particular location, it was deemed appropriate to install that hedgerow so that the galls brook post-war during obviously the operational phase, it was separated and creates a very, um scenic and rural location along the gorge. But then also at the long term that that could be in itself protected and separated from the agricultural practices that would take place within the agricultural field, within D13, once it's returned back to agriculture.

00:46:36:16 - 00:46:53:00

So our expectation is that the the goes brook margin would the, the the riparian corridor and all of that planting would be retained. And so therefore the hedgerow in this location was deemed appropriate so that the farming practices in the future would be separate away from the gorse Brook.

00:46:54:14 - 00:47:34:21

Okay. Thank you. That's that's helpful. Um, if I could turn to Wiltshire Council, um, and noted that in your written representation, you suggested a secondary hedgerow at gate entrances to reduce visibility. Could could be proposed, could be planted at gate entrances to reduce the visibility of the proposed development. To what do you agree with the applicant's position in its response to, um, your written representation, that the visual impact associated with the views view these through these entrances doesn't warrant a potential permanent change.

00:47:36:21 - 00:48:18:25

Mark Goodwin, Wiltshire Council I don't think, uh. that the full effects of those vehicle access points have been fully, um, detailed yet obviously. And I do think that highway visibility plays and the requirement to keep hedgerows low, potentially, and depending on the alignment. Um, I mean, Wiltshire Council accepted they're not characteristic ways of potentially, um, trying to reduce visual effects. But I think, uh, certainly on some of the longer, straighter roads, you know, the visual effects will be experienced potentially both ways where an intervening hedgerow wouldn't intercept and you will see into these fields.

00:48:18:27 - 00:48:48:20

And, um, personally speaking, as a, as a landscape officer, um, we've used some of these measures prior on, on, on a, on a, on a quarry access, for instance. And um, it overall it retains the character of the, of the road. That's, that's my personal view as a landscape architect, so that uncharacteristic element is worth it. To screen those entrance exits, which can be quite, um,

00:48:50:12 - 00:48:52:26

uh, quite impactful in my opinion.

00:48:52:28 - 00:49:06:13

But it's the example you gave of a quarry is that it's a, it's a, it's a more permanent change, the landscape in itself. Whereas I think the applicant's say at times. Yeah. Sorry. Go ahead.

00:49:06:15 - 00:49:31:03

Yeah. I mean time scale, if it was a temporary effect I would probably concur with you. But a 60 year period of time I will never class as a temporary effect. It's a long term substantial effect. So that's that's why I've come to this conclusion. And removing short sections or even retaining them as a slight anomaly to character, I don't think would be particularly harmful in the scheme of things.

00:49:35:29 - 00:49:42:03

Okay. Thank you. Um. Anything from stop lying down on this.

00:49:42:29 - 00:49:43:23

Thanks, sir. Carly.

00:49:43:25 - 00:49:47:00

Tinkler, stop lying down. Um, again, I find myself.

00:49:47:02 - 00:49:47:26

Slightly agreeing with.

00:49:47:28 - 00:50:23:03

Both sides here. Um. And I think that the solution for, um, what Wiltshire Council, um, would like to see, because I agree entirely that those open. I mean, it is difficult to unless you've actually seen one the width of the aprons that are required to accommodate the aisles and other large vehicles, they're enormous. I mean, they really are huge. And so the gaps and you do have to keep hedges low for sightlines over. And so they become massive concrete urbanizing features.

00:50:23:05 - 00:50:56:27

So I agree with the idea of planting something to screen the view in. But there's no reason that. But that could be seen as a as a temporary, if you like, hedge, it's a sacrificial hedge. It would come out, um, at decommissioning because it would disrupt the field patterns. But if you took it out afterwards, then it would have served its purpose. You might not want to make it to species rich. You know, you might put something that's not going to and be overrun with rare animals.

00:50:57:15 - 00:51:24:22

I was going to suggest Lalonde, I think I don't. Um, or it could be, you know, it could be a, a screen fence to, to screen, which so long as I think we're going to come on to color, but as long as the color and materials, um, achieved the objective, I think, I think that I think the objective that Wiltshire Council wants to see could be done in a way that would not end up with disrupted field patterns.

00:51:30:22 - 00:51:44:18

Okay. Thank you. That's that's helpful. Um, can I turn to the applicant for for their comment on some of those suggestions? Uh, please. Thanks.

00:51:45:17 - 00:51:47:24

Chris Jackson, on behalf of the applicant. Um.

00:51:50:00 - 00:51:51:06

The, uh.

00:51:53:10 - 00:52:28:21

The I think the term that we've sort of coined internally to this approach is a hedgerow hook. Essentially, it's where you have the the access point and it's a it's like a hook that comes up and comes around and intrudes into the field and to, to allow vehicles to, to sweep in, but then also to, um, to screen the visibility in as long as it comes along the, uh, the width for the access. Um, I think in themselves, I think it could be incongruous.

00:52:28:23 - 00:53:03:07

I think, I think it's, it's a trade off between the visibility through the access points and the potential impacts associated with this, this change. Um, what I would say is typically, though, where you do have an access, it is, um, oblique to the direction of travel. Mostly it's going to be, you know, to the side. Whereas drivers and vehicles attention is typically straight ahead. Um, it's obviously it's going to be transient. So it's going to be taken at a pace as you, as you pass this gap.

00:53:03:09 - 00:53:50:05

But I'm accepting that there are going to be views where you have them. Um, just to touch on, I think the the response I gave in in my rep was that looking at the Fosse Way, there are only four locations along the entirety of the Fosse Way, where there is a proposed access that has a solar field behind it. So these occasions where you would have a view through to infrastructure are quite, um, few and far between in the grand scheme of Of the scale of the development. Um, and so it's I think we've just got to be mindful that the and particularly Miss tinker's point that the, you know, I'm not suggesting we hand over any point, but the, uh, the mitigation in itself doesn't ultimately lead to adverse effect.

00:53:50:07 - 00:54:00:09

And it's, you know, it comes back to the, um, the poor old lady, the swallow, the spider. We keep getting more and more and more to try and screen the, uh, the previous mitigation point. That's all.

00:54:02:12 - 00:54:30:02

Okay. Thanks. Um, and, uh, the point that Miss Stickler made about the visibility space. So, um, she referenced the, um, large visibility displays for construction. I would say the visibility displays be able to be reduced for the operational, um, access. And how is that? How is that secured?

00:54:44:06 - 00:55:19:02

For the applicant. Yeah. Just to confirm that the the there are the access widths required during the construction phase. And then there is a narrow width required during the operational phase. So where it's the same access that's being retained. So some some access points are purely for um construction and some will then be retained um during operation but a narrower width. And it's the management plans that confirm which of those accesses will be fully reinstated and which of those will be reinstated to a smaller width during operation.

00:55:19:04 - 00:55:34:12

So that it is it is controlled by the management plan. So there wouldn't be a scenario where you would leave a wider. Yes Ale access. During the operational phase, it would be reduced down to the maintenance access width.

00:55:35:04 - 00:55:43:22

Thank you. Um, so if we then move on to cumulative landscape character effects. Um.

00:55:47:00 - 00:56:28:12

So stop lying down. Highlighted in its response to ex q1 LV 1.24 that the the guidelines for Landscape visual impact assessment um gl VA. Uh states that at paragraph 7.28 that the most significant cumulative landscape effects are likely to be those that would give rise to changes in the landscape character of the study area of such an extent as to have a major effect on its key characteristics, and even in some cases, to transform it into a different landscape type.

00:56:28:18 - 00:57:07:10

So as, as with, um, the proposed development alone, where questions ask one why cumulative effects to landscape character were not defined in relation to the scoped in character types or character areas. And um, again, it would be of assistance to the Xa for the applicant to provide a commentary on how the most relevant landscape character types, in this case limestone, limestone, lowland and Lovington rolling lowlands would be impacted by the proposed development.

00:57:07:24 - 00:57:34:24

Um, and what what I'm interested in is a description of how the key characteristics of character areas would be affected, and whether the key characteristics of the character areas or character types would be so changed by the cumulative solar development in the area, so as to effectively transform it into a different landscape type.

00:57:40:08 - 00:57:47:17

This is potentially something to provide in writing, but I'd welcome a response now as well.

00:57:56:29 - 00:57:57:29

On behalf of the applicant.

00:58:00:00 - 00:58:32:22

I'm just going to ask a point of clarification. So absolutely, we can take this away and come back. What I'm what I'm trying to clear on. It's the it's the cumulative assessment to the key characteristics identified within the landscape character type in the area. And so you'd like us to apply the landscape character assessment in the area to those areas as it was and type as it were. So within the defined, um, type 16 limestone lowlands and within the defined the highlands and rolling lowlands.

00:58:34:12 - 00:58:51:25

Yes. And as an outcome, what I want to understand is, ah, um, the key characteristics, if you look at the key characteristics and the extent of cumulative solar development,

00:58:53:19 - 00:59:04:07

does large scale solar become a key characteristic? And does it diminish the other key characteristics of those landscape character types?

00:59:04:27 - 00:59:20:08

Thank you sir. Um, I suppose I would take this opportunity then just to just to one more point of clarification. When we're talking about cumulative here, we're in direct reference to the the long and short list as identified when the cumulative sites.

00:59:22:27 - 00:59:28:15

So I do have follow up questions as to what is in what has been.

00:59:30:09 - 00:59:36:18

Which developments have been included in the in the assessment on of um,

00:59:38:04 - 01:00:00:10

assessment of the cumulative effects on landscape character. So I'd first like to ask you to clarify, um, whether you're a cumulative assessment for landscape character includes just solar development or does it include other development. Uh, for example, best residential commercial road infrastructure?

01:00:01:06 - 01:00:03:26

Okay. Um, so.

01:00:07:18 - 01:00:13:14

So just to clarify, we're here, we're talking about new developments, not existing development within the landscape.

01:00:13:16 - 01:00:16:12

So yes. So okay.

01:00:17:29 - 01:00:18:24

Because it is.

01:00:18:29 - 01:00:55:02

Yes. So not not exist. It's so. It's so existing. Development is the baseline. And we're talking about new development. And I'm asking for clarification as to what's what's been included. So stop writing down questions. This um in its LVI. Ah. So paragraph 12.6 of rep one 170. Um, they questioned what types of solar developments. What types of developments have been included in the cumulative assessment? Um, so I want to I want to understand that from you.

01:00:55:04 - 01:01:06:14

And then I also want to understand, uh, from Stockholm and Wiltshire Council, whether there's agreement as to which developments have been included and should be included.

01:01:09:04 - 01:01:46:23

Thank you sir. I think I understood your position on that. Um, so the the starting point is, obviously. It's the long list that community development that's generated and and then obviously that's refined down to the short list, um, with regards to the landscape visual impact assessment, what we've what we've looked at is following um, paragraph 7.10 within the three. So paragraph 710, which says that the focus of cumulative assessment will be on the additional effect of the project in conjunction with other developments of the same type.

01:01:47:15 - 01:02:25:15

Um, as for example, in the case of wind farm. So the other wind farm schemes, um, so given this statement from Javier three at paragraph 710, what we do is we've, we've taken the short list that has been identified through consultation with Wiltshire Council, and then we've sieved that to identify similar, um, nature developments so that any form of renewable development that we would have on the short list. So any form of renewable development, whether that's Des or um or solar, um, was then carried forward into the the assessment.

01:02:25:17 - 01:02:59:18

You mentioned residential where we would typically pick up on an a residential scheme within the shortlist would be to identify it as an additional receptor. So what we'd look at is how is that being affected, uh, in a future state by the, by the scheme. So that's how we pick up on, on residential schemes. And once we've identified the, um, the short list and then identified the, uh, the schemes of the same nature, um, that leaves us with 14 schemes, of which there are no what we refer to as community development sites.

01:02:59:20 - 01:03:37:24

There are no schemes, development sites. Within the one kilometre study area. There is a one cumulative element site within the two kilometre wider study area, which was identified as Community Development Site 229 um, which was at the time was an EIA screening opinion for a proposed 20 megawatt solar farm to the north of Cawston, where there is an existing solar scheme. Um, and then there were two community development sites within the the five kilometre outer study area, that being seed sites 221 and CD site 243.

01:03:37:26 - 01:04:13:05

Now Human Development site 243 is for a solar farm, up to 40MW at land at Red barn, which is um east of Kingston, Saint Michael down at Chippenham, which is about 3.3km away from London EE to the south. Thank you. Um, and then, um, the future development site two, two one, which lands to the south of the M4 at Leigh Delamere. Um, which again I believe is for a solar scheme which is, um, located to the south of the M4 and Approximately, um,

01:04:14:23 - 01:04:56:10

uh, 3.84km south of London. See? Um, and then the remainder of the identified development sites set within the the wider ten kilometre study area, um, as identified. Now, given that we've we are visual assessment for the overlay went out to two kilometres out to ten kilometre area. We've looked at impact on landscape character. Given that the lack of visibility of the scheme within that that area and what we have since done as well has produced a, um, a series of technical notes to support some of the sequential, um, visibility tests within that area.

01:04:58:03 - 01:05:30:13

Yes. And, um, we will come on to this, the sequential visual aspect. But, um, I think what I want to make sure is that the cumulative the the effect of the of cumulative developments on the landscape character of the those landscape character types is, um, is understood by us. Um, so yeah.

01:05:30:15 - 01:05:33:06

So I would welcome uh,

01:05:35:00 - 01:05:49:21

yes. Yeah. I will come to you. Um, so yes, I would, I would welcome that a that assessment of how, how those developments, um,

01:05:51:19 - 01:05:54:23

might change the, the, the.

01:05:57:06 - 01:06:02:10

The key characteristics of those landscape character areas. So I'll just come to watch Council.

01:06:02:12 - 01:06:11:08

So Odette shall be Wiltshire Council. So just following on from what you've just said, sir. So the particular part.

01:06:11:10 - 01:06:43:19

Of the guidelines for landscape and visual impact assessment, um, that we would invite the applicant to consider in carrying out this cumulative landscape effect is paragraph 7.28. Um, because the applicant was saying, do do we only look at sort of cumulative future schemes coming forward? And to some extent that is the purpose of a cumulative assessment. But there's also a question when you're looking at changes to key characteristics, whether your development is at the point, the tips, the balance. It's that question of tipping the balance such that the key characteristics are changed.

01:06:43:21 - 01:07:01:27

And that requires also an assessment of what's already there in the baseline. So the baseline can't be ignored when an assessment is done of whether the key characteristics would change as a result of this. You can't just leave aside those schemes that are there already because of this question of tipping the balance.

01:07:04:13 - 01:07:09:27

Yes. Understood. So in that sense, I agree it would be helpful to

01:07:11:24 - 01:07:23:20

to identify the existing similar developments as well in that section. Um, before I come back to you, could I come to stop lying down on this as well?

01:07:23:25 - 01:08:00:01

Thank you, Sir Daniel Gazelka, for stop lying down. Um, we agree with the point that's just been made. Two other small points from us. Um, first, um, the applicant, when it was talking about LCAs,

referred to, um, the Huffington Rolling Lowland, which is the relevant LCF for the 2004 local character assessment. Um, it may have just been mentioned. He only mentioned one and was going to mention the overall had the other in mind, but we'd also welcome the ones from the 2005 local character assessment as well, which is Malmesbury Corsham Limestone Lowland.

01:08:00:08 - 01:08:33:22

Um, just because they're actually drawn in slightly different ways. Um, and so it may be that there's differences in um, how that's approach. The other thing on cumulative. Um, we've just looked at 728. Again, in Bolivia, we look back at 710. Um, it's developments of the same type. Um, of course. And as the applicant has, has referred to, um, this is a solar scheme. It's a PV scheme. But obviously you've got to understand what is included in that, which is not just PV, but it's also BS.

01:08:33:24 - 01:08:59:28

It's also electrical infrastructure like 400, um, four 400 kV substations and it's road improvements as well. Um, all of those things are part of the description of development in this case. And so when assessing what is, um, development of the same type, we would say that that needs to be considered when writing the long list to understand, you know, for example, is there urban development that is making changes to roads which should be considered?

01:09:05:13 - 01:09:19:10

And I said thank you. And then just can I just ask for Wiltshire Council to. Can you make can you be clear on what the types of development you consider should be included?

01:09:21:12 - 01:09:35:04

Will Hartley for Wiltshire Council? Um, yeah, we would concur. Exactly. With the stop line down. And those are the development areas. I was just going to mention actually, that should be included.

01:09:36:04 - 01:09:38:27

Okay. Thank you. In which case I'll ask.

01:09:38:29 - 01:10:22:00

The project, the applicant. I just want to be clear here because there seems to be a change of position. So the long list was agreed with Wiltshire Council. The short list was also agreed with Wiltshire Council before the cumulative assessment was undertaken. And what we're hearing today on behalf of Wiltshire Council is that's not in fact, the position. And there are a number of other unknown developments that should have been included in that assessment. So before the applicant is required to do any further work, it would be very helpful if Wiltshire Council could actually clarify their position as to whether they're now saying that the short list of developments for the purposes of the cumulative assessment.

01:10:22:02 - 01:10:56:07

So this is new development, not development, not existing development that forms part of the baseline, but new developments. For the purposes of the short list that set out in the cumulative um, in chapter 21, if they're now saying that that list is no longer correct, it would be helpful to understand if that's what they're actually saying now or whether we're actually talking about existing development

that forms part of the baseline, because I'm a little unclear as to what the the most recent comments on behalf of Wiltshire Council related to.

01:10:57:19 - 01:11:10:24

Okay, but um, Separate to what has been agreed with Wiltshire Council in the past. Out of this discussion, I'm seeing the value in

01:11:12:15 - 01:11:24:27

having an assessment, or at least a commentary relative to the key characteristics of the relevant landscape character types of um.

01:11:27:07 - 01:11:49:13

The development in combination with accumulative other developments, other renewable developments. And I, I do see at the I it does make sense to me that similar developments should include developments which um,

01:11:51:00 - 01:12:18:22

maybe not the, the main characteristic, but yes, there are implications to the road network from the proposed development. So it makes sense to also include other schemes which affect the road network as well in that in that commentary on the key key character, key characteristics of the landscape, character types. I think what I, what I don't feel like is before us is it set out how

01:12:20:22 - 01:12:49:03

how the how the character, how the character types are affected by the development and similar developments. Um, the I understand how the the the approach you've taken with the study areas, but it doesn't it's not giving me a, a picture of of how those character types are affected. Does that help.

01:12:50:09 - 01:13:21:09

That? I think we take the point in terms of what you're looking to understand. What I was just trying to clarify there is that. Obviously, our short list contains different types of development in the cumulative chapter. And what I was just seeking to clarify is whether Wiltshire Council is saying that the list of developments that we've included in our short list is now no longer sufficient for them because it includes residential, commercial, mixed use as well as energy.

01:13:21:11 - 01:14:02:13

And that's the point I wasn't clear about. It was suggested just then that we needed to relook at our short list. Um, and maybe I misinterpreted what was being said there. And actually, it was at the point that you were saying about in terms of the character area assessment rather than a suggestion that we are missing some proposed developments from our short list. So I would I would be appreciated if we could just clarify whether Wiltshire Council is saying we've missed some some developments, proposed developments, not not things that are built but proposed developments if they're saying we've missed something from our short list, but if that's not what they're saying and I've misunderstood, then that would be helpful to understand.

01:14:02:15 - 01:14:03:10

Thank you.

01:14:05:01 - 01:14:09:10

Um, yes, I agree it would be helpful to have that clarification.

01:14:18:04 - 01:14:38:25

If it helps briefly in response to that, um, Odette shall be Wiltshire Council. Um, we have there was a question from the examining authority on the cumulative list, and Wiltshire Council has said in its response that it will be providing a fuller answer on that at deadline for. So we will respond. A deadline for.

01:14:41:29 - 01:14:44:07

Okay. Thank you. Um.

01:14:46:24 - 01:14:47:09

So.

01:14:49:18 - 01:14:51:11

Yes, Miss Jackson.

01:14:51:13 - 01:15:24:08

Thank you. I'm Chris Jackson, half the applicant. Um, just a few points I'd like to sort of round up if possible. Um, the the existing solar developments and renewable developments, they exist all form part of the existing baseline. So the LDA has been undertaken against the existing baseline. The game to assessment then looks at the developments from the the long and short list. So we have a assessment of the the tipping points as it was referred to within the LDA. That's what that is fundamentally looked at.

01:15:24:10 - 01:15:59:03

It then considers the the cumulative schemes from from the shortlist the of the same nature within the cumulative assessment. So you've got that baseline identification. You then have baseline plus line down and the cumulative is baseline lime down cumulative sites. Now what I'd just like to point out and I think I've mentioned it in my reps previously in regards to looking at Um, essentially man defined lines on plans regarding landscape character areas.

01:15:59:06 - 01:16:40:21

So obviously we've got a defined boundary for for limestone lowland and for the Clements Lowland and the Poston and Malmesbury lowlands. And one of the, one of the issues that I, I raised and one of the reasons for the the approach to study area methodology, which fundamentally was agreed with Wiltshire um, throughout this process, um, is that you you risk through the assessment of um, looking at the landscape area or landscape character type as a defined spatial region on a plan, you run the risk of, um, using it to essentially water down the assessment based on the scale that that receptor becomes.

01:16:40:23 - 01:17:11:16

So an easy way of thinking about it is if you look at the national character areas, they're extremely large, extremely broad tracts of land, of which a development is even a scale of lime down is a small

development. When a match or a small, um, spatial element within a large space. And so there is a risk through the idea of saying, well, actually, because it only occupies that small pinprick in that bottom corner. The fundamental characteristics of this large area remain intact.

01:17:11:18 - 01:17:43:16

The level of harm is exactly the same. You know, lime down will deliver the landscape effects. It delivers all you're doing by bringing in the landscape character areas to to test it against is giving it predefined areas. And obviously the larger the the line you draw, the larger the area. There is a risk that you can water down a level of effect. As I said, the harm delivered from this scheme or any scheme is always going to be what it will be. It's just how you risk drawing that. And that can often be, um, particularly noticeable where you have a scheme that sits on the boundary of one character area.

01:17:43:18 - 01:18:17:10

So there are direct effects, landscape, character within that area, but it's neighbouring character areas in doing stuff as indirect effects or and and what you would essentially, you know, be accused of saying as I've through my work when I've reviewed, um, landscape and visual impact assessments on behalf of local authorities or even acted on behalf of DCO examinations, there's a risk that through the scale of the, um, landscape character area, you are forcing the, the, the scale of the harm to be, um, comparatively watered down.

01:18:17:12 - 01:18:50:13

And so regardless of the scale of the the lines that are drawn on a plan, the, the, the level of harm will be what it will be. And it's then it's it's how we are ultimately reporting that. So that's, that's the reason for the, for the study areas. And that's why when particularly when we've got a large scheme such as lime down that I mean it's slightly unusual in this case that it all sits within one landscape character type. The previous DCO that I worked on, it spread multiple landscape character types and different different lines.

01:18:50:19 - 01:19:21:06

I think we've picked up on that on this scheme. You know that this will only occupy, um, 3.41% of the Lavington rolling lowland, which is which is a small percentage. And so what I want to be mindful of is that we're not saying, well, at 3.4%, it's it's diminutive. It's dismissive and dismissive just because it's a small percentage of a larger character area. If that character area were twice as large, it would only be 1.5%. If it was smaller, that percentage would increase.

01:19:21:08 - 01:19:28:02

And so it's just I'm just demonstrating the rationale behind the approach we've taken to the assessment.

01:19:28:04 - 01:19:32:12

So yes. And that is understood. Um,

01:19:33:29 - 01:19:37:12

so character areas um.

01:19:40:26 - 01:20:18:09

By definition are an area of landscape that shares a character. And so, um, so a change to that Cher's landscape character is, uh, I find a good way of understanding the impact on landscape character. I don't think anyone suggested that we should be looking at the national character area scale. So the question comes about what scale of character area should we be looking at? And, um, we have I understand the, the approach of the study areas and, and we've got that before us.

01:20:18:11 - 01:20:48:02

So what? Yeah, I think I think it's understood what I'm looking for. Um, and and why I'm looking for that. Um, before we move on, does anyone have any further comment, any representations they would like to make under the landscape character, any of the points we've discussed? Um, I see a hand, uh, behind Mister Cossack. Can we get a either a roving microphone or if you want to

01:20:49:28 - 01:20:51:24

come up to the table and.

01:20:54:20 - 01:20:55:17

Um, Jane Clark.

01:20:55:19 - 01:20:56:22

I'm interested.

01:20:56:29 - 01:20:57:22

Party.

01:20:58:02 - 01:21:03:06

Um, arising out of the comments on the, um, fields coming to the north.

01:21:03:21 - 01:21:04:17

West of.

01:21:04:19 - 01:21:05:04

Of.

01:21:05:06 - 01:21:05:21

Norton.

01:21:05:23 - 01:21:09:16

And the comments that made B9 um, and.

01:21:09:18 - 01:21:13:16

Up that road, um, there are very clear.

01:21:13:18 - 01:21:22:10

Gaps, both at B9 and at B6, which give amazing long views into the, uh, CNL.

01:21:22:26 - 01:21:23:28

Across.

01:21:24:00 - 01:21:41:05

What is a very low and flat area, which will be completely changed notwithstanding the hedge hook or whatever it is that is suggested. Um, particularly, I think the entry into B6 just by the Fos.

01:21:43:04 - 01:21:47:27

Okay. Thank you. And to clarify is that views northwards to the.

01:21:48:04 - 01:21:57:14

It's northwards to the kennel and indeed eastward towards dovecote, Foxley manor. So it's north east and north west.

01:22:00:06 - 01:22:00:21

Right.

01:22:00:23 - 01:22:01:08

Yeah.

01:22:01:27 - 01:22:06:09

No I think I understand. Thank you. Yeah.

01:22:11:24 - 01:22:34:29

If you did want to submit an an annotated plan, then that would, that would be helpful. I, I think I think I can see which which entrance is to the field you're referring to. But for so that we can be sure that I've understood. Yeah. An annotated plan would be helpful. Are there any other comments? Any? Yes. Which council?

01:22:35:27 - 01:23:09:00

Wiltshire council. Mark Goodwin. Just a follow on from Mr. Jackson's Point. Um. The council has consistently highlighted its concerns about the approach to cumulative landscape assessment in the limestone lowland type. It highlighted right from the very start of this process that it got this really, um, quite, um, deep concerns about clustering of solar developments within this specific landscape type.

01:23:09:28 - 01:23:47:09

Um, so it's really quite critical in the council's view that existing and proposed forms of that development, including Bess, are actually cumulatively, cumulatively assessed so that we can understand whether or not the limestone lowland type or it's the limestone lowland character areas are being incrementally turned into a solar landscape, and that should include considerations of character and fabric as well as visual.

01:23:47:15 - 01:23:50:00

And I think that's all I want to say. Thank you sir.

01:23:50:03 - 01:23:50:27

Thank you.

01:23:54:00 - 01:23:57:26

Anyone else before I ask the applicant to respond?

01:23:59:14 - 01:24:06:20

No. So, applicant, would you like to respond to the either of those points?

01:24:16:17 - 01:24:55:18

Of the applicant? Um, I think we we understand the position that Wiltshire Council are asking of us. And obviously, the assessment you've asked us to undertake as well. And I think once we will undertake that assessment, uh, focusing on the the limestone landscape character to type, um, which is again, it is a departure away from the agreed methodology. Um, but we'll. We'll undertake that. Um, and again I would direct. We don't have them on screen anymore, but we have set out the, um, the existing and the included community development schemes alongside the limestone line down and scheme within the cumulative assessment drawings.

01:24:55:20 - 01:25:11:26

And so the Schemes of assessment has undertaken an assessment of the impact on landscape character based on the existing lime down scheme and the cumulative schemes, which includes solar. There's electrical cable connections, um, as as identified from the shortlist.

01:25:11:28 - 01:25:20:25

So so that that was the percentage land use change figures in the bottom left of that drawing. Is that what you're referring to there?

01:25:22:22 - 01:25:31:26

The applicant. Yes. Correct. The the numbers I referenced earlier, um, are looking at the the schemes that have come from the, the shortlist that are included within the cumulative assessment.

01:25:34:21 - 01:25:36:18

Okay. Thank you. Um.

01:25:49:06 - 01:26:25:28

I think, uh, so that that brings us to the end of, um, uh, agenda item for landscape character. So next we'll move on to, um, agenda item five, which is visual impact. Uh, possibly a good a good point for our afternoon break. And then we'll, um, we'll get through visual impact and design and parameters before closing. So the times now 336 if we come back at 350 to give us just under 15 minutes.