



Planning Inspectorate
Arolygiaeth Gynllunio

Hearing Transcript

Project:	Meridian Solar Farm
Hearing:	Transcript of Issue Specific Hearing 1 (ISH1) – Part 2
Date:	9 September 2026

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

It is not a verbatim text of what was said at the above hearing. The content was produced using artificial intelligence voice to text software. It may, therefore, include errors and should be assumed to be unedited.

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

1

00:00:01,600 --> 00:00:05,260

Welcome back, everybody. It's 12:05, so it's time for us to

2

00:00:05,420 --> 00:00:06,160

resume.

3

00:00:07,760 --> 00:00:11,520

We have a couple of short questions left on agenda item

4

00:00:11,900 --> 00:00:15,280

four. But to make sure that we make the most of the Environment Agency while

5

00:00:15,300 --> 00:00:19,220

they're here, we're going to move to agenda item

6

00:00:19,460 --> 00:00:23,120

seven, and then if we have time before lunch, we'll finish off

7

00:00:23,160 --> 00:00:26,380

agenda item four. Are there any objections to that?

8

00:00:33,240 --> 00:00:35,740

Okay. So moving to agenda item

9

00:00:36,560 --> 00:00:37,080

seven,

10

00:00:39,520 --> 00:00:40,690

I'd like to

11

00:00:41,960 --> 00:00:44,600

start by inviting the Environment Agency,

12

00:00:47,480 --> 00:00:48,089

Ms. Locke,

13

00:00:51,160 --> 00:00:51,920

to give us

14

00:00:55,060 --> 00:00:58,520
a summary of your concerns from the relevant

15
00:00:58,600 --> 00:01:02,400
reps, expand on any of them as you want

16
00:01:02,440 --> 00:01:05,980
to, and then let us know what progress the Environment

17
00:01:06,040 --> 00:01:09,740
Agency understands has been made between the two parties since your
relevant rep

18
00:01:09,780 --> 00:01:11,200
was submitted.

19
00:01:15,080 --> 00:01:18,750
Good morning, madam. Thank you for moving the agenda item to the

20
00:01:18,820 --> 00:01:22,510
morning. It's much appreciated. It's Liz Locke

21
00:01:22,540 --> 00:01:25,580
here, speaking on behalf of the Environment Agency.

22
00:01:26,360 --> 00:01:28,980
And I've got with me my colleagues from

23
00:01:29,860 --> 00:01:31,500
our different disciplines.

24
00:01:33,600 --> 00:01:33,960
So

25
00:01:35,200 --> 00:01:37,440
in summary, we've made our relevant reps.

26
00:01:38,220 --> 00:01:38,800
We've

27
00:01:40,040 --> 00:01:42,820

raised issues concerning flood risk,

28

00:01:44,500 --> 00:01:45,540
geomorphology,

29

00:01:47,020 --> 00:01:47,860
flood modeling,

30

00:01:48,840 --> 00:01:49,560
fisheries,

31

00:01:51,420 --> 00:01:55,360
and we've also got some comments to make regarding water

32

00:01:55,400 --> 00:01:56,120
resources.

33

00:01:58,600 --> 00:01:58,940
So-

34

00:01:59,240 --> 00:02:03,080
For now, Ms. Locke, could we concentrate on the flooding issues, and then I'll

35

00:02:03,140 --> 00:02:06,180
come back to you for some of the others when we get to those questions.

36

00:02:07,280 --> 00:02:11,200
Yes. Thank you. So, can I bring in my colleague, Sasha Lavers,

37

00:02:11,740 --> 00:02:15,600
who is our flood risk specialist, who has been working on this

38

00:02:15,680 --> 00:02:16,240
project?

39

00:02:16,760 --> 00:02:17,980
That'd be great. Thank you.

40

00:02:20,920 --> 00:02:22,680

Hi, everyone. Yes, Sasha Lavers here.

41

00:02:22,740 --> 00:02:25,700

So flood risk specialist at the Environment Agency.

42

00:02:26,760 --> 00:02:30,600

From our relevant reps, we had a few points to add, which

43

00:02:30,640 --> 00:02:34,560

I'll just run through quickly now, but feel free to let me know if you have

44

00:02:34,580 --> 00:02:36,980

any questions on each of the points.

45

00:02:37,060 --> 00:02:40,860

So I should state, I think when we submitted our

46

00:02:40,900 --> 00:02:43,390

relevant reps, and please if someone from the applicant wants to correct me on

47

00:02:43,460 --> 00:02:47,000

this, please do, but we looked at a flood risk

48

00:02:47,060 --> 00:02:50,920

assessment dated March 2026. But I think there has since been an

49

00:02:50,980 --> 00:02:54,880

updated one of June 2026, so some of these points may have

50

00:02:54,900 --> 00:02:57,220

already been addressed in an updated

51

00:02:58,080 --> 00:02:59,120

flood risk assessment.

52

00:03:00,800 --> 00:03:01,120

So

53

00:03:02,720 --> 00:03:03,640

there was a few

54

00:03:05,680 --> 00:03:08,760

issues relating to some flood defense assets.

55

00:03:08,820 --> 00:03:12,780

They haven't all been specifically acknowledged within the flood risk assessment.

56

00:03:12,880 --> 00:03:13,490

Specifically,

57

00:03:14,820 --> 00:03:18,800

the Crowland & Cowbit Wash is a designated reservoir, so

58

00:03:18,840 --> 00:03:22,780

we've asked for more clarification on that and how the development interacts with

59

00:03:22,820 --> 00:03:24,320

that particular asset.

60

00:03:26,900 --> 00:03:30,420

We also raised concerns regarding development within flood zone

61

00:03:30,600 --> 00:03:32,940

3b, so I do acknowledge that the applicant has

62

00:03:34,120 --> 00:03:37,980

revised plans to reduce the amount of development going in flood

63

00:03:38,020 --> 00:03:40,140

zone 3b, so the functional floodplain.

64

00:03:40,180 --> 00:03:41,400

But there are six

65

00:03:42,760 --> 00:03:46,600

solar stations that I think are still proposed in that area, so we just wanted

66

00:03:46,640 --> 00:03:50,510
further clarification on that point that

67
00:03:50,820 --> 00:03:54,280
flood flow routes won't be interrupted

68
00:03:54,740 --> 00:03:57,660
and that flood storage capacity will not be reduced.

69
00:03:59,720 --> 00:04:03,560
And then we've also made points on the flood risk

70
00:04:03,620 --> 00:04:07,090
exception test, specifically relating

71
00:04:07,180 --> 00:04:11,160
to demonstrating that opportunities to reduce flood risk

72
00:04:11,200 --> 00:04:15,020
have been explored. So I'm not saying that there is or isn't any

73
00:04:15,060 --> 00:04:18,840
opportunity, but there needs to be justification if there

74
00:04:18,880 --> 00:04:22,640
isn't, and there doesn't seem to be any attempts made to reduce

75
00:04:22,720 --> 00:04:26,219
flood risk. So this needs to be justified as to why that is the case.

76
00:04:30,560 --> 00:04:34,160
So can I confirm with you, is there an intention to look at the latest

77
00:04:34,300 --> 00:04:37,860
FRA and ES chapter and any changes to those for

78
00:04:37,940 --> 00:04:41,720
your written representation to make sure that your comments are up to date?

79

00:04:42,840 --> 00:04:44,840

Yes. Yeah. We'll provide written response on that.

80

00:04:44,880 --> 00:04:48,560

I have reviewed it to some extent, but yeah, we'll provide a more detailed

81

00:04:48,580 --> 00:04:51,480

response on whether the issues we've raised have been addressed within that

82

00:04:51,520 --> 00:04:51,969

document.

83

00:04:52,960 --> 00:04:56,080

And have you had any dialogue with the applicant

84

00:04:56,600 --> 00:04:59,400

about your concerns from the relevant rep?

85

00:05:01,020 --> 00:05:03,840

Yes. We have had a meeting. I don't have the date to hand, but we have had a

86

00:05:03,880 --> 00:05:07,450

meeting to go through it, and they said that the comments that we've raised should

87

00:05:07,480 --> 00:05:10,960

be addressed within the flood risk assessment, whether the version we've got now or

88

00:05:10,980 --> 00:05:14,840

they're in progress of updating that further to cover the concerns we've raised.

89

00:05:16,100 --> 00:05:19,400

So is your understanding that there will be additional flood modeling done as well?

90

00:05:21,500 --> 00:05:24,720

There has been flood modeling already undertaken.

91

00:05:25,160 --> 00:05:28,900

As I understand it, I think there are a few issues outstanding that need to be

92

00:05:28,940 --> 00:05:32,220

addressed as part of that before we confirm it's acceptable or not.

93

00:05:32,340 --> 00:05:33,930

I think yeah, that's an ongoing piece of work.

94

00:05:34,960 --> 00:05:37,860

So have you managed to resolve the issue around the reservoir

95

00:05:37,900 --> 00:05:39,880

flooding?

96

00:05:40,200 --> 00:05:44,120

Not as such so much. We're not overly concerned about the risk from the

97

00:05:44,160 --> 00:05:47,500

reservoir itself. It's more just how the scheme

98

00:05:47,880 --> 00:05:51,280

interacts with particular assets, just to make sure that access to the

99

00:05:51,300 --> 00:05:55,280

reservoir isn't going to be prohibited and there'll be no damage to the

100

00:05:55,320 --> 00:05:59,300

assets involved within that. The applicant has said that they're aware of

101

00:05:59,320 --> 00:06:02,820

this issue, and they were going to provide further information on how close

102

00:06:02,860 --> 00:06:06,240

particular elements of the proposed scheme will be to those assets

103

00:06:11,850 --> 00:06:15,770

Okay then. And I had one specific question for you, and I'll let the applicant

104

00:06:15,790 --> 00:06:17,490

respond to this as well afterwards.

105

00:06:17,510 --> 00:06:18,590

And that was that

106

00:06:20,330 --> 00:06:24,070

the modeling for the three separate catchments

107

00:06:24,150 --> 00:06:24,670

that's in

108

00:06:26,650 --> 00:06:29,490

Annex B of Appendix 113,

109

00:06:31,770 --> 00:06:35,630

the applicant has said that they're only going to use the

110

00:06:35,930 --> 00:06:37,730

1% AEP

111

00:06:39,330 --> 00:06:41,930

for the risk modeling for the River Welland rather than

112

00:06:41,990 --> 00:06:43,630

0.1%.

113

00:06:44,970 --> 00:06:48,570

I understand it on the basis that it's

114

00:06:48,650 --> 00:06:52,310

defended and that those are unlikely to

115

00:06:52,350 --> 00:06:55,690

breach during the period of construction.

116

00:06:55,730 --> 00:06:58,650

Is that something that the Environment Agency has agreed to?

117

00:07:00,230 --> 00:07:04,010

If it's okay, can I ask my colleague Philip Sale, who's our

118

00:07:04,050 --> 00:07:06,810

flood modeling specialist, to come in on this? Is that okay?

119

00:07:07,020 --> 00:07:07,369

Yeah, of course.

120

00:07:09,110 --> 00:07:11,730

Afternoon. I'm Philip Sale for the Environment Agency.

121

00:07:12,610 --> 00:07:16,030

So yeah, in respect to the River Welland, so

122

00:07:16,130 --> 00:07:19,390

that's protected by some quite substantial

123

00:07:20,250 --> 00:07:24,150

flood defenses, including the Crowland and Cowbit Washes.

124

00:07:24,250 --> 00:07:24,470

So,

125

00:07:25,890 --> 00:07:29,790

the flood defenses don't actually overtop in events up to

126

00:07:29,830 --> 00:07:30,730

and including the

127

00:07:31,670 --> 00:07:35,190

0.1%, so one in a thousand year flood, plus climate change.

128

00:07:36,850 --> 00:07:40,430

So yeah, we've agreed that there isn't a defended

129

00:07:40,830 --> 00:07:44,310

flood risk to the proposed development from the Welland itself.

130

00:07:44,490 --> 00:07:48,030

However, the applicant has assessed the residual flood risk

131

00:07:48,090 --> 00:07:52,030

associated with the River Welland to the development through

132

00:07:52,090 --> 00:07:54,250

some breach modeling that they've undertaken.

133

00:07:55,230 --> 00:07:59,110

We do have some outstanding comments in relation

134

00:07:59,170 --> 00:08:03,070

to the River Welland breach modeling, and they're fairly minor comments

135

00:08:03,670 --> 00:08:07,190

in relation to how breach has been assessed.

136

00:08:09,210 --> 00:08:13,050

But yeah, so we're not too concerned with the River Welland, just given

137

00:08:13,120 --> 00:08:13,350

the

138

00:08:14,210 --> 00:08:17,550

standard protection offered by the raised flood defenses along the Welland.

139

00:08:18,990 --> 00:08:22,850

Just expanding a little bit more in terms of the other modeling the applicant has

140

00:08:22,890 --> 00:08:26,410

undertaken. So the applicant has undertaken modeling

141

00:08:26,590 --> 00:08:30,450

for some of the internal drainage board watercourses within the Postland

142

00:08:30,650 --> 00:08:33,451

catchment and also for the South Holland Main Drain.

143

00:08:34,510 --> 00:08:35,451

We do have some

144

00:08:36,510 --> 00:08:40,331

outstanding concerns with regards to the modeling for South Holland Main

145

00:08:40,390 --> 00:08:40,770

Drain,

146

00:08:41,951 --> 00:08:45,690

mainly in respect to how some of the flows have been calculated

147

00:08:47,010 --> 00:08:47,650

for that model,

148

00:08:49,090 --> 00:08:52,650

and also how the applicant has assessed the

149

00:08:52,670 --> 00:08:54,610

proposed development within that modeling,

150

00:08:55,490 --> 00:08:58,750

because there is an area where, as Sasha mentioned,

151

00:09:00,690 --> 00:09:02,750

the development encroaches into the functional flood plain

152

00:09:03,990 --> 00:09:05,810

within the Gotts catchment for that model.

153

00:09:06,660 --> 00:09:06,660

Yeah.

154

00:09:06,730 --> 00:09:10,490

And we've asked the applicant to consider

155

00:09:10,910 --> 00:09:14,500

whether the impact on flood risk elsewhere within the model, which they've

156

00:09:14,510 --> 00:09:15,310

attempted to do,

157

00:09:16,150 --> 00:09:20,089

but we just have some concerns regarding the method and also whether

158

00:09:20,150 --> 00:09:23,970

the solar panel support frames themselves, not just the solar

159

00:09:24,030 --> 00:09:27,740

stations, have been incorporated into the assessment of impacts

160

00:09:27,790 --> 00:09:31,690

elsewhere. So, got a couple of comments on the South Holland

161

00:09:31,710 --> 00:09:34,070

Main Drain in particular. But with respect to the Welland,

162

00:09:35,310 --> 00:09:39,090

yeah, we're happy in terms of fluvial flood risk.

163

00:09:39,570 --> 00:09:43,170

With defenses in place, there is a residual flood risk there that the applicant has

164

00:09:43,210 --> 00:09:46,740

assessed through breach modeling and we've got some minor technical comments there,

165

00:09:46,810 --> 00:09:49,510

but not too concerned with the Welland.

166

00:09:49,550 --> 00:09:53,390

It's more the internal drainage board and smaller watercourses,

167

00:09:54,770 --> 00:09:57,910

particularly for South Holland Main Drain, that we've got some

outstanding comments

168

00:09:57,990 --> 00:09:58,570
on.

169

00:09:59,190 --> 00:10:03,090
That's helpful, thank you. So will your concerns about

170

00:10:03,100 --> 00:10:07,050
the South Holland Main Drain modeling be expanded on in

171

00:10:07,070 --> 00:10:10,220
your written representations, or are you hoping that they will have
been resolved

172

00:10:10,230 --> 00:10:10,710
by then?

173

00:10:13,870 --> 00:10:17,490
So yeah, we provided some comments to the applicant in relation to
the

174

00:10:17,530 --> 00:10:21,130
modeling for South Holland Main Drain, but yeah, we're happy to
provide also

175

00:10:21,150 --> 00:10:22,050
written responses

176

00:10:23,350 --> 00:10:27,110
to yourselves as planning inspectorate on those comments as well for

177

00:10:27,170 --> 00:10:27,850
visibility.

178

00:10:29,410 --> 00:10:33,390
You also raised concerns about whether or not the risk from tidal
flooding had

179

00:10:33,430 --> 00:10:36,270
been sufficiently covered. Is that something that's been resolved?

180

00:10:38,470 --> 00:10:42,390

Yeah, so we did have a comment around assessing in particular the credible maximum

181

00:10:43,130 --> 00:10:46,270

scenario from a tidal flood risk, particularly on the River Welland.

182

00:10:47,830 --> 00:10:49,790

I think that issue has been resolved.

183

00:10:50,470 --> 00:10:54,390

There's a tidal barrage within Spalding,

184

00:10:55,250 --> 00:10:59,050

which should prevent from tidal ingress up the Welland into the development

185

00:10:59,190 --> 00:11:02,990

area, and the fluvial flood risk

186

00:11:03,050 --> 00:11:05,310

is likely to be the more dominant flood risk source.

187

00:11:06,910 --> 00:11:10,290

But yeah, I think that issue has been resolved now in terms of

188

00:11:11,050 --> 00:11:14,990

tidal H++ scenario. We did raise a comment to get

189

00:11:15,030 --> 00:11:18,510

the applicant to just demonstrate that the fluvial flood levels would be more

190

00:11:18,550 --> 00:11:21,830

conservative than the tidal flood levels along the River Welland in this area.

191

00:11:24,190 --> 00:11:28,040

And then last question, the cumulative effects of

192

00:11:28,130 --> 00:11:31,510

all of these different sources of flooding, are you satisfied that those have been

193

00:11:31,550 --> 00:11:32,670
adequately looked at?

194

00:11:35,270 --> 00:11:37,030
In terms of cumulative effects-

195

00:11:37,550 --> 00:11:37,680
Mm-hmm

196

00:11:37,680 --> 00:11:41,130
... at the moment, it rests a little bit on the assessment of impacts

197

00:11:41,270 --> 00:11:44,389
on flood risks for the South Holland Main Drain, really.

198

00:11:45,170 --> 00:11:48,210
So for the River Welland, the flood risk to development is really only

199

00:11:48,270 --> 00:11:51,870
residual, ie in the case of a flood defense

200

00:11:51,970 --> 00:11:54,870
failure or breach of the Crowland and Cowbit Washes.

201

00:11:56,810 --> 00:12:00,310
But yeah, for the Postland catchment, the applicant has

202

00:12:00,330 --> 00:12:04,310
assessed the impacts of the development on flood risk elsewhere using the hydraulic

203

00:12:04,370 --> 00:12:07,750
modeling, and we're satisfied with the methodology they've used, and it shows

204

00:12:07,950 --> 00:12:11,930
negligible impacts. But with the South Holland Main Drain, there's

some

205

00:12:11,970 --> 00:12:12,810
uncertainty there.

206

00:12:14,010 --> 00:12:17,889
The assessment shows negligible impacts, but there isn't really any way

207

00:12:17,940 --> 00:12:18,070
of

208

00:12:18,902 --> 00:12:22,842
Sort of spatially visualizing what those impacts are, and that's

209

00:12:22,862 --> 00:12:24,382
where the main concerns lie, really.

210

00:12:24,482 --> 00:12:27,061
So I think it sort of rests on their assessment

211

00:12:27,862 --> 00:12:31,062
of flood risk from that particular water course, really.

212

00:12:31,642 --> 00:12:35,182
So yeah, we're just seeking some further clarity on any impacts,

213

00:12:35,242 --> 00:12:38,842
particularly as some of the proposed development is

214

00:12:38,862 --> 00:12:41,182
within the functional flood plain.

215

00:12:41,842 --> 00:12:42,482
And obviously,

216

00:12:44,462 --> 00:12:48,342
paragraph 5.8.12 within the Overarching National Policy Statement
for

217

00:12:48,362 --> 00:12:52,202

Energy suggests that there should be no impact on

218

00:12:52,362 --> 00:12:55,282

flood flow routes or increases to flood risk elsewhere

219

00:12:57,562 --> 00:13:00,642

from proposed development. So we're just, yeah, waiting for some additional

220

00:13:00,662 --> 00:13:02,802

information really to ensure that that's satisfied.

221

00:13:04,742 --> 00:13:06,482

Thank you, Mr Sale.

222

00:13:10,482 --> 00:13:13,052

So turning to the applicant, Ms Power,

223

00:13:13,242 --> 00:13:17,202

I'd like to get your response to what we've just heard

224

00:13:17,482 --> 00:13:20,362

and understand how you think things are progressing and what you see as the next

225

00:13:20,402 --> 00:13:23,922

steps. And I think it would also be useful to have

226

00:13:23,982 --> 00:13:26,322

confirmation of what the latest modeling is

227

00:13:27,562 --> 00:13:30,432

and the latest flood risk assessment, so we can all be sure that we're looking at

228

00:13:30,442 --> 00:13:34,122

the right thing. I think I do have different maps and bits of the

229

00:13:34,142 --> 00:13:37,842

ES according to where they were generated from the modeling.

230

00:13:37,952 --> 00:13:41,942

So I think a definitive list, and it can be taken away

231

00:13:41,982 --> 00:13:45,752

as an action point, if you like, of what we should be looking at, would be very

232

00:13:45,842 --> 00:13:49,002

helpful. And there might be more to add to that as we work our way through this

233

00:13:49,042 --> 00:13:49,962

agenda item.

234

00:13:51,462 --> 00:13:53,082

Yes. Thank you, Taylor Power, for that.

235

00:13:53,102 --> 00:13:53,642

Applicant

236

00:13:54,642 --> 00:13:58,082

will definitely take that away and provide further updates in writing.

237

00:13:58,222 --> 00:14:01,702

I would note that there is a suite of changes to the flood risk

238

00:14:01,782 --> 00:14:05,622

assessment that are being provided at deadline one by the applicant

239

00:14:05,822 --> 00:14:09,502

that reflect the engagement with the Environment Agency since their

240

00:14:09,562 --> 00:14:13,482

relevant representation. So the applicant's

241

00:14:13,542 --> 00:14:15,842

already providing updates to these documents.

242

00:14:16,302 --> 00:14:16,542

Great.

243

00:14:16,642 --> 00:14:17,152

I'll pass-

244

00:14:17,332 --> 00:14:20,662

So as long as it may be made very clear what we should be looking at, because we

245

00:14:20,722 --> 00:14:23,612

have got quite a few floating around now. Excuse the pun.

246

00:14:24,302 --> 00:14:26,782

Yes. No, definitely. So we'll make sure

247

00:14:28,761 --> 00:14:32,702

that the cover letter and the written summary for this hearing makes clear which

248

00:14:32,782 --> 00:14:35,392

documents the examining authority should be looking at.

249

00:14:36,242 --> 00:14:39,512

I would also suggest the statement of common ground that's being progressed between

250

00:14:39,542 --> 00:14:43,482

the applicant and the Environment Agency should assist in helping clarify, kind

251

00:14:43,502 --> 00:14:46,802

of which elements are still at discussion between the parties.

252

00:14:47,902 --> 00:14:51,862

In respect of your other questions when it comes to the technical matters

253

00:14:51,982 --> 00:14:55,882

and the status of that engagement so far and the applicant's view on that, I would

254

00:14:55,922 --> 00:14:59,192

just pass to my colleagues, Astrid Tischler from a

255

00:14:59,522 --> 00:15:03,402

broader EIA perspective and Chris Brandon from

256

00:15:03,442 --> 00:15:07,382

a flood risk perspective, who are both associate directors at

257

00:15:07,582 --> 00:15:07,962

AECOM.

258

00:15:08,342 --> 00:15:11,362

And I'm just looking for a response to the questions about the modeling at this

259

00:15:11,442 --> 00:15:14,882

stage. I'll move on to the sequential approach afterwards.

260

00:15:15,162 --> 00:15:16,952

Thank you.

261

00:15:16,982 --> 00:15:19,982

Astrid Tischler, associate director from AECOM,

262

00:15:20,542 --> 00:15:24,462

representing the applicant. Just on the modeling point, just

263

00:15:24,502 --> 00:15:28,242

to provide an update. As referred to by the Environment

264

00:15:28,342 --> 00:15:32,002

Agency colleagues, we've been receiving comments from the

265

00:15:32,042 --> 00:15:35,982

Environment Agency over the course of the last couple of weeks on the

266

00:15:36,022 --> 00:15:38,882

modeling. And we've also received the

267

00:15:38,922 --> 00:15:42,582

comments on the South Holland Main Drain modeling earlier this

268

00:15:42,662 --> 00:15:46,322

week. So we're now in the process of reviewing those comments,

269

00:15:46,622 --> 00:15:48,942

and considering how to respond to them.

270

00:15:49,642 --> 00:15:53,582

And we'll be discussing them further with the Environment Agency as

271

00:15:53,622 --> 00:15:54,622

we work through them as well.

272

00:15:57,642 --> 00:15:58,062

Thank you.

273

00:16:02,742 --> 00:16:06,582

Was there questions from anybody else, or comments that people would like to

274

00:16:06,642 --> 00:16:08,702

make about what we've just heard about the flood

275

00:16:08,742 --> 00:16:12,442

modeling? Mr Semakula, anything from the local

276

00:16:12,482 --> 00:16:13,822

authority on behalf of the

277

00:16:15,302 --> 00:16:15,782

LLFA?

278

00:16:18,122 --> 00:16:20,142

Joe Semakula of the LCC.

279

00:16:21,082 --> 00:16:24,922

Madam, the LLFA have raised no objection to this, and we have no comments on the

280

00:16:24,962 --> 00:16:28,082

modeling at this stage. We note the indication there'll be

281

00:16:29,122 --> 00:16:30,842

some suite of changes coming at deadline one.

282

00:16:30,902 --> 00:16:34,262

If that changes our assessment in any way, then we'll be sure to let the examining

283

00:16:34,282 --> 00:16:35,722

authority and the applicant know.

284

00:16:36,342 --> 00:16:38,602

Thank you. And I can't see any other hands up.

285

00:16:39,442 --> 00:16:42,542

Okay then. So I want to move on to the sequential approach and how that's been

286

00:16:42,582 --> 00:16:44,102

applied within the site.

287

00:16:45,142 --> 00:16:48,942

So I can see that in the ES, you stated that flood zone

288

00:16:48,982 --> 00:16:52,302

three has been largely avoided for structures within the site, with the exception

289

00:16:52,342 --> 00:16:56,322

of the solar panels. Where is it set out that flood zone two

290

00:16:56,362 --> 00:16:58,382

has also been avoided, if possible,

291

00:16:59,422 --> 00:17:01,062

as per the sequential approach?

292

00:17:03,502 --> 00:17:06,971

Taylor Power for the applicant. I will just pass down again to Ms Tischler

293

00:17:07,022 --> 00:17:08,603

and Mr Brandon.

294

00:17:11,982 --> 00:17:15,482

Chris Brandon, associate director at AECOM, on behalf of the applicant.

295

00:17:16,962 --> 00:17:20,812

In ES appendix 113, flood risk assessment,

296

00:17:21,442 --> 00:17:21,822

reference

297

00:17:22,662 --> 00:17:24,562

AS020,

298

00:17:26,343 --> 00:17:27,123

FRA figures,

299

00:17:28,442 --> 00:17:31,502

application reference AS019, figure 1-1

300

00:17:33,742 --> 00:17:37,722

provides flooding 3A and 3B outlines for the South Holland main

301

00:17:37,782 --> 00:17:38,182

drain and-

302

00:17:38,242 --> 00:17:40,302

Can we get those put up on the screen, please?

303

00:17:43,002 --> 00:17:44,842

It's figure 1-1 in ASA 1-9.

304

00:17:51,622 --> 00:17:52,242

Or is it...

305

00:17:57,562 --> 00:18:00,692

Just to clarify, Mr Brandon, is that a figure within the flood risk assessment or

306

00:18:00,722 --> 00:18:02,892

is that a standalone ES figure?

307

00:18:03,282 --> 00:18:05,562

Oh, apologies. A standalone ES figure.

308

00:18:05,662 --> 00:18:09,622

Okay, great. It was figure 1-1 in the

309

00:18:09,702 --> 00:18:10,302

ES.

310

00:18:15,602 --> 00:18:15,822

Yeah.

311

00:18:21,470 --> 00:18:25,170

Can you confirm that's the figure you were referring to, the one up on screen now?

312

00:18:27,270 --> 00:18:28,410

Correct. That's the one.

313

00:18:29,570 --> 00:18:32,330

So this figure represents flood zones 3A and 3B,

314

00:18:33,790 --> 00:18:37,750

including climate change for flood zone 3A for the Poston pumped catchment

315

00:18:38,070 --> 00:18:40,250

and the South Holland main drain. As

316

00:18:41,510 --> 00:18:45,370

I may have mentioned earlier, the River Welland is only a

317

00:18:45,390 --> 00:18:48,900

risk to site in event of a breach. It's in defended scenarios, and the site is not

318

00:18:48,930 --> 00:18:50,210

at risk of flooding from the River Welland.

319

00:18:52,550 --> 00:18:56,450

So the scheme has used figure one to set

320

00:18:56,510 --> 00:18:58,660

the critical infrastructure outside of these flood zones

321

00:18:59,590 --> 00:19:00,350

as far as possible.

322

00:19:00,750 --> 00:19:02,310

So this doesn't illustrate flood zone two?

323

00:19:06,090 --> 00:19:10,050

No, just flood zone 3A and 3B, where we've moved critical infrastructure outside

324

00:19:10,090 --> 00:19:11,070

of those areas.

325

00:19:11,690 --> 00:19:14,599

So where is it demonstrated that you've avoided flood zone two where possible as

326

00:19:14,630 --> 00:19:14,810

well?

327

00:19:20,710 --> 00:19:22,370

So in terms of the modeling, we've

328

00:19:23,190 --> 00:19:25,349

modeled the 1,000-year event

329

00:19:26,170 --> 00:19:29,730

as our flood zone 3A extent, which is effectively the flood zone two

330

00:19:29,770 --> 00:19:33,380

extent under normal conditions. We haven't applied another

331

00:19:33,490 --> 00:19:36,270

percentage to locate flood zone two.

332

00:19:36,450 --> 00:19:36,630
So

333
00:19:37,490 --> 00:19:40,900
in this area, the requirement is in Lincolnshire County

334
00:19:40,950 --> 00:19:42,350
Council's

335
00:19:43,930 --> 00:19:47,630
matrix and the EA's own advice, we've had to assess the one in 1,000
year

336
00:19:47,670 --> 00:19:50,890
event instead of not the 1% one in 100 year event.

337
00:19:50,940 --> 00:19:53,560
So the flood zone three extent is effectively flood zone two

338
00:19:54,570 --> 00:19:57,970
in terms of assessment. It's just classified as 3A in this

339
00:19:58,170 --> 00:20:01,430
scenario because of the assessment criteria required in this region.

340
00:20:03,090 --> 00:20:06,980
So there's no difference between anything above one in 1,000 year

341
00:20:06,990 --> 00:20:10,740
event in this scheme. That's de facto flood zone two and flood zone

342
00:20:10,850 --> 00:20:11,510
one.

343
00:20:19,670 --> 00:20:19,990
Okay.

344
00:20:22,150 --> 00:20:26,130
Just to put you on warning, I might come back to the Environment
Agency

345

00:20:26,150 --> 00:20:27,950
to get their thoughts on that. But before we do,

346
00:20:29,589 --> 00:20:33,230
I've got this map in front of me that shows flood zone two,

347
00:20:33,330 --> 00:20:35,150
three, 3A possibly.

348
00:20:38,050 --> 00:20:41,990
Where is it illustrated how the sequential approach has actually

349
00:20:42,030 --> 00:20:45,930
been applied to the works on site? I don't

350
00:20:46,030 --> 00:20:48,840
have, as far as I can see, a plan that

351
00:20:48,890 --> 00:20:52,550
shows the works and the layout on the

352
00:20:52,590 --> 00:20:53,070
site

353
00:20:54,210 --> 00:20:57,230
overlaid with the different flood zones.

354
00:20:58,450 --> 00:21:01,130
Can you signpost me to where I can find that evidence?

355
00:21:02,510 --> 00:21:04,500
The outline drainage strategy,

356
00:21:06,430 --> 00:21:07,670
application reference

357
00:21:09,310 --> 00:21:12,690
227

358
00:21:13,570 --> 00:21:16,390
in Appendix D provides

359

00:21:17,310 --> 00:21:21,170

the outline drainage and arrangement plan, which includes all the

360

00:21:21,230 --> 00:21:25,099

model flood extents for the site layout, which includes a panels infrastructure.

361

00:21:25,510 --> 00:21:27,250

Can we have that put up on the screen as well, please?

362

00:21:37,010 --> 00:21:37,230

Sorry.

363

00:21:37,270 --> 00:21:41,210

Yeah, it's App 231, Annex D is the outline drainage strategy.

364

00:21:41,230 --> 00:21:41,570

Apologies.

365

00:21:42,590 --> 00:21:45,590

And would you also mind providing the page number of the image?

366

00:21:52,930 --> 00:21:54,250

Annex D is just the mapping.

367

00:21:57,190 --> 00:21:58,190

So

368

00:22:01,890 --> 00:22:02,950

it might take a while to load.

369

00:22:04,650 --> 00:22:11,090

So

370

00:22:11,110 --> 00:22:12,490

in the key on the right,

371

00:22:13,930 --> 00:22:16,530

each plan layout represents

372

00:22:17,510 --> 00:22:18,950
the hatching of the various modeled

373

00:22:20,030 --> 00:22:21,550
flood extent to the maximum

374

00:22:22,810 --> 00:22:25,590
model scenarios, the one in 1,000 year event, plus climate

375

00:22:25,630 --> 00:22:29,430
change for the Poston pump catchment down south of the main

376

00:22:29,470 --> 00:22:29,690
drain,

377

00:22:30,630 --> 00:22:31,830
where we've avoided

378

00:22:32,850 --> 00:22:36,410
flood zone 3B and 3A as far as possible, except in the Gos
catchment.

379

00:22:41,870 --> 00:22:45,410
And is the intention to update these plans when you

380

00:22:45,450 --> 00:22:49,350
revise the modeling, including the South Holland main

381

00:22:49,430 --> 00:22:52,670
drain modeling that the Environment Agency was referring to earlier?

382

00:22:53,590 --> 00:22:57,190
Yes, these will be updated if the modeling extents change and upon
agreement with

383

00:22:57,210 --> 00:22:58,090
the Environment Agency.

384

00:23:08,330 --> 00:23:12,210
Ms. Powell, for the applicant, would it assist perhaps if you
scrolled through some

385

00:23:12,230 --> 00:23:14,270

of the sheets and explained a bit further,

386

00:23:16,050 --> 00:23:18,310

perhaps even to show the South Holland main drain sheet?

387

00:23:18,390 --> 00:23:20,570

I'm aware this isn't that sheet.

388

00:23:24,750 --> 00:23:28,490

It would be helpful, particularly with a view to the welfare

389

00:23:28,570 --> 00:23:32,470

facilities going forward. I need to understand why

390

00:23:32,560 --> 00:23:36,170

they've been located where they have been in respect of flood risk.

391

00:23:37,970 --> 00:23:41,890

For the welfare facilities in terms of compounds?

392

00:23:42,510 --> 00:23:44,270

Yeah. Well, I think that's where they're going to go.

393

00:23:44,350 --> 00:23:48,210

That was one of my questions, but yes, construction and operation.

394

00:23:53,690 --> 00:23:55,590

If you scroll down again, please, the last figure,

395

00:23:55,610 --> 00:23:58,210

this is

396

00:23:59,030 --> 00:23:59,540

catchment D

397

00:24:00,970 --> 00:24:02,170

from the South Holland main drain.

398

00:24:10,550 --> 00:24:13,130

I think, Mr. Davies, it's the final sheet that shows the-

399

00:24:14,110 --> 00:24:14,120

Yeah.

400

00:24:14,130 --> 00:24:14,410

There you go.

401

00:24:16,270 --> 00:24:16,830

So the north

402

00:24:18,190 --> 00:24:19,690

side of the South Holland main drain is shown.

403

00:24:19,730 --> 00:24:22,470

The blue line across the page is the South Holland main drain.

404

00:24:23,310 --> 00:24:27,059

The yellow hatched area is the area in question, and there's a large orange

405

00:24:27,150 --> 00:24:30,470

square in the middle of that site where the operational compound's going to

406

00:24:30,510 --> 00:24:33,170

be. So there's a temporary construction compound with welfare in it.

407

00:24:35,090 --> 00:24:36,670

And that's located there for

408

00:24:38,090 --> 00:24:42,030

logistics reasons, for constructing that side

409

00:24:42,050 --> 00:24:45,530

of the scheme on the other side of the South Holland Main Drain to reduce movements

410

00:24:45,590 --> 00:24:46,850

across the South Holland Main Drain.

411

00:24:48,430 --> 00:24:51,910

We have undertaken an assessment of

412

00:24:52,370 --> 00:24:56,170

safe refuge for welfare units on that site to

413

00:24:56,190 --> 00:24:56,670

ensure the

414

00:24:58,110 --> 00:25:00,330

op camps have a safe refuge in times of a flood.

415

00:25:05,150 --> 00:25:07,990

Sorry, I'm just bringing up the plan on my screen because it's too small for me to

416

00:25:08,050 --> 00:25:08,790

see from here.

417

00:25:31,510 --> 00:25:33,770

Sorry, it's going too slowly for me to see it at the moment.

418

00:25:34,070 --> 00:25:34,150

Mm-hmm.

419

00:25:34,250 --> 00:25:38,230

My question, and what I'm unsure about at the moment is,

420

00:25:39,010 --> 00:25:42,490

given how much of the site is in flood zone 3A and

421

00:25:42,690 --> 00:25:46,090

3B, I'm missing a detailed

422

00:25:46,150 --> 00:25:49,970

explanation of how it's been decided what is going where,

423

00:25:50,030 --> 00:25:53,570

as per the sequential approach. So I can see the

424

00:25:53,630 --> 00:25:54,210
maps,

425
00:25:55,670 --> 00:25:59,290
and I can work out where the welfare facilities are going to be in particular, but

426
00:25:59,330 --> 00:26:01,730
I'm interested in the other components as well.

427
00:26:02,710 --> 00:26:06,700
Where is it set out how it was decided where things

428
00:26:06,730 --> 00:26:10,650
were moved to? And I'm aware that things were moved off

429
00:26:10,670 --> 00:26:14,330
the back of some detail modeling a couple of years ago, and then there's some

430
00:26:14,370 --> 00:26:18,300
comment that they were perhaps moved somewhere else, and I'm unclear about

431
00:26:18,350 --> 00:26:20,550
what that decision-making process was.

432
00:26:21,910 --> 00:26:22,290
So the

433
00:26:23,730 --> 00:26:25,710
flood risk assessment, AS020,

434
00:26:27,510 --> 00:26:30,600
discusses, I haven't got the exact paragraphs, but

435
00:26:30,670 --> 00:26:34,450
the sequential locating of critical infrastructure is

436
00:26:34,610 --> 00:26:38,450
borne out of the initial detailed hydraulic flood modeling undertaken to

437

00:26:38,490 --> 00:26:38,990
locate

438

00:26:40,150 --> 00:26:43,890
critical infrastructure, solar stations, substations, and BESS units
outside

439

00:26:43,970 --> 00:26:46,410
of undefended flood risk locations.

440

00:26:46,460 --> 00:26:47,370
So that's discussed in

441

00:26:48,170 --> 00:26:50,890
section 5.8 of the flood risk assessment.

442

00:26:53,290 --> 00:26:53,590
The

443

00:26:55,230 --> 00:26:57,030
flood modeling for

444

00:26:58,230 --> 00:27:01,970
one of the substations was moved out of parcel B into parcel C.

445

00:27:02,450 --> 00:27:03,390
As a result of that modeling,

446

00:27:04,550 --> 00:27:08,090
the construction compound, substation, yeah,

447

00:27:08,450 --> 00:27:09,970
1C2 substation was moved out of flood zone

448

00:27:11,610 --> 00:27:11,770
3,

449

00:27:12,770 --> 00:27:16,270
in relation to the breach modeling of the River Welland, so it was a
defended

450

00:27:16,330 --> 00:27:16,910
scenario.

451

00:27:18,670 --> 00:27:22,450
The approach to the Goths catchment

452

00:27:23,350 --> 00:27:23,450
is

453

00:27:24,470 --> 00:27:28,330
we haven't been able to move infrastructure outside of the flood
zone 3B

454

00:27:28,350 --> 00:27:30,970
in this area due to location

455

00:27:33,410 --> 00:27:37,150
and no available other sites outside of the border limits,

456

00:27:38,490 --> 00:27:42,430
without substantial engineering and flood risk management

457

00:27:42,490 --> 00:27:43,160
activities,

458

00:27:44,510 --> 00:27:47,490
which would introduce further impacts to the scheme.

459

00:27:48,870 --> 00:27:51,450
That's discussed in section 5.8 of the flood risk assessment.

460

00:27:58,190 --> 00:28:01,820
Taylor Powell for the applicant. But if it would assist the
examining authority,

461

00:28:02,370 --> 00:28:06,080
we could also provide a further summary that pulls together some of
this

462

00:28:06,130 --> 00:28:09,330

discussion and these images from NXT,

463

00:28:10,020 --> 00:28:13,090

and those elements of the flood risk assessment that Mr.

464

00:28:13,190 --> 00:28:16,890

Brandon referred to, just to set that out in a staggered

465

00:28:16,930 --> 00:28:18,080

and summarized manner.

466

00:28:22,990 --> 00:28:25,450

I think that would help. At the moment, I've got quite high-level statements about

467

00:28:25,470 --> 00:28:28,610

the principles that were applied, but I'm still a little bit unsure about how

468

00:28:29,250 --> 00:28:32,850

decisions were made on individual units, particularly the sensitive

469

00:28:32,890 --> 00:28:36,370

ones. But it will have to be redone as the modeling is revised

470

00:28:36,430 --> 00:28:40,210

anyway. So I think that's an opportune time to just explain why

471

00:28:40,270 --> 00:28:42,750

things have been put where they are, clearly.

472

00:28:51,750 --> 00:28:52,830

Before I move on

473

00:28:54,250 --> 00:28:57,590

to the safety of users of the site, were there

474

00:28:57,670 --> 00:29:01,120

any comments that anybody else wanted to make on what they've

475

00:29:01,210 --> 00:29:04,110

just heard regarding the sequential approach on the site?

476

00:29:06,030 --> 00:29:06,750

Mr. Semakula?

477

00:29:08,690 --> 00:29:11,750

Thank you, madam. Joel Semakula on behalf of LCC.

478

00:29:12,570 --> 00:29:15,550

So of course, wearing the LLFA hat, we have no additional comments.

479

00:29:15,670 --> 00:29:19,150

As I've already mentioned, we raise no objection on those grounds.

480

00:29:19,190 --> 00:29:20,510

But wearing my LPA

481

00:29:21,510 --> 00:29:24,850

hat, we do have some concerns, some policy concerns regarding the sequential and

482

00:29:24,890 --> 00:29:26,350

exceptions tests. So,

483

00:29:27,410 --> 00:29:28,130

as echoed by

484

00:29:29,530 --> 00:29:33,140

Ms. Davies, from a policy perspective, we've got

485

00:29:33,190 --> 00:29:36,820

concerns over whether the strategic site selection process and

486

00:29:36,850 --> 00:29:40,450

application of the sequential and exception tests have been undertaken in any kind

487

00:29:40,510 --> 00:29:44,390

of robust manner. We're lacking some of the detail that's

488

00:29:44,430 --> 00:29:48,350

been expressed already. So, to raise just a couple of

489

00:29:48,390 --> 00:29:52,110

points, for example, and I think it's a matter that will arise again under

490

00:29:52,170 --> 00:29:55,830

item five. The guidance states that for infrastructure of

491

00:29:55,890 --> 00:29:59,610

regional and national importance, the area of search may extend beyond the

492

00:29:59,690 --> 00:30:03,550

LPA boundary, to give an example, and small alternative sites at low

493

00:30:03,570 --> 00:30:05,980

flood risk should be considered. We're concerned around

494

00:30:07,110 --> 00:30:10,610

any kind of robust evidence as to whether those small alternative

495

00:30:10,650 --> 00:30:14,270

sites have been considered. We've also got questions around

496

00:30:14,950 --> 00:30:18,830

the applicant's four reasons for discounting the flood zone one and flood

497

00:30:18,890 --> 00:30:22,350

zone two areas to the south and southeast of the points

498

00:30:23,210 --> 00:30:26,430

of connection. There's been already a point raised

499

00:30:26,770 --> 00:30:30,690

regarding the six solar stations sited in the, I think it's the

500

00:30:30,750 --> 00:30:34,650

Goths catchment in flood zone 3B, that being raised

501

00:30:34,670 --> 00:30:35,210
on plinths.

502
00:30:36,150 --> 00:30:39,960
And so that's another question we have around

503
00:30:40,030 --> 00:30:43,570
how this has been properly considered from a

504
00:30:43,610 --> 00:30:46,450
sequential test perspective. And then finally, really

505
00:30:50,370 --> 00:30:54,250
On the exception test, just one point of detail, but we'll expand on

506
00:30:54,270 --> 00:30:56,470
this further in our written submissions.

507
00:30:56,950 --> 00:30:57,210
There's

508
00:30:58,110 --> 00:31:02,050
some reference to the recovery of the agricultural land and
continued livestock

509
00:31:02,070 --> 00:31:05,630
grazing as a benefit to meet that test, the exception test.

510
00:31:05,670 --> 00:31:09,140
It's already

511
00:31:09,670 --> 00:31:10,230
come up in this

512
00:31:11,330 --> 00:31:15,110
ISH. We'd still seek some clarification as to whether or not that
recovery actually

513
00:31:15,150 --> 00:31:18,270
occurs, given that it's relied on as part of that test.

514

00:31:18,860 --> 00:31:22,570

Thank you. And Ms. Locke from the Environment Agency, did you have your hand

515

00:31:22,730 --> 00:31:22,910

up?

516

00:31:28,410 --> 00:31:31,890

Hello. Yes, sorry. It's Liz Locke from the Environment

517

00:31:31,970 --> 00:31:34,730

Agency. It was a point

518

00:31:35,030 --> 00:31:37,930

regarding your request for written

519

00:31:37,970 --> 00:31:41,650

representations and a question as to whether it would be

520

00:31:41,830 --> 00:31:42,610

better to

521

00:31:43,750 --> 00:31:44,990

wait until the

522

00:31:46,950 --> 00:31:50,770

latest iteration of the FRA has come through at deadline

523

00:31:50,830 --> 00:31:51,670

one, which

524

00:31:52,810 --> 00:31:54,890

may incorporate the comments made on the modeling.

525

00:31:56,730 --> 00:32:00,670

So I just wanted to clarify exactly what it was that you would like

526

00:32:00,730 --> 00:32:04,150

us to submit at written reps. I'm sorry to go back a stage.

527

00:32:07,610 --> 00:32:10,470

Well, it's part of the process that you will have to provide written reps,

528

00:32:10,610 --> 00:32:14,470

but we will be aware that things are going on in the

529

00:32:14,510 --> 00:32:17,750

background. So reflect that as part of your statement of common ground, and then it

530

00:32:17,790 --> 00:32:21,330

will evolve as we go along. But the Environment Agency, I'm sure, will want to

531

00:32:21,370 --> 00:32:24,690

submit written representations to tell us their concerns as it stands at

532

00:32:25,330 --> 00:32:25,910

that time.

533

00:32:28,070 --> 00:32:30,690

Turning back to the applicant to respond to what you've just heard.

534

00:32:31,670 --> 00:32:34,630

You're very welcome to respond, but some of the issues that were raised by

535

00:32:34,670 --> 00:32:38,410

Lincolnshire there, I know we've discussed earlier, and I'm happy that I've heard

536

00:32:38,450 --> 00:32:42,050

enough on that if you want to respond to those in writing at a later date.

537

00:32:42,710 --> 00:32:43,870

And Taylor Power for the applicant.

538

00:32:43,910 --> 00:32:47,790

Yes, I think it makes sense for us to respond to those in writing as part of our

539

00:32:47,830 --> 00:32:49,270
general progress of this issue.

540

00:32:50,510 --> 00:32:53,950
Thank you. Okay, so moving on to the safety of users of the site.

541

00:32:55,010 --> 00:32:58,910
Paragraph 5836 of the N1 states that the Secretary of State

542

00:32:58,990 --> 00:33:02,640
must be satisfied that the project includes safe access and

543

00:33:02,670 --> 00:33:06,390
escape routes where required as part of an agreed emergency

544

00:33:06,410 --> 00:33:09,730
plan, and that any residual risk can be safely managed over the
lifetime of the

545

00:33:09,750 --> 00:33:13,730
development. And then paragraph 5834 goes on to say

546

00:33:13,790 --> 00:33:17,290
the applicant should take advice from the local authority emergency
planning team,

547

00:33:17,790 --> 00:33:21,250
emergency services, and where appropriate, from the local resilience
forum when

548

00:33:21,270 --> 00:33:25,160
producing an evacuation plan for a manned energy project as part of

549

00:33:25,190 --> 00:33:28,879
the FRA. Any emergency planning documents, flood warning and

550

00:33:28,910 --> 00:33:32,110
evacuation procedures that are required should be identified in the
FRA.

551

00:33:32,910 --> 00:33:36,790

Please could you signpost as to where the evidence that these requirements are met?

552

00:33:39,410 --> 00:33:42,590

Taylor Power for the applicant. I'll pass down to Mr. Brandon and Ms.

553

00:33:42,630 --> 00:33:43,450

Tishler on this.

554

00:33:48,070 --> 00:33:49,130

Chris Brandon on behalf of the applicant.

555

00:33:49,190 --> 00:33:53,039

Could you clarify exactly what you're asking for again, sorry, I was making some

556

00:33:53,070 --> 00:33:53,390

notes?

557

00:33:53,950 --> 00:33:55,070

Yeah. So in particular,

558

00:33:56,610 --> 00:33:59,730

the emergency plan, and I'm interested in

559

00:34:01,230 --> 00:34:01,710

safe

560

00:34:02,590 --> 00:34:06,190

access and egress to probably the

561

00:34:06,230 --> 00:34:09,290

welfare cabins where workers may be.

562

00:34:10,250 --> 00:34:14,210

This is part of my question is I am actually unclear how the site is

563

00:34:14,250 --> 00:34:18,011

going to be kept safe given how much flood zone you're dealing

564

00:34:18,051 --> 00:34:21,670

with. So if you could signpost as to where that is, that would be very helpful.

565

00:34:22,870 --> 00:34:23,410

Yes, for sure.

566

00:34:24,511 --> 00:34:28,051

Paragraph 5.3.16 of the Flood Risk Assessment,

567

00:34:28,591 --> 00:34:29,410

AS020,

568

00:34:30,730 --> 00:34:33,830

discusses safe refuge to those temporary construction compounds throughout the

569

00:34:33,850 --> 00:34:34,150

scheme.

570

00:34:35,910 --> 00:34:36,051

So,

571

00:34:38,170 --> 00:34:38,500

either

572

00:34:39,450 --> 00:34:42,611

during the breach scenario event of the River Welland

573

00:34:43,611 --> 00:34:47,270

or where we have the construction compound within the Goth

574

00:34:47,350 --> 00:34:47,850

catchment,

575

00:34:48,890 --> 00:34:50,450

within flood zone 3B and 3A.

576

00:34:51,350 --> 00:34:55,290

We've assessed the maximum modeled flood depth

577

00:34:55,890 --> 00:34:57,470
and the impact on welfare cabins

578
00:34:58,310 --> 00:35:00,270
and provided

579
00:35:01,770 --> 00:35:05,090
additional welfare cabin units above that flood

580
00:35:05,110 --> 00:35:07,570
level with a minimum of 300 millimeters of freeboard.

581
00:35:07,650 --> 00:35:09,390
So in the event of a breach,

582
00:35:10,470 --> 00:35:14,170
safe refuge can be provided in the construction compounds above the
maximum flood

583
00:35:14,230 --> 00:35:15,870
depth that would be experienced.

584
00:35:17,150 --> 00:35:18,330
Same goes for the Goth catchment.

585
00:35:19,350 --> 00:35:22,310
The maximum flood depth for the one in 1,000 year plus climate
change event has

586
00:35:22,370 --> 00:35:26,230
also been assessed, and we've done raised cabins again,

587
00:35:27,290 --> 00:35:30,690
to make sure the safe refuge is clear of all the flood risk.

588
00:35:31,230 --> 00:35:34,490
Okay. Can we put that paragraph up? 5836, I think you said it was.

589
00:35:34,500 --> 00:35:36,410
It's 5.3.136.

590

00:35:36,710 --> 00:35:37,070
Yeah.

591
00:35:37,130 --> 00:35:38,030
It's on page-

592
00:35:40,190 --> 00:35:40,280
Thank you

593
00:35:40,410 --> 00:35:40,410
...

594
00:35:41,930 --> 00:35:45,110
It's not page one. PDF page 98 of the Flood Risk Assessment.

595
00:35:46,290 --> 00:35:50,110
And if I may, while that's just coming up, it's Carly Vince on behalf of the

596
00:35:50,150 --> 00:35:54,060
applicant. In the Appendix B of the planning statement where

597
00:35:54,110 --> 00:35:57,930
we consider the compliance against the national policy statement, we do

598
00:35:57,990 --> 00:36:01,950
identify that the outline construction environmental management plan

599
00:36:02,010 --> 00:36:05,700
does secure the preparation of an emergency response plan in

600
00:36:05,730 --> 00:36:09,490
consultation with the relevant local authorities.

601
00:36:09,530 --> 00:36:13,150
And that's for the future for the DCO, but none of those people have been consulted

602
00:36:13,160 --> 00:36:15,310
to date over an emergency plan, have they?

603

00:36:15,350 --> 00:36:19,120

And whether or not it's feasible in principle what's being

604

00:36:19,130 --> 00:36:20,430

proposed. Is that correct?

605

00:36:23,110 --> 00:36:23,630

That's correct.

606

00:36:25,290 --> 00:36:25,910

Okay. So

607

00:36:26,830 --> 00:36:30,470

all we have at the moment is this paragraph in terms of ensuring that the

608

00:36:30,530 --> 00:36:34,390

future users of the site are kept safe, and this is the idea that you're going to

609

00:36:34,450 --> 00:36:37,310

build welfare cabins and that you've looked at

610

00:36:37,350 --> 00:36:41,070

potential worst case, for want of a better term, depths.

611

00:36:41,770 --> 00:36:45,430

So I've got several questions about this.

612

00:36:46,110 --> 00:36:49,950

How are construction workers going to access these cabins

613

00:36:50,774 --> 00:36:54,294

And tied into that, how far do they have to travel?

614

00:36:54,934 --> 00:36:57,654

How long do they have to get there according to the modeling?

615

00:36:58,414 --> 00:37:01,734

Where's information about speed of onset, velocity?

616

00:37:02,334 --> 00:37:05,214

Where are the safe access and escape routes

617

00:37:05,534 --> 00:37:06,614

demonstrated?

618

00:37:08,734 --> 00:37:09,934

Chris Banner on behalf of the applicant.

619

00:37:09,974 --> 00:37:13,294

They're not assessed in detail, and if Roger said at this stage we can respond in

620

00:37:13,314 --> 00:37:13,734

writing to-

621

00:37:13,794 --> 00:37:15,094

Are they assessed anywhere,

622

00:37:16,734 --> 00:37:20,634

even if not in detail? Where have I got evidence that there are safe access

623

00:37:20,704 --> 00:37:24,674

routes both to the welfare cabins and

624

00:37:24,714 --> 00:37:28,594

to get out of the welfare cabins if it's a severe breach, for instance,

625

00:37:28,654 --> 00:37:29,544

during operation?

626

00:37:31,714 --> 00:37:32,814

Yep.

627

00:37:33,514 --> 00:37:35,864

Astrid Tischler on behalf of the applicant.

628

00:37:35,954 --> 00:37:39,164

If I can just jump in here, I just wanted to point out that

629

00:37:39,194 --> 00:37:42,563

the locations of the temporary construction

630

00:37:42,634 --> 00:37:46,434

compounds, that there's flexibility across the solar

631

00:37:46,454 --> 00:37:48,904

development area with regards to their

632

00:37:49,694 --> 00:37:53,534

location, and therefore the assessment and the application

633

00:37:53,574 --> 00:37:57,384

documents currently consider this flexibility, and they set

634

00:37:57,494 --> 00:38:01,454

out the design principles and parameters with regards to how

635

00:38:01,474 --> 00:38:03,234

the safe access would be provided.

636

00:38:03,674 --> 00:38:07,654

But that's the reason for why perhaps that detailed

637

00:38:07,674 --> 00:38:09,694

assessment that you've been looking for-

638

00:38:09,834 --> 00:38:09,964

Yes

639

00:38:10,074 --> 00:38:10,624

... is not currently within-

640

00:38:10,634 --> 00:38:13,994

So that brings me back to the lack of sequential approach and the evidence of how

641

00:38:14,054 --> 00:38:17,714

it's being applied. Because you're saying you can move it around

642

00:38:17,774 --> 00:38:21,434

within certain parameters, and I don't understand how

643

00:38:21,494 --> 00:38:25,474

certain places have been picked or not picked according to all those criteria that

644

00:38:25,534 --> 00:38:26,614

I've just read out.

645

00:38:29,734 --> 00:38:31,314

And I do need that information.

646

00:38:34,554 --> 00:38:36,474

Astrid Tischler on behalf of the applicant.

647

00:38:36,634 --> 00:38:38,774

If I can just respond to that quickly as well.

648

00:38:39,254 --> 00:38:42,574

I guess just to, again, to note that the

649

00:38:42,614 --> 00:38:45,954

locations shown are illustrative and they're not fixed.

650

00:38:46,874 --> 00:38:50,834

And the plans that we were looking in the outline drainage strategy as

651

00:38:50,894 --> 00:38:54,454

well, it is just showing the illustrative locations of the

652

00:38:54,494 --> 00:38:55,274

compounds.

653

00:38:56,674 --> 00:38:58,954

I think for the Goths catchment,

654

00:39:00,634 --> 00:39:04,434

all of the area to the north of South Holland main

655

00:39:04,514 --> 00:39:08,434

drain is within flood zone 3B, so inevitably there would

656

00:39:08,514 --> 00:39:12,474

have to be a location within flood zone 3B for those

657

00:39:12,874 --> 00:39:14,714

compounds that are in that area.

658

00:39:16,264 --> 00:39:20,454

So

659

00:39:21,214 --> 00:39:25,114

I think within the flood risk assessment that have been submitted as well,

660

00:39:25,394 --> 00:39:29,314

there is a discussion in there, and we can look at the paragraphs in there that

661

00:39:29,354 --> 00:39:33,304

talk about that flexibility and having assessed the worst case rather than

662

00:39:33,354 --> 00:39:37,034

that specific location, and that the

663

00:39:37,074 --> 00:39:41,034

assessment provided provides the worst case assessment with regards to-

664

00:39:43,914 --> 00:39:47,754

I completely appreciate you wanting to retain some flexibility, but

665

00:39:47,764 --> 00:39:51,584

we'll need to understand that in principle this can be delivered safely

666

00:39:51,594 --> 00:39:54,634

for future users of the site. And that's not just during construction, that's

667

00:39:54,654 --> 00:39:58,644

during operation as well. And at the moment, I don't have the evidence for that,

668

00:39:58,754 --> 00:40:01,214

so if you could pull that together for me,

669

00:40:03,254 --> 00:40:03,883

deadline one,

670

00:40:04,934 --> 00:40:08,744

that would be appreciated. And how that actually looks,

671

00:40:09,234 --> 00:40:13,214

I don't know if you'd like to suggest what your preference would

672

00:40:13,274 --> 00:40:16,974

be, but I would suggest that we do need something akin to an

673

00:40:17,014 --> 00:40:20,694

emergency plan that has ideally been consulted on.

674

00:40:24,334 --> 00:40:27,634

Taylor Power for the applicant. We can prepare something that addresses these

675

00:40:27,674 --> 00:40:30,954

questions. I'm aware that deadline one is in a matter of weeks, so

676

00:40:30,974 --> 00:40:34,774

the potential for us to pull together a full new

677

00:40:34,794 --> 00:40:38,634

plan and consult on that with the relevant parties is probably quite

678

00:40:38,694 --> 00:40:42,654

unlikely. But we'll at least prepare an initial response, and

679

00:40:42,694 --> 00:40:46,614

then to the extent that we work that up further with the relevant stakeholders,

680

00:40:46,674 --> 00:40:50,163

that's possible. I think also what I understand from your discussion is

681

00:40:50,194 --> 00:40:51,524

that

682

00:40:52,414 --> 00:40:56,354

what you're looking for is an illustrative example that there is at least one

683

00:40:56,534 --> 00:41:00,294

option available that addresses the sequential

684

00:41:00,354 --> 00:41:04,234

test, even if there is greater flexibility retained and then that can be shifted

685

00:41:04,294 --> 00:41:06,334

in the future. Is that correct?

686

00:41:07,374 --> 00:41:10,994

To some extent, but ultimately this is about the safety of the users on the site,

687

00:41:11,094 --> 00:41:14,644

this question. So yes, it ties in with the sequential approach and my previous

688

00:41:14,674 --> 00:41:16,934

question because I don't really understand how that's been applied.

689

00:41:16,954 --> 00:41:20,354

But ultimately, we need to know that people can be kept safe on the site, and I

690

00:41:20,374 --> 00:41:22,074

don't have evidence of that at the moment.

691

00:41:22,114 --> 00:41:24,954

So that's what I'm looking for as part of this kind of third

692

00:41:26,294 --> 00:41:26,894
strand.

693

00:41:28,914 --> 00:41:32,734
Rather than sending in half a document and then waiting a bit
longer, just

694

00:41:33,314 --> 00:41:37,304
if you could submit it in deadline two, and if you can speak to any
of those

695

00:41:37,334 --> 00:41:41,284
emergency services that would be responsible for implementing it as

696

00:41:41,314 --> 00:41:45,254
the NPS requires you to do, then that would be very helpful if

697

00:41:45,314 --> 00:41:46,974
I could see their thoughts on it too.

698

00:41:47,974 --> 00:41:49,574
And on that matter,

699

00:41:50,534 --> 00:41:54,034
Mr. Seymour Cooler, was there anything that your colleagues from the

700

00:41:54,114 --> 00:41:58,034
LFA wanted to say with respect to keeping users safe for

701

00:41:58,054 --> 00:41:59,014
the lifetime of the site?

702

00:42:01,214 --> 00:42:05,034
Joseph McCullough for LCC. We don't have any comments at this point,
but

703

00:42:05,434 --> 00:42:09,294
I'd of course be apprised of what's happened in this particular ISH,
and if there

704

00:42:09,334 --> 00:42:12,083
are any comments, then those will be submitted at

705
00:42:12,414 --> 00:42:14,794
deadline one with our response.

706
00:42:16,674 --> 00:42:20,534
And was there anybody else that wanted to comment on this matter?
Ms.

707
00:42:20,594 --> 00:42:22,794
Locke for the Environment Agency, did you have any comments?

708
00:42:28,774 --> 00:42:30,654
I don't think so at this stage. Thank you very much.

709
00:42:32,954 --> 00:42:34,674
Okay. I haven't got any other hands up.

710
00:42:34,814 --> 00:42:36,134
So

711
00:42:37,054 --> 00:42:39,514
Ms. Power, are you clear about what I'm asking for by deadline two?

712
00:42:40,734 --> 00:42:44,714
Yes. So just to clarify, because I think this has Related to some

713
00:42:44,734 --> 00:42:48,514
other elements as well, I think there's a request earlier

714
00:42:48,554 --> 00:42:52,054
in this discussion for that summary of the sequential test and

715
00:42:52,114 --> 00:42:55,634
how the various elements within the site have been cited according
to the

716
00:42:55,694 --> 00:42:59,674
sequential test, and then there's the separate request for the
preparation of

717

00:42:59,714 --> 00:43:03,494

an emergency response plan, which explains the safe access and

718

00:43:03,554 --> 00:43:04,054

egress-

719

00:43:04,354 --> 00:43:04,434

Yes

720

00:43:04,534 --> 00:43:08,374

... and the management of construction workers on-site and operational workers, I

721

00:43:08,394 --> 00:43:08,794

presume-

722

00:43:09,754 --> 00:43:09,834

Yeah

723

00:43:09,854 --> 00:43:10,144

... as well,

724

00:43:10,954 --> 00:43:13,864

if there are operational elements that remain within those areas.

725

00:43:13,894 --> 00:43:14,934

They all tie together.

726

00:43:14,964 --> 00:43:14,964

Yeah.

727

00:43:15,574 --> 00:43:18,634

I am conscious as well that there might be some remodeling going on and, of course,

728

00:43:18,694 --> 00:43:22,194

anything to do with the sequential approach will then fit in to showing, which then

729

00:43:22,274 --> 00:43:25,814

lead into people being kept safe. It may be that we have to wait for

the modeling

730

00:43:25,874 --> 00:43:29,844

to be done. I am conscious of that. And just to separate out,

731

00:43:30,494 --> 00:43:33,294

when it comes to site selection, that's what I've been referring to as the

732

00:43:33,334 --> 00:43:37,194

selection as the sequential test, and then within the site, I'm referring it to the

733

00:43:37,214 --> 00:43:40,174

sequential approach, that we don't get the two confused.

734

00:43:41,094 --> 00:43:41,574

Okay?

735

00:43:41,634 --> 00:43:42,434

Understood. Thank you.

736

00:43:45,314 --> 00:43:46,914

Okay. Those are all my questions on flooding.

737

00:43:47,414 --> 00:43:49,814

Turning to the Water Framework Directive.

738

00:43:51,714 --> 00:43:52,174

So my

739

00:43:53,874 --> 00:43:57,704

first question is for Ms. Lock and possibly your colleague at the

740

00:43:57,734 --> 00:43:58,774

Environment Agency.

741

00:44:00,094 --> 00:44:04,074

We've noted the concerns that you raised in your relevant rep about the

742

00:44:04,114 --> 00:44:05,554
Water Framework Directive assessment.

743
00:44:05,594 --> 00:44:08,904
Was there anything that you wanted to expand on or explain to us further

744
00:44:08,904 --> 00:44:12,794
here, or update us on any progress that's been made since you

745
00:44:12,814 --> 00:44:13,614
submitted that?

746
00:44:16,694 --> 00:44:19,694
Hello. Yes. Liz Lock for the Environment Agency.

747
00:44:20,634 --> 00:44:24,014
We had a meeting on Monday with the applicant to

748
00:44:24,054 --> 00:44:27,914
discuss geomorphology and how that applies to the

749
00:44:27,934 --> 00:44:29,214
Water Framework Directive.

750
00:44:30,614 --> 00:44:33,674
So can I pass over to my colleague, Jeremy Pyle, who

751
00:44:34,474 --> 00:44:36,154
is our geomorphologist? Thank you.

752
00:44:40,194 --> 00:44:42,564
Good afternoon. Jeremy Pyle, Environment Agency.

753
00:44:44,094 --> 00:44:46,194
Yes, we had a meeting with the applicant,

754
00:44:47,514 --> 00:44:49,754
and applicant's representatives on Monday.

755
00:44:50,414 --> 00:44:51,334

We discussed

756

00:44:52,894 --> 00:44:55,814
the actual

757

00:44:56,634 --> 00:45:00,014
Water Framework Directive with respects to geomorphology.

758

00:45:01,774 --> 00:45:03,674
There was concerns that at

759

00:45:04,534 --> 00:45:08,434
initial stages that the grid connection route hadn't been scoped
into the

760

00:45:08,634 --> 00:45:10,474
WFD. That has now

761

00:45:11,594 --> 00:45:12,054
happened,

762

00:45:13,934 --> 00:45:14,534
thankfully.

763

00:45:16,314 --> 00:45:17,854
There was also,

764

00:45:21,574 --> 00:45:25,434
as we're the competent authority for WFD, I realized

765

00:45:25,474 --> 00:45:27,634
that all the water courses

766

00:45:28,454 --> 00:45:31,914
within the site are ordinary water courses, so

767

00:45:34,314 --> 00:45:37,014
that would be the IDB LFFA

768

00:45:38,274 --> 00:45:39,194
responsibility.

769

00:45:40,614 --> 00:45:44,294

But we had issues with temporary crossings

770

00:45:44,474 --> 00:45:48,334

and the duration of temporary crossings, access crossings in.

771

00:45:50,114 --> 00:45:53,943

And our own internal guidance for temporary

772

00:45:54,014 --> 00:45:57,574

crossings and temporary activities is that they are

773

00:45:57,774 --> 00:45:58,334

short-term,

774

00:45:59,314 --> 00:46:01,374

is less than six months,

775

00:46:02,314 --> 00:46:04,294

the actual activity, and the

776

00:46:05,174 --> 00:46:09,034

effects of that activity should be less than six months

777

00:46:09,054 --> 00:46:09,794

in duration.

778

00:46:10,674 --> 00:46:14,574

Whereas some of these temporary crossings may be

779

00:46:14,654 --> 00:46:17,814

in place for four years.

780

00:46:21,054 --> 00:46:24,294

So we had issues with the use of temporary

781

00:46:24,834 --> 00:46:28,234

for construction purposes and temporary for WFD

782

00:46:28,934 --> 00:46:29,214
are

783
00:46:30,194 --> 00:46:31,014
not compatible.

784
00:46:33,394 --> 00:46:37,114
I recommended in my

785
00:46:37,154 --> 00:46:40,654
relevant reps that those temporary crossings should

786
00:46:40,714 --> 00:46:42,274
be assessed as

787
00:46:43,574 --> 00:46:44,114
high-risk

788
00:46:45,274 --> 00:46:45,854
crossings.

789
00:46:51,174 --> 00:46:52,374
Thank you, Mr. Pyle. So

790
00:46:53,214 --> 00:46:53,464
has

791
00:46:54,654 --> 00:46:55,534
progress been made

792
00:46:56,834 --> 00:46:58,734
since your meeting?

793
00:47:02,094 --> 00:47:05,574
I think the applicants

794
00:47:05,794 --> 00:47:07,774
agreed to take things away and

795
00:47:09,094 --> 00:47:09,474
issue

796

00:47:10,474 --> 00:47:11,974
updates at deadline one.

797

00:47:15,994 --> 00:47:19,274
As I say, the meeting was on this Monday, so

798

00:47:19,874 --> 00:47:22,814
very little will have been done since then.

799

00:47:24,534 --> 00:47:26,654
Apologies, I misspoke. I meant by your relevant rep.

800

00:47:26,754 --> 00:47:28,774
But you are satisfied that progress is being made.

801

00:47:28,874 --> 00:47:30,954
Are you satisfied that it can be resolved?

802

00:47:32,814 --> 00:47:34,674
Yes. I'm

803

00:47:36,994 --> 00:47:38,814
satisfied that it can be resolved.

804

00:47:39,034 --> 00:47:41,854
I did make some points about,

805

00:47:43,294 --> 00:47:43,514
and I

806

00:47:44,834 --> 00:47:47,894
think it's mentioned in the agenda for later on,

807

00:47:48,754 --> 00:47:49,814
that

808

00:47:50,954 --> 00:47:54,804
although from a geomorphology point of view, most of these water

809

00:47:54,874 --> 00:47:57,154
courses are ordinary water courses,

810
00:47:58,434 --> 00:48:01,814
and they are managed by the IDB,

811
00:48:02,294 --> 00:48:04,994
for flow conveyance and drainage purposes.

812
00:48:06,134 --> 00:48:09,814
Therefore, they are geomorphologically rather

813
00:48:09,914 --> 00:48:13,814
poor, and I don't really have that much to comment on, on that respect.

814
00:48:14,334 --> 00:48:14,714
But

815
00:48:15,734 --> 00:48:18,894
despite that, they still could support

816
00:48:20,874 --> 00:48:23,554
biodiversity and fisheries. So

817
00:48:25,154 --> 00:48:29,114
I noticed that in the agenda, that there were some concerns about fisheries being

818
00:48:29,154 --> 00:48:32,994
scoped out of the assessment, and that sort of lends

819
00:48:33,014 --> 00:48:35,514
credence to my argument that

820
00:48:36,574 --> 00:48:36,874
I

821
00:48:37,774 --> 00:48:41,654
raised in the meeting on Monday, that biodiversity and fisheries

822

00:48:41,694 --> 00:48:43,494
should actually be consulted

823
00:48:45,478 --> 00:48:49,098
As there were some discussion of open-cut

824
00:48:49,178 --> 00:48:52,098
crossings for the cable installation

825
00:48:53,218 --> 00:48:54,698
and where those

826
00:48:56,018 --> 00:48:59,578
are cutting across wet ditches and wet drains,

827
00:49:01,038 --> 00:49:03,838
there may be habitats involved and which may

828
00:49:05,038 --> 00:49:05,598
require,

829
00:49:08,298 --> 00:49:09,898
well, for cutting across a

830
00:49:10,778 --> 00:49:14,658
ditch or wet ditch, you need to work in a drier environment, which
would

831
00:49:14,998 --> 00:49:18,798
require over-pumping and therefore fish

832
00:49:18,858 --> 00:49:20,518
screening. And I will

833
00:49:21,518 --> 00:49:25,358
leave that to my fisheries and biodiversity colleagues

834
00:49:25,418 --> 00:49:27,598
to actually explain more about that.

835
00:49:28,038 --> 00:49:29,998

Thank you, Mr Pyle. Perhaps we could turn to them now.

836

00:49:30,118 --> 00:49:33,758

Can somebody give me an update on discussions with the

837

00:49:33,958 --> 00:49:37,358

applicant about fish and aquatic

838

00:49:37,498 --> 00:49:38,478

invertebrates?

839

00:49:40,378 --> 00:49:43,998

Yeah. Good afternoon. William West, fisheries specialist on behalf of the

840

00:49:44,038 --> 00:49:45,138

Environment Agency.

841

00:49:46,078 --> 00:49:46,758

So we

842

00:49:47,578 --> 00:49:48,188

haven't had any

843

00:49:50,638 --> 00:49:53,938

engagement with the applicant around

844

00:49:54,238 --> 00:49:54,938

fisheries.

845

00:49:56,778 --> 00:49:59,078

From the point of EIA scoping,

846

00:50:00,498 --> 00:50:04,178

comments were made around fish being scoped out, and we have an

847

00:50:04,238 --> 00:50:07,688

issue with that. There are a number of water bodies and water

848

00:50:07,758 --> 00:50:09,938

courses within the draft water limits

849

00:50:11,318 --> 00:50:13,698
that could potentially hold

850

00:50:14,858 --> 00:50:18,798
a notable fish assemblage, including European eel and spined

851

00:50:18,858 --> 00:50:19,278
loach,

852

00:50:20,478 --> 00:50:21,958
which are both protected species.

853

00:50:24,038 --> 00:50:24,318
The

854

00:50:25,578 --> 00:50:26,438
most recent

855

00:50:27,638 --> 00:50:30,998
response to our relevant representation from the applicant is that
they

856

00:50:32,098 --> 00:50:35,098
will provide some mitigation, which includes

857

00:50:36,098 --> 00:50:39,798
for any in-channel works to avoid spawning periods.

858

00:50:40,558 --> 00:50:43,018
The issue with this is that it doesn't

859

00:50:43,978 --> 00:50:47,158
go as far as protecting fish habitat.

860

00:50:48,198 --> 00:50:52,178
It doesn't go as far as protecting fish from

861

00:50:52,258 --> 00:50:54,898
being entrained into pumps.

862

00:50:55,878 --> 00:50:58,628

And there's no fish rescue planned.

863

00:50:58,998 --> 00:51:02,658

So there's very little specific mitigation in the

864

00:51:02,698 --> 00:51:04,838

construction environmental management plan.

865

00:51:06,558 --> 00:51:09,038

That moves me onto my next point, where

866

00:51:11,138 --> 00:51:15,098

it's our position that fish surveys should have been completed

867

00:51:15,198 --> 00:51:18,858

on any water bodies that have suitable fish habitat and where

868

00:51:18,898 --> 00:51:22,698

there is in-channel works proposed.

869

00:51:22,738 --> 00:51:26,658

The reason for this is because without knowing what is there,

870

00:51:26,838 --> 00:51:30,658

you cannot design appropriate mitigation or design the

871

00:51:30,698 --> 00:51:34,547

scheme. And if fish rescues are required,

872

00:51:35,058 --> 00:51:38,618

you need to know what fish species you are rescuing

873

00:51:39,178 --> 00:51:41,698

and the Environment Agency

874

00:51:42,678 --> 00:51:46,538

issue the licenses for any fish

875

00:51:46,578 --> 00:51:47,098

rescue

876

00:51:48,138 --> 00:51:51,538

that's going to be taking place, and we would not be able to issue that

877

00:51:52,958 --> 00:51:54,398

license unless

878

00:51:55,838 --> 00:51:58,618

there was a thorough understanding of the baseline

879

00:51:59,718 --> 00:52:00,958

for that particular water body.

880

00:52:03,158 --> 00:52:06,198

The applicant, in response to our relevant

881

00:52:06,258 --> 00:52:07,678

representation,

882

00:52:09,158 --> 00:52:12,958

has also said that there are no suitable water bodies

883

00:52:13,018 --> 00:52:16,898

with fish habitat. However, there is no

884

00:52:16,998 --> 00:52:19,578

evidence to back this

885

00:52:20,798 --> 00:52:22,838

up, so we haven't seen any

886

00:52:24,138 --> 00:52:27,338

understanding of the methodology that's been used to inform

887

00:52:28,118 --> 00:52:31,898

that conclusion. We would need to see some photographs

888

00:52:32,058 --> 00:52:34,178

and commentary on how

889

00:52:35,738 --> 00:52:39,658

water bodies have been scoped out for aquatic habitat, and

890

00:52:39,858 --> 00:52:40,978

we haven't seen that yet.

891

00:52:41,918 --> 00:52:45,718

Thank you, Mr West. Ms Lock, was there anybody else from the Environment Agency

892

00:52:45,738 --> 00:52:47,158

that wanted to speak on this matter?

893

00:52:52,058 --> 00:52:54,958

No, those are our main points on this matter.

894

00:52:56,798 --> 00:53:00,178

If we want to talk about WFD on a broader level,

895

00:53:01,098 --> 00:53:04,198

just to mention that from a water quality point of view,

896

00:53:05,318 --> 00:53:08,258

we're just looking for some additional

897

00:53:08,758 --> 00:53:12,638

information to be provided in the outline management documents,

898

00:53:12,738 --> 00:53:13,238

the outline

899

00:53:14,098 --> 00:53:15,098

CAMP and

900

00:53:16,098 --> 00:53:19,438

operational environment management plan, decommissioning management plan.

901

00:53:20,678 --> 00:53:24,598

But we consider that those are in hand and are

902

00:53:24,618 --> 00:53:26,698

being addressed with the applicant. Thank you.

903

00:53:26,978 --> 00:53:30,738

Thank you, Ms Lock. Before I come to the applicant to

904

00:53:30,798 --> 00:53:34,518

ask how they're proposing to address the Environment Agency's concerns, was there

905

00:53:34,528 --> 00:53:35,458

anybody else

906

00:53:36,358 --> 00:53:39,968

in the room or online who wants to comment on Water Framework Directive matters?

907

00:53:42,538 --> 00:53:44,038

Okay. Ms Power.

908

00:53:44,898 --> 00:53:46,538

Thank you. Taylor Power for the applicant.

909

00:53:48,038 --> 00:53:51,958

Yes, just to confirm that, as has already been stated, that meeting was held

910

00:53:51,998 --> 00:53:55,658

on Monday, so the applicant is considering updates following that

911

00:53:55,718 --> 00:53:56,158

meeting,

912

00:53:57,458 --> 00:53:59,978

and will be updating documents at deadline one.

913

00:53:59,988 --> 00:54:03,918

I might pass to my colleague, David Coote, who has joined at

914

00:54:03,958 --> 00:54:07,598

the end of the table, who can speak to the fish assessment

915

00:54:07,998 --> 00:54:11,038

and WFD elements of those questions

916

00:54:11,838 --> 00:54:15,818

in the first instance and provide a brief update on

917

00:54:15,898 --> 00:54:18,478

some of the amendments and updates to the

918

00:54:19,998 --> 00:54:23,798

documents that are occurring for deadline one as part of those discussions with the

919

00:54:23,838 --> 00:54:24,078

EA.

920

00:54:26,758 --> 00:54:28,618

Thank you. David Coote, Ramboll,

921

00:54:29,598 --> 00:54:31,678

biodiversity specialist senior management consultant

922

00:54:32,698 --> 00:54:33,678

on behalf of the applicant.

923

00:54:35,598 --> 00:54:39,218

Yes, so we have received the representations from the Environment

924

00:54:39,298 --> 00:54:39,638

Agency,

925

00:54:40,518 --> 00:54:43,478

and we will be updating the

926

00:54:44,418 --> 00:54:47,638

chapter nine, ecology and biodiversity chapter of the ES.

927

00:54:47,818 --> 00:54:51,398

That's document APP060.

928

00:54:52,790 --> 00:54:56,530

And as well as the Water Framework Directive report, APP221,

929

00:54:57,130 --> 00:55:00,740

at deadline one to include an additional

930

00:55:00,790 --> 00:55:01,790

assessment on fish.

931

00:55:04,830 --> 00:55:05,110

The

932

00:55:08,070 --> 00:55:11,640

exclusion of fish surveys will be included as a limitation,

933

00:55:14,090 --> 00:55:16,010

with confirmation of the decision process for this.

934

00:55:17,350 --> 00:55:20,750

It's not considered to affect the overall assessment findings.

935

00:55:21,110 --> 00:55:24,090

The majority of ditches associated with aerial fields are controlled by sluice,

936

00:55:24,770 --> 00:55:27,290

include a large number that are dry at the time of assessment.

937

00:55:29,330 --> 00:55:30,290

However,

938

00:55:35,570 --> 00:55:36,530

sorry, I'm just jumping around my notes.

939

00:55:38,110 --> 00:55:39,450

I'll stick to my notes.

940

00:55:40,350 --> 00:55:42,010

The watercourse crossing schedule as well,

941

00:55:42,870 --> 00:55:46,610

which is document APP169, will also be updated for

942

00:55:46,630 --> 00:55:47,170

deadline one to

943

00:55:47,990 --> 00:55:51,610

note which watercourses are presumed to be

944

00:55:51,650 --> 00:55:55,300

permanently wet or seasonally wet based on survey information to provide

945

00:55:55,300 --> 00:55:56,930

indication of their potential for fish habitat.

946

00:55:57,940 --> 00:56:01,170

Majority of drains and ditches where watercourse crossings are proposed had low or

947

00:56:01,190 --> 00:56:05,010

no water levels present during surveys and assessed to only be seasonally wet and

948

00:56:05,070 --> 00:56:09,010

be limited value of use by fish. Where there is water permanently present,

949

00:56:09,470 --> 00:56:12,570

pollution prevention measures and timing works to avoid spawning periods will be

950

00:56:12,590 --> 00:56:15,530

considered for detailed design and set out in the

951

00:56:16,410 --> 00:56:19,870

OCEMP, which is document AS024.

952

00:56:20,830 --> 00:56:24,350

Where culverts are proposed as part of watercourse crossings, they will not prevent

953

00:56:24,390 --> 00:56:27,530

continued movement upon completion of works, with details to be provided with the

954

00:56:27,570 --> 00:56:31,110

detailed design secured through the OCEMP.

955

00:56:31,590 --> 00:56:34,010

And the applicant is in the process of considering further updates to the

956

00:56:34,030 --> 00:56:36,670

application documents to address these comments.

957

00:56:38,090 --> 00:56:41,950

So the assessment presented within the ES chapter nine,

958

00:56:42,090 --> 00:56:45,810

ecology and biodiversity, will be updated to include the

959

00:56:45,830 --> 00:56:46,910

impact assessment of fish,

960

00:56:48,770 --> 00:56:50,550

on the basis that it will consider

961

00:56:52,370 --> 00:56:55,430

watercourses which are

962

00:56:56,970 --> 00:56:57,710

permanently wet

963

00:56:58,510 --> 00:57:01,810

will be considered as assumed on a precautionary basis to support the relevant

964

00:57:01,850 --> 00:57:05,750

species, in particular European eel and common

965

00:57:05,790 --> 00:57:06,159

lamprey.

966

00:57:08,190 --> 00:57:12,130

And on that basis, the appropriate mitigation will be provided within

967

00:57:12,210 --> 00:57:14,190

the OCEMP as set out.

968

00:57:16,270 --> 00:57:16,750

As such,

969

00:57:18,110 --> 00:57:18,580

we currently

970

00:57:19,770 --> 00:57:22,370

don't anticipate that there'll be any residual effects

971

00:57:23,190 --> 00:57:26,010

as a result of the

972

00:57:27,010 --> 00:57:28,430

mitigation measures in place.

973

00:57:29,430 --> 00:57:30,630

These include the

974

00:57:31,570 --> 00:57:33,250

commitment to avoid key mitigation timings

975

00:57:34,170 --> 00:57:37,910

for watercourse crossings as far as possible and limiting works to daylight hours.

976

00:57:41,390 --> 00:57:44,810

And also, I note the comment that the

977

00:57:45,370 --> 00:57:47,749

fish rescue has not been accounted for.

978

00:57:47,970 --> 00:57:50,290

That is referred to in the OCEMP,

979

00:57:51,210 --> 00:57:53,410

but obviously specific details of that

980

00:57:54,290 --> 00:57:56,890

would need to be secured further down the line.

981

00:57:56,990 --> 00:57:57,670

At this stage,

982

00:57:58,650 --> 00:58:01,910

we have made a commitment to a fish rescue as appropriate, and

983

00:58:01,990 --> 00:58:02,790

the

984

00:58:03,650 --> 00:58:06,330

diversion over pumping to enable

985

00:58:07,710 --> 00:58:11,690

continued appropriate use where there are crossings during

986

00:58:11,710 --> 00:58:13,330

construction.

987

00:58:21,930 --> 00:58:25,390

Okay. Just so I'm clear, is there a proposal to do surveys

988

00:58:26,890 --> 00:58:30,090

before the close of the examination, or is that something that you're intending to

989

00:58:30,150 --> 00:58:33,890

insert into an environmental management plan

990

00:58:33,930 --> 00:58:35,490

later on?

991

00:58:35,510 --> 00:58:36,620

Thank you. Yes. David Coate,

992

00:58:37,570 --> 00:58:41,250

on behalf of the applicant. Yes, we would be looking to

993

00:58:41,410 --> 00:58:43,110

provide those further down the line.

994

00:58:43,270 --> 00:58:46,660

So at this stage, say for in terms of the environmental assessment and

995

00:58:46,730 --> 00:58:50,490

demonstrating that the project can be delivered with no significant

996

00:58:50,530 --> 00:58:50,910

effect,

997

00:58:52,330 --> 00:58:55,430

on taking a precautionary basis and providing appropriate mitigation,

998

00:58:56,310 --> 00:58:56,650

we don't

999

00:58:57,990 --> 00:59:00,690

believe that surveys will be proportionate at this stage.

1000

00:59:01,450 --> 00:59:04,730

So they would need to be delivered further down the line in terms of the detailed

1001

00:59:04,870 --> 00:59:07,390

agreement in preparation for any licensing required.

1002

00:59:08,110 --> 00:59:11,090

Mr. West indicated that he hadn't had discussions with you about any of this.

1003

00:59:11,129 --> 00:59:14,430

Have you had any discussion with the Environment Agency about these

1004

00:59:14,490 --> 00:59:15,150

proposals?

1005

00:59:23,710 --> 00:59:25,750

Astrid Tischler on behalf of the applicant.

1006

00:59:26,530 --> 00:59:30,370

Just to confirm that we've had high-level discussions

1007

00:59:31,350 --> 00:59:35,090

with Ms. Lislock from the Environment Agency with regards to the

1008

00:59:35,170 --> 00:59:39,130

approach to addressing the comments in the relevant representations, but we

1009

00:59:39,170 --> 00:59:42,639

haven't had a specific meeting with the Environment Agency's

1010

00:59:43,050 --> 00:59:43,750

fish specialist.

1011

00:59:45,720 --> 00:59:49,410

And is there one planned? And we mustn't forget the aquatic invertebrates

1012

00:59:49,550 --> 00:59:51,550

either, because they raised concerns about those.

1013

00:59:54,310 --> 00:59:56,550

Astrid Tischler on behalf of the applicant.

1014

00:59:56,870 --> 01:00:00,730

I think we would definitely look to have a

1015

01:00:00,770 --> 01:00:04,370

further discussion once we've finalized the details to the

1016

01:00:04,430 --> 01:00:08,410

updated assessment, so we can then discuss those through and whether those

1017

01:00:08,450 --> 01:00:11,170
resolve the comments raised by the Environment

1018
01:00:11,310 --> 01:00:13,170
Agency.

1019
01:00:13,250 --> 01:00:16,590
And I'm assuming these issues will all be covered as part of your statement of

1020
01:00:16,630 --> 01:00:20,430
common ground when they come in? Okay. I will read with interest.

1021
01:00:21,130 --> 01:00:21,590
Thank you.

1022
01:00:26,050 --> 01:00:28,230
That was everything from me on Water Framework Directive.

1023
01:00:28,810 --> 01:00:32,100
My next and last question relates to water

1024
01:00:32,170 --> 01:00:36,070
resources, so I'm going to turn to Anglian Water Services

1025
01:00:36,090 --> 01:00:36,630
for this.

1026
01:00:37,710 --> 01:00:41,470
You've raised a number of queries in your relevant

1027
01:00:41,510 --> 01:00:44,610
rep, including sourcing of water for construction and

1028
01:00:44,670 --> 01:00:48,570
operation, given the scarcity of water in the area.

1029
01:00:50,440 --> 01:00:53,730
And I'm just interested in the water resource aspects here rather than the

1030

01:00:53,770 --> 01:00:56,230

protective provisions and the other things that were in your relevant rep.

1031

01:00:56,590 --> 01:01:00,420

Was there anything you wanted to expand on or explain further to us here about

1032

01:01:00,450 --> 01:01:03,050

your concerns about water use at the site?

1033

01:01:04,986 --> 01:01:07,126

Andrea Dollard, Anglian Water Services.

1034

01:01:07,706 --> 01:01:11,606

Yeah, we raise concerns in regards to the demands of the scheme in both

1035

01:01:11,666 --> 01:01:13,865

terms of potable and non-potable water.

1036

01:01:14,466 --> 01:01:17,746

We acknowledge that the scheme proposes to tanker

1037

01:01:18,306 --> 01:01:21,206

water in. However, there remains some

1038

01:01:21,246 --> 01:01:25,106

ambiguity within the documents that there

1039

01:01:25,166 --> 01:01:28,666

may be requirement for main supply as well.

1040

01:01:29,326 --> 01:01:32,886

And then that is not then accompanied with evidence on the level of

1041

01:01:32,906 --> 01:01:36,886

demand for water for both construction and operation,

1042

01:01:37,406 --> 01:01:40,826

which doesn't allow us to make an assessment as to whether we can

1043

01:01:41,166 --> 01:01:44,446

supply the water required or whether that will exceed

1044

01:01:45,266 --> 01:01:49,046

our non-domestic water policy that we have in place at the

1045

01:01:49,086 --> 01:01:52,876

moment. So we have concerns that there's a lack of evidence,

1046

01:01:52,966 --> 01:01:56,706

really, in terms of water resources and what they need and where.

1047

01:01:58,186 --> 01:02:01,236

So my understanding from your rep is what you're asking for, let me get the

1048

01:02:01,286 --> 01:02:04,966

terminology right, is a water resource assessment, if you can have one.

1049

01:02:05,666 --> 01:02:06,566

Is that correct?

1050

01:02:07,146 --> 01:02:09,006

Andrea Dollard, Anglian Water Services. Yes.

1051

01:02:09,306 --> 01:02:13,246

A water resource assessment would provide us with clarity around

1052

01:02:13,306 --> 01:02:16,846

water use, water efficiency, and puts us in a better position to

1053

01:02:16,866 --> 01:02:20,226

assess that we can deliver sustainable water

1054

01:02:20,826 --> 01:02:21,206

supply.

1055

01:02:21,626 --> 01:02:23,926

And I saw that it's not

1056

01:02:25,026 --> 01:02:28,766

part of your policy to ask for one of those if it's less than 20 meters cubed a

1057

01:02:28,806 --> 01:02:32,506

day non-domestic. Are you clear if it would

1058

01:02:32,566 --> 01:02:36,426

be less than 20 meters cubed a day or above 20 meters cubed a day based on what

1059

01:02:36,486 --> 01:02:36,906

you've had?

1060

01:02:38,406 --> 01:02:41,986

Unfortunately, it's not clear, which is why we're asking for the water resources

1061

01:02:42,026 --> 01:02:42,486

assessment.

1062

01:02:42,846 --> 01:02:43,246

I see.

1063

01:02:43,566 --> 01:02:45,986

We can establish whether it's less than that or not.

1064

01:02:46,226 --> 01:02:50,166

And you're also asking for a holistic approach where you want to see

1065

01:02:50,206 --> 01:02:53,626

how rainwater harvesting, for example, is going to be used on the site.

1066

01:02:54,106 --> 01:02:55,266

Am I correct in that?

1067

01:02:55,826 --> 01:02:58,206

Andrea Dollard, Anglian Water Services. Yes.

1068

01:02:58,406 --> 01:02:59,426

We would like to see

1069

01:03:01,346 --> 01:03:05,266

more exploration of water reuse to reduce the demand of

1070

01:03:05,286 --> 01:03:09,065

water supply for operational and construction purposes.

1071

01:03:09,726 --> 01:03:12,926

Although there is some elements within the OCMP

1072

01:03:13,666 --> 01:03:16,996

with regards to wheel washing, we would like to see further exploration.

1073

01:03:18,306 --> 01:03:21,126

And in the event that water needed to be used for emergencies,

1074

01:03:22,026 --> 01:03:23,946

what's Anglian Water's position on that?

1075

01:03:25,826 --> 01:03:27,066

Andrea Dollard, Anglian Water.

1076

01:03:28,626 --> 01:03:32,066

Our understanding is that the fire water will be

1077

01:03:32,306 --> 01:03:36,026

stored on-site, and that will also be tankered in.

1078

01:03:36,046 --> 01:03:39,726

But again, we don't know what requirements that will be.

1079

01:03:40,846 --> 01:03:44,806

So we can't make an assessment on whether we can assist

1080

01:03:44,826 --> 01:03:47,326

with supply. Also, whether that

1081

01:03:48,206 --> 01:03:51,635

level of storage is going to be sufficient to put out the fire, or

whether there'll

1082

01:03:51,646 --> 01:03:55,106

be need to plug into our hydrants to

1083

01:03:55,166 --> 01:03:58,896

supplement the water supply. So we would want more detail on

1084

01:03:58,946 --> 01:03:59,166

that.

1085

01:04:01,566 --> 01:04:05,476

And to draw on your experience of this area and

1086

01:04:05,586 --> 01:04:09,366

tankering water in, given the volumes that have been provided as part of the

1087

01:04:09,426 --> 01:04:09,866

ES,

1088

01:04:11,506 --> 01:04:13,946

does it appear realistic to you that they could be tankered in?

1089

01:04:13,966 --> 01:04:16,246

That they can be sourced

1090

01:04:17,226 --> 01:04:21,086

outside of your catchment or from other users in the area?

1091

01:04:23,626 --> 01:04:24,966

Anglian Water, Andrea Dollard.

1092

01:04:27,546 --> 01:04:31,336

Bearing in mind that solar farms are quite new in our experiences, we're

1093

01:04:31,386 --> 01:04:34,526

unsure how much water that they would require.

1094

01:04:34,596 --> 01:04:37,126

So we don't know whether that would be possible.

1095

01:04:38,966 --> 01:04:42,456

And obviously we've got quite a large area that's water-stressed at the moment, and

1096

01:04:42,486 --> 01:04:46,406

we'd have concerns that tankering might have

1097

01:04:46,446 --> 01:04:50,216

to come from some distance in order to be supplied outside the water-stressed

1098

01:04:50,286 --> 01:04:50,626

area.

1099

01:04:52,306 --> 01:04:53,626

That's not really much of an answer, sorry.

1100

01:04:53,766 --> 01:04:56,326

Oh, I know I put you on the spot a bit there, but thank you, Ms. Dollard.

1101

01:04:57,086 --> 01:05:00,926

Before I turn to the applicant, does anybody else have any questions or comments

1102

01:05:01,066 --> 01:05:02,536

on water resources?

1103

01:05:05,646 --> 01:05:06,886

Okay. Ms. Power.

1104

01:05:07,786 --> 01:05:11,426

Taylor Power for the applicant. I will largely pass on to

1105

01:05:11,466 --> 01:05:15,166

Astrid Tischler in respect of this question and Owen Tucker, who can

1106

01:05:15,246 --> 01:05:18,526

speak to the engagement with Anglian Water so far, as well as the

1107

01:05:18,566 --> 01:05:21,286

assumptions that have been taken within the ES.

1108

01:05:25,506 --> 01:05:27,906

Astrid Tischler on behalf of the applicant.

1109

01:05:28,866 --> 01:05:32,506

The applicant's assessment of impacts on water supply and water

1110

01:05:32,546 --> 01:05:36,386

resources is set out within ES Chapter 11,

1111

01:05:36,486 --> 01:05:39,516

Hydrology and Flood Risk, App 062

1112

01:05:40,266 --> 01:05:43,546

within paragraphs 11.431 to

1113

01:05:43,586 --> 01:05:44,756

11.437,

1114

01:05:46,266 --> 01:05:49,966

within a section titled Water Supply and Water Resources.

1115

01:05:51,406 --> 01:05:54,866

In summary, the section states that the scheme is not proposing

1116

01:05:55,286 --> 01:05:58,806

a connection to the mains water supply for construction or decommissioning

1117

01:05:59,866 --> 01:06:03,526

or during the operational period for the storage of fire water or panel

1118

01:06:03,586 --> 01:06:07,506

cleaning. The only proposed connection to Anglian

1119

01:06:07,546 --> 01:06:10,946

Water's main supply is for the operational water

1120

01:06:11,026 --> 01:06:14,786

supply of site offices within the on-site substations,

1121

01:06:15,926 --> 01:06:18,606

which accommodate up to 10 site staff.

1122

01:06:19,866 --> 01:06:23,846

This would equate to a mains water supply requirement of 0.9

1123

01:06:23,886 --> 01:06:27,246

meters cubed per day, which is below the threshold

1124

01:06:27,966 --> 01:06:31,616

at which Anglian Water requires the submission of

1125

01:06:31,646 --> 01:06:35,216

the water resource assessment form that's been

1126

01:06:35,666 --> 01:06:39,086

provided as part of the relevant representation as

1127

01:06:39,126 --> 01:06:40,486

well.

1128

01:06:42,806 --> 01:06:46,486

For all other purposes, water will be obtained from a commercial

1129

01:06:47,166 --> 01:06:50,526

third-party source and delivered to site as and when required.

1130

01:06:51,526 --> 01:06:55,206

The applicant does note that the third-party

1131

01:06:55,286 --> 01:06:58,426

source would be confirmed by the contractor prior to construction.

1132

01:06:59,466 --> 01:07:02,686

However, there are currently multiple

1133

01:07:03,266 --> 01:07:06,466

suppliers who operate in Lincolnshire and UK-wide.

1134

01:07:08,166 --> 01:07:11,766

The applicant would only be able to use commercial third-party suppliers that have

1135

01:07:11,806 --> 01:07:14,966

existing consents and licenses in place to provide the supply,

1136

01:07:15,766 --> 01:07:19,206

and these would be in place regardless of the DC0 application for the scheme.

1137

01:07:20,506 --> 01:07:24,266

An allowance for tanker movements is also included within the applicant's traffic

1138

01:07:24,366 --> 01:07:25,906

estimates presented in the ES.

1139

01:07:27,726 --> 01:07:31,686

We would also note that the similar approach to the provision of water supply

1140

01:07:31,706 --> 01:07:35,586

has been adopted for other consented solar schemes in Lincolnshire,

1141

01:07:35,886 --> 01:07:38,026

such as the Tilbridge Solar Project.

1142

01:07:39,046 --> 01:07:40,866

However, we would be looking to

1143

01:07:42,146 --> 01:07:46,066

track the discussion on the water supply with Anglian Water through the statement

1144

01:07:46,086 --> 01:07:49,546

of common ground as we progress through the examination,

1145

01:07:50,266 --> 01:07:54,006

to make sure that any points of clarification have been

1146

01:07:54,046 --> 01:07:57,306
provided as requested. Thanks.

1147

01:07:58,906 --> 01:08:02,226
So it's not your intention at the moment to do a water resource
assessment as been

1148

01:08:02,326 --> 01:08:03,806
asked for by Anglian Water?

1149

01:08:05,046 --> 01:08:08,426
Not in terms of the form that have... Apologies.

1150

01:08:08,506 --> 01:08:10,026
Ash Ratisha on behalf of the applicant.

1151

01:08:11,186 --> 01:08:14,886
We're not currently proposing to submit the form

1152

01:08:14,946 --> 01:08:16,967
that's been provided by Anglian Water.

1153

01:08:17,946 --> 01:08:18,446
However,

1154

01:08:19,246 --> 01:08:23,166
the water supply and water resources information is already provided

1155

01:08:23,226 --> 01:08:26,467
within ES Chapter 11, within the paragraphs that

1156

01:08:27,906 --> 01:08:28,786
I previously quoted.

1157

01:08:31,266 --> 01:08:35,146
Okay. I think it would be useful for us

1158

01:08:35,206 --> 01:08:38,946
to have some more detail. I've read those paragraphs, and they're
very

1159

01:08:39,007 --> 01:08:42,846

high-level statements, and I appreciate at this stage that to some

1160

01:08:42,887 --> 01:08:46,486

extent that's necessary. But taking into account Anglian Water's concerns,

1161

01:08:47,547 --> 01:08:51,047

I think more detail around the principle of what you're

1162

01:08:51,087 --> 01:08:54,826

proposing would be useful, including looking

1163

01:08:54,927 --> 01:08:58,686

at the reuse of water and the sustainability of the scheme from that

1164

01:08:58,726 --> 01:09:02,566

point of view, harvesting water. Those are all things that should be

1165

01:09:02,606 --> 01:09:06,547

looked at as part of meeting the policy requirements of the MPS, and at

1166

01:09:06,566 --> 01:09:09,846

the moment I don't really have a sense of that water balance.

1167

01:09:10,266 --> 01:09:13,816

And the proposal is to use some very large volumes of

1168

01:09:14,186 --> 01:09:16,047

water at some points during the scheme.

1169

01:09:16,126 --> 01:09:20,007

So I think given that it's an area where there's scarce

1170

01:09:20,126 --> 01:09:23,855

water available, that is something that we will need to satisfy ourselves, that in

1171

01:09:23,887 --> 01:09:27,626

principle everything's being done to make sure it's as efficient as

1172

01:09:27,666 --> 01:09:30,927

possible and that Anglian Water's concerns will be addressed.

1173

01:09:30,986 --> 01:09:34,855

So I would prefer, even if you don't end up doing a full water

1174

01:09:34,906 --> 01:09:38,346

resource assessment, I think we could do with some form of water

1175

01:09:38,427 --> 01:09:38,906

balance

1176

01:09:39,906 --> 01:09:43,467

set in the wider context of how water will be conserved.

1177

01:09:48,507 --> 01:09:50,967

Ash Ratisha on behalf of the applicant.

1178

01:09:51,507 --> 01:09:54,906

We'll take these comments away and we'll respond in writing.

1179

01:09:56,566 --> 01:10:00,515

And if possible, if you could speak to Anglian Water to, even if we don't

1180

01:10:00,546 --> 01:10:04,196

have the official titled document in, to make sure the information you're

1181

01:10:04,226 --> 01:10:08,166

providing addresses their concerns as well, and then we can pick that up

1182

01:10:08,906 --> 01:10:09,846

at a later point.

1183

01:10:12,546 --> 01:10:14,686

Deadline one or two?

1184

01:10:16,126 --> 01:10:19,206

Taylor Power for the applicant. I think we'll at the very least be able to provide

1185

01:10:19,246 --> 01:10:21,466

an update on those discussions between Anglian,

1186

01:10:22,586 --> 01:10:25,706

and the applicant at deadline one as part of the statement of common ground.

1187

01:10:26,186 --> 01:10:30,096

Whether we'll have the full assessment or details that you're

1188

01:10:30,146 --> 01:10:33,646

seeking, by deadline one, I think we'll just need to take away and

1189

01:10:33,686 --> 01:10:35,086

confirm.

1190

01:10:37,006 --> 01:10:37,966

My colleague has a question.

1191

01:10:39,286 --> 01:10:40,986

In terms of fires,

1192

01:10:42,046 --> 01:10:45,886

and if you can signpost this to me, if I've missed it,

1193

01:10:46,226 --> 01:10:47,236

fine. Is it

1194

01:10:48,446 --> 01:10:50,506

water or foam

1195

01:10:51,566 --> 01:10:54,326

which would be used in a fire situation?

1196

01:10:54,606 --> 01:10:57,426

I appreciate they're a different infrastructure.

1197

01:10:57,686 --> 01:11:00,726

I can't find the answer to that question.

1198

01:11:02,186 --> 01:11:06,075

Taylor Power for the applicant. My understanding is

1199

01:11:06,226 --> 01:11:08,486

yes, it does depend on the infrastructure.

1200

01:11:08,646 --> 01:11:12,436

I would direct the examining authority and also Anglian Water, in respect to one of

1201

01:11:12,466 --> 01:11:16,306

the questions raised earlier about the battery

1202

01:11:16,986 --> 01:11:20,586

energy storage system to the battery safety management plan, which

1203

01:11:20,686 --> 01:11:23,526

outlines that it is water in the case of batteries.

1204

01:11:24,066 --> 01:11:27,506

And the volumes of water have been calculated in

1205

01:11:27,566 --> 01:11:28,605

accordance with the

1206

01:11:30,106 --> 01:11:33,866

National Fire Service guidance, and that's what has been

1207

01:11:33,886 --> 01:11:37,486

designed and incorporated and secured within that battery safety

1208

01:11:37,546 --> 01:11:41,526

management plan. I understand it's slightly different when it comes to,

1209

01:11:41,646 --> 01:11:44,916

for example, the substations on site, or solar

1210

01:11:45,026 --> 01:11:47,926
stations and whether foam is used in those

1211
01:11:48,266 --> 01:11:49,706
circumstances instead.

1212
01:11:51,386 --> 01:11:51,866
So-

1213
01:11:52,146 --> 01:11:52,866
Sorry to interrupt.

1214
01:11:52,896 --> 01:11:52,896
Yes.

1215
01:11:52,906 --> 01:11:56,726
Is that detailed anywhere? Because obviously I've seen the BES

1216
01:11:56,736 --> 01:12:00,186
document, but for the other equipment, I can't find an

1217
01:12:00,246 --> 01:12:01,126
answer.

1218
01:12:01,426 --> 01:12:04,746
Taylor Power for the applicant. If you don't mind, if we came back
to you after the

1219
01:12:04,766 --> 01:12:05,686
break on that point-

1220
01:12:05,926 --> 01:12:07,186
Or at deadline one

1221
01:12:07,226 --> 01:12:07,946
... or at deadline one. Yeah.

1222
01:12:07,956 --> 01:12:07,956
Yeah.

1223
01:12:08,006 --> 01:12:10,226

I'll just check with the team of where that's detailed.

1224

01:12:10,316 --> 01:12:10,316

Yeah.

1225

01:12:10,326 --> 01:12:13,616

But that's my understanding from discussions, but I can't tell you the document off

1226

01:12:13,616 --> 01:12:13,625

the top of my head.

1227

01:12:13,666 --> 01:12:15,386

I appreciate it's a really small point-

1228

01:12:15,526 --> 01:12:15,576

Yeah

1229

01:12:15,576 --> 01:12:17,966

... but it's something that I just can't find the answer to.

1230

01:12:18,026 --> 01:12:18,126

No.

1231

01:12:18,166 --> 01:12:18,446

Thank you.

1232

01:12:18,466 --> 01:12:18,886

Understood.

1233

01:12:21,146 --> 01:12:21,866

I understand that Mr.

1234

01:12:23,946 --> 01:12:27,706

Corcoran from the Environment Agency has his hand up.

1235

01:12:27,786 --> 01:12:28,906

Is that still the case?

1236

01:12:34,466 --> 01:12:35,686

Good afternoon. Yeah.

1237

01:12:36,846 --> 01:12:38,766

Sorry, Mark Corcoran, Environment Agency.

1238

01:12:39,026 --> 01:12:42,426

It was some comments with regards to the initial point around

1239

01:12:42,806 --> 01:12:46,736

water supply and demand really. But I think most

1240

01:12:46,786 --> 01:12:50,706

of the comments covered some of the points that I had to make, but

1241

01:12:50,866 --> 01:12:54,786

I think it's worth just adding a little bit of weight to the argument of

1242

01:12:54,806 --> 01:12:58,366

further work being required to understand what some of the consumptive water

1243

01:12:58,386 --> 01:13:02,186

demands are from the scheme and the supply options that have been considered.

1244

01:13:03,386 --> 01:13:06,336

Some of them have been forthcoming within the documentation submitted for the

1245

01:13:06,366 --> 01:13:06,926

examination

1246

01:13:07,818 --> 01:13:11,398

But I think at scoping and at peer, I think the recommendation was from the

1247

01:13:11,418 --> 01:13:15,098

Environment Agency to provide a water supply strategy, which

1248

01:13:15,158 --> 01:13:18,998

basically itemizes, as Anglian Water have suggested with the

1249

01:13:19,018 --> 01:13:22,898

water resources assessment, itemizes consumptive water demands down to

1250

01:13:22,998 --> 01:13:26,618

things like dust suppression, horizontal directional drilling fluids if they're

1251

01:13:26,638 --> 01:13:30,258

required for underground cable alignment and crossings, for example,

1252

01:13:30,958 --> 01:13:34,878

and wheel washing. So these things are quite small in

1253

01:13:34,938 --> 01:13:35,938

volume, relatively,

1254

01:13:36,838 --> 01:13:40,608

but they add up to enough to cause problems when it comes to looking at water

1255

01:13:40,658 --> 01:13:44,438

availability. As Anglian Water mentioned, this is an extremely water-scarce

1256

01:13:44,538 --> 01:13:44,918

area.

1257

01:13:45,798 --> 01:13:47,978

There are limitations to water company supply.

1258

01:13:48,028 --> 01:13:50,058

There are limitations to surface water abstraction.

1259

01:13:50,718 --> 01:13:53,138

And we've seen projects in the past

1260

01:13:53,958 --> 01:13:57,578

fall foul of the number of HGVs that are required to meet demands,

1261

01:13:57,678 --> 01:14:00,078

which add up to quite a significant volume.

1262

01:14:00,618 --> 01:14:02,018

So in the absence of any

1263

01:14:03,178 --> 01:14:06,418

quantified volumes of water for these consumptive purposes

1264

01:14:06,938 --> 01:14:10,578

at all phases of the project, not just construction, although operational, I think,

1265

01:14:10,658 --> 01:14:12,118

would be particularly minimal,

1266

01:14:13,197 --> 01:14:16,038

it's just having the confidence really that there's a source of supply that is

1267

01:14:16,078 --> 01:14:19,778

practical and viable. So without knowing what those volumes are likely to be at

1268

01:14:19,818 --> 01:14:23,608

this stage, it's a little bit of the case of just taking the applicant's

1269

01:14:23,658 --> 01:14:24,217

word for it.

1270

01:14:25,218 --> 01:14:28,378

And that, to be fair, is the applicant's risk at this stage.

1271

01:14:28,918 --> 01:14:31,818

Outside of water company supply needing to be agreed with Anglian Water,

1272

01:14:32,858 --> 01:14:35,108

if it came to the point where permits were required,

1273

01:14:36,278 --> 01:14:40,258

it's the applicant's risk if at the 11th hour they were not

practical or refused.

1274

01:14:40,338 --> 01:14:43,998

So what we're looking to achieve from the Environment Agency's point of view is

1275

01:14:44,018 --> 01:14:46,918

just a level of confidence that we're not going to end up with

1276

01:14:47,838 --> 01:14:51,418

significant obstacles pre-commencement, which have been left to contractors

1277

01:14:51,978 --> 01:14:55,818

too far down the line. Because if, for example, abstraction

1278

01:14:55,858 --> 01:14:59,558

was required, if HGVs weren't viable, then

1279

01:15:00,538 --> 01:15:03,888

you'd be looking at creative solutions to provide storage, which would affect

1280

01:15:03,918 --> 01:15:07,578

detailed design. So these are the reasons why we want this looking at

1281

01:15:08,118 --> 01:15:12,038

pre-app and ahead of time, rather than being left to contractors and to

1282

01:15:12,058 --> 01:15:15,918

pre-commencement, just because of the nature of the

1283

01:15:15,937 --> 01:15:18,958

water resources landscape in this part of the world with water scarcity.

1284

01:15:19,058 --> 01:15:22,598

So just to reiterate the importance of being ahead

1285

01:15:22,678 --> 01:15:24,628

of the curve on that in terms of

1286

01:15:25,458 --> 01:15:29,158

attempting to quantify, even with broad estimates rather than exact

1287

01:15:29,198 --> 01:15:33,088

volumes. Appreciate that won't be known at this time, but a lot of other

1288

01:15:33,098 --> 01:15:37,018

projects have been able to evaluate broad estimates of volumes required for

1289

01:15:37,058 --> 01:15:40,818

consumptive uses and to provide a very brief options appraisal of what

1290

01:15:40,858 --> 01:15:44,098

sources of supply are available and what those limitations are.

1291

01:15:44,158 --> 01:15:46,718

I think MPS EN1

1292

01:15:47,578 --> 01:15:50,998

does refer to a review of the abstraction licensing strategies, and I think it

1293

01:15:51,038 --> 01:15:54,858

would provide some reassurances to the Environment Agency that there's an awareness

1294

01:15:54,878 --> 01:15:58,818

of the limitations around access to water, just so that there

1295

01:15:58,838 --> 01:16:02,658

are no surprises and everyone's expectations are on the same page ultimately.

1296

01:16:02,758 --> 01:16:05,118

So if a water supply strategy isn't

1297

01:16:06,278 --> 01:16:08,998

proportionate, if the applicant decides not to do that,

1298

01:16:09,998 --> 01:16:13,478

then the water resources assessment that Anglian Water are proposing would

1299

01:16:13,638 --> 01:16:17,518

be a way to satisfy all of those things in terms of qualifying

1300

01:16:17,558 --> 01:16:21,438

those demands and looking at options appraisal for sources of supply.

1301

01:16:21,518 --> 01:16:21,638

So,

1302

01:16:22,598 --> 01:16:24,098

no doubt the applicant has enough information.

1303

01:16:24,278 --> 01:16:28,078

I think the things that they've mentioned have alleviated some concerns, but I

1304

01:16:28,118 --> 01:16:31,918

think just having a bit more confidence on quantities would be

1305

01:16:32,178 --> 01:16:34,898

really valuable. But I think that was covered, so apologies for repeating any of

1306

01:16:34,918 --> 01:16:35,038

that.

1307

01:16:35,358 --> 01:16:36,878

That's been really helpful. Thank you.

1308

01:16:39,558 --> 01:16:40,098

Ms Power,

1309

01:16:40,958 --> 01:16:42,378

did you want to respond to any of that?

1310

01:16:43,038 --> 01:16:44,998

Taylor Power for the applicant. No, I don't think so.

1311

01:16:45,118 --> 01:16:49,108

I think that just feeds into the responsible provide back in terms of

1312

01:16:49,138 --> 01:16:51,148

what further information can be provided.

1313

01:16:51,447 --> 01:16:53,918

And it sounds as though it would be helpful if you could speak to Mr.

1314

01:16:54,138 --> 01:16:54,758

Corcoran

1315

01:16:56,378 --> 01:16:59,378

if you have enough time before you need to submit it, but we'll certainly be

1316

01:16:59,418 --> 01:17:02,698

looking out for his response to whatever is submitted. Thank you.

1317

01:17:04,188 --> 01:17:08,058

I have no more questions on water issues,

1318

01:17:10,178 --> 01:17:13,498

so I think we will adjourn now and move to

1319

01:17:13,738 --> 01:17:14,318

lunch.

1320

01:17:15,918 --> 01:17:19,878

I'm proposing that we resume at 2:00

1321

01:17:19,918 --> 01:17:21,978

if there are no objections to that.

1322

01:17:23,678 --> 01:17:24,178

Okay, then.

