Planning Inspectorate
Arolygiaeth Gynllunio

Hearing Transcript

Project:	Meridian Solar Farm
Hearing:	Issue Specific Hearing 4 (ISH4) – Part 1
Date:	12 November 2026

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

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

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1
00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:03,440
Good morning, everybody. It's now 10:00, so it's time for this hearing to begin.

2
00:00:04,360 --> 00:00:08,200
I'd like to welcome you all to this issue-specific hearing, which

3
00:00:08,240 --> 00:00:11,940
will deal with agriculture and soils, traffic and access,

4
00:00:12,200 --> 00:00:15,940
noise and socioeconomics, and land use for the Meridian

5
00:00:16,200 --> 00:00:19,980
Solar Farm project. Can I just confirm that everybody can hear me

6
00:00:20,360 --> 00:00:20,780
clearly?

7
00:00:21,580 --> 00:00:21,700
Yes.

8
00:00:22,420 --> 00:00:22,920
Thank you.

9
00:00:23,780 --> 00:00:27,420
Can I also confirm with the case team that the live streaming and recording of this

10
00:00:27,480 --> 00:00:29,660
event has commenced? Thanks.

11
00:00:30,940 --> 00:00:34,740
My name is Beth Davis. I'm a chartered geologist, and I've been appointed by the

12
00:00:34,780 --> 00:00:38,500
Secretary of State to be a member of the panel of inspectors to examine

13
00:00:38,560 --> 00:00:41,860
this application. I'm now going to ask the other panel members to introduce

14
00:00:41,900 --> 00:00:42,420
themselves.

15
00:00:43,600 --> 00:00:47,240
Good morning. My name is Samantha Murphy, and I am a chartered town planner and a

16
00:00:47,280 --> 00:00:48,380
chartered environmentalist.

17
00:00:49,660 --> 00:00:51,460
Good morning. My name is Ms. Casini.

18
00:00:51,520 --> 00:00:55,060
I'm a chartered town planner, and I've been appointed by the Secretary of State to

19
00:00:55,100 --> 00:00:57,940
be the lead member of the panel to examine this application.

20
00:00:58,660 --> 00:01:02,340
And together, we constitute the examining authority, or XA, for this

21
00:01:02,440 --> 00:01:03,100
application.

22
00:01:04,060 --> 00:01:06,640
Also present today are members of the case team.

23
00:01:07,080 --> 00:01:10,800
The case manager is Ms. Margum, and she's supported at the

24
00:01:10,840 --> 00:01:14,540
venue by Mr. Stevens, Ms. Woodruff, and by colleagues

25
00:01:14,620 --> 00:01:18,480
online. If you have any questions or concerns about today's event,

26
00:01:18,540 --> 00:01:20,320
please contact one of the case team.

27
00:01:21,340 --> 00:01:24,900
In addition, there are technicians from TM Services with us today.

28
00:01:25,340 --> 00:01:28,140
They're here to manage the recording and the live streaming of the event.

29
00:01:28,800 --> 00:01:31,480
We also have a colleague at the back of the room observing us for training

30
00:01:31,520 --> 00:01:32,160
purposes.

31
00:01:33,980 --> 00:01:37,140
I'll now deal with a few housekeeping matters for those attending in person.

32
00:01:37,540 --> 00:01:41,460
Can everyone please make sure that their devices and phones are set to silent so

33
00:01:41,480 --> 00:01:42,380
that we're not interrupted?

34
00:01:43,220 --> 00:01:46,540
There are no fire alarms planned, so if you do hear the alarm, please leave the

35
00:01:46,580 --> 00:01:50,180
building following the fire exits, and we meet by the back car

36
00:01:50,240 --> 00:01:50,700
park.

37
00:01:51,700 --> 00:01:55,580
In terms of timings, we'll have a break around 11:00, and we'll likely

38
00:01:55,620 --> 00:01:59,540
break for lunch around 1:00, and then there'll

39
00:01:59,600 --> 00:02:03,280
be an afternoon break. That should be 11:30 for the first break rather than

40
00:02:03,340 --> 00:02:04,260
11:00. Apologies.

41
00:02:05,400 --> 00:02:08,720
The meeting will follow the agenda published on the National Infrastructure

42
00:02:08,759 --> 00:02:12,480
Planning website on the 30th of October, 2026, which has

43
00:02:12,520 --> 00:02:16,040
examination library reference EV8001.

44
00:02:17,040 --> 00:02:20,800
A recording of today's hearing will be made available on the Meridian Solar Farm

45
00:02:20,880 --> 00:02:24,200
Project section of the National Infrastructure Planning website as soon as

46
00:02:24,260 --> 00:02:28,140
possible. With this in mind, please can you speak clearly into a

47
00:02:28,180 --> 00:02:31,940
microphone, stating your name and who you represent each time you

48
00:02:32,040 --> 00:02:32,380
speak.

49
00:02:33,940 --> 00:02:37,180
A link to the Planning Inspectorate's privacy notice was provided in the

50
00:02:37,220 --> 00:02:40,880
notification for this hearing. We are assuming that everybody here today has

51
00:02:40,920 --> 00:02:44,900
familiarized themselves with this, but please speak to the case team if you've

52
00:02:44,940 --> 00:02:46,720
got any questions about it.

53
00:02:47,780 --> 00:02:50,840
Does anyone have any questions about agenda item one?

54
00:02:53,780 --> 00:02:55,340
We'll move on to agenda item two.

55
00:02:56,600 --> 00:02:59,880
I'm now going to ask those of you who are participating in today's meeting to

56
00:02:59,940 --> 00:03:03,240
introduce yourselves. Could you state your name, let me know who you

57
00:03:03,280 --> 00:03:06,520
represent, and which agenda item you wish to speak on?

58
00:03:07,320 --> 00:03:08,500
And we'll start with the applicant.

59
00:03:09,780 --> 00:03:13,440
Taylor Power, a managing senior associate at Pinsent Masons, and I am here on

60
00:03:13,460 --> 00:03:16,640
behalf of the applicant. I propose to introduce the various members of the

61
00:03:16,700 --> 00:03:20,040
applicant team as we get to each item, but we'll be speaking to all of the items

62
00:03:20,100 --> 00:03:20,340
today.

63
00:03:21,160 --> 00:03:21,840
Thank you, Ms. Power.

64
00:03:23,960 --> 00:03:27,940
I'll now move on to the organizations and individuals that I've got in the room who

65
00:03:27,960 --> 00:03:31,900
have given us notice of their intention to speak. So first of all, I've got Mr.

66
00:03:32,160 --> 00:03:34,060
Barton from Lincolnshire County Council.

67
00:03:34,760 --> 00:03:37,680
Yes, good morning, madam. Thank you. My name's Andrew Barton.

68
00:03:37,760 --> 00:03:40,780
I'm a principal infrastructure officer at Lincolnshire County Council.

69
00:03:41,600 --> 00:03:44,660
I'm joined today by Mr. Peter Danks on my left.

70
00:03:45,500 --> 00:03:48,120
He is a director at Reading Agricultural Consultants.

71
00:03:48,180 --> 00:03:52,140
He'll be speaking to item three, possibly six, depending on the nature

72
00:03:52,179 --> 00:03:55,860
of the questions. To his left is Ms. Catherine Eales.

73
00:03:56,060 --> 00:03:57,380
She's principal planning officer.

74
00:03:57,640 --> 00:04:01,060

She'll be looking at speaking to item six as well.

75
00:04:01,980 --> 00:04:05,920
And then to her left is Marieka White, who's from our legal services,

76
00:04:05,980 --> 00:04:08,180
who's here in observational capacity.

77
00:04:08,940 --> 00:04:10,220
And then we're joined online by Mr.

78
00:04:10,980 --> 00:04:13,920
Joel Sevcoula, who's counsel from Landmark Chambers,

79
00:04:14,680 --> 00:04:16,440
representing the council, and also by Mr.

80
00:04:16,680 --> 00:04:20,541
Ian Field, who will speak to item four on traffic.

81
00:04:21,079 --> 00:04:21,360
Thank you.

82
00:04:21,579 --> 00:04:25,460
Thank you, Mr. Barton. And then also in the room, I've got representatives of the

83
00:04:25,500 --> 00:04:29,220
Meridian Action Group. So I've got Mr. Malkin, Mr. Smith, Mr. Smith, and Mr.

84
00:04:29,460 --> 00:04:30,060
Raines.

85
00:04:31,920 --> 00:04:32,900
They're all here.

86
00:04:32,940 --> 00:04:34,100
Would you like to introduce yourself?

87

00:04:35,200 --> 00:04:38,800
Yes, I'm Andrew Malkin. I'm a local resident, but I'll be speaking on behalf of

88
00:04:38,840 --> 00:04:39,860
Meridian Action Group.

89
00:04:41,980 --> 00:04:45,920
My name is David Raines. I'm a local resident, so I'll be speaking on behalf of

90
00:04:45,960 --> 00:04:49,880
myself today. I would like to say something in the any other business at the

91
00:04:49,920 --> 00:04:51,060
end of the day if that's possible.

92
00:04:51,900 --> 00:04:53,000
Thank you. We'll make a note of that.

93
00:04:53,480 --> 00:04:54,920
Good morning. My name's Paul Smith.

94
00:04:55,060 --> 00:04:55,240
I'm a

95
00:04:56,040 --> 00:04:56,420
resident

96
00:04:58,240 --> 00:04:58,800
representing

97
00:04:59,920 --> 00:05:01,480
Meridian Action Group. Thank you.

98
00:05:03,560 --> 00:05:07,400
Hello again. I'm Simon Smith. I'm no relation to Paul, as it happens, but I'm

99
00:05:07,440 --> 00:05:10,760
part of Meridian Action Group, and we're all here to support our

100
00:05:11,340 --> 00:05:13,880
concerns, if you like, against the whole proposal.

101
00:05:14,960 --> 00:05:15,360
Thank you.

102
00:05:16,920 --> 00:05:20,420
Turning to attendees online, first on my list is Mr.

103
00:05:20,760 --> 00:05:23,620
Dewar from South Holland District Council. Mr. Dewar?

104
00:05:25,340 --> 00:05:29,120
Yes. Hi. Good morning. Sam Dewar, planning consultant appointed

105
00:05:29,200 --> 00:05:31,140
by South Holland District Council.

106
00:05:32,620 --> 00:05:36,420
We don't particularly want to speak on any items apart from

107
00:05:36,460 --> 00:05:40,360
possibly item six. However, we are available on other items if
needed.

108
00:05:41,940 --> 00:05:44,900
Thank you. And then Mr. Bloom from the National Highways.

109
00:05:47,980 --> 00:05:50,820
Morning, madam. Thank you. I am Jeremy Bloom.

110
00:05:51,540 --> 00:05:55,220
I'm representing National Highways, the East

111
00:05:55,320 --> 00:05:57,620
Region third party DCO

112
00:05:58,540 --> 00:05:58,980
lead.

113
00:06:00,440 --> 00:06:04,420
I may wish to speak on item four, transport, depending

114
00:06:04,480 --> 00:06:05,760
on how the discussion

115
00:06:06,580 --> 00:06:10,040
progresses, and I'm available to assist the

116
00:06:10,620 --> 00:06:13,720
examining authority with any questions. Thank you.

117
00:06:14,000 --> 00:06:16,840
Thank you, Mr. Bloom. And last on my list is Ms.

118
00:06:16,940 --> 00:06:18,460
Makinson from Land.

119
00:06:20,250 --> 00:06:24,170
Hello there. Yeah, Kat Makinson from Lincolnshire Against Needless Destruction.

120
00:06:25,130 --> 00:06:28,090
Looking at speaking on agenda item three,

121
00:06:28,910 --> 00:06:31,230
specifically sheep grazing. Thank you.

122
00:06:32,490 --> 00:06:36,229
Thank you. Are there any other people who want to speak today?

123
00:06:39,270 --> 00:06:42,990
I'm not seeing any hands, so we will move on to agenda

124
00:06:43,050 --> 00:06:43,870
item three.

125
00:06:45,730 --> 00:06:46,410
Thank you.

126

00:06:47,290 --> 00:06:51,130
Bullet one, I'm going to turn to the local authorities, well,

127
00:06:51,250 --> 00:06:53,950
Lincolnshire in the first instance.

128
00:06:54,950 --> 00:06:58,750
Obviously, I've read your submissions and particularly the recent ones at

129
00:06:58,790 --> 00:07:00,530
deadline three and the additional submissions.

130
00:07:01,150 --> 00:07:04,710
I'd like you to give me a high-level update of your position in respect of

131
00:07:04,750 --> 00:07:08,710
proposed use of BMV land, and the concerns with the applicant's

132
00:07:08,750 --> 00:07:11,810
methodology, and any other high-level

133
00:07:12,470 --> 00:07:16,330
issues or concerns in respect of agriculture and soils, please.

134
00:07:19,590 --> 00:07:22,870
Good morning, madam. Peter Danks, Reading Agricultural Consultants for

135
00:07:23,490 --> 00:07:24,669
Lincolnshire County Council.

136
00:07:26,910 --> 00:07:30,850
The council still has significant areas of disagreement

137
00:07:30,910 --> 00:07:32,290
with the applicant regarding the

138
00:07:34,270 --> 00:07:37,170
work on agriculture and soils, particularly BMV land.

139
00:07:39,310 --> 00:07:41,190
And these were addressed at our submission,

140
00:07:42,710 --> 00:07:44,110
AS034.

141
00:07:47,090 --> 00:07:51,010
If I start with the ALC survey, Lincolnshire County Council disputes

142
00:07:51,050 --> 00:07:54,770
the findings of the ALC survey, which was carried out in highly

143
00:07:54,850 --> 00:07:58,630
adverse conditions at a time when a significant part of the soil

144
00:07:58,670 --> 00:08:02,570
profile was dry and auguring and digging pits was very challenging,

145
00:08:03,190 --> 00:08:05,290
making accurate observations difficult.

146
00:08:07,210 --> 00:08:11,110
Difficulties were compounded by the applicant's failure to consult
and acknowledge

147
00:08:11,730 --> 00:08:15,310
detailed and semi-detailed published information on the soils of the
area,

148
00:08:16,050 --> 00:08:19,570
the content of which is disputed by the applicant, without

149
00:08:19,630 --> 00:08:23,510
robust supporting evidence such as photographs portraying

150
00:08:23,550 --> 00:08:26,810
properly exposed soil profiles and laboratory analysis.

151
00:08:28,530 --> 00:08:30,470
The findings of the applicant surveys

152
00:08:31,890 --> 00:08:35,410
fails to identify claying, which is an indicator of soil wetness

153
00:08:36,250 --> 00:08:40,091
in various appendices 5.2 and 5.3,

154
00:08:40,730 --> 00:08:44,610
which are at App 172 and 173.

155
00:08:45,750 --> 00:08:48,570
This feature is recorded as commonly found in the soils of

156
00:08:50,110 --> 00:08:53,350
the soil associations of the solar development area.

157
00:08:54,990 --> 00:08:58,170
The applicant justifies downgrading ALC on

158
00:08:59,770 --> 00:09:03,650
identifying a slowly permeable layer, which is attributed to

159
00:09:03,710 --> 00:09:06,310
prolonged agricultural and horticultural use of the land.

160
00:09:06,990 --> 00:09:10,490
This layer is between 300 and 400 millimeters depth in the soil

161
00:09:10,530 --> 00:09:11,190
profiles

162
00:09:12,010 --> 00:09:13,830
of much of the solar development area.

163
00:09:14,690 --> 00:09:14,930
And

164
00:09:15,650 --> 00:09:20,070
that

165
00:09:20,150 --> 00:09:20,930

is addressed in

166
00:09:21,810 --> 00:09:25,510
the applicant's comments on the LIRs, which is Rep

167
00:09:25,990 --> 00:09:27,110
2015.

168
00:09:29,290 --> 00:09:32,750
The feature isn't clearly identified in soil pits, and

169
00:09:33,510 --> 00:09:37,370
Lincolnshire County Council is of the opinion that the feature is most likely to

170
00:09:37,430 --> 00:09:40,810
be anthropogenic, a common feature caused by trafficking with

171
00:09:40,850 --> 00:09:42,510
high-axle weight farm machinery,

172
00:09:43,330 --> 00:09:47,210
fitted with low ground pressure tires, which can be remediated readily

173
00:09:47,250 --> 00:09:51,130
by appropriate cultivations, which is addressed in Paras

174
00:09:51,190 --> 00:09:53,910
18.3 and 18.6 of

175
00:09:54,030 --> 00:09:55,230
AS034.

176
00:09:58,270 --> 00:09:59,170
And I think

177
00:10:03,170 --> 00:10:06,830
that addresses the dealing of the BMV land, the

178
00:10:06,870 --> 00:10:08,530

classification of the land and site.

179
00:10:10,010 --> 00:10:12,510
Thank you. Is that the summary of your general-

180
00:10:12,530 --> 00:10:15,230
That's the summary of the general of where we stand.

181
00:10:15,430 --> 00:10:18,310
If you have any specific questions, I'd be happy to address them.

182
00:10:18,350 --> 00:10:21,290
No, not at this point, but thank you for that.

183
00:10:23,910 --> 00:10:27,750
Ms. Makinson, just to let you know, I am going to deal with the

184
00:10:27,810 --> 00:10:31,670
point about grazing, but I'm going to bring that in under bullet

185
00:10:31,730 --> 00:10:35,470
point number five, but you are welcome, obviously, to make any

186
00:10:35,530 --> 00:10:37,050
further representations

187
00:10:38,030 --> 00:10:41,749
before we get to that point. But before I turn to the applicant

188
00:10:42,850 --> 00:10:46,370
for their response to Lincolnshire County Council, is there anybody else in the

189
00:10:46,410 --> 00:10:50,030
room who wishes to make any comments on that agenda item?

190
00:10:51,270 --> 00:10:51,790
Mr. Malkin?

191
00:10:56,130 --> 00:10:59,450
In the case of this application, the detailed survey carried out for

the

192
00:10:59,490 --> 00:11:03,210
environmental statement identified the distribution of land

193
00:11:03,290 --> 00:11:06,990
grades as 120.6 hectares of Grade

194
00:11:07,330 --> 00:11:10,870
1, 11.3%, 92.6

195
00:11:10,910 --> 00:11:13,570
hectares of Grade 2, 8.7%,

196
00:11:14,330 --> 00:11:17,690
205.4 hectares of sub-Grade 3A,

197
00:11:17,910 --> 00:11:19,990
19.2%, and

198
00:11:20,410 --> 00:11:23,810
523.7 hectares of sub-Grade 3B,

199
00:11:24,170 --> 00:11:28,090
49.1%. This grading is significantly

200
00:11:28,190 --> 00:11:30,390
different to other sources of land grading.

201
00:11:31,370 --> 00:11:35,310
Natural England's 2026 predictive ALC map for England

202
00:11:35,850 --> 00:11:37,170
shows the whole area

203
00:11:38,030 --> 00:11:41,250
to be within ALC Grades 1, 2, and 3A.

204
00:11:42,030 --> 00:11:45,710
Natural England's strategic scale map of the East Midlands region of

205
00:11:45,750 --> 00:11:48,890
England predicts the likelihood of BMV land,

206
00:11:49,870 --> 00:11:53,770
shows there is a high likelihood that it's 60% or greater

207
00:11:53,830 --> 00:11:55,670
chance of the land being BMV.

208
00:11:56,750 --> 00:12:00,630
MAFF and the Soil Survey of England and Wales indicates that the

209
00:12:00,670 --> 00:12:04,270
land occupied by the scheme is all within Grades 1 and 2.

210
00:12:05,490 --> 00:12:09,430
The conclusions drawn and used in the assessment are significantly

211
00:12:09,470 --> 00:12:13,230
different from any previously published assessment of the quality of
the land

212
00:12:13,730 --> 00:12:17,170
of the proposed development area and of the surrounding area,

213
00:12:18,570 --> 00:12:22,190
a difference which is not commented on or justified in the

214
00:12:22,390 --> 00:12:22,910
ES

215
00:12:23,742 --> 00:12:27,622
This method of analysis significantly understates the proportion

216
00:12:28,042 --> 00:12:30,802
of BMV land to be found in the project land.

217
00:12:31,522 --> 00:12:35,382
Meridian claims one thing, Lincolnshire County Council and its

218

00:12:35,522 --> 00:12:39,262
expert advisors say different. They cannot both be

219
00:12:39,322 --> 00:12:39,722
right.

220
00:12:41,542 --> 00:12:45,422
Are the inspectors to accept that they agree to disagree, or

221
00:12:45,462 --> 00:12:47,662
is it your job to believe one or the other?

222
00:12:48,442 --> 00:12:52,182
Energy security should not compete with food security.

223
00:12:54,622 --> 00:12:58,542
Thank you. Is there anybody else in the room or online who wishes

224
00:12:58,602 --> 00:13:00,842
to speak before I turn to the applicant?

225
00:13:03,542 --> 00:13:03,662
No.

226
00:13:05,182 --> 00:13:06,702
Just before I turn to you,

227
00:13:08,842 --> 00:13:12,742
I do have concerns that we are coming up to deadline

228
00:13:12,842 --> 00:13:13,562
four, and

229
00:13:14,662 --> 00:13:18,242
parties seem to be very far apart in terms of

230
00:13:18,282 --> 00:13:22,242
methodology, surveys, approaches that aren't

231
00:13:22,282 --> 00:13:24,862
agreed. We're almost halfway through the examination.

232
00:13:25,602 --> 00:13:28,942
I would not expect at this point to still be discussing

233
00:13:30,882 --> 00:13:34,582
this particular issue. So I've raised my concern.

234
00:13:35,822 --> 00:13:38,642
I'll draw a line under that in terms of your response.

235
00:13:38,782 --> 00:13:42,722
But yeah, hand over to you for response from what you've heard.

236
00:13:44,062 --> 00:13:46,922
Taylor Powell for the applicant. I will pass over to Mr.

237
00:13:47,082 --> 00:13:50,622
Ewan Brierley, who's our associate director and our expert on soils, to speak to

238
00:13:50,662 --> 00:13:52,542
the specifics in respect of surveys.

239
00:13:53,002 --> 00:13:54,022
I would just note that

240
00:13:55,502 --> 00:13:58,782
Natural England isn't able to be here today, but the applicant has also been having

241
00:13:58,822 --> 00:14:02,602
discussions with them in respect of the point of surveys, so we can provide

242
00:14:02,662 --> 00:14:05,262
some update on that as well, if that would assist.

243
00:14:05,322 --> 00:14:06,342
Yeah, I think that's at bullet

244
00:14:07,242 --> 00:14:09,782

two. We're going to talk about Natural England and their statement-

245
00:14:09,842 --> 00:14:10,262
Okay, great

246
00:14:10,461 --> 00:14:10,762
... on the ground. Yeah.

247
00:14:12,822 --> 00:14:16,022
I suppose just to clarify, I think that from the applicant's perspective, there has

248
00:14:16,062 --> 00:14:17,922
been progress in that space.

249
00:14:19,322 --> 00:14:22,782
I can pass over to Mr. Brierley, but I would note on some of these survey elements

250
00:14:23,362 --> 00:14:26,802
where there are differences in respect of a survey

251
00:14:26,842 --> 00:14:30,202
methodology that's already been undertaken, and the applicant's position is that

252
00:14:31,422 --> 00:14:35,142
while it will be taking additional surveys in the future post-consent, it

253
00:14:35,182 --> 00:14:38,962
can't go back and change the past in respect of what's been done already.

254
00:14:39,062 --> 00:14:39,902
So I think

255
00:14:41,162 --> 00:14:43,982
we're very happy to continue to have conversations with the council if there's

256
00:14:44,042 --> 00:14:47,902

additional surveys in respect of the methodologies for the surveys going

257
00:14:47,982 --> 00:14:51,862
forward. But to the extent of assessing what we have now, I think the applicant is

258
00:14:51,902 --> 00:14:54,142
quite confident that we've assessed a worst case,

259
00:14:55,402 --> 00:14:58,282
taking into account the disagreements between the surveys.

260
00:14:59,222 --> 00:15:02,842
Just on that point, so prior to the surveys being

261
00:15:02,882 --> 00:15:06,042
undertaken then, so had you sought agreement with

262
00:15:06,862 --> 00:15:10,442
Lincolnshire and Natural England about the survey methodology you were proposing?

263
00:15:11,902 --> 00:15:15,782
Taylor Powell for the applicant. My understanding, and again, I'll pass over to Mr.

264
00:15:16,002 --> 00:15:19,802
Brierley in terms of the specifics of the surveys, but I understand the concern is

265
00:15:19,862 --> 00:15:23,682
around some of the environmental conditions when the surveys were taken

266
00:15:23,762 --> 00:15:25,902
out and how they've been reported on.

267
00:15:27,042 --> 00:15:30,982
But I will pass to him to speak to the validity of the survey methodology

268

00:15:31,042 --> 00:15:31,802
from his perspective.

269
00:15:31,962 --> 00:15:35,942
Because I would expect before surveys were undertaken that the general

270
00:15:35,982 --> 00:15:38,962
concept of the methodology had been agreed with parties.

271
00:15:41,622 --> 00:15:45,102
I'm not convinced that has happened in this case, but again,

272
00:15:45,542 --> 00:15:49,142
these are just my observations. I'm not expecting necessarily a

273
00:15:49,162 --> 00:15:51,462
response. But again, to say

274
00:15:52,382 --> 00:15:56,242
I do have concerns that we are at this point and we are still discussing these

275
00:15:56,322 --> 00:15:56,702
issues.

276
00:15:57,482 --> 00:15:58,782
Understood. Yeah. I'll pass to Mr.

277
00:15:58,922 --> 00:16:01,862
Brierley, and he can give you the more detailed update on those matters.

278
00:16:05,842 --> 00:16:08,462
Good morning, madam. Ewan Brierley for the applicant.

279
00:16:09,622 --> 00:16:10,962
Sorry, does that need to be a bit nearer?

280
00:16:11,062 --> 00:16:11,202
Yeah,

281
00:16:12,062 --> 00:16:12,662
that's better. That's better, thank you.

282
00:16:12,682 --> 00:16:16,562
Thank you. Would you like me to comment, madam, on what you've just been

283
00:16:16,602 --> 00:16:17,102
discussing?

284
00:16:17,382 --> 00:16:20,902
I think what I'd like you to comment on is what you've heard from Lincolnshire

285
00:16:20,962 --> 00:16:24,782
County Council, Mr. Malekin, and then if you want to touch on...

286
00:16:25,002 --> 00:16:28,622
What I don't want this to turn into is a debate about where we are, because

287
00:16:29,602 --> 00:16:31,982
without stating the obvious, we are where we are.

288
00:16:32,122 --> 00:16:34,022
I just needed you to be aware

289
00:16:34,882 --> 00:16:36,342
of my concerns. So

290
00:16:37,262 --> 00:16:40,682
we don't need to go over that point again unless you have something more

291
00:16:40,742 --> 00:16:41,821
substantive to add.

292
00:16:42,842 --> 00:16:45,262
Okay. Ewan Brierley for the applicant.

293
00:16:46,222 --> 00:16:49,842

So the methodology was agreed with Natural England.

294
00:16:50,302 --> 00:16:53,902
It was to follow the standard agricultural land classification

295
00:16:54,342 --> 00:16:58,102
survey methodology of one auger point per hectare

296
00:16:58,782 --> 00:17:02,422
to a depth of 1.2 meters, and with supporting

297
00:17:02,462 --> 00:17:05,402
information provided by soil pits.

298
00:17:06,902 --> 00:17:10,462
It was subsequently agreed with Natural England the areas that were to

299
00:17:10,542 --> 00:17:14,123
remain in agricultural production, where there would be no infrastructure,

300
00:17:14,442 --> 00:17:18,383
could be surveyed at a survey intensity less

301
00:17:18,442 --> 00:17:20,583
than the standard methodology.

302
00:17:22,822 --> 00:17:23,542
So the fieldwork

303
00:17:24,402 --> 00:17:25,083
was conducted

304
00:17:26,162 --> 00:17:27,542
following the standard approach.

305
00:17:30,562 --> 00:17:31,562
And the differences

306
00:17:33,242 --> 00:17:34,682

presented by

307
00:17:36,102 --> 00:17:39,942
Lincolnshire County Council relate not to the application of a

308
00:17:39,982 --> 00:17:43,122
methodology, but to the field observations

309
00:17:43,962 --> 00:17:47,342
that were made by the specialist surveyors

310
00:17:47,742 --> 00:17:48,402
undertaking

311
00:17:49,242 --> 00:17:50,322
the ALC method.

312
00:17:53,522 --> 00:17:56,782
So Lincolnshire is quite right that in the ES, there isn't a

313
00:17:56,842 --> 00:17:59,362
reference to historical data.

314
00:18:01,042 --> 00:18:04,782
At scoping, there had been reference made to the

315
00:18:04,822 --> 00:18:07,962
provisional ALC grades, which does identify

316
00:18:09,242 --> 00:18:11,622
best and most versatile land throughout the site.

317
00:18:14,062 --> 00:18:14,422
But the

318
00:18:16,022 --> 00:18:19,362
historical records are at a coarser resolution,

319
00:18:19,682 --> 00:18:22,502
spatial resolution, than the field survey

320
00:18:23,162 --> 00:18:26,082
undertaken. So in all cases, they're at a coarser

321
00:18:26,642 --> 00:18:30,242
resolution, and the provisional mapping is at a very coarse

322
00:18:30,962 --> 00:18:33,962
resolution relative to the field survey.

323
00:18:36,162 --> 00:18:39,402
I believe it's also true that the application

324
00:18:40,162 --> 00:18:40,482
of the

325
00:18:42,182 --> 00:18:45,162
field observations through the subsequent math

326
00:18:46,162 --> 00:18:49,202
requirements for determining land grade

327
00:18:50,302 --> 00:18:51,302
are not in dispute,

328
00:18:53,142 --> 00:18:56,402
but the issue rests solely on the field observations.

329
00:18:58,242 --> 00:18:58,862
And because

330
00:18:59,762 --> 00:19:02,922
there is disagreement about the field observations, the application
of the

331
00:19:02,981 --> 00:19:06,882
subsequent analysis methodology comes out with an outcome

332
00:19:07,962 --> 00:19:08,302
which

333

00:19:09,462 --> 00:19:10,502
Lincolnshire County Council

334
00:19:12,042 --> 00:19:12,862
do not agree with.

335
00:19:18,362 --> 00:19:18,762
Thank you.

336
00:19:21,162 --> 00:19:24,562
Turning to Lincolnshire County Council, I don't want it to be a you said, they

337
00:19:24,622 --> 00:19:28,542
said, but is there anything else you wish to comment on from what

338
00:19:28,582 --> 00:19:29,722
you've just heard from the applicant?

339
00:19:30,522 --> 00:19:31,522
No, ma'am. I

340
00:19:32,662 --> 00:19:36,002
think that's about right. If they haven't observed it

341
00:19:36,302 --> 00:19:38,582
properly, then they can't map it properly.

342
00:19:42,182 --> 00:19:42,622
Thank you.

343
00:19:44,242 --> 00:19:45,162
Move on to bullet

344
00:19:46,062 --> 00:19:46,742
number two.

345
00:19:48,722 --> 00:19:52,622
Note the content of the latest statement of common ground, with Natural England.

346

00:19:53,202 --> 00:19:56,602
For those in the room, Natural England are not attending

347
00:19:57,142 --> 00:20:00,922
the hearings. You may have noticed that they're not here, but we still, obviously,

348
00:20:01,062 --> 00:20:04,682
if they wish to listen, they can submit anything in writing in

349
00:20:04,702 --> 00:20:07,822
response to anything that we make in reference to them.

350
00:20:08,822 --> 00:20:12,562
You've said that things have moved on slightly since the

351
00:20:12,962 --> 00:20:15,202
submission of that statement of common ground.

352
00:20:16,562 --> 00:20:19,502
Taylor Power for the applicant. Yes, that's correct. And Mr.

353
00:20:19,682 --> 00:20:22,682
Brawley can speak to that and give a brief summary if that would assist.

354
00:20:22,722 --> 00:20:26,702
That would be useful, and maybe an overview of those issues that

355
00:20:26,722 --> 00:20:30,342
are still outstanding and likelihood of them being resolved by the close of

356
00:20:30,382 --> 00:20:31,362
examination, please.

357
00:20:33,642 --> 00:20:35,142
Ewan Brawley for the applicant.

358
00:20:36,522 --> 00:20:37,202
So the issues

359
00:20:38,042 --> 00:20:38,602
which

360
00:20:39,902 --> 00:20:42,862
Natural England have raised relate principally

361
00:20:43,662 --> 00:20:46,922
to presentation of data and to

362
00:20:48,022 --> 00:20:50,862
the application of professional judgment in one of the environmental

363
00:20:51,682 --> 00:20:52,322
assessments.

364
00:20:53,302 --> 00:20:57,262
So in relation to the presentation of data, Natural

365
00:20:57,322 --> 00:21:00,282
England have expressed a preference for

366
00:21:02,162 --> 00:21:05,762
presenting the data using something called inverse distance

367
00:21:06,242 --> 00:21:06,742
weighting.

368
00:21:07,702 --> 00:21:08,282
So this

369
00:21:09,982 --> 00:21:11,922
is a methodology that

370
00:21:13,482 --> 00:21:16,822
maps according to relationship between

371
00:21:16,882 --> 00:21:20,562
various point samples. And there's a

372
00:21:20,622 --> 00:21:23,982

power function which means how much weight is

373
00:21:24,022 --> 00:21:27,782
given to the closest samples and how much is given to

374
00:21:27,842 --> 00:21:29,482
samples further away.

375
00:21:32,242 --> 00:21:34,282
This methodology wasn't used

376
00:21:35,182 --> 00:21:36,542
by the applicant because

377
00:21:37,622 --> 00:21:39,642
it works best for

378
00:21:45,142 --> 00:21:46,942
variables that are on a continuum.

379
00:21:47,102 --> 00:21:48,982
So something like soil nutrients,

380
00:21:49,762 --> 00:21:53,362
which,

381
00:21:54,102 --> 00:21:57,582
as I say, sorry, varies on a continuum, whereas

382
00:21:57,662 --> 00:22:00,582
agricultural land classification is a categorized

383
00:22:01,562 --> 00:22:02,742
number. So

384
00:22:03,762 --> 00:22:07,662
the fact that you've got grades one and grade three

385
00:22:07,922 --> 00:22:11,862
A next to each other doesn't mean to say that

386
00:22:12,442 --> 00:22:14,602
the interim points are at grade two.

387
00:22:14,922 --> 00:22:18,562
It is perfectly possible to jump between

388
00:22:18,622 --> 00:22:19,322
categories.

389
00:22:20,582 --> 00:22:22,602
So by applying inverse distance weighting,

390
00:22:23,782 --> 00:22:27,242
in effect, you introduce that potentially

391
00:22:27,302 --> 00:22:30,922
false category at intermediate points between the

392
00:22:30,982 --> 00:22:31,842
sample points.

393
00:22:32,662 --> 00:22:32,782
So

394
00:22:33,722 --> 00:22:37,662
the mapping has been prepared in that way, and there is a meeting
tomorrow with

395
00:22:37,702 --> 00:22:41,402
Natural England to present the data, but we will still maintain the

396
00:22:41,442 --> 00:22:45,142
position that we prefer the original mapping

397
00:22:45,202 --> 00:22:47,061
based on categories.

398
00:22:51,001 --> 00:22:54,522
But it will also show there is not a huge difference between them,
but that it

399
00:22:54,582 --> 00:22:58,442
introduces a potentially false category between individual

400
00:22:58,502 --> 00:22:59,282
sample points.

401
00:23:00,642 --> 00:23:02,462
Sorry to interrupt. Is this the mapping...

402
00:23:04,542 --> 00:23:08,282
I was going to have a question because I think in your deadline three,

403
00:23:08,402 --> 00:23:11,022
even, submission, you make reference to new mapping.

404
00:23:11,662 --> 00:23:12,522
Is that

405
00:23:13,762 --> 00:23:14,842
what you're referring to?

406
00:23:15,602 --> 00:23:17,122
Yes. Taylor Power for the applicant. Yes.

407
00:23:17,182 --> 00:23:20,842
So we've prepared, so we had our original approach to mapping, which the applicant

408
00:23:20,902 --> 00:23:21,462
still considers-

409
00:23:21,462 --> 00:23:21,482
Yes

410
00:23:21,561 --> 00:23:25,442
... as correct. But further to the request from Natural England, the applicant's

411
00:23:25,502 --> 00:23:29,462
gone away and reinterpreted its results through their preferred form

of

412
00:23:29,522 --> 00:23:33,502
mapping. We've prepared a draft form of that, which we're discussing with them

413
00:23:33,562 --> 00:23:37,342
tomorrow, and then the intention is to submit that in for deadline four.

414
00:23:37,922 --> 00:23:40,822
You may not be willing or able to answer this next question.

415
00:23:41,542 --> 00:23:45,082
Does that show significant differences to the mapping that

416
00:23:45,502 --> 00:23:49,362
you originally undertook? If you're not able to comment on

417
00:23:49,402 --> 00:23:53,102
that at this stage, that's fine. I'm putting you on the spot. I appreciate.

418
00:23:54,182 --> 00:23:57,902
Ewan Brawley for the applicant. Because it still relies on the original

419
00:23:58,462 --> 00:24:02,222
point data, it doesn't create significant differences.

420
00:24:02,722 --> 00:24:02,942
So

421
00:24:04,202 --> 00:24:07,022
as I say, it introduces new categories in thin

422
00:24:07,902 --> 00:24:11,682
strips between borders. So you might lose, for example, some

423
00:24:11,762 --> 00:24:14,742
grade one land to grade two. You might lose a little bit of

424
00:24:15,622 --> 00:24:19,302
some grade three A land to grade two. So, it's a balance.

425
00:24:19,442 --> 00:24:23,422
But by creating this gradient, if you like, between categories,

426
00:24:24,082 --> 00:24:28,042
there are small differences, but not significant differences.

427
00:24:28,222 --> 00:24:29,042
It's just-

428
00:24:31,866 --> 00:24:35,726
I think it's a presentational issue that I think

429
00:24:35,926 --> 00:24:39,525
Natural England believe would help a

430
00:24:39,606 --> 00:24:43,466
viewer understand. We take the opposite position, that we think it

431
00:24:43,906 --> 00:24:46,606
actually clouds the position.

432
00:24:48,566 --> 00:24:51,626
So that will be submitted at deadline four.

433
00:24:51,686 --> 00:24:55,286
So in effect, we'll have two sets of mapping before us.

434
00:24:56,626 --> 00:24:58,486
Yes. Taylor Power for the applicant.

435
00:24:58,546 --> 00:25:02,366
Yes, so we'll submit that at deadline four, but we'll make sure that when we submit

436
00:25:02,386 --> 00:25:05,666
it, we have the explanation beside it, which explains the

437

00:25:05,706 --> 00:25:09,666
differences and explains the impacts and respective

438
00:25:09,746 --> 00:25:12,466
assessment. But as I understand from talking to Mr.

439
00:25:12,526 --> 00:25:15,866
Brearley, it doesn't change any of the significant

440
00:25:15,926 --> 00:25:17,566
effects assessments.

441
00:25:18,086 --> 00:25:18,346
Okay.

442
00:25:18,446 --> 00:25:21,206
It doesn't change any of the outcomes of the assessment.

443
00:25:21,686 --> 00:25:21,826
It

444
00:25:23,266 --> 00:25:26,926
might, as he just explained, it might mean that some are

445
00:25:26,986 --> 00:25:30,286
downgraded slightly, some are upgraded slightly, but generally the

446
00:25:31,706 --> 00:25:34,426
overall quantity of BMV stays about the same.

447
00:25:34,826 --> 00:25:35,366
Okay, so there-

448
00:25:35,406 --> 00:25:36,606
Have I explained that correctly? Yes.

449
00:25:36,946 --> 00:25:39,126
Ewan Riley for the applicant. That is well explained.

450
00:25:39,546 --> 00:25:39,626
And

451
00:25:40,906 --> 00:25:44,666
my preference following tomorrow's meeting would be for

452
00:25:44,706 --> 00:25:48,586
Natural England to acknowledge that there aren't significant differences,

453
00:25:49,086 --> 00:25:52,246
and that there is no advantage in presenting

454
00:25:53,006 --> 00:25:56,146
the further maps. But if they maintain the position they would like those

455
00:25:56,186 --> 00:26:00,026
additional alternative mapping to be presented, then of course

456
00:26:00,106 --> 00:26:01,386
we would be happy to do so.

457
00:26:02,726 --> 00:26:03,026
Thank you.

458
00:26:05,106 --> 00:26:08,986
It sounds like it's not going to change the overall assessment, but what I don't

459
00:26:09,026 --> 00:26:12,806
want is something being put into the examination which causes an

460
00:26:12,866 --> 00:26:15,206
additional layer of confusion for people.

461
00:26:15,806 --> 00:26:19,686
Having said that, obviously, if Natural England think it is of use and will

462
00:26:19,726 --> 00:26:22,446
be beneficial to ourselves and other parties,

463

00:26:23,426 --> 00:26:23,766
please

464
00:26:24,686 --> 00:26:25,226
submit that.

465
00:26:26,126 --> 00:26:27,546
Yes. Taylor Power for the applicant.

466
00:26:27,606 --> 00:26:29,926
If Natural England doesn't think it's of use,

467
00:26:30,966 --> 00:26:34,706
yeah, we had understood based on some of the discussion yesterday that if we

468
00:26:34,766 --> 00:26:38,626
can put information in, we will. But if it's considered by both parties

469
00:26:38,666 --> 00:26:42,226
not to be of use, we won't put in extra documentation that's just going to confuse

470
00:26:42,246 --> 00:26:42,586
things. That-

471
00:26:42,666 --> 00:26:42,726
Yeah

472
00:26:42,945 --> 00:26:43,506
... understood.

473
00:26:43,906 --> 00:26:47,266
Obviously, for everybody involved, there's a lot of documentation.

474
00:26:47,866 --> 00:26:51,466
But if it helps parties to understand the position, please do

475
00:26:52,246 --> 00:26:52,906
submit it.

476
00:26:55,246 --> 00:26:58,386
In terms of Natural England's statement of common ground, are there any other

477
00:26:59,666 --> 00:27:00,666
comments you wish to make?

478
00:27:01,006 --> 00:27:04,546
Ewan Riley for the applicant. So the other topic we will speak about

479
00:27:04,606 --> 00:27:05,066
tomorrow

480
00:27:06,086 --> 00:27:07,546
is a continuing one. So

481
00:27:08,426 --> 00:27:11,886
the permanent loss of BMV land for the creation of

482
00:27:12,346 --> 00:27:16,306
hedgerows at field boundaries, only at field boundaries, so

483
00:27:16,406 --> 00:27:17,266
linear features.

484
00:27:18,746 --> 00:27:22,546
We have included in our area assessment a wide buffer

485
00:27:23,646 --> 00:27:27,606
to those hedges and trees in order that they can

486
00:27:27,686 --> 00:27:31,306
be managed over the operational phase

487
00:27:31,446 --> 00:27:35,166
using mechanized machinery. So in effect,

488
00:27:35,886 --> 00:27:36,986
the area presented

489

00:27:37,826 --> 00:27:40,666
includes a wide field margin.

490
00:27:41,786 --> 00:27:43,266
The footprint of the planting

491
00:27:44,386 --> 00:27:45,026
is less than

492
00:27:46,326 --> 00:27:47,586
one meter width.

493
00:27:52,186 --> 00:27:56,126
Well, the stems won't grow beyond that one meter footprint because

494
00:27:56,166 --> 00:27:56,346
they're

495
00:27:57,346 --> 00:28:01,006
300-millimeter centers. So even at the end of the operational phase,

496
00:28:01,086 --> 00:28:04,006
everything is within one meter in terms of footprint.

497
00:28:04,306 --> 00:28:06,546
However, hedgerows do expand

498
00:28:07,446 --> 00:28:11,406
over the neighboring land, and it depends on the management strategy

499
00:28:11,466 --> 00:28:15,366
as to how wide that might be. But it

500
00:28:15,406 --> 00:28:17,146
might be only two or three meters

501
00:28:17,986 --> 00:28:21,846
of landtake by a hedgerow and the trees and canopy above

502
00:28:21,906 --> 00:28:22,166
that.

503
00:28:23,386 --> 00:28:23,626
So

504
00:28:24,546 --> 00:28:28,486
taking this into account, but in order to preserve the buffer for

505
00:28:28,606 --> 00:28:30,506
mechanized hedgerow management,

506
00:28:31,786 --> 00:28:33,286
we extended or presented

507
00:28:34,726 --> 00:28:38,326
the area to include the buffer, but then said we're applying

508
00:28:38,446 --> 00:28:41,786
professional judgment because this land could remain as a field
margin

509
00:28:42,226 --> 00:28:44,506
post-restoration or it could be cultivated

510
00:28:45,426 --> 00:28:46,786
and brought into production.

511
00:28:48,066 --> 00:28:51,906
And therefore, applied professional judgment to a larger area

512
00:28:52,925 --> 00:28:55,686
to say that that represents a minor effect.

513
00:28:56,966 --> 00:29:00,766
And Natural England do not like that approach

514
00:29:01,066 --> 00:29:03,106
because the numbers being presented

515
00:29:04,286 --> 00:29:08,146
are above a threshold of category

516
00:29:08,206 --> 00:29:08,626
within

517
00:29:09,466 --> 00:29:12,786
the Institute of Sustainability and Environmental

518
00:29:12,886 --> 00:29:16,066
Professionals' guidance for assessment.

519
00:29:16,506 --> 00:29:20,046
Which does incidentally, not encourage, but allow

520
00:29:20,086 --> 00:29:22,086
professional judgment to moderate these

521
00:29:23,806 --> 00:29:24,166
things.

522
00:29:25,986 --> 00:29:26,226
But

523
00:29:28,546 --> 00:29:32,326
what we'll discuss tomorrow is whether there should be a revision to
the

524
00:29:32,386 --> 00:29:35,946
text to look only at the footprint and spread of the

525
00:29:35,966 --> 00:29:39,606
hedgerows and take the management buffer out of that

526
00:29:39,986 --> 00:29:40,506
so that

527
00:29:41,906 --> 00:29:45,626
the numbers presented are smaller and fall within

528
00:29:46,166 --> 00:29:49,006
the threshold of a minor effect anyway.

529

00:29:49,426 --> 00:29:49,526
So

530
00:29:50,706 --> 00:29:54,306
potentially, the inclusion of the buffer has created some confusion

531
00:29:54,606 --> 00:29:58,146
by exaggerating the area. But because of the

532
00:29:58,226 --> 00:30:02,186
ability to apply professional judgment and because we're talking about an

533
00:30:02,246 --> 00:30:02,886
enhancement

534
00:30:03,926 --> 00:30:05,606
around hedges and trees,

535
00:30:07,386 --> 00:30:10,966
which we want to be appropriately managed, we thought it would be better

536
00:30:11,966 --> 00:30:15,646
initially to include that buffer within the area and then apply the professional

537
00:30:15,706 --> 00:30:18,546
judgment. But we will resolve that issue tomorrow.

538
00:30:18,626 --> 00:30:22,286
So the options are that they accept the application of professional

539
00:30:22,406 --> 00:30:26,286
judgment, or there's a revision to better reflect

540
00:30:26,326 --> 00:30:30,286
the actual footprint of the hedgerows and take the management buffer

541
00:30:31,066 --> 00:30:32,446
out of that terminology

542
00:30:34,618 --> 00:30:35,138
Thank you.

543
00:30:36,038 --> 00:30:39,698
Are there any other comments on the Natural England statement of common

544
00:30:39,738 --> 00:30:40,058
ground?

545
00:30:43,158 --> 00:30:43,518
What was-

546
00:30:43,798 --> 00:30:46,698
Taylor Powell for the applicant. I think there might have just been one more in

547
00:30:46,718 --> 00:30:49,538
respect of the access to evidence records.

548
00:30:52,438 --> 00:30:54,918
Ewan Briarly for the applicant. I do apologize. Thank you, Taylor.

549
00:30:55,998 --> 00:30:57,238
Yes. So

550
00:30:58,418 --> 00:31:01,218
over part of the site, there was a

551
00:31:02,038 --> 00:31:04,558
field survey undertaken in 1991,

552
00:31:06,198 --> 00:31:07,978
following standard methodology.

553
00:31:08,938 --> 00:31:10,138
There is mapping for that

554
00:31:11,058 --> 00:31:15,038
survey. So that's the only survey at the equivalent

555
00:31:15,198 --> 00:31:19,118
spatial density of samples as has been

556
00:31:19,158 --> 00:31:20,818
undertaken by the applicant.

557
00:31:22,898 --> 00:31:25,018
There is mapping available for that.

558
00:31:25,058 --> 00:31:26,018
There is a two-page

559
00:31:26,898 --> 00:31:30,238
report provided, which is accessible

560
00:31:30,898 --> 00:31:33,718
online. But the actual survey data

561
00:31:35,018 --> 00:31:38,618
are not available. So we've made an application to

562
00:31:38,658 --> 00:31:41,438
Natural England for access to evidence.

563
00:31:42,918 --> 00:31:46,858
And the indication is that there are field notebooks for the

564
00:31:46,918 --> 00:31:47,398
survey

565
00:31:48,258 --> 00:31:51,798
and they're looking at digitizing those field notebooks

566
00:31:52,318 --> 00:31:54,958
so that the information can be made available.

567
00:31:55,218 --> 00:31:58,778
But we're not in control of the timetable for that

568
00:31:58,918 --> 00:32:01,258

digitization and sharing of the information.

569
00:32:03,318 --> 00:32:06,598
That was going to be my next question, when were you able to get that information,

570
00:32:06,678 --> 00:32:08,798
but is that just in the hands of Natural England?

571
00:32:10,298 --> 00:32:11,418
Ewan Briarly for the applicant. It

572
00:32:12,478 --> 00:32:13,658
is in the hands of Natural England.

573
00:32:13,958 --> 00:32:14,218
And

574
00:32:15,678 --> 00:32:19,538
it's being undertaken not only on behalf of the applicant,

575
00:32:19,618 --> 00:32:23,198
this is a process of digitizing field notebooks generally,

576
00:32:23,678 --> 00:32:27,498
and the work is being undertaken for Natural England by volunteers, the

577
00:32:27,538 --> 00:32:29,898
digitization process. And I think

578
00:32:31,778 --> 00:32:34,318
Natural England is prioritizing

579
00:32:35,318 --> 00:32:39,158
a notebook for which there is some value in having the evidence.

580
00:32:39,578 --> 00:32:42,458
But as I said, unfortunately,

581
00:32:43,657 --> 00:32:47,438

we have no control over when that information

582
00:32:47,498 --> 00:32:48,518
might be made available.

583
00:32:49,838 --> 00:32:51,278
That's understood. Thank you.

584
00:32:52,158 --> 00:32:53,018
Are those the... Yeah.

585
00:32:53,898 --> 00:32:57,738
Turning to Lincolnshire County Council, do you have any comments on what

586
00:32:57,778 --> 00:33:01,598
you've heard about the Natural England statement of common ground at all, or

587
00:33:01,618 --> 00:33:02,778
anything you wish to add?

588
00:33:05,398 --> 00:33:05,898
Yes, ma'am.

589
00:33:09,718 --> 00:33:13,518
I don't have any comments about the buffer losses for hedgerows,

590
00:33:14,298 --> 00:33:15,878
but regarding the mapping,

591
00:33:17,858 --> 00:33:18,218
there are

592
00:33:19,118 --> 00:33:19,658
definite

593
00:33:21,078 --> 00:33:22,258
protocols for mapping

594
00:33:23,378 --> 00:33:24,118

BMV land

595
00:33:26,838 --> 00:33:28,438
for agricultural land classification,

596
00:33:29,298 --> 00:33:32,378
and the original mapping method was

597
00:33:33,458 --> 00:33:37,258
directly opposed to that. The second mapping

598
00:33:37,318 --> 00:33:41,278
method used by the applicant was

599
00:33:41,358 --> 00:33:43,218
better, but took no

600
00:33:45,978 --> 00:33:49,958
guidance from either the landscape, existing mapping, or

601
00:33:50,018 --> 00:33:53,738
weighting between points. And the Natural

602
00:33:53,798 --> 00:33:55,658
England's request to do

603
00:33:59,538 --> 00:34:03,038
an inverse distance weighted analysis is

604
00:34:03,758 --> 00:34:07,458
valuable to see what level of effect there will be.

605
00:34:08,379 --> 00:34:08,618
But,

606
00:34:10,118 --> 00:34:11,379
I agree with Mr. Briarly, the

607
00:34:12,438 --> 00:34:14,359
difference may not be significant.

608
00:34:15,018 --> 00:34:18,798
But notwithstanding that, we still don't agree with the findings of the survey

609
00:34:19,478 --> 00:34:20,578
on which the mapping is based.

610
00:34:22,078 --> 00:34:24,379
Thank you for that. Does anybody else in the room or online?

611
00:34:25,298 --> 00:34:25,498
Yep.

612
00:34:26,478 --> 00:34:28,538
Hello. Simon Smith on behalf of MAG HiMer.

613
00:34:30,379 --> 00:34:33,859
Apologies. Private resident, and also I used to farm land at Gedding Hill, which is

614
00:34:33,899 --> 00:34:37,118
land actually literally next door to some of the land that's been proposed.

615
00:34:38,278 --> 00:34:40,998
I do get the point from Meridian, that yes,

616
00:34:42,638 --> 00:34:44,658
land can literally go in the space of a meter from

617
00:34:46,678 --> 00:34:50,298
three to one, and it can do that, but I still don't really understand how

618
00:34:50,899 --> 00:34:53,118
the classification was quite as low in places.

619
00:34:54,018 --> 00:34:56,458
From my perspective, it's all good solid land.

620
00:34:57,358 --> 00:35:01,218

It will grow wheat day in, day out, and actually it's

621
00:35:01,278 --> 00:35:02,958
quite heavily bodied land, a lot of it.

622
00:35:02,998 --> 00:35:03,578
In other words,

623
00:35:04,598 --> 00:35:08,058
it will actually hold under pressure from climate change.

624
00:35:08,098 --> 00:35:10,358
In other words, if you don't get rain after rain, which we've had

625
00:35:11,558 --> 00:35:13,018
one heat wave after the next this year,

626
00:35:13,838 --> 00:35:15,558
still producing very, very good crops.

627
00:35:15,798 --> 00:35:17,818
Now, a lot of land in this country will not do that.

628
00:35:17,978 --> 00:35:21,458
Particularly, I'd say towards Stamford, it's much lighter. It's not resistant.

629
00:35:21,578 --> 00:35:25,558
This land is very resistant. My bigger picture, whether it's right

630
00:35:25,578 --> 00:35:29,078
or not, is that we're going to lose somewhere in the region of, say, 300,000

631
00:35:29,138 --> 00:35:33,018
tonnes. That's the way I see it, at three tonne an acre for 2,500 acres over 40

632
00:35:33,038 --> 00:35:36,898
years. So a third of a million tonnes of grain will not be produced, and

633
00:35:36,958 --> 00:35:40,598
surely the food security is always more important than energy security, which can

634
00:35:40,618 --> 00:35:41,458
be dealt with anyway.

635
00:35:42,498 --> 00:35:42,818
Thank you.

636
00:35:43,378 --> 00:35:47,018
Thank you very much. Does the applicant have anything to respond?

637
00:35:48,538 --> 00:35:49,698
Ewan Briarly for the applicant.

638
00:35:52,518 --> 00:35:52,998
I don't want to

639
00:35:54,518 --> 00:35:58,318
diminish in any way people's concerns about food security.

640
00:35:58,558 --> 00:36:01,298
I think there is much that could be done at a policy level

641
00:36:02,978 --> 00:36:06,838
around food security, which is not relevant to this

642
00:36:06,898 --> 00:36:09,918
meeting. But what is relevant is that Defra's

643
00:36:10,358 --> 00:36:13,278
2024 UK Food Security report

644
00:36:14,658 --> 00:36:17,678
says that productivity

645
00:36:18,998 --> 00:36:19,278
could

646

00:36:20,638 --> 00:36:21,158
improve

647
00:36:22,178 --> 00:36:25,558
possibly, but certainly hold steady under land use change

648
00:36:26,298 --> 00:36:26,898
required

649
00:36:27,778 --> 00:36:29,258
for net zero.

650
00:36:30,198 --> 00:36:30,518
And

651
00:36:32,138 --> 00:36:35,858
Defra does not see a conflict between land use change

652
00:36:36,598 --> 00:36:40,058
to meet net zero requirements and food

653
00:36:40,558 --> 00:36:43,338
security. In fact, that report suggests

654
00:36:44,206 --> 00:36:48,006
That climate change is the bigger threat than

655
00:36:48,065 --> 00:36:48,986
land use change.

656
00:36:49,966 --> 00:36:50,106
So

657
00:36:51,466 --> 00:36:54,646
DEFRA's UK Food Security report does not

658
00:36:55,166 --> 00:36:55,466
share

659
00:36:56,486 --> 00:36:57,826
concerns around

660
00:37:00,046 --> 00:37:03,926
change of land use, temporary change of land use from agriculture

661
00:37:04,146 --> 00:37:04,906
to other uses.

662
00:37:06,686 --> 00:37:07,126
Thank you.

663
00:37:08,306 --> 00:37:11,966
Taylor Power for the applicant. I would also just point, I won't go into the

664
00:37:12,006 --> 00:37:15,786
detail of it, but to the extensive discussion on the policy

665
00:37:15,866 --> 00:37:16,765
statement applicable

666
00:37:17,686 --> 00:37:21,566
in this instance, being the energy policy statements and the discussion that

667
00:37:21,606 --> 00:37:25,326
that has on food security, which supports Mr. Bradley's comments.

668
00:37:27,186 --> 00:37:30,706
Thank you. We don't need to discuss

669
00:37:30,966 --> 00:37:33,286
bullet point three because we've discussed mapping.

670
00:37:35,026 --> 00:37:38,046
Moving on to bullet point four, cumulative.

671
00:37:40,026 --> 00:37:43,966
To Lincolnshire County Council, we note the comments

672
00:37:44,026 --> 00:37:47,626
that have been made by yourselves in your various submissions and

673
00:37:47,686 --> 00:37:48,406
reports.

674
00:37:51,606 --> 00:37:55,146
Other than asking you whether you have any further comments as to the

675
00:37:55,186 --> 00:37:56,866
approach taken in the ES

676
00:37:58,726 --> 00:38:02,526
in respect of cumulative effects for agriculture and soils, I don't

677
00:38:02,586 --> 00:38:06,546
actually have any specific questions for you on cumulative matters

678
00:38:06,606 --> 00:38:10,206
today. But I'd like to give you this opportunity to confirm whether there's

679
00:38:10,246 --> 00:38:14,026
anything you wish to add, revisit in terms of cumulative

680
00:38:14,286 --> 00:38:14,746
issues.

681
00:38:16,246 --> 00:38:17,886
Yes, ma'am. Thank you very much. Peter Danks,

682
00:38:18,866 --> 00:38:20,006
for Lincolnshire County Council.

683
00:38:23,026 --> 00:38:23,366
The

684
00:38:25,826 --> 00:38:29,446
cumulative impacts are not necessarily addressed in

685
00:38:29,966 --> 00:38:33,606
the form of BMV. It's a very simple calculation,

686
00:38:33,946 --> 00:38:37,746
and the percentage of BMV land in Lincolnshire has

687
00:38:37,806 --> 00:38:41,426
been addressed by the

688
00:38:41,486 --> 00:38:42,386
applicant. And

689
00:38:43,526 --> 00:38:43,826
the...

690
00:38:45,446 --> 00:38:48,506
Sorry, I don't have the right notes sitting in front of me.

691
00:38:49,666 --> 00:38:50,166
That's fine.

692
00:38:50,466 --> 00:38:50,666
But

693
00:38:54,286 --> 00:38:57,826
it's the matter of the proportion of BMV land in Lincolnshire
compared with the

694
00:38:57,866 --> 00:39:00,426
rest of the country, the land take that's involved

695
00:39:02,586 --> 00:39:06,446
with this and cumulative solar developments within the

696
00:39:06,506 --> 00:39:06,946
county.

697
00:39:08,126 --> 00:39:08,306
The

698
00:39:09,946 --> 00:39:10,966
Land Use Framework,

699
00:39:11,986 --> 00:39:13,586
which is a 2026 document,

700
00:39:15,586 --> 00:39:19,406
suggests that there is an area of land of

701
00:39:19,606 --> 00:39:23,446
8.4% of the UK that

702
00:39:23,906 --> 00:39:27,586
would be taken for solar, or

703
00:39:28,086 --> 00:39:31,206
I think it actually says renewables in total, and that would include

704
00:39:31,926 --> 00:39:34,106
large areas of upland taken for wind.

705
00:39:37,746 --> 00:39:39,786
That's a figure that if you

706
00:39:41,226 --> 00:39:44,506
apply that within England, is equivalent to

707
00:39:44,706 --> 00:39:48,306
1.1% of agricultural land.

708
00:39:50,066 --> 00:39:50,326
The

709
00:39:51,366 --> 00:39:53,526
applicant's comments on our

710
00:39:55,026 --> 00:39:55,506
LIR

711
00:39:58,186 --> 00:40:01,686
state that if this were to go ahead, then only

712
00:40:01,866 --> 00:40:05,486

1.1% of Lincolnshire's BMV land would

713
00:40:05,546 --> 00:40:06,766
be taken up

714
00:40:08,126 --> 00:40:08,986
by solar.

715
00:40:09,826 --> 00:40:13,006
And our position is that it's clearly

716
00:40:13,066 --> 00:40:14,006
disproportionate

717
00:40:15,086 --> 00:40:18,906
in cumulative terms to take that much

718
00:40:18,966 --> 00:40:19,306
land

719
00:40:20,146 --> 00:40:23,406
for solar development, albeit temporary,

720
00:40:24,246 --> 00:40:28,106
and the Secretary of State in his decision

721
00:40:28,226 --> 00:40:29,946
on Outer Dowsing

722
00:40:32,126 --> 00:40:35,646
suggested that there is a point at which

723
00:40:36,766 --> 00:40:39,866
further solar development is

724
00:40:39,946 --> 00:40:40,866
unacceptable.

725
00:40:43,226 --> 00:40:46,806
What we would say is that attention should be given to the

726
00:40:47,966 --> 00:40:51,546
proportions cumulatively that are being taken, and that

727
00:40:51,906 --> 00:40:53,786
within Lincolnshire, which is a

728
00:40:55,106 --> 00:40:58,746
county which has, as Mr. Smith has pointed out, highly resilient

729
00:40:58,846 --> 00:41:00,366
soils in climate terms

730
00:41:01,426 --> 00:41:05,246
and highly flexible soils in cropping terms,

731
00:41:07,006 --> 00:41:07,366
it is

732
00:41:08,406 --> 00:41:10,426
amongst the best soil in the country,

733
00:41:12,186 --> 00:41:12,346
that

734
00:41:13,326 --> 00:41:17,226
we should pay particular attention to the cumulative loss of BMV
land in

735
00:41:17,266 --> 00:41:19,566
Lincolnshire. Despite the fact that it has

736
00:41:21,326 --> 00:41:25,026
40% plus of BMV land within the county, that's no reason

737
00:41:25,666 --> 00:41:27,106
to occupy that land with

738
00:41:28,086 --> 00:41:31,986
solar. When you look at it on a national basis, guidance

739

00:41:32,066 --> 00:41:35,706
says that we should protect BMV land, avoid its use.

740
00:41:37,266 --> 00:41:38,826
We just feel that the cumulative

741
00:41:39,726 --> 00:41:42,566
impact has risen to a point where

742
00:41:44,166 --> 00:41:47,386
it may well be tipping into being

743
00:41:47,466 --> 00:41:49,546
unacceptable loss of BMV land.

744
00:41:50,006 --> 00:41:53,246
That's what I was going to ask. So Lincolnshire County Council have opinion that

745
00:41:53,306 --> 00:41:55,006
that tipping point is,

746
00:41:55,806 --> 00:41:58,106
you are now potentially at that tipping point?

747
00:41:58,346 --> 00:42:02,026
Or we're approaching it and specific attention should be

748
00:42:02,086 --> 00:42:05,806
given to what's coming forward locally and nationally on other

749
00:42:05,886 --> 00:42:09,646
sites. So there are other NSIP sites for solar

750
00:42:09,706 --> 00:42:11,486
coming forward which are on

751
00:42:12,666 --> 00:42:14,386
lower grade agricultural land.

752
00:42:16,426 --> 00:42:19,346

Thank you. That's useful. Before I turn to the applicant, is there anybody else

753
00:42:19,366 --> 00:42:22,346
that wishes to speak on cumulative? Mr. Malkin.

754
00:42:24,006 --> 00:42:27,606
Sorry, it's not on that. I just wondered if we could go back to mapping

755
00:42:27,846 --> 00:42:28,566
very quickly.

756
00:42:28,886 --> 00:42:29,466
Of course, yeah.

757
00:42:31,226 --> 00:42:35,046
There's a lot of technical information from our friend on the left

758
00:42:35,106 --> 00:42:35,346
here.

759
00:42:36,906 --> 00:42:38,046
Just so we can be clear,

760
00:42:38,886 --> 00:42:42,786
are they now saying then that Natural England's 2026 predictive

761
00:42:42,906 --> 00:42:46,546
map and Natural England's strategic

762
00:42:46,686 --> 00:42:49,226
scale map showing that,

763
00:42:50,266 --> 00:42:54,206
in one case, that the whole of the site is grades one, two, and 3A or

764
00:42:54,246 --> 00:42:57,906
at least 60% or greater chance of being BMV land

765

00:42:58,706 --> 00:42:59,466
are not now

766
00:43:01,158 --> 00:43:04,818
Supported. It's a shame that Natural England are not here,

767
00:43:05,278 --> 00:43:08,578
but that there's been a change of opinion by Natural England.

768
00:43:08,638 --> 00:43:11,638
I was a bit confused about that. If we could just have some clarity on that.

769
00:43:13,638 --> 00:43:15,478
Tony Chapman, are you able to deal with Mr.

770
00:43:15,618 --> 00:43:19,178
Malikin's point then revert to anything you wish to say

771
00:43:19,578 --> 00:43:21,078
from Lincolnshire County Council, please?

772
00:43:22,498 --> 00:43:23,758
Ewan Brierley for the applicant.

773
00:43:25,018 --> 00:43:27,038
Taking the mapping point first,

774
00:43:28,398 --> 00:43:28,618
the

775
00:43:29,578 --> 00:43:30,438
predictive model

776
00:43:31,658 --> 00:43:34,098
is that, a model at a

777
00:43:34,938 --> 00:43:38,838
relatively coarse resolution. The provisional mapping,

778
00:43:39,818 --> 00:43:43,138

similar resolution, but less sophisticated

779
00:43:43,858 --> 00:43:44,318
modeling.

780
00:43:45,158 --> 00:43:46,378
So the predictive model

781
00:43:47,258 --> 00:43:48,698
is an excellent tool

782
00:43:51,138 --> 00:43:54,718
for early-stage

783
00:43:55,138 --> 00:43:58,838
planning purposes and particularly

784
00:43:58,938 --> 00:44:02,318
useful for linear schemes where-

785
00:44:07,258 --> 00:44:08,478
Non-site-based schemes,

786
00:44:10,298 --> 00:44:14,258
it's particularly useful to be able to thread a linear scheme using

787
00:44:14,637 --> 00:44:18,498
a predictive model. It's also, of course, very good for

788
00:44:18,558 --> 00:44:20,518
site selection purposes for sites.

789
00:44:20,678 --> 00:44:24,538
It has both those functions, the predictive model, and

790
00:44:25,718 --> 00:44:29,518
consultants and others are delighted that it's an open-source

791
00:44:30,038 --> 00:44:32,338
tool made available this year.

792
00:44:33,518 --> 00:44:33,758
But

793
00:44:34,998 --> 00:44:38,838
once survey is undertaken, it's superseded by

794
00:44:39,378 --> 00:44:42,878
much greater resolution data from the

795
00:44:42,938 --> 00:44:43,378
field.

796
00:44:44,758 --> 00:44:48,698
And as I say, its value is

797
00:44:48,758 --> 00:44:50,698
at early-stage planning

798
00:44:52,598 --> 00:44:54,618
and then becomes superseded.

799
00:44:56,998 --> 00:44:57,478
Does that

800
00:44:58,378 --> 00:44:59,898
answer your question, Mr. Malikin?

801
00:45:00,858 --> 00:45:01,058
Okay.

802
00:45:01,898 --> 00:45:05,478
Do you have any response to what you heard

803
00:45:05,518 --> 00:45:08,178
from Lincolnshire in respect of cumulative issues?

804
00:45:09,258 --> 00:45:10,618
Ewan Brierley for the applicant.

805
00:45:12,218 --> 00:45:12,438

So

806
00:45:14,318 --> 00:45:15,778
we looked at the outer dowsing

807
00:45:16,598 --> 00:45:20,098
feedback from the examiner who acknowledged

808
00:45:21,338 --> 00:45:25,118
that at some point, a tipping point may be reached,

809
00:45:25,798 --> 00:45:27,178
but that it's not defined,

810
00:45:28,198 --> 00:45:31,938
and it's not clear whose responsibility it might

811
00:45:31,998 --> 00:45:34,238
be to define a tipping point.

812
00:45:36,098 --> 00:45:36,698
What I would say,

813
00:45:38,158 --> 00:45:42,038
for nationally significant infrastructure projects, perhaps

814
00:45:42,118 --> 00:45:42,438
even at

815
00:45:43,338 --> 00:45:43,958
county level,

816
00:45:45,898 --> 00:45:49,838
that's perhaps not the appropriate boundary at which to look at
cumulative

817
00:45:49,898 --> 00:45:52,738
effects. It perhaps should be at the national level.

818
00:45:54,258 --> 00:45:57,418
I would also say that the data presented in the cumulative table

819
00:45:57,878 --> 00:45:58,698
includes

820
00:45:59,698 --> 00:46:03,278
all projected solar schemes, not

821
00:46:03,338 --> 00:46:06,418
just those that are approved or in

822
00:46:06,478 --> 00:46:08,918
existence. So where there is information

823
00:46:09,778 --> 00:46:13,338
about projected schemes, that's also included in that table.

824
00:46:13,958 --> 00:46:17,338
And we agree with the figure that the cumulative

825
00:46:17,738 --> 00:46:18,898
effect on BNV land

826
00:46:19,818 --> 00:46:23,518
is 1.1% of Lincolnshire.

827
00:46:24,038 --> 00:46:26,998
However, that's temporary use. The land isn't sterilized.

828
00:46:27,058 --> 00:46:28,798
It's not lost, and therefore,

829
00:46:29,998 --> 00:46:32,778
the view is that it's the permanent land take, which is

830
00:46:32,798 --> 00:46:36,618
.02% of BNV land in Lincolnshire,

831
00:46:37,278 --> 00:46:39,798
that should be the figure that's considered.

832

00:46:43,058 --> 00:46:44,958
Taylor Power for the applicant. Just to add to what Mr.

833
00:46:45,178 --> 00:46:48,678
Brierley said in respect of that outer dowsing decision.

834
00:46:48,858 --> 00:46:52,738
I think where the discussion from the Secretary of State was,

835
00:46:52,778 --> 00:46:56,358
was that while they acknowledge the concerns raised by Lincolnshire County Council

836
00:46:56,418 --> 00:46:59,398
in that case around a tipping point, and they weren't alleging that

837
00:47:00,678 --> 00:47:02,658
that concept doesn't exist.

838
00:47:03,978 --> 00:47:07,838
Because there isn't a defined threshold and that threshold hasn't been

839
00:47:07,978 --> 00:47:11,938
set in national policy, the appropriate decision-making approach is to

840
00:47:11,998 --> 00:47:15,978
come back to the national policy statement and come back to the direction

841
00:47:15,998 --> 00:47:19,598
in there in respect of avoiding and minimizing impacts on BNV land.

842
00:47:19,638 --> 00:47:23,418
And that's been the decision-making approach which the applicant

843
00:47:23,478 --> 00:47:24,878
has followed.

844
00:47:27,918 --> 00:47:28,398
Thank you.

845
00:47:29,498 --> 00:47:30,838
Move on to...

846
00:47:32,618 --> 00:47:33,758
Sorry, I didn't see your hand.

847
00:47:34,778 --> 00:47:36,778
Yes. Simon Smith again, a local resident.

848
00:47:36,998 --> 00:47:40,378
You're talking about temporary measures or use of land for 40 years.

849
00:47:41,038 --> 00:47:44,618
I don't see it as temporary, but can you honestly, hand on heart, in front of

850
00:47:44,658 --> 00:47:48,298
everybody today, say that actually is only temporary and that land will

851
00:47:48,358 --> 00:47:51,738
definitely be able to revert back to growing potatoes, wheat, barley, maize, which

852
00:47:51,778 --> 00:47:55,078
is already being grown for energy crops anyway, et cetera, please? Thank you.

853
00:47:55,658 --> 00:47:59,398
I think we have covered the return of land

854
00:47:59,878 --> 00:48:00,698
back to its

855
00:48:01,558 --> 00:48:02,058
original-

856
00:48:02,278 --> 00:48:02,979
Understood. Thank you ...

857

00:48:03,117 --> 00:48:05,018
LDT grading. But I will obviously

858
00:48:05,938 --> 00:48:06,978
turn to the applicant,

859
00:48:07,798 --> 00:48:09,078
if you have any further comments.

860
00:48:09,998 --> 00:48:13,598
Taylor Power for the applicant. Yes, we've outlined in various

861
00:48:13,618 --> 00:48:17,598
submission the restoration commitments that the applicant has made in respect

862
00:48:17,618 --> 00:48:21,458
to the land, and those are principally captured in the soil management plan.

863
00:48:21,978 --> 00:48:24,578
So we'd direct the parties to have a look at that.

864
00:48:24,598 --> 00:48:28,378
But we're also very happy to discuss and explain further should there be further

865
00:48:28,418 --> 00:48:32,018
questions if they were raised in written submissions once you've had a look at that

866
00:48:32,378 --> 00:48:36,258
document. You possibly already have, but just to flag, that's where we see

867
00:48:36,298 --> 00:48:37,718
those commitments being made.

868
00:48:38,138 --> 00:48:41,998
If we can help direct you to that information, please speak

869
00:48:42,078 --> 00:48:44,718

to the case team if you've not seen it

870
00:48:44,977 --> 00:48:45,198
already. Thank you.

871
00:48:46,258 --> 00:48:46,798
Mr. Malikin.

872
00:48:47,438 --> 00:48:51,218
I just wonder whether we could get away from this idea that 40 years is temporary.

873
00:48:51,498 --> 00:48:53,198
It is not temporary for me. I'll be dead.

874
00:48:54,598 --> 00:48:57,998
Lots of people in this room will also be dead. 40 years isn't temporary.

875
00:48:58,598 --> 00:49:02,198
No, I am only too well aware of the debate

876
00:49:02,618 --> 00:49:06,558
between temporary and permanent, and it's not something that

877
00:49:06,698 --> 00:49:08,698
we're going to enter into today, unfortunately.

878
00:49:08,738 --> 00:49:11,818
But I take on board your comments about that.

879
00:49:12,654 --> 00:49:13,154
Lincolnshire?

880
00:49:13,814 --> 00:49:15,214
Yes. Regarding

881
00:49:16,414 --> 00:49:17,574
temporary and

882
00:49:18,474 --> 00:49:22,434

the tipping point, the Secretary of State's out

883
00:49:22,474 --> 00:49:23,054
of downsing

884
00:49:24,314 --> 00:49:24,654
letter

885
00:49:26,074 --> 00:49:29,894
wasn't referring to permanent land take, it was referring to a figure

886
00:49:29,954 --> 00:49:31,754
that was temporary land take.

887
00:49:33,334 --> 00:49:33,774
And

888
00:49:37,874 --> 00:49:41,634
Lincolnshire is firmly of the opinion that in this county

889
00:49:41,754 --> 00:49:45,054
at least, the tipping point is being approached,

890
00:49:45,854 --> 00:49:49,614
and that special consideration should be given to cumulative

891
00:49:50,134 --> 00:49:50,634
takes

892
00:49:54,134 --> 00:49:57,954
in this specific case, particularly given our

893
00:49:58,014 --> 00:50:00,894
disagreement over the grading of the land.

894
00:50:02,794 --> 00:50:03,254
Thank you.

895
00:50:06,254 --> 00:50:07,814
We'll move on to

896
00:50:08,754 --> 00:50:12,434
bullet five, which is Ms. Makinson, if you want to come in

897
00:50:13,174 --> 00:50:16,414
just in a moment. Just in terms of setting the scene,

898
00:50:16,834 --> 00:50:20,714
obviously, we asked questions regarding sheep grazing, and

899
00:50:20,754 --> 00:50:24,614
we saw your response at EXQ 1703 and

900
00:50:24,934 --> 00:50:28,814
04. But Ms. Makinson, do you have comments you wish to make on

901
00:50:28,874 --> 00:50:29,434
grazing?

902
00:50:31,914 --> 00:50:33,634
Yes. Kat Makinson from LAND.

903
00:50:34,514 --> 00:50:38,194
We're very concerned that grazing's being treated as something that might be

904
00:50:38,254 --> 00:50:42,214
added later, rather than something that's being properly planned during

905
00:50:42,254 --> 00:50:42,974
development.

906
00:50:44,474 --> 00:50:48,414
As you say, in September, we'd asked some questions, and Meridians response

907
00:50:48,974 --> 00:50:52,614
was that it was too early to produce a detailed site-specific

908
00:50:52,754 --> 00:50:56,014

grazing strategy because it was too early to enter

909
00:50:56,074 --> 00:50:59,334
into contractual arrangements with graziers.

910
00:51:00,354 --> 00:51:04,054
But surely there's a difference between signing contracts with farmers and asking

911
00:51:04,094 --> 00:51:05,574
them what they would actually need.

912
00:51:07,134 --> 00:51:10,354
We're not asking Meridian to employ shepherds today,

913
00:51:11,114 --> 00:51:14,194
but we're asking whether or not the development has actually been designed to

914
00:51:14,234 --> 00:51:16,554
accommodate working sheep enterprises.

915
00:51:17,514 --> 00:51:20,814
And Meridian's response to the examining

916
00:51:20,893 --> 00:51:24,194
authority's own questions was to say that they haven't

917
00:51:24,554 --> 00:51:26,454
undertaken any detailed discussions,

918
00:51:27,334 --> 00:51:31,114
and they stated that discussions with graziers would take place at a

919
00:51:31,154 --> 00:51:33,474
later stage, closer to commissioning.

920
00:51:34,494 --> 00:51:36,534
And I find that very difficult to understand.

921
00:51:37,114 --> 00:51:40,454

If sheep grazing is being presented as an opportunity from the beginning,

922
00:51:41,074 --> 00:51:44,334
why haven't the people that would actually be responsible for sheep grazing been

923
00:51:44,394 --> 00:51:47,194
involved in establishing the development needs?

924
00:51:49,234 --> 00:51:51,134
Take the height of the panels.

925
00:51:51,994 --> 00:51:55,694
Meridian has said that a minimum clearance at the lower edge will

926
00:51:55,734 --> 00:51:59,714
be 80 centimeters, which it considers sufficient for sheep

927
00:51:59,754 --> 00:52:00,634
to move underneath.

928
00:52:01,514 --> 00:52:03,894
But sheep don't spend the whole day with their heads down.

929
00:52:04,994 --> 00:52:08,154
They raise their heads, they scratch them on anything that they can reach.

930
00:52:08,214 --> 00:52:11,794
So where did this 80 centimeters figure come from? Who did they consult?

931
00:52:12,974 --> 00:52:14,534
Was it established through any

932
00:52:16,354 --> 00:52:20,074
consultation with any experienced sheep farmers or

933
00:52:20,134 --> 00:52:22,514
supportive livestock welfare advice?

934
00:52:23,574 --> 00:52:27,554
And if those discussions haven't taken place, how has Meridian established that

935
00:52:27,594 --> 00:52:29,014
that's an appropriate clearance?

936
00:52:29,774 --> 00:52:32,114
The same applies for water, feeding,

937
00:52:33,454 --> 00:52:34,874
and how will sheep be moved?

938
00:52:35,694 --> 00:52:37,694
What arrangements are there for extreme weather?

939
00:52:38,054 --> 00:52:41,654
They're basic requirements for keeping livestock, and they should

940
00:52:41,714 --> 00:52:43,974
surely influence the design from the onset.

941
00:52:45,474 --> 00:52:49,434
Meridians also identified that 430 hectares of the

942
00:52:49,474 --> 00:52:52,154
proposed site would be a grazing option.

943
00:52:52,854 --> 00:52:56,314
But it doesn't tell us how much of that land would genuinely be suitable

944
00:52:56,734 --> 00:52:58,354
and accessible for livestock.

945
00:53:00,794 --> 00:53:04,754
Why would any professional grazier take on a large, complicated site if

946
00:53:04,794 --> 00:53:07,314
the facilities are not there in the first place?

947
00:53:07,874 --> 00:53:11,274
So we would like Meridian to demonstrate that it has taken the opportunity

948
00:53:11,474 --> 00:53:15,014
seriously, and that means consulting experienced graziers

949
00:53:15,314 --> 00:53:18,974
now, incorporating practical needs and arrangements into the

950
00:53:19,034 --> 00:53:22,614
design, and making proper grazing and animal

951
00:53:22,674 --> 00:53:24,154
welfare part of the strategy.

952
00:53:25,354 --> 00:53:29,034
We'd like to see meaningful commitments secured through the development

953
00:53:29,094 --> 00:53:32,753
consent order, rather than simply allowing grazing as an

954
00:53:32,854 --> 00:53:36,734
option of managing the grass, because there's an important distinction

955
00:53:36,794 --> 00:53:37,074
here.

956
00:53:38,254 --> 00:53:42,094
Meridian itself has acknowledged that grazing isn't equivalent to arable farming

957
00:53:42,614 --> 00:53:44,934
and it would displace it, and we agree.

958
00:53:46,034 --> 00:53:49,474
We're not suggesting that keeping sheep would replace the loss of existing food

959
00:53:49,514 --> 00:53:53,494
production or resolve the wider concerns about agricultural land.

960
00:53:54,414 --> 00:53:57,694
But if this development consent is granted, surely

961
00:53:57,774 --> 00:54:01,514
opportunities that have been presented and promoted should be properly

962
00:54:01,574 --> 00:54:02,514
planned and delivered.

963
00:54:03,454 --> 00:54:06,734
So we would ask that the examining authority establish what

964
00:54:06,794 --> 00:54:10,534
consultation with professionals has taken place and what

965
00:54:10,634 --> 00:54:12,454
evidence supports the proposed design.

966
00:54:13,534 --> 00:54:17,354
Because if sheep grazing's genuinely part of what's intended for the future

967
00:54:17,774 --> 00:54:21,014
use of this site, then it shouldn't be left till the end.

968
00:54:22,254 --> 00:54:22,614
Thank you.

969
00:54:23,894 --> 00:54:27,534
No, thank you for your comments. Just before I turn

970
00:54:27,654 --> 00:54:31,514
to the applicant, is there anybody in the room who wishes to comment on

971
00:54:31,574 --> 00:54:34,294
the grazing issue? Lincolnshire, have you got any

972
00:54:35,294 --> 00:54:35,674
comments?

973
00:54:37,354 --> 00:54:38,794
Yes, ma'am. The

974
00:54:39,734 --> 00:54:43,174
establishment of swards under solar panels

975
00:54:43,474 --> 00:54:43,754
is

976
00:54:45,674 --> 00:54:46,074
not a

977
00:54:46,114 --> 00:54:50,514
proven

978
00:54:50,594 --> 00:54:50,874
thing.

979
00:54:51,854 --> 00:54:54,214
In my experience, they're not always good.

980
00:54:56,534 --> 00:55:00,234
Having livestock in areas where there are

981
00:55:00,854 --> 00:55:04,274
legs on the ground makes management of those livestock

982
00:55:05,574 --> 00:55:06,054
difficult.

983
00:55:09,334 --> 00:55:10,314
Rounding sheep up

984
00:55:11,794 --> 00:55:12,474
in a

985

00:55:13,330 --> 00:55:17,210
A forest of small diameter steel legs won't

986
00:55:17,270 --> 00:55:18,010
be easy.

987
00:55:19,250 --> 00:55:22,610
It would be feasible to do that on a small scale.

988
00:55:22,770 --> 00:55:25,530
But on the scale we're talking here, we're talking far greater

989
00:55:27,210 --> 00:55:28,890
numbers, possibly of sheep or

990
00:55:29,930 --> 00:55:33,890
scattering of sheep. So actually, the management of sheep is an issue.

991
00:55:34,930 --> 00:55:35,270
And

992
00:55:36,410 --> 00:55:38,010
yes, 0.8 of a meter of

993
00:55:39,070 --> 00:55:41,630
headroom for a sheep isn't significant.

994
00:55:42,090 --> 00:55:43,930
It will affect the way that they move.

995
00:55:45,350 --> 00:55:49,270
So there are a great number of issues around grazing, particularly

996
00:55:49,350 --> 00:55:51,850
on the scale we're talking about here.

997
00:55:53,630 --> 00:55:53,830
And

998
00:55:55,510 --> 00:55:59,230

the only places really that people graze sheep on

999
00:55:59,290 --> 00:56:03,030
this scale, area-wise, is on open

1000
00:56:03,710 --> 00:56:05,790
land in the uplands,

1001
00:56:07,090 --> 00:56:09,430
where management of sheep is done in a very specific way.

1002
00:56:11,610 --> 00:56:13,790
Thank you. Does anybody else have any comments?

1003
00:56:15,330 --> 00:56:15,510
No?

1004
00:56:16,350 --> 00:56:18,470
Just before I hear what you've in response.

1005
00:56:18,790 --> 00:56:21,110
In your outline skills plan,

1006
00:56:22,070 --> 00:56:24,590
one of the jobs listed is a shepherd.

1007
00:56:25,650 --> 00:56:29,150
So I'm assuming, and whilst that list of jobs is obviously

1008
00:56:29,190 --> 00:56:32,130
indicative, I'm assuming consideration has been given

1009
00:56:32,990 --> 00:56:35,630
to more than just a passing

1010
00:56:36,270 --> 00:56:38,730
possibility of grazing of sheep.

1011
00:56:39,690 --> 00:56:41,670
So I suppose from what we've heard from Ms.

1012
00:56:41,730 --> 00:56:42,350
Makinson

1013
00:56:43,470 --> 00:56:47,070
and building on the answers you've given me, so what consultation

1014
00:56:47,610 --> 00:56:51,030
has taken place in respect of the grazing of sheep?

1015
00:56:51,470 --> 00:56:54,910
And I suppose, what is the likelihood of grazing

1016
00:56:55,450 --> 00:56:59,430
to actually take place if the project was consented?

1017
00:57:01,150 --> 00:57:04,390
Taylor Power for the applicant. I think on some of these points, we're going to

1018
00:57:04,410 --> 00:57:07,790
have to come back in writing so that I can confer with the

1019
00:57:08,650 --> 00:57:12,510
team members that prepared the skill supply chain and employment

1020
00:57:12,570 --> 00:57:16,430
plan. My understanding, though, for the purposes of the decision-making,

1021
00:57:16,490 --> 00:57:20,390
is that, in respect of the operational jobs for the scheme, on

1022
00:57:20,470 --> 00:57:23,810
a conservative basis, we haven't incorporated grazing

1023
00:57:24,190 --> 00:57:27,910
within the assessed effects when it comes to a socioeconomic perspective.

1024
00:57:28,050 --> 00:57:29,790
So we're not asking...

1025
00:57:31,710 --> 00:57:34,910
Acknowledging that there might not be interest in the area,

1026
00:57:35,630 --> 00:57:39,610
from farmers to undertake grazing, and it ultimately depends on there being

1027
00:57:39,630 --> 00:57:43,590
the appropriate operators in the area at the time that might want to take up

1028
00:57:43,630 --> 00:57:47,570
this opportunity. We can't make a firm commitment as

1029
00:57:47,610 --> 00:57:50,690
a project that grazing will definitely be undertaken.

1030
00:57:51,490 --> 00:57:55,350
But as with other solar farm DCOs

1031
00:57:55,410 --> 00:57:59,350
particularly where DCO solar farms utilize a significant portion of

1032
00:57:59,390 --> 00:58:03,210
land, there has been examples of grazing or other forms of

1033
00:58:03,330 --> 00:58:07,150
agriculture, as in it might not be sheep, it might be ducks

1034
00:58:07,190 --> 00:58:11,170
or similar. It might be another approach, or

1035
00:58:11,270 --> 00:58:11,750
chickens.

1036
00:58:13,110 --> 00:58:15,250
There's been consideration to how

1037
00:58:16,850 --> 00:58:20,690
that alternative use of land could be used alongside the solar

1038
00:58:20,790 --> 00:58:24,130
farm, and reference being made in the outline skill and

1039
00:58:25,010 --> 00:58:28,910
supply chain plan indicates that the applicant should think about

1040
00:58:28,970 --> 00:58:32,810
that in the future as it's undertaking that preparation bit operational

1041
00:58:32,850 --> 00:58:34,170
approach. So

1042
00:58:35,150 --> 00:58:38,550
I can't provide more specific detail right now on the consultation.

1043
00:58:39,650 --> 00:58:43,450
If land wants to set out those specific questions in

1044
00:58:43,490 --> 00:58:46,070
writing, we'd be very happy to come back on those.

1045
00:58:46,430 --> 00:58:49,770
But I don't think I can provide much more detail than what's already been set out

1046
00:58:49,830 --> 00:58:52,390
in the response to the written questions at this stage.

1047
00:58:53,550 --> 00:58:55,430
Thanks. Ms. Makinson, your hand's up?

1048
00:58:56,970 --> 00:58:58,490
Yeah. On that point,

1049
00:58:59,870 --> 00:59:03,650
saying that there might not be any interest in grazing at the end of the

1050
00:59:03,710 --> 00:59:07,510

day, there won't be if there's nothing in place that makes it an

1051
00:59:07,570 --> 00:59:08,770
attractive prospect.

1052
00:59:09,570 --> 00:59:13,310
Nothing about that solar site says, "Bring your sheep here."

1053
00:59:14,010 --> 00:59:15,450
So I think that's

1054
00:59:16,310 --> 00:59:18,850
a little bit disingenuous to say there might not be interest.

1055
00:59:18,890 --> 00:59:22,490
There won't, if nothing is done at this stage. Thank you.

1056
00:59:24,970 --> 00:59:25,430
Thank you.

1057
00:59:26,970 --> 00:59:30,029
I don't have any more questions in terms of agriculture and soils.

1058
00:59:30,070 --> 00:59:32,510
Does anybody have any other points they wish to make?

1059
00:59:36,390 --> 00:59:36,530
No.

1060
00:59:37,690 --> 00:59:37,970
Sorry.

1061
00:59:38,490 --> 00:59:39,370
Sorry. Yes, ma'am.

1062
00:59:40,490 --> 00:59:44,410
It's regarding the economic benefits of best and most versatile
land, which

1063
00:59:45,070 --> 00:59:48,750
aren't specifically addressed in the

1064
00:59:48,810 --> 00:59:52,470
socioeconomic chapter. And the

1065
00:59:53,470 --> 00:59:54,470
economic benefits

1066
00:59:55,530 --> 00:59:58,290
of this best and most versatile land are

1067
00:59:59,450 --> 01:00:00,670
not inconsiderable.

1068
01:00:02,670 --> 01:00:04,110
We've put forward figures

1069
01:00:05,410 --> 01:00:06,170
suggesting

1070
01:00:09,110 --> 01:00:12,250
what sort of revenue the solar development area can

1071
01:00:12,310 --> 01:00:16,190
generate from crops based on historical cropping

1072
01:00:16,250 --> 01:00:20,130
from the area and the area around the

1073
01:00:20,190 --> 01:00:20,530
land,

1074
01:00:21,710 --> 01:00:25,250
around the SDA, which is of similar soil quality,

1075
01:00:25,490 --> 01:00:29,250
rather than focusing on the individual land use

1076
01:00:29,310 --> 01:00:30,110
which the

1077

01:00:31,390 --> 01:00:34,190
farms have elected to apply.

1078
01:00:35,290 --> 01:00:35,550
And

1079
01:00:36,550 --> 01:00:37,170
we feel that

1080
01:00:40,670 --> 01:00:44,290
the national policy statement on energy is

1081
01:00:44,550 --> 01:00:47,230
quite clear that the economic

1082
01:00:50,330 --> 01:00:53,910
benefits of best and most versatile should be taken into

1083
01:00:53,970 --> 01:00:54,510
account.

1084
01:00:58,350 --> 01:01:01,770
So yeah, the policy is there and quite clear,

1085
01:01:02,970 --> 01:01:05,190
and nowhere has the applicant

1086
01:01:06,650 --> 01:01:10,470
set out what the output of the land is and put it

1087
01:01:10,530 --> 01:01:11,510
into comparison

1088
01:01:11,590 --> 01:01:15,070
with the solar

1089
01:01:15,370 --> 01:01:15,690
scheme.

1090
01:01:17,322 --> 01:01:20,982
Thank you. I think this is a point that's been raised a

1091
01:01:21,282 --> 01:01:23,682
few times now, and I think

1092
01:01:23,842 --> 01:01:27,862
you've

1093
01:01:27,902 --> 01:01:31,782
declined to provide that information, with explanation,

1094
01:01:31,962 --> 01:01:32,722
I accept.

1095
01:01:33,622 --> 01:01:34,702
Do you have any further

1096
01:01:36,302 --> 01:01:37,602
points you want to make on that matter?

1097
01:01:38,142 --> 01:01:39,282
Taylor Power for the applicant.

1098
01:01:40,222 --> 01:01:42,662
I have in the room, although not at the table, Ms.

1099
01:01:42,782 --> 01:01:45,962
Esther Howe, who's our socioeconomic expert, which I think this
question probably

1100
01:01:46,022 --> 01:01:50,002
sits more clearly with. She could either address it now, or she
could address it

1101
01:01:50,042 --> 01:01:51,982
in the socioeconomic section of the hearing.

1102
01:01:52,302 --> 01:01:52,502
Which would-

1103
01:01:53,142 --> 01:01:55,762
Now is fine. It sits between-

1104
01:01:55,941 --> 01:01:56,263
It does, yeah ...

1105
01:01:56,421 --> 01:01:58,602
a lot of these sit between both, so that's fine.

1106
01:02:01,882 --> 01:02:05,622
Esther Howe for the applicant, covering socioeconomics in the

1107
01:02:05,662 --> 01:02:06,802
environmental impact assessment.

1108
01:02:08,642 --> 01:02:12,562
So yes, madam, you are correct that we have very much acknowledged the

1109
01:02:13,122 --> 01:02:16,842
additional information submitted around the economic impact of the

1110
01:02:16,882 --> 01:02:20,802
BMV land and the analysis of potential

1111
01:02:21,202 --> 01:02:23,782
economic value of the crops produced on that land.

1112
01:02:24,262 --> 01:02:28,102
But in terms of our assessment, we followed the standard approach, and

1113
01:02:28,122 --> 01:02:30,722
we've considered what is there at the moment.

1114
01:02:31,442 --> 01:02:35,322
We've done some additional work around to understand

1115
01:02:35,362 --> 01:02:38,742
what's currently being produced on the land.

1116
01:02:38,822 --> 01:02:42,262
So for example, 25% of the land is currently in

1117
01:02:42,282 --> 01:02:45,862
environmental schemes, and therefore not producing any crops at all.

1118
01:02:46,362 --> 01:02:50,002
And, I acknowledge that there is a question about the theoretical

1119
01:02:51,902 --> 01:02:53,922
capacity of the land to produce crops.

1120
01:02:54,362 --> 01:02:58,322
But we followed the standard approach for an ES, and we've considered

1121
01:02:58,362 --> 01:03:02,242
what's there at the moment. And for that reason, we feel that the work we

1122
01:03:02,262 --> 01:03:05,882
have done, in terms of considering what the land is

1123
01:03:05,942 --> 01:03:09,482
currently being used for and the economic impacts of taking that

1124
01:03:09,542 --> 01:03:13,262
land out of agricultural production, is a robust

1125
01:03:13,322 --> 01:03:16,042
approach and proportionate to the potential impacts.

1126
01:03:16,842 --> 01:03:20,582
Thank you. I accept fully that you've followed the correct approach.

1127
01:03:20,642 --> 01:03:20,742
Is

1128
01:03:21,642 --> 01:03:25,522
it something, the information that's been asked for, is it something that could be

1129
01:03:25,561 --> 01:03:26,102

produced?

1130
01:03:29,222 --> 01:03:33,142
Yes. I think we could definitely take that away and potentially look at it

1131
01:03:33,222 --> 01:03:36,602
further. I think, again, there's

1132
01:03:36,922 --> 01:03:40,622
complexities to it and context which do need to be put around the figures.

1133
01:03:42,082 --> 01:03:45,962
It's easy to apply a benchmark and say, "There's this many hectares, and if you

1134
01:03:46,002 --> 01:03:49,802
produce this crop, this is what it can be sold for." But the reality

1135
01:03:49,882 --> 01:03:52,782
is that not all of that value goes into the local economy.

1136
01:03:53,662 --> 01:03:53,922
And

1137
01:03:55,062 --> 01:03:58,942
for that reason, it's very difficult for farmers to make a profit at the

1138
01:03:58,982 --> 01:04:01,222
moment, because that is the way the world works.

1139
01:04:02,162 --> 01:04:05,282
And some inputs come from the other side of the world and

1140
01:04:06,882 --> 01:04:10,102
there's certain complexities and contexts which need to be taken into account.

1141
01:04:10,922 --> 01:04:14,722
So I think we'd need to do a bit more detailed work around that

rather than

1142
01:04:14,762 --> 01:04:18,662
just applying the benchmarks which have been put forward and coming

1143
01:04:18,722 --> 01:04:20,682
up with a high-level figure.

1144
01:04:21,442 --> 01:04:25,042
Okay, if I could ask that as an action point for you to have a look at.

1145
01:04:25,102 --> 01:04:28,942
I appreciate deadline for it is quite soon, so I wouldn't expect

1146
01:04:28,982 --> 01:04:31,982
that for deadline four. But at deadline four, could you

1147
01:04:32,862 --> 01:04:34,142
let me know whether or not

1148
01:04:35,062 --> 01:04:38,802
you could provide that information and at what point? That would be helpful.

1149
01:04:39,162 --> 01:04:39,602
Thank you.

1150
01:04:41,722 --> 01:04:43,282
Are there any other comments?

1151
01:04:44,862 --> 01:04:46,442
Apologies. Simon Smith again.

1152
01:04:47,662 --> 01:04:49,502
If we just go from the point of BMV,

1153
01:04:50,322 --> 01:04:52,642
clearly I understand about the environmental schemes.

1154
01:04:52,782 --> 01:04:55,242

This is a government interaction again with farmers.

1155
01:04:55,262 --> 01:04:59,022
They make a lot of money from it actually. I understand totally it's about money.

1156
01:04:59,042 --> 01:05:00,362
It has to be for farming as well.

1157
01:05:01,522 --> 01:05:03,002
But let's just put this point forward.

1158
01:05:03,842 --> 01:05:04,222
Just say

1159
01:05:05,202 --> 01:05:09,022
you ladies at the front would like to give the company carte blanche to cover the

1160
01:05:09,042 --> 01:05:10,822
entire country in these lovely solar panels.

1161
01:05:11,802 --> 01:05:15,222
Approximately how much would global temperatures reduce given that crops put carbon

1162
01:05:15,282 --> 01:05:18,502
into the ground, and they do, which then tends to remain there

1163
01:05:18,582 --> 01:05:21,922
if only minimal cultivation methods are used?

1164
01:05:23,362 --> 01:05:25,222
And this is what we tend to do. We tend not to plow anymore.

1165
01:05:25,322 --> 01:05:27,882
Again, it's expensive, so we tend to keep minimal cultivations.

1166
01:05:28,582 --> 01:05:29,082
And given that

1167

01:05:30,182 --> 01:05:34,022
our country only produces, I'd say, about 1% of emissions, and that the rest of the

1168
01:05:34,041 --> 01:05:37,942
world is now appearing to step away from this technology, as I say, how much impact

1169
01:05:37,981 --> 01:05:40,882
will it generally make to the loss of all these lovely crops that we're going to

1170
01:05:40,942 --> 01:05:43,322
need in the future? That's just the question. Thank you.

1171
01:05:45,402 --> 01:05:48,162
If it's a question for me, I'm unable-

1172
01:05:48,442 --> 01:05:49,362
Yeah

1173
01:05:49,401 --> 01:05:53,302
... to answer that. Whether or not the applicant has any comments they wish

1174
01:05:53,342 --> 01:05:53,742
to make.

1175
01:05:54,482 --> 01:05:57,222
Taylor Power for the applicant. I think we've heard the point and,

1176
01:05:58,162 --> 01:06:02,102
to the extent we're coming back on further analysis on this economics

1177
01:06:02,162 --> 01:06:04,882
point in future submissions, we'll take that into account. Thank you.

1178
01:06:04,902 --> 01:06:05,362
Thank you.

1179