



Planning Inspectorate  
Arolygiaeth Gynllunio

## Event Transcript

<b>Project:</b>	Green Hill Solar Farm
<b>Event:</b>	Issue Specific Hearing 2 (ISH2) – Part 1
<b>Date:</b>	09 December 2025

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

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1

00:00:00.080 --> 00:00:03.409

Well, good morning, everyone. Uh, it is now 10:00

2

00:00:03.480 --> 00:00:05.980

a.m. and time for this hearing to

3

00:00:06.060 --> 00:00:10.000

begin. Um, could I just confirm first,

4

00:00:10.070 --> 00:00:13.740

um, that everybody in the room, um, particularly people at the back, can

5

00:00:14.000 --> 00:00:17.280

hear me clearly? Great. I'm seeing a few thumbs

6

00:00:17.340 --> 00:00:21.240

up. Um, and, um, could, uh, people online

7

00:00:21.320 --> 00:00:25.300

just give a quick, um, indication by way of a

8

00:00:25.580 --> 00:00:28.940

thumbs up or a hands up virtually, um, that they can

9

00:00:29.400 --> 00:00:31.860

hear proceedings?

10

00:00:31.900 --> 00:00:32.860

Yeah, that's perfect.

11

00:00:34.100 --> 00:00:37.960

Great. Thank you. Um, and could I also

12

00:00:38.020 --> 00:00:41.680

confirm with the case manager that the live streaming and

13

00:00:41.740 --> 00:00:45.580

recording of this event has commenced? Again, great.

14

00:00:45.660 --> 00:00:49.640

I'm seeing another thumbs up. Um, so I would like

15

00:00:49.680 --> 00:00:53.260

to welcome you all to this second

16

00:00:53.360 --> 00:00:57.140

issue-specific hearing on various

17

00:00:57.200 --> 00:01:00.840

environmental matters in relation to

18

00:01:00.860 --> 00:01:03.120

the Green Hill Solar Farm

19

00:01:03.440 --> 00:01:07.380

project. Uh, my name is Mark Harrison.

20

00:01:07.480 --> 00:01:11.080

I am a chartered town planner and examining inspector

21

00:01:11.600 --> 00:01:15.580

with the Planning Inspectorate. I've been appointed by the

22

00:01:15.640 --> 00:01:19.580

secretary of state to be the lead member of the panel

23

00:01:19.800 --> 00:01:23.640

comprising the examining authority, um, that will be

24

00:01:23.700 --> 00:01:27.400

examining this application. I'm now going to

25

00:01:27.540 --> 00:01:31.160

ask my colleagues and fellow panel members of the examining

26

00:01:31.240 --> 00:01:35.120

authority to introduce themselves.

27

00:01:35.780 --> 00:01:39.060  
Thank you. Apologies. Good morning.

28  
00:01:39.080 --> 00:01:42.360  
My name is Catherine Beeby. I'm a town planner and an examining

29  
00:01:42.380 --> 00:01:46.160  
inspector. I've been appointed as a panel member of the examining

30  
00:01:46.220 --> 00:01:49.920  
authority. I will be leading the discussion later on agenda

31  
00:01:50.160 --> 00:01:52.930  
items 3.2, 3.3, and

32  
00:01:53.200 --> 00:01:55.720  
3.5.

33  
00:01:56.480 --> 00:01:58.450  
Good morning. My name's Rebecca Norman.

34  
00:01:58.480 --> 00:02:01.300  
I'm a chartered town planner and examining inspector.

35  
00:02:01.340 --> 00:02:04.520  
I've been appointed as a panel member of the examining authority and  
will be

36  
00:02:04.540 --> 00:02:08.500  
leading the discussion later on agenda mi- agenda item 3.4.

37  
00:02:08.560 --> 00:02:10.520  
Thank you.

38  
00:02:10.560 --> 00:02:14.520  
Thank you. Uh, so our role is to examine

39  
00:02:14.560 --> 00:02:18.240  
the application and to report to the Secretary of State

40  
00:02:18.500 --> 00:02:21.340

for Energy Security and Net

41

00:02:21.600 --> 00:02:25.370

Zero, um, with a recommendation as to

42

00:02:25.460 --> 00:02:29.300

whether or not the development consent order should be

43

00:02:29.340 --> 00:02:32.840

made for this application. Um, at this

44

00:02:32.960 --> 00:02:36.840

point, I'd also like to introduce the members of

45

00:02:36.940 --> 00:02:40.840

the Planning Inspectorate's case team who are supporting us

46

00:02:40.960 --> 00:02:44.620

today. Uh, you may possibly have already spoken with

47

00:02:44.660 --> 00:02:48.280

them. Um, we have Ryan Sedgman, who is

48

00:02:48.360 --> 00:02:52.160

case manager for this project, um, and

49

00:02:52.240 --> 00:02:55.900

Jessica Dunlop, who is providing case officer

50

00:02:55.920 --> 00:02:58.820

support, and they're currently sat in the back corner of the

51

00:02:58.940 --> 00:03:02.920

room. Uh, and we have, um, another case officer, Sam

52

00:03:03.020 --> 00:03:06.120

Stephens, who is providing online

53

00:03:06.240 --> 00:03:07.020

support.

54

00:03:08.060 --> 00:03:11.020

Um, in addition, technicians from the

55

00:03:11.220 --> 00:03:15.000

audiovisual company Event Video & TM

56

00:03:15.120 --> 00:03:18.440

Services are in attendance at the back of the

57

00:03:18.520 --> 00:03:22.360

room solely for the purpose of managing the recording

58

00:03:22.420 --> 00:03:24.609

and live streaming for this

59

00:03:24.660 --> 00:03:28.420

hearing. Um, so just to quickly

60

00:03:28.430 --> 00:03:32.260

deal with a, a couple of housekeeping matters for

61

00:03:32.280 --> 00:03:35.250

those who are attending in person.

62

00:03:35.320 --> 00:03:38.960

Um, could we please ask that, uh, everybody set

63

00:03:39.280 --> 00:03:42.280

all devices and phones to silent,

64

00:03:42.320 --> 00:03:45.720

please? Um, you've

65

00:03:45.780 --> 00:03:49.620

probably already seen, uh, where the toilets are on your

66

00:03:49.700 --> 00:03:53.100

way into this room, um, but in case you haven't,

67

00:03:53.180 --> 00:03:57.000

um, back out the doors where you came in,

68

00:03:57.120 --> 00:04:00.960

um, and they're located immediately outside on the, on the sort of

69

00:04:01.000 --> 00:04:04.930

right-hand side. And finally, um,

70

00:04:05.120 --> 00:04:08.580

there isn't any planned fire alarm

71

00:04:08.720 --> 00:04:12.480

test today, um, so if a fire alarm

72

00:04:12.540 --> 00:04:16.480

does sound at, at any point, um, please leave the

73

00:04:16.519 --> 00:04:20.459

building via the marked fire exits, um, which

74

00:04:20.500 --> 00:04:24.460

are, well, at the side and at the back of this

75

00:04:24.540 --> 00:04:28.120

room, um, and go to the assembly point,

76

00:04:28.240 --> 00:04:31.960

um, which is, uh, the hotel car park, which is sort of

77

00:04:32.020 --> 00:04:33.880

facing you as you leave the back of the

78

00:04:33.920 --> 00:04:37.860

room. Um, so just a, a

79

00:04:37.940 --> 00:04:41.100

couple of words on the sort of agenda and

80

00:04:41.180 --> 00:04:42.140

logistics.

81

00:04:42.960 --> 00:04:46.440

Um, so this hearing will follow the agenda that was

82

00:04:46.520 --> 00:04:50.350

published on the National Infrastructure Planning

83

00:04:50.460 --> 00:04:52.860

website on the 28th of

84

00:04:53.160 --> 00:04:57.140

November, um, with an examination library reference

85

00:04:57.180 --> 00:05:00.090

of EV4001.

86

00:05:01.120 --> 00:05:04.720

Um, it would be helpful to have a copy of this in front of

87

00:05:04.800 --> 00:05:08.520

you, um, but could I perhaps, uh, also ask the

88

00:05:08.560 --> 00:05:11.560

applicant's team to arrange to show it on the screen?

89

00:05:11.580 --> 00:05:15.560

And, and there it is. And perhaps

90

00:05:15.640 --> 00:05:18.880

if you could just scroll down a li- a little bit so that people could just see the

91

00:05:19.060 --> 00:05:22.990

sort of substantive items. Um, the

92

00:05:23.160 --> 00:05:27.050

agenda is for guidance only, um, and we

93

00:05:27.050 --> 00:05:30.900

may possibly add other considerations or issues as

94

00:05:31.000 --> 00:05:34.700  
we progress. Um, we will conclude

95  
00:05:35.000 --> 00:05:38.500  
the hearing as soon as all relevant contributions

96  
00:05:39.040 --> 00:05:42.440  
have been made and all questions asked and responded

97  
00:05:42.540 --> 00:05:45.990  
to. But if the discussions can't be, um,

98  
00:05:46.200 --> 00:05:49.820  
concluded, then it may be necessary for us to prioritize

99  
00:05:49.880 --> 00:05:53.580  
certain matters and possibly defer other matters

100  
00:05:53.680 --> 00:05:57.640  
to further written questions. Um, as we've

101  
00:05:57.740 --> 00:06:01.660  
said many times, this is predominantly a written process.

102  
00:06:01.740 --> 00:06:05.600  
Um, and likewise, if, um, you cannot answer the questions being

103  
00:06:05.800 --> 00:06:09.780  
asked or require time to get any information

104  
00:06:09.840 --> 00:06:13.680  
requested, um, then please do indicate, uh, that you

105  
00:06:13.760 --> 00:06:15.360  
may need to respond in

106  
00:06:15.400 --> 00:06:19.320  
writing. So, today's hearing is

107  
00:06:19.360 --> 00:06:23.120  
being undertaken in a hybrid way, meaning

108

00:06:23.180 --> 00:06:27.000

that, um, many of you are present, uh, with us in the hearing

109

00:06:27.120 --> 00:06:30.560

venue, um, but some of you are joining us virtually using

110

00:06:30.600 --> 00:06:34.110

Microsoft Teams. Um, we will make sure that

111

00:06:34.160 --> 00:06:37.900

however you have decided to attend today, you will be given a

112

00:06:38.020 --> 00:06:40.980

fair opportunity to participate.

113

00:06:42.500 --> 00:06:45.900

So, the meeting is being, um, both live-streamed and

114

00:06:45.960 --> 00:06:49.740

recorded. Um, for those people participating

115

00:06:49.920 --> 00:06:53.650

or observing via Microsoft Teams, um, could we please

116

00:06:53.760 --> 00:06:57.129

ask that in order to minimize background noise and

117

00:06:57.180 --> 00:07:00.940

disturbance, um, if you could please stay on mute

118

00:07:01.000 --> 00:07:04.700

unless you are speaking? Um, and if you

119

00:07:04.920 --> 00:07:08.400

are online and wish to speak, um, could you please

120

00:07:08.659 --> 00:07:12.560

indicate to us, um, so that we can see by raising

121

00:07:12.640 --> 00:07:16.280

a, a virtual hand in the Teams facility?

122

00:07:16.360 --> 00:07:19.370

Um, we will make sure we keep an eye on the screen for virtual

123

00:07:19.460 --> 00:07:23.440

hands, um, but please be patient as we may not get to you

124

00:07:23.480 --> 00:07:26.900

immediately, um, but we will invite you to speak at an

125

00:07:26.920 --> 00:07:30.700

appropriate time. Um, and I would also remind everyone that

126

00:07:30.800 --> 00:07:34.600

the, uh, chat function on Microsoft Teams is

127

00:07:34.860 --> 00:07:36.550

switched off, uh, for this

128

00:07:36.580 --> 00:07:40.260

event. Um, a recording of

129

00:07:40.320 --> 00:07:44.170

today's hearing will be made available on the Green Hill Solar

130

00:07:44.320 --> 00:07:47.680

Farm section of the National Planning Infrastructure

131

00:07:48.440 --> 00:07:52.260

website, um, as soon as practicable after the hearing has

132

00:07:52.340 --> 00:07:56.020

finished. Um, so with this in mind, um, please could you

133

00:07:56.060 --> 00:07:59.280

ensure that you speak clearly into a

134

00:07:59.320 --> 00:08:03.050

microphone, um, stating your name and who you are

135

00:08:03.120 --> 00:08:06.200

representing each time, um, before you

136

00:08:06.380 --> 00:08:10.180

speak. If you are not sitting at the, the

137

00:08:10.300 --> 00:08:14.280

table with a microphone immediately in front of you, um, I believe

138

00:08:14.300 --> 00:08:18.159

there is a roving microphone, um, which the case team

139

00:08:18.240 --> 00:08:21.860

will, will bring to you. So please wait for one of those,

140

00:08:21.960 --> 00:08:24.700

um, to be in front of you before you speak.

141

00:08:26.479 --> 00:08:30.000

Um, and a link to the Planning Inspectorate's privacy

142

00:08:30.080 --> 00:08:33.000

notice was provided in the notification for this

143

00:08:33.080 --> 00:08:36.480

hearing. We assume that everybody here today has

144

00:08:36.539 --> 00:08:39.900

familiarised themselves with this document, um, which

145

00:08:39.960 --> 00:08:43.819

establishes how the personal data of our customers

146

00:08:44.100 --> 00:08:47.680

is handled in accordance with the principles set out in data

147

00:08:47.740 --> 00:08:51.660

protection laws. Um, please speak to our

148

00:08:51.720 --> 00:08:55.540

case team, um, if you do have any questions about this.

149

00:08:55.700 --> 00:08:59.540

Um, but if, if we could just make a plea that if, if you've got any sort

150

00:08:59.620 --> 00:09:03.420

of personal information that you wouldn't want to be in the

151

00:09:03.470 --> 00:09:06.900

public realm, um, then, um, try to avoid

152

00:09:07.560 --> 00:09:11.520

saying it during the hearing to, um, avoid redactions having to be

153

00:09:11.620 --> 00:09:14.460

made on the, on the recording.

154

00:09:15.540 --> 00:09:19.350

Um, so timings wise, um,

155

00:09:19.400 --> 00:09:23.319

we, we need to close this hearing by no later than 3:00 PM

156

00:09:23.819 --> 00:09:26.540

this afternoon because we have to allow for the room to be

157

00:09:26.600 --> 00:09:30.360

reconfigured, um, ready for this evening's open

158

00:09:30.520 --> 00:09:34.380

floor hearing. So I think with that in mind,

159

00:09:35.100 --> 00:09:38.240

um, we probably just look to have a, a short break, uh,

160

00:09:38.260 --> 00:09:40.580

mid-morning, um, and then, and then a lunch

161

00:09:40.660 --> 00:09:43.240

break. We'll, uh,

162

00:09:44.340 --> 00:09:48.069

play the timings by ear, um, based on how we get through

163

00:09:48.140 --> 00:09:49.549

each of the topics.

164

00:09:51.560 --> 00:09:54.760

So a couple of brief words about the purpose of this

165

00:09:54.800 --> 00:09:58.280

issue-specific hearing. Um, so the

166

00:09:58.300 --> 00:10:01.900

examination of this, uh, NSIP application will

167

00:10:01.960 --> 00:10:05.920

primarily be conducted in written form as explained

168

00:10:06.000 --> 00:10:09.260

in detail by us at the preliminary meeting on the

169

00:10:09.460 --> 00:10:13.400

21st of October. Um, the purpose of

170

00:10:13.520 --> 00:10:17.260

today's hearing is for the examining authority to hear

171

00:10:17.680 --> 00:10:21.540

evidence concerning a range of environmental matters

172

00:10:21.620 --> 00:10:24.360

in relation to the Green Hill Solar Farm

173

00:10:24.540 --> 00:10:28.200

application. And it follows on, of course, from, um,

174

00:10:28.220 --> 00:10:32.190

issue-specific hearing one, um, ISH as we,

175

00:10:32.240 --> 00:10:35.300

uh, say for short, which was held on the 22nd of

176

00:10:35.339 --> 00:10:39.180

October. The matters for discussion during the course

177

00:10:39.280 --> 00:10:43.050

of ISH two today have been identified by the

178

00:10:43.050 --> 00:10:47.000

examining authority based on our consideration of

179

00:10:47.339 --> 00:10:50.860

application documentation, um, and the various

180

00:10:50.900 --> 00:10:54.319

submissions made by interested parties during the

181

00:10:54.360 --> 00:10:58.240

examination process. Um, and when

182

00:10:58.300 --> 00:11:02.180

you are answering our questions, uh, please ensure that you

183

00:11:02.220 --> 00:11:05.040

try and provide succinct answers.

184

00:11:05.100 --> 00:11:08.569

So, um, where a question is deserving of a yes/no type

185

00:11:08.660 --> 00:11:11.200

answer, uh, then please respond

186

00:11:11.480 --> 00:11:14.980

accordingly, um, followed by any amplification as

187

00:11:15.000 --> 00:11:17.120

necessary. So thank

188

00:11:17.180 --> 00:11:20.600

you. So moving on to

189

00:11:20.660 --> 00:11:24.480

introductions. Um, I'm now going to ask those of

190

00:11:24.540 --> 00:11:27.960

you who are participating in today's meeting to

191

00:11:28.000 --> 00:11:31.900

introduce yourselves. Um, when I,

192

00:11:31.980 --> 00:11:35.940

um, state your organization's name, um, or,

193

00:11:36.000 --> 00:11:39.730

um, body's name, could you introduce yourself, uh, stating your

194

00:11:39.839 --> 00:11:43.380

name, um, who you represent, and which agenda

195

00:11:43.500 --> 00:11:47.380

item or items you wish to speak on. Um, if

196

00:11:47.500 --> 00:11:51.000

you are not representing an organisation, uh, then

197

00:11:51.300 --> 00:11:55.120

please just confirm your name, uh, summarise your interest in the

198

00:11:55.160 --> 00:11:58.660

application, and let us know agenda item or

199

00:11:58.760 --> 00:12:02.600

items, uh, upon which you wish to speak.

200

00:12:03.240 --> 00:12:07.140

Um, and just to help us, please could everybody also, uh, let

201

00:12:07.240 --> 00:12:10.640

us know, uh, how you wish to be addressed, i.e.

202

00:12:10.680 --> 00:12:14.604

Mr., Mrs., Ms., Miss.... um,

203

00:12:15.204 --> 00:12:19.024

so if, if I start first with the, um, applicants

204

00:12:19.084 --> 00:12:22.914

and any of their advisors, um, I assume we'll,

205

00:12:22.964 --> 00:12:26.204

probably follow the same approach that we did at, um,

206

00:12:26.364 --> 00:12:29.744

ISH1, that rather than you list every

207

00:12:29.904 --> 00:12:33.784

participant for every, uh, agenda item at this stage, perhaps, um,

208

00:12:34.264 --> 00:12:38.064

if, if we just hear who's going to be, um, leading,

209

00:12:38.164 --> 00:12:42.104

um, overall, uh, and perhaps who's going to be speaking to the

210

00:12:42.184 --> 00:12:46.104

first item on, um, e- ecology matters, and then

211

00:12:46.124 --> 00:12:50.044

we'll, we'll pick up the others, um, before each topic.

212

00:12:50.064 --> 00:12:51.484

Thank you.

213

00:12:52.824 --> 00:12:55.324

Thank you. Good morning. My name is Clare Brodrick.

214

00:12:55.404 --> 00:12:58.624

I'm a partner at Pinsent Masons LLP solicitors

215

00:12:59.324 --> 00:13:02.564

for the applicant, Greenhill Solar Farm Limited.

216

00:13:02.644 --> 00:13:06.334

Um, as you've mentioned, we have different, um, topic experts

217

00:13:06.444 --> 00:13:08.164

speaking for each of the agenda items.

218

00:13:08.204 --> 00:13:12.024

I'll let those who are sat at the table, uh, now, um, who

219

00:13:12.064 --> 00:13:15.644

may be contributing to agenda item 3.2, um,

220

00:13:15.704 --> 00:13:19.094

introduce themselves. Um, we also have a number of,

221

00:13:19.504 --> 00:13:23.204

applicant, uh, speakers who are attending virtually, so

222

00:13:23.264 --> 00:13:26.984

again, I'll introduce, um, uh, the person who'll be

223

00:13:27.004 --> 00:13:30.764

participating in relation to agenda item 3.2 who's available

224

00:13:30.804 --> 00:13:34.644

online, and then we'll do further introductions, um, in respect of the later

225

00:13:34.684 --> 00:13:38.324

agenda items. Thank you.

226

00:13:40.364 --> 00:13:42.984

Good morning. My name's, uh, Chris Pool.

227

00:13:43.064 --> 00:13:46.394

Uh, I'm a senior ecologist at Clarkson & Woods Ecological

228

00:13:46.464 --> 00:13:49.484

Consultants. Um, I have eight years of

229

00:13:49.524 --> 00:13:53.164

experience, um, in the sector, and I'm an associate

230

00:13:53.244 --> 00:13:56.564

member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental

231

00:13:56.644 --> 00:13:59.264

Management, um, and I'll be speaking on item

232

00:13:59.444 --> 00:14:02.704

3.2.

233

00:14:11.584 --> 00:14:15.524

Hi, I'm Lesley Giles, um, on behalf of

234

00:14:15.564 --> 00:14:19.244

the applicant, um, from Island Green Power.

235

00:14:19.364 --> 00:14:22.964

Um, I am not speaking in particular on the

236

00:14:23.044 --> 00:14:26.514

item agendas, but may have something to contribute, um,

237

00:14:26.524 --> 00:14:28.544

throughout.

238

00:14:31.604 --> 00:14:35.264

Hi. Uh, Jane Crighton. I'm associate planning director,

239

00:14:35.504 --> 00:14:39.284

um, dealing with planning matters on behalf of Greenhill Solar.

240

00:14:39.404 --> 00:14:42.744

Um, again, not to speak on any specific items, but here to answer any questions if

241

00:14:42.764 --> 00:14:44.584

required. Thank you.

242

00:14:47.794 --> 00:14:50.084

Thank you. Uh, Clare Brodrick for the applicant. I'll let Mr.

243

00:14:50.124 --> 00:14:52.404

Alex Lowe introduce himself as well.

244

00:14:52.424 --> 00:14:54.804

Thank you.

245

00:14:55.744 --> 00:14:57.944

Good morning. Um, my name's Alex Lowe.

246

00:14:57.964 --> 00:15:01.824

I'm an associate director of arboriculture at Landpro, um, on

247

00:15:01.864 --> 00:15:05.794

behalf of the applicant, and I'll be speaking on, on arboricultural matters for

248

00:15:05.864 --> 00:15:09.484

item 3.2.

249

00:15:12.084 --> 00:15:13.084

Clare Brodrick for the applicant.

250

00:15:13.144 --> 00:15:16.504

Um, I believe those are the people speaking in relation to agenda item 3.2.

251

00:15:16.524 --> 00:15:19.824

We do have some other people, but they'll introduce themselves if they, um, are

252

00:15:19.904 --> 00:15:22.694

speaking or responding to any particular questions. Thank you.

253

00:15:23.884 --> 00:15:27.524

That's great. Thank you very much.

254

00:15:27.604 --> 00:15:30.204

Uh, so turning to the, uh, local

255

00:15:30.544 --> 00:15:34.134

authorities, um, who, who's going to be, uh,

256

00:15:34.224 --> 00:15:37.544

speaking for, uh, West Northamptonshire Council,

257

00:15:37.584 --> 00:15:39.584

please?

258

00:15:40.424 --> 00:15:43.444

Good morning. It's, um, I'm Mrs. Nikki Scaife.

259

00:15:43.544 --> 00:15:46.264

I'm on behalf of West Northants Council.

260

00:15:46.324 --> 00:15:50.064

Uh, we've got various colleagues joining virtually from ecology,

261

00:15:50.124 --> 00:15:53.884

drainage, highways. Um, haven't got anything

262

00:15:54.204 --> 00:15:57.944

specific to speak on, but, um, if, if we can chip in

263

00:15:58.044 --> 00:16:01.544

as, as necessary. Thank you.

264

00:16:01.644 --> 00:16:03.944

That's great. Thank you very much.

265

00:16:04.424 --> 00:16:07.724

And for, uh, North Northamptonshire Council, please?

266

00:16:09.444 --> 00:16:13.424

Good morning. Um, so, Gary Grant, uh, I'm a barrister

267

00:16:13.444 --> 00:16:15.614

of King's Chambers, um,

268

00:16:17.184 --> 00:16:21.144  
and, uh, I appear for North, uh, Northamptonshire.

269  
00:16:21.224 --> 00:16:24.544  
Uh, for, I will introduce to my left, or allow to

270  
00:16:24.564 --> 00:16:28.144  
introduce, um, Nicola Thompson to my left, and on this item,

271  
00:16:28.364 --> 00:16:30.984  
3.2, we have available, um,

272  
00:16:32.324 --> 00:16:35.933  
Sven Rufus. So I'll ask him to introduce himself, um,

273  
00:16:36.003 --> 00:16:39.304  
briefly as well. So if I can turn to my left.

274  
00:16:41.084 --> 00:16:44.604  
Good morning. Uh, Nicola Thompson, that's Mrs. Nicola Thompson.

275  
00:16:44.684 --> 00:16:48.024  
Um, I am a planning consultant on behalf of North Northants

276  
00:16:48.104 --> 00:16:50.284  
Council.

277  
00:16:52.904 --> 00:16:55.364  
And online.

278  
00:16:55.404 --> 00:16:58.284  
Yeah. Good morning. I'm Sven Rufus. I'm the council's ecologist.

279  
00:16:58.384 --> 00:17:01.904  
Um, I'm happy to be called Sven through this process, and available  
when you need

280  
00:17:01.924 --> 00:17:04.204  
me.

281  
00:17:05.364 --> 00:17:09.284

(clears throat) That's great. Thank you very

282

00:17:09.364 --> 00:17:11.164

much.

283

00:17:13.084 --> 00:17:16.573

Actually, I, I just noticed that I'd, uh, I'd skipped on to, uh,

284

00:17:16.904 --> 00:17:20.894

inviting councils to introduce themselves before I'd, uh, uh,

285

00:17:20.894 --> 00:17:24.624

uh, had made a note, uh, to just while the applicant

286

00:17:24.684 --> 00:17:28.054

was, um, speaking. Um, in, in terms of,

287

00:17:28.644 --> 00:17:32.144

capturing action points, um, as we did with

288

00:17:32.244 --> 00:17:35.864

ISH1, is, is, um, is, is there somebody available in the

289

00:17:35.874 --> 00:17:39.144

applicant's team to sort of be recording them as, as we go

290

00:17:39.224 --> 00:17:40.364

along?

291

00:17:40.644 --> 00:17:42.434

Clare Brodrick for the applicant. Yes, my colleague, Ms.

292

00:17:42.464 --> 00:17:44.764

Dablin will record the actions. Thank you.

293

00:17:44.864 --> 00:17:46.544

Thank you.

294

00:17:48.084 --> 00:17:51.404

Uh, don't think we've actually got, um, uh, Milton

295

00:17:51.484 --> 00:17:53.824  
Keynes, uh, Council attending.

296

00:17:53.864 --> 00:17:54.874  
Yes, you do. (laughs)

297

00:17:54.874 --> 00:17:56.424  
Uh, we, we have. Just as well I checked.

298

00:17:56.434 --> 00:17:56.434

299

00:17:56.444 --> 00:17:58.064  
It's, it's not on our list, so.

300

00:17:58.084 --> 00:17:59.984  
Hi. Yeah, I'm Ms. Elizabeth Verdigum.

301

00:18:00.104 --> 00:18:04.084  
I'm a team leader in, uh, the strategic team for development management for

302

00:18:04.104 --> 00:18:07.664  
Milton Keynes City Council, and I will speak on any agenda items as

303

00:18:07.724 --> 00:18:09.704  
needed.

304

00:18:12.084 --> 00:18:13.264  
Great. Thank you. Thank you very

305

00:18:13.304 --> 00:18:18.043  
much. Now

306

00:18:18.083 --> 00:18:20.924  
then turning to, um, interested

307

00:18:21.863 --> 00:18:25.724  
parties. Um, so in

308

00:18:25.783 --> 00:18:29.383

te- in terms of the, uh, Stop Greenhill Solar

309

00:18:29.524 --> 00:18:33.484

group, um, I've got quite a, quite a long list of, of

310

00:18:33.704 --> 00:18:37.644

names. So perhaps, um, would, would you be able to confirm who's, um, going

311

00:18:37.684 --> 00:18:41.623

to be speaking for that group, uh, during today's event

312

00:18:41.684 --> 00:18:42.283

please?

313

00:18:42.303 --> 00:18:45.404

Good morning, sir. (clears throat) My name is Richard Humphreys, King's

314

00:18:45.484 --> 00:18:48.704

Counsel, representing Stop Greenhill

315

00:18:48.783 --> 00:18:51.904

Solar. There are a number of, um,

316

00:18:52.404 --> 00:18:55.043

representatives for particular items.

317

00:18:55.083 --> 00:18:58.524

Perhaps I can come to those as and when, um,

318

00:18:59.224 --> 00:19:02.704

the issues arise. In relation to the

319

00:19:02.744 --> 00:19:06.543

agenda, uh, we may have some comments

320

00:19:06.924 --> 00:19:10.803

on 3.2. Uh, we will certainly have some

321

00:19:10.863 --> 00:19:12.724

comments on 3.4.

322

00:19:13.764 --> 00:19:17.383

Uh, on 3.5, th- that issue will be dealt with

323

00:19:17.623 --> 00:19:21.164

at the, um, the open floor hearing by our particular

324

00:19:21.224 --> 00:19:24.603

representative. And I set that out in an email to the

325

00:19:25.464 --> 00:19:29.264

inspectorates on Thursday, the 4th of December, at

326

00:19:29.884 --> 00:19:33.674

4:44, t- to... so you had an indication before today

327

00:19:34.004 --> 00:19:37.504

about that. And then under any other business,

328

00:19:38.444 --> 00:19:42.424

I've identified, uh, three matters in, in

329

00:19:42.543 --> 00:19:46.053

the email last week, um, where,

330

00:19:46.123 --> 00:19:48.404

um, we would like to, uh, address

331

00:19:48.563 --> 00:19:51.904

the, uh, address examination, if we may.

332

00:19:51.924 --> 00:19:54.884

Thank you very much.

333

00:19:54.984 --> 00:19:57.143

That's great. Thank

334

00:19:57.244 --> 00:20:00.583

you.

335

00:20:03.004 --> 00:20:06.944

Now, if, if I turn to, um, people that I've got on my

336

00:20:06.964 --> 00:20:10.484

list, um, that it, it doesn't necessarily say that

337

00:20:10.563 --> 00:20:13.543

they're, um, part of the Stop Greenhill Solar

338

00:20:13.643 --> 00:20:17.603

group. So a- apologies if you are and it just doesn't say it

339

00:20:17.704 --> 00:20:21.464

on our, on our list. Um, but I believe we, we might

340

00:20:21.524 --> 00:20:24.663

have a Kay Brown attending.

341

00:20:25.464 --> 00:20:29.283

I can, I can see a, a hand up. C- could, could we just wait for a,

342

00:20:29.303 --> 00:20:33.063

uh, a microphone to come and just check if it, if it's

343

00:20:33.083 --> 00:20:36.083

something that you're intend... If there's a particular agenda item that you might

344

00:20:36.123 --> 00:20:37.444

want to speak on?

345

00:20:37.484 --> 00:20:41.363

Hello, I'm Kay Brown. I'm an interested party and also a member of Stop Greenhill

346

00:20:41.464 --> 00:20:45.283

Solar, and I'd like to talk on any other business on section

347

00:20:45.343 --> 00:20:48.803

four, if there's time today. But I am here tonight, so if there isn't

348

00:20:48.863 --> 00:20:51.783

time, I'm happy for that to move into tonight as

349

00:20:51.843 --> 00:20:55.803

well. Thank you. Oh, I can be r- referred

350

00:20:55.843 --> 00:20:58.004

to as Kay.

351

00:20:58.043 --> 00:21:01.704

That's very helpful, thank- thank you.

352

00:21:06.384 --> 00:21:09.244

So do we also have a Michael

353

00:21:09.303 --> 00:21:12.224

Griffiths?

354

00:21:16.643 --> 00:21:20.543

Good morning. Uh, I'm Michael Griffiths. I'm a Lavenden resident.

355

00:21:20.623 --> 00:21:24.103

I also sit on the Lavenden Residence Committee

356

00:21:24.504 --> 00:21:28.103

that was formed and is affiliated to the Stop Greenhill

357

00:21:28.643 --> 00:21:31.823

Solar. Um, Michael is perfectly okay for

358

00:21:31.863 --> 00:21:33.914

me.

359

00:21:33.924 --> 00:21:37.744

Thank you. And, um, w- is there a particular agenda item that you might want to

360

00:21:37.823 --> 00:21:38.744

be speaking on?

361

00:21:38.783 --> 00:21:41.464

Yes, I'm sorry. Um, 3.3.

362

00:21:45.843 --> 00:21:48.504

Thank you.

363

00:21:49.964 --> 00:21:53.783

Um, and do we have a Chris Robinson,

364

00:21:53.863 --> 00:21:55.244

um, possibly joining us

365

00:21:55.323 --> 00:21:58.024

virtually?

366

00:22:07.863 --> 00:22:11.823

Okay, maybe not. It... They're showing

367

00:22:11.904 --> 00:22:15.744

green on my spreadsheet as, as if they have a- uh, attended,

368

00:22:15.783 --> 00:22:18.754

but, uh...

369

00:22:18.754 --> 00:22:21.884

Okay. Um,

370

00:22:22.283 --> 00:22:25.654

right. We also have a, uh, Sheena H-

371

00:22:25.654 --> 00:22:29.424

Howell, uh, down as, as att- attending and possibly wishing to

372

00:22:29.524 --> 00:22:30.783

speak.

373

00:22:30.823 --> 00:22:34.073

Hello. Sheena Howell, um, Stop Greenhill Solar.

374

00:22:34.103 --> 00:22:38.024

Um, I may well reserve the right to speak, um, at the end of the, uh, hearing.

375

00:22:38.063 --> 00:22:41.204

Thank you, sir. You can call me Mrs. Howell.

376

00:22:43.843 --> 00:22:47.603

Right, thank you. Um, and a,

377

00:22:47.623 --> 00:22:51.524

uh, Dr. Linda Toohey. Apologies if I've pronounced

378

00:22:51.563 --> 00:22:54.484

that wrong. Please, uh, do correct me.

379

00:22:54.494 --> 00:22:55.783

(laughs)

380

00:22:55.823 --> 00:22:58.924

It's, it's Linda Toohey. It's just Toohey. Thank you.

381

00:22:58.984 --> 00:23:02.884

Um, I'm a, um, resident of Wargrave and also a member of Stop Greenhill

382

00:23:02.904 --> 00:23:06.184

Solar. And I may wish to make, um, comments in,

383

00:23:06.244 --> 00:23:10.103

um, section 3.2, please.

384

00:23:22.524 --> 00:23:22.704

0-

385

00:23:23.603 --> 00:23:27.484

okay, um, yeah, my, uh, my colleague is telling me online that,

386

00:23:27.583 --> 00:23:31.494

uh, uh, Chris Robinson is, uh, in the meeting

387

00:23:31.603 --> 00:23:35.184

now, has a, a hand up. Um, would you like to

388

00:23:35.224 --> 00:23:39.194

introduce yourself and let us know which agenda item, uh, you'd like

389

00:23:39.224 --> 00:23:42.343

to speak on, please?

390

00:23:43.904 --> 00:23:55.964

...

391

00:24:02.643 --> 00:24:04.543

Okay, may- maybe we're having technical problems

392

00:24:04.704 --> 00:24:06.803

there.

393

00:24:06.813 --> 00:24:11.583

(laughs)

394

00:24:11.603 --> 00:24:14.704

Okay. Well, I'm, I'm sure our case team will be working on that in, in the

395

00:24:14.744 --> 00:24:17.264

background and uh, um,

396

00:24:18.204 --> 00:24:21.904

hopefully Chris Robinson will be able to join at, uh, at whatever

397

00:24:21.944 --> 00:24:25.744

agenda item, uh, they, they wanted to speak

398

00:24:25.843 --> 00:24:29.434

on. So I

399

00:24:29.474 --> 00:24:33.454

think everybody else that I have on my list, either in

400

00:24:33.494 --> 00:24:37.154

the room or virtually, is either down as being part of the Stop

401

00:24:37.214 --> 00:24:40.994

Greenhill Solar group, or I've got a note saying that they- they

402

00:24:41.034 --> 00:24:44.774

only wish to observe. But, um, if I could

403

00:24:44.854 --> 00:24:48.784

just check firstly in- in the room, um, whether there was anybody

404

00:24:48.854 --> 00:24:51.854

else, um, who, um, wishes

405

00:24:51.914 --> 00:24:54.534

to speak, if th- if they could let us

406

00:24:54.814 --> 00:24:57.184

know? Yeah, I can see a hand up.

407

00:24:57.194 --> 00:24:59.254

Ryan?

408

00:25:00.034 --> 00:25:03.774

Um, Marian Turner-Hawes from Wellingborough Hawks Action Group.

409

00:25:03.874 --> 00:25:07.614

Um, I may wish to... I'm not down to

410

00:25:07.634 --> 00:25:10.924

speak, but I may wish to comment in relation to 3.2

411

00:25:11.694 --> 00:25:11.883

and

412

00:25:12.774 --> 00:25:16.474

possibly the next item as well, if that's okay.

413

00:25:16.534 --> 00:25:19.634

And, uh, I'd like to be referred to as Marian. Thank you.

414

00:25:19.654 --> 00:25:20.854  
Okay. Thank

415  
00:25:20.914 --> 00:25:24.334  
you.

416  
00:25:26.694 --> 00:25:27.854  
Might have somebody else?

417  
00:25:27.894 --> 00:25:31.834  
Hello. Yes. Um, I'm, uh, Professor Dobson from Oxford

418  
00:25:31.934 --> 00:25:35.354  
University and, um, I've been asked as an

419  
00:25:35.394 --> 00:25:39.214  
advisor, or if you like, a consultant, to investigate

420  
00:25:39.274 --> 00:25:43.104  
some of the, uh, battery energy storage issues that come up in

421  
00:25:43.154 --> 00:25:47.004  
this proposal. So I'm here to comment, um,

422  
00:25:47.074 --> 00:25:50.674  
and to ask questions, particularly on things

423  
00:25:50.794 --> 00:25:54.334  
connected with the battery energy storage systems.

424  
00:25:55.654 --> 00:25:57.754  
Okay. Thank you, Professor Dobson.

425  
00:26:01.434 --> 00:26:04.714  
Okay. Is that everybody in the room?

426  
00:26:04.754 --> 00:26:06.384  
Oh, I think we might have one more.

427  
00:26:07.214 --> 00:26:09.314  
My name is Robin Aitken.

428

00:26:10.134 --> 00:26:13.974

Um, I'm here supporting the, uh, Stop Greenhill

429

00:26:14.074 --> 00:26:17.914

Solar, but I'm actually a member of the UK

430

00:26:18.694 --> 00:26:20.334

Solar Alliance,

431

00:26:21.234 --> 00:26:24.874

um, and I will also be, um, adding

432

00:26:25.034 --> 00:26:28.584

comments possibly under agenda item four on the

433

00:26:28.654 --> 00:26:31.814

battery energy storage system. Thank

434

00:26:31.854 --> 00:26:33.634

you.

435

00:26:35.873 --> 00:26:38.574

Right. Thank you, Mr. Aitken. So I

436

00:26:39.354 --> 00:26:42.714

think... I'm not seeing any more hands up, so I think that's everybody in- in the

437

00:26:42.834 --> 00:26:46.754

room. Now, just turning, um, online, uh,

438

00:26:46.874 --> 00:26:50.394

is there anybody else who's joining us via Microsoft

439

00:26:50.514 --> 00:26:54.474

Teams who, uh, we haven't heard from yet, um, who

440

00:26:54.534 --> 00:26:57.294

might wish to speak on any of the agenda

441

00:26:57.374 --> 00:26:59.614  
items?

442

00:27:03.234 --> 00:27:06.394  
Okay. Right. I'm not seeing any-- not seeing any hands up

443

00:27:06.474 --> 00:27:10.424  
there, so thank-- thank you. Um,

444

00:27:10.734 --> 00:27:13.954  
if-- if, of course, anybody else, uh, decides that they wish to speak during the

445

00:27:13.994 --> 00:27:17.914  
course of the hearing, uh, for example, to make comments in response

446

00:27:17.974 --> 00:27:21.894  
to representations made by other parties, uh, you may

447

00:27:22.014 --> 00:27:25.334  
do so. Um, please do raise your hand either

448

00:27:25.414 --> 00:27:29.334  
physically or using the raise hand function in Microsoft Teams

449

00:27:29.914 --> 00:27:31.674  
if you wish to speak.

450

00:27:33.754 --> 00:27:37.654  
So, before I move on, I'll just double-check that, uh, there are no

451

00:27:37.874 --> 00:27:41.274  
further comments or questions to make under agenda item

452

00:27:41.394 --> 00:27:45.714  
two.

453

00:27:47.594 --> 00:27:51.554  
Right. Thank you very much. So that concludes, um, this

454

00:27:51.564 --> 00:27:52.694  
item of the agenda

455  
00:27:54.154 --> 00:27:57.454  
(clears throat) . And if we turn now to item

456  
00:27:57.654 --> 00:28:01.134  
three of the agenda, the substantive part of

457  
00:28:01.214 --> 00:28:02.874  
the agenda.

458  
00:28:04.294 --> 00:28:07.334  
Um, and as we said at the first

459  
00:28:07.534 --> 00:28:11.314  
issue-specific hearing, um, if- if your interest in this

460  
00:28:11.324 --> 00:28:14.874  
application is, um, a- a particular

461  
00:28:14.994 --> 00:28:18.434  
topic, um, once that agenda item has been

462  
00:28:18.514 --> 00:28:22.494  
completed, um, do not feel that you have to stay

463  
00:28:22.534 --> 00:28:25.854  
for the entirety of- of the event.

464  
00:28:27.354 --> 00:28:31.184  
Um, but I will now hand over to Mrs. Bibby, who

465  
00:28:31.294 --> 00:28:35.264  
is leading on agenda item 3.2,

466  
00:28:35.314 --> 00:28:37.964  
which is effects for ecology and

467  
00:28:38.034 --> 00:28:40.654  
biodiversity.

468

00:28:43.654 --> 00:28:47.394

Thank you. So firstly, if I could ask the applicant to provide an update with

469

00:28:47.414 --> 00:28:51.334

regard to ecology and biodiversity matters since issue-specific hearing

470

00:28:51.434 --> 00:28:54.834

one, please. Um, to include effects on internationally

471

00:28:54.914 --> 00:28:58.654

designated sites and protected species, including bats,

472

00:28:58.714 --> 00:29:02.214

and effects on trees and hedgerow, including ancient woodland buffer

473

00:29:02.274 --> 00:29:04.274

zones. Thank you.

474

00:29:04.354 --> 00:29:08.274

Uh, Clare Project for the applicant. I will let Mr. Poole provide an update.

475

00:29:08.354 --> 00:29:12.074

Um, they will, uh, depending on questions, it'll be split

476

00:29:12.094 --> 00:29:15.854

between Mr. Poole and Mr. Low online, but we'll try and, um, identify who's going

477

00:29:15.894 --> 00:29:18.534

to answer each question. Um, thank

478

00:29:18.614 --> 00:29:20.473

you.

479

00:29:21.654 --> 00:29:25.474

Chris Poole for the applicant. Um, so I'll just provide an update

480

00:29:25.634 --> 00:29:29.514

on point A, effects on internationally designated sites and protected species,

481

00:29:29.594 --> 00:29:33.554

including bats, um, and then, uh, I think I may pass

482

00:29:33.614 --> 00:29:36.094

over to Mr. Low to provide an update on point

483

00:29:36.134 --> 00:29:40.074

B. So with regard to

484

00:29:40.134 --> 00:29:44.114

the Habitats Regulations Assessment and the effects of the scheme on Functionally

485

00:29:44.124 --> 00:29:47.744

Linked Land, uh, FLL, associated with the Upper Nene

486

00:29:47.834 --> 00:29:51.674

Gravel- Gravel Pits SPA, discussions with Natural England

487

00:29:51.734 --> 00:29:55.724

have continued on this matter. Uh, an updated draft of the statement of

488

00:29:55.814 --> 00:29:59.674

common ground is currently with Natural England for their review and

489

00:29:59.834 --> 00:30:03.274

input. A revised version of the Habitats

490

00:30:03.394 --> 00:30:05.654

Regulations Assessment, uh, reference

491

00:30:05.874 --> 00:30:09.674

REP1153, was submitted at deadline

492

00:30:09.774 --> 00:30:13.654

one. The minor updates were generally in response to various

493

00:30:13.754 --> 00:30:17.054

examining authority questions and consultation from other

494

00:30:17.134 --> 00:30:21.064

stakeholders. Other updates included the removal of a

495

00:30:21.174 --> 00:30:24.754

single small field, FF16, from the

496

00:30:24.794 --> 00:30:28.654

precautionary FLL mitigation offering, given the need to

497

00:30:28.714 --> 00:30:31.804

instate a hedgerow along the boundary of the field for visual

498

00:30:31.894 --> 00:30:35.814

screening, rendering it unlikely to be suitable for use by golden

499

00:30:35.834 --> 00:30:39.796

plover. This reduces the precautionary FLL mitigation

500

00:30:39.886 --> 00:30:43.306

land offering by approximately 1.86

501

00:30:43.366 --> 00:30:46.996

hectares. However, this is not considered to be a significant

502

00:30:46.996 --> 00:30:50.826

change given that the total area of precautionary mitigation land

503

00:30:50.846 --> 00:30:54.326

provided is still 73.79

504

00:30:54.406 --> 00:30:58.306

hectares, previously 75.65 hectares,

505

00:30:59.046 --> 00:31:02.986

and still significantly exceeds the baseline area of FLL

506

00:31:03.026 --> 00:31:06.806

identified on a precautionary basis.

507

00:31:07.706 --> 00:31:11.326

Following comments from Natural England and as o- outlined in

508

00:31:11.366 --> 00:31:14.966

response NE004 in the applicant

509

00:31:15.026 --> 00:31:18.676

responses to deadline one submissions document, uh,

510

00:31:18.766 --> 00:31:21.906

reference REP2050,

511

00:31:22.766 --> 00:31:26.686

the FLL mitigation fields will be available for birds prior to

512

00:31:26.746 --> 00:31:30.676

the commencement of development on adjacent fields and will

513

00:31:30.706 --> 00:31:34.226

be maintained as suitable for use by the target species for the

514

00:31:34.246 --> 00:31:36.966

duration of the construction phase.

515

00:31:37.006 --> 00:31:40.566

This change will be reflected in a revised version of the outline

516

00:31:40.666 --> 00:31:43.626

landscape and ecological management plan, uh,

517

00:31:43.726 --> 00:31:47.686

REP1137, to be submitted at deadline

518

00:31:47.726 --> 00:31:51.466

three. It's acknowledged that birds within FLL

519

00:31:51.506 --> 00:31:55.226

mitigation fields during construction may be disturbed by noise and

520

00:31:55.306 --> 00:31:59.166

visual disturbance associa- associated with construction work

521

00:31:59.606 --> 00:32:03.186

in adjacent fields. The applicant will look to discuss

522

00:32:03.386 --> 00:32:07.026

any practicable and proportionate addi- uh, additional mitigation

523

00:32:07.086 --> 00:32:10.886

measures with Natural England on this as part of the statement of common

524

00:32:10.946 --> 00:32:12.106

ground process.

525

00:32:13.286 --> 00:32:17.006

With regards to other protected species, updated versions

526

00:32:17.126 --> 00:32:20.966

of several technical appendices were submitted at deadline one,

527

00:32:21.006 --> 00:32:24.886

which included final results of ecological surveys completed

528

00:32:24.946 --> 00:32:26.666

in spring 2025.

529

00:32:27.826 --> 00:32:31.626

These final surveys were in relation to Greenhill A.2 only

530

00:32:32.286 --> 00:32:36.266

and related to bats. Uh, the reference for that document

531

00:32:36.346 --> 00:32:38.726

is REP1047,

532

00:32:39.826 --> 00:32:43.446

otters and water voles, REP1049,

533

00:32:44.146 --> 00:32:46.275  
and breeding birds, REP1-

534  
00:32:46.806 --> 00:32:50.606  
REP1051. No significant survey

535  
00:32:50.646 --> 00:32:54.626  
findings were returned, meaning that these final surveys did not  
result in any

536  
00:32:54.666 --> 00:32:57.976  
significant changes to the assessment of impacts on these

537  
00:32:57.986 --> 00:32:59.786  
species.

538  
00:33:00.906 --> 00:33:04.246  
In addition, final walkover surveys of parts of the cable route

539  
00:33:04.346 --> 00:33:08.305  
corridor, which were previously inaccessible were completed.

540  
00:33:08.376 --> 00:33:11.826  
The results of these surveys were also submitted at deadline one  
through

541  
00:33:11.886 --> 00:33:15.426  
updates to ES appendix 9.2 habitat

542  
00:33:15.506 --> 00:33:19.306  
surveys, REP1045,

543  
00:33:19.506 --> 00:33:23.226  
and appendix 9.13 biodiversity net gain

544  
00:33:23.346 --> 00:33:26.466  
assessment, REP1043.

545  
00:33:27.966 --> 00:33:31.895  
The inclusion of this new data within the BNG assessment resulted in

546

00:33:31.966 --> 00:33:35.546

a very minor change to the outcome of the assessment, with the scheme

547

00:33:35.606 --> 00:33:38.886

anticipated to result in a net gain of plus

548

00:33:38.926 --> 00:33:42.446

70.66% in habitat units

549

00:33:42.866 --> 00:33:46.546

rather than the previous 70.68% net

550

00:33:46.606 --> 00:33:50.506

gain. This represents a very comparable result to the previous

551

00:33:50.566 --> 00:33:53.966

assessment. That concludes the update on point

552

00:33:54.066 --> 00:33:57.906

A. Thank you.

553

00:33:57.916 --> 00:34:01.626

Uh, Claire Project for the applicant.

554

00:34:01.666 --> 00:34:05.226

Um, if Mr. Lowe would like to provide the update for agenda

555

00:34:05.306 --> 00:34:07.426

item point B. Thank

556

00:34:07.486 --> 00:34:09.606

you.

557

00:34:09.666 --> 00:34:13.565

Alex Lowe for the applicant, speaking on agenda item

558

00:34:13.626 --> 00:34:17.485

B, effects on trees and hedgerow including ancient woodland

559

00:34:17.505 --> 00:34:21.206

buffer zones. Um, I have two parts to

560

00:34:21.306 --> 00:34:25.226

Speak on. The first is an update on discussions with the Wellingborough Walks

561

00:34:25.406 --> 00:34:29.295

Action Group. As set out in the written summary of the

562

00:34:29.386 --> 00:34:33.326

applicant's oral submissions and responses at issue specific hearing

563

00:34:33.366 --> 00:34:37.086

one and responses to action points, document reference

564

00:34:37.306 --> 00:34:41.045

REP1-162, the applicant's

565

00:34:41.106 --> 00:34:44.266

arboricultural and planning consultants met with the Wellingborough Walks Action

566

00:34:44.326 --> 00:34:47.806

Group virtually on the 6th of November 2025

567

00:34:48.286 --> 00:34:51.985

to undertake an orientation session to signpost the Wellingborough Walks Action

568

00:34:52.065 --> 00:34:55.926

Group to the arboricultural mitigation and explain where this mitigation is

569

00:34:55.965 --> 00:34:59.786

secured in the appropriate management plans and, in turn,

570

00:34:59.826 --> 00:35:03.346

secured through the requirements in schedule two of the draft DCO

571

00:35:04.006 --> 00:35:05.746

REP1008.

572

00:35:07.246 --> 00:35:10.676

Before this meeting, the applicant sent an email to the Wellingborough Walks Action

573

00:35:10.746 --> 00:35:14.586

Group on the 31st of October 2025 with a

574

00:35:14.626 --> 00:35:18.506

link to those specific references in the DCO submission where mitigation

575

00:35:18.526 --> 00:35:22.506

is located and secured. Marian Turner-Hawes of the Wellingborough

576

00:35:22.566 --> 00:35:26.166

Walks Action Group sent an email on the 7th of November with

577

00:35:26.266 --> 00:35:30.226

queries on the tree survey methodology, which the applicant responded to

578

00:35:30.286 --> 00:35:33.946

on the 10th of November, setting out how the tree survey was undertaken

579

00:35:34.366 --> 00:35:38.296

and how different elements, such as groups of trees, woodlands, and hedgerows were

580

00:35:38.306 --> 00:35:42.186

assessed. Then a subsequent email was received from Marian

581

00:35:42.206 --> 00:35:46.186

Turner-Hawes on the 12th of November seeking clarification on tree and hedgerow

582

00:35:46.326 --> 00:35:50.026

loss and retention, which the applicant responded to on the 18th of

583

00:35:50.066 --> 00:35:53.666

November, signposting to the specific commitments in the

584

00:35:53.686 --> 00:35:57.146

DCO to minimise tree and hedgerow removal and secure the

585

00:35:57.186 --> 00:36:00.866

mitigation strategy. The second part of my

586

00:36:00.906 --> 00:36:04.416

comments is a general update on the arboricultural surveys and

587

00:36:04.966 --> 00:36:08.946

findings of the assessment. An arboricultural

588

00:36:08.986 --> 00:36:12.286

survey was undertaken across all sites and the cable route corridor  
by an

589

00:36:12.346 --> 00:36:16.226

arboricultural consultant. The results of the tree survey are  
provided

590

00:36:16.266 --> 00:36:19.196

in the environmental statement chapter 19 arboriculture

591

00:36:19.866 --> 00:36:23.626

APP-056, as well as the

592

00:36:23.646 --> 00:36:27.586

environmental statement appendix 19.2, arboricultural impact

593

00:36:27.596 --> 00:36:30.316

assessment and outline arboricultural method statement

594

00:36:30.986 --> 00:36:34.786

APP171. Effects to ancient and

595

00:36:34.846 --> 00:36:38.546

veteran trees and ancient woodland within or near the sites were

596

00:36:38.646 --> 00:36:42.286

scoped into the environmental statement, as well as effects to all  
trees and

597

00:36:42.306 --> 00:36:46.222

woodlands within the cable route corridor. The assessment found that there will be

598

00:36:46.262 --> 00:36:50.162

no residual significant arboricultural effects on ancient and veteran trees

599

00:36:50.182 --> 00:36:53.102

and ancient woodland within the sites.

600

00:36:53.112 --> 00:36:56.982

The assessment also concluded that, as a worst case, there will be two moderate

601

00:36:57.022 --> 00:37:00.482

residual effects to trees within the cable route corridor.

602

00:37:00.522 --> 00:37:04.502

The first moderate effect would occur from the removal of category B trees of

603

00:37:04.562 --> 00:37:08.102

moderate quality within the cable route corridor.

604

00:37:08.162 --> 00:37:11.522

It should be noted that this is based on a precautionary assessment of tree removal

605

00:37:11.542 --> 00:37:14.282

within the cable route corridor as a worst case.

606

00:37:14.302 --> 00:37:17.962

And in practice, impacts are likely to be lower as the outline of

607

00:37:18.002 --> 00:37:21.922

arboricultural method statement APP171 seeks

608

00:37:21.982 --> 00:37:25.722

to avoid tree removal as far as practicable and subject to engineering

609

00:37:25.762 --> 00:37:29.582

constraints. The second moderate effect would result from the possible

610

00:37:29.622 --> 00:37:33.602

canopy lifting required to three category A high-quality trees, which are

611

00:37:33.662 --> 00:37:37.472

also veteran, to achieve a visibility splay for access to the cable route

612

00:37:37.502 --> 00:37:39.352

corridor near Green Hill A.2

613

00:37:40.242 --> 00:37:42.122

and clearance sites for construction vehicles.

614

00:37:42.842 --> 00:37:45.642

Again, this is a precautionary assessment and this impact could potentially be

615

00:37:45.702 --> 00:37:48.302

avoided through further detailed design post-DC0

616

00:37:48.362 --> 00:37:52.242

consent. Existing farm tracks within the

617

00:37:52.282 --> 00:37:56.262

ancient woodland buffer zones of Hornwood at Green Hill F and Three

618

00:37:56.342 --> 00:38:00.002

Shires Wood at Green Hill G will be improved for

619

00:38:00.062 --> 00:38:03.202

lengths of 840 meters and 24 meters

620

00:38:03.362 --> 00:38:07.122

respectively. Whilst farm tracks already exist in these

621

00:38:07.162 --> 00:38:10.702

proposed access track locations, the applicant has committed to not using these

622

00:38:10.742 --> 00:38:14.482

tracks during the construction stage as they are located within the ancient

623

00:38:14.502 --> 00:38:18.402

woodland buffer zones. To facilitate their use during operational

624

00:38:18.482 --> 00:38:22.472

maintenance activities, any required improvements to the existing farm tracks will

625

00:38:22.482 --> 00:38:25.802

be undertaken using a no-dig method of installing hard

626

00:38:25.862 --> 00:38:29.712

surfacing to avoid harms to the roots of the trees on the edge of the

627

00:38:29.742 --> 00:38:33.582

ancient woodlands as secured in the outline arboricultural method statement

628

00:38:34.162 --> 00:38:35.712

APP171.

629

00:38:37.162 --> 00:38:40.962

Minor pruning work may be required to trees next to the section of access

630

00:38:40.982 --> 00:38:44.682

track to provide clearance for maintenance vehicles.

631

00:38:44.762 --> 00:38:48.302

All tree work will be undertaken in accordance with arboricultural best practice

632

00:38:48.802 --> 00:38:51.562

as secured in the outline arboricultural method statement

633

00:38:51.882 --> 00:38:53.242

APP171.

634

00:38:54.762 --> 00:38:58.562

Negligible impacts to trees on the edge of the ancient woodlands are identified

635

00:38:59.142 --> 00:39:03.012

resulting in a minor residual effect to woodland edge trees within

636

00:39:03.062 --> 00:39:06.742

Hornwood and Three Shires Wood. This is due to the precautionary

637

00:39:06.762 --> 00:39:10.702

approach of assuming pruning work will be required as the worst cased

638

00:39:10.762 --> 00:39:12.782

in the environmental statement chapter for

639

00:39:12.822 --> 00:39:16.802

arboriculture. A robust package of mitigation

640

00:39:16.862 --> 00:39:20.842

measures are secured within the DCO including curr-

641

00:39:20.882 --> 00:39:24.742

commitments to not remove any veteran or ancient trees or category A trees

642

00:39:25.182 --> 00:39:28.782

of high quality within the cable route corridor as well as tree protection

643

00:39:28.882 --> 00:39:31.622

fencing throughout construction to ensure trees can be retained

644

00:39:31.682 --> 00:39:35.462

safely. These measures are detailed in outline, in the outline

645

00:39:35.482 --> 00:39:38.982

arboricultural method statement and further committed to in the outline

646

00:39:39.042 --> 00:39:40.982

construction environmental management plan

647

00:39:41.582 --> 00:39:45.102

APP545, the outline operational

648

00:39:45.182 --> 00:39:48.842

environmental management plan APP546

649

00:39:49.522 --> 00:39:51.322

and the outline decommissioning statement

650

00:39:51.662 --> 00:39:54.022

APP547.

651

00:39:55.142 --> 00:39:58.962

In conclusion, the effects to trees and ancient woodlands remain unchanged since

652

00:39:59.022 --> 00:40:02.782

issue specific hearing one. Details on the extents of

653

00:40:02.822 --> 00:40:06.472

hedgerow losses expected to facilitate access for construction and

654

00:40:06.522 --> 00:40:09.882

operation of the scheme are provided in section 1.2,

655

00:40:10.482 --> 00:40:14.342

approach to construction and maintenance access gap at hedgerows

656

00:40:14.462 --> 00:40:16.982

of the outline landscape and ecological management plan

657

00:40:17.802 --> 00:40:21.632

rep 1137. This approach to hedgerow

658

00:40:21.682 --> 00:40:24.782

removal will be secured through requirement seven of the draft DCO

659

00:40:25.322 --> 00:40:29.002

CR1015 and finalized in the detailed

660

00:40:29.042 --> 00:40:31.082

landscape and ecological management plan

661

00:40:31.122 --> 00:40:34.182

post-consent.

662

00:40:43.542 --> 00:40:47.282

Thank you. So if I could now invite interested

663

00:40:47.322 --> 00:40:50.882

parties to comment on the applicant's position in respect of eco-

664

00:40:50.942 --> 00:40:54.662

ecology and biodiversity effects please. Um, firstly I think we had Mrs.

665

00:40:54.702 --> 00:40:57.072

Thompson for, um, North Northamptonshire,

666

00:40:57.082 --> 00:40:59.302

please.

667

00:41:06.302 --> 00:41:09.002

Uh, Gary Grant, um, for North

668

00:41:09.302 --> 00:41:13.242

Northamptonshire. Um, madam, w- we have no further comment to

669

00:41:13.302 --> 00:41:16.022

make on this issue at this stage. Thank you very

670

00:41:16.062 --> 00:41:17.322

much.

671

00:41:19.002 --> 00:41:22.762

Thank you. Do any of the other local authorities wish to comment at

all

672

00:41:22.802 --> 00:41:25.102  
please?

673

00:41:27.582 --> 00:41:30.982  
Thank you. So turning now to Mr.

674

00:41:31.022 --> 00:41:34.782  
Humphries, um, I believe you indicated a wish to comment on this  
agenda item

675

00:41:34.822 --> 00:41:36.122  
please.

676

00:41:36.182 --> 00:41:39.902  
Yes, it was, um, uh, Dr. Tui who sits to my right who

677

00:41:39.962 --> 00:41:41.442  
was going to listen and I,

678

00:41:42.442 --> 00:41:45.822  
uh, she doesn't wish to, to make any comments at this stage having  
heard what's

679

00:41:45.882 --> 00:41:47.222  
been said. Thank you.

680

00:41:47.242 --> 00:41:49.102  
Okay.

681

00:41:53.522 --> 00:41:57.502  
Um, I did have a note lastly that Mrs., Mr. Turner-Hawes may wish to  
comment.

682

00:41:57.542 --> 00:42:00.752  
Could you indicate whether you would like to or...

683

00:42:00.802 --> 00:42:03.002  
Yes, certainly. If you could wait for the microphone

684

00:42:03.042 --> 00:42:08.422  
please.

685  
00:42:13.002 --> 00:42:16.342  
Thank you very much, Chair. Um,

686  
00:42:18.662 --> 00:42:21.662  
so Marion Turner-Hawes, Wellingborough Walks Action Group.

687  
00:42:21.742 --> 00:42:23.842  
Um, I'm, I'm not necessarily gonna go into detail.

688  
00:42:23.862 --> 00:42:27.742  
I did as part of our submissions both for the first deadline and the second

689  
00:42:27.802 --> 00:42:31.282  
deadline provide detail in terms of our concerns in relation

690  
00:42:31.322 --> 00:42:32.142  
to, um,

691  
00:42:33.142 --> 00:42:36.842  
broader hopeful protections of trees on the site

692  
00:42:37.262 --> 00:42:39.562  
and hedgerows on the site. Um,

693  
00:42:41.242 --> 00:42:44.332  
I think the, the main point around the tree protections that I wanted to sort

694  
00:42:44.362 --> 00:42:47.642  
echo really is that whilst we recognize there are many

695  
00:42:47.682 --> 00:42:51.562  
mitigations and many means of mitigation proposed by

696  
00:42:51.622 --> 00:42:55.310  
the, by the applicant, um-We really call on

697

00:42:55.790 --> 00:42:58.150

those to be extensively used as much as possible.

698

00:42:58.190 --> 00:43:02.050

We note that the, the primary area where tree

699

00:43:02.110 --> 00:43:05.930

loss could occur the most is within the cable corridor, and

700

00:43:06.010 --> 00:43:09.950

yet that is also the area through which many mitigations can be

701

00:43:09.990 --> 00:43:13.829

deployed effectively, so we were surprised about the level of tree

702

00:43:14.110 --> 00:43:18.040

loss that we are noticing from the documents that we've been through.

703

00:43:18.130 --> 00:43:20.870

Um, I did as, um,

704

00:43:22.250 --> 00:43:26.240

I think it was James said a moment ago, I did, uh, acknowledge that, uh,

705

00:43:26.270 --> 00:43:30.150

we did speak about the survey method, but from the maths that we looked at in terms

706

00:43:30.190 --> 00:43:34.130

of the trees that could be affected, we identified that up to

707

00:43:34.190 --> 00:43:37.410

14% of trees that were mentioned in the overall survey

708

00:43:38.270 --> 00:43:42.230

would, could be felled using the, even acknowledging the, the

709

00:43:42.310 --> 00:43:46.010

precautionary approach that the, that the applicant has used, and we

710

00:43:46.050 --> 00:43:49.830

acknowledge that. But that's a really high level of tree loss potentially

711

00:43:50.230 --> 00:43:54.170

and a significant effect to the l- to the level of canopy and impact

712

00:43:54.180 --> 00:43:57.850

to the level of canopy that exists within this part of the county.

713

00:43:57.910 --> 00:44:01.390

So, we, we really a- appeal to the applicant and

714

00:44:01.430 --> 00:44:05.310

developer to really deploy all the mitigations open to it, not

715

00:44:05.390 --> 00:44:09.250

just for the protection of ancient trees and category A trees, but

716

00:44:09.270 --> 00:44:12.730

for all trees, o- on the site, B, C, and

717

00:44:12.830 --> 00:44:16.750

U, because those trees become category B, A,

718

00:44:16.770 --> 00:44:20.590

and ancient trees if we leave them in peace and if we protect them

719

00:44:20.630 --> 00:44:23.410

on site. Secondly, around the hedgerow, we

720

00:44:23.450 --> 00:44:27.370

have... The submission that we were able to put in for the second

721

00:44:27.430 --> 00:44:31.190

deadline really highlighted even more concerns that we have around the

722

00:44:31.230 --> 00:44:35.140

hedgerow situation, and through concer- constru- um,

723

00:44:35.170 --> 00:44:38.770

further discussion with the applicant, um, it became

724

00:44:38.830 --> 00:44:42.810

clear... I mean, we identified from the documents that up

725

00:44:42.890 --> 00:44:46.630

to 95% of hedgerow loss could

726

00:44:46.750 --> 00:44:50.630

be, uh, removed on the sites, on all of

727

00:44:50.690 --> 00:44:54.390

the sites, across all of the sites within the request within the

728

00:44:54.430 --> 00:44:58.050

DCO document. Now, our colleagues from the

729

00:44:58.090 --> 00:45:01.990

applicant did reply back saying it was not their intention to remove

730

00:45:02.050 --> 00:45:05.090

anywhere near that level of, um,

731

00:45:05.710 --> 00:45:09.450

hedgerow from within the, you know, during the development

732

00:45:09.550 --> 00:45:12.850

process or after that. But we're concerned

733

00:45:12.910 --> 00:45:16.510

about that level of permission being given

734

00:45:16.530 --> 00:45:20.510

to any developer wanting to, to do works of this nature,

735

00:45:20.590 --> 00:45:23.830

uh, across our community. Um, and, but we do

736

00:45:23.850 --> 00:45:27.500

acknowledge the, you know, from the comments that they were only planning to

737

00:45:27.530 --> 00:45:30.810  
remove about 350 meters of hedgerow at

738

00:45:30.930 --> 00:45:34.670  
maximum. However, that level of permission that they are

739

00:45:34.690 --> 00:45:38.130  
requesting within the DCO is very, very concerning for any

740

00:45:38.190 --> 00:45:42.070  
community, and the impacts of, of hedgerow loss

741

00:45:42.170 --> 00:45:46.150  
for 350 meters is significant, but for

742

00:45:46.190 --> 00:45:49.950  
up to 95% of loss, which is thousands and thousands of

743

00:45:50.030 --> 00:45:53.970  
meters, it's, it's shocking. Um, not just the loss

744

00:45:54.010 --> 00:45:57.890  
of the hedgerows themselves, which are, many of which are, are, are

745

00:45:59.450 --> 00:46:03.350  
long-lived or in some cases ancient themselves, but also

746

00:46:03.370 --> 00:46:06.690  
for the impact on biodiversity across those

747

00:46:06.830 --> 00:46:10.650  
areas, all nine sites. So, we're really

748

00:46:10.710 --> 00:46:14.210  
flagging a major alarm bell around that

749

00:46:14.230 --> 00:46:18.030  
potential extensive, uh, permission that could be given, or at

750

00:46:18.070 --> 00:46:21.950

least is requested. Um, there may be other comments we

751

00:46:21.990 --> 00:46:25.210

wish to, wish to make following this meeting about listening to different

752

00:46:25.250 --> 00:46:28.870

information that comes up today, and of course, we'll, we'll take the

753

00:46:28.910 --> 00:46:32.600

opportunity to write on those points, uh, later.

754

00:46:32.670 --> 00:46:36.330

Um, but finally, it's just, again, the purpose of this whole

755

00:46:36.710 --> 00:46:40.410

development is to enable the generation of green energy

756

00:46:40.490 --> 00:46:44.430

across, um, this area, but to benefit that across the

757

00:46:44.470 --> 00:46:48.370

whole nation, and that is the need, the main need that's been identified by the

758

00:46:48.430 --> 00:46:51.180

applicant in their DCO application.

759

00:46:51.210 --> 00:46:53.530

But it would be so div- uh, so perverse

760

00:46:54.350 --> 00:46:58.230

if, uh, following if many of the

761

00:46:58.270 --> 00:47:01.950

mitigations that have been suggested and said to be

762

00:47:02.090 --> 00:47:06.010

used are not used as thoroughly as they could be, and the negative impacts

763

00:47:06.070 --> 00:47:09.910

on our community mean that we, in this county, in this area,

764

00:47:09.950 --> 00:47:13.840

experience canopy depletion, we experience, uh,

765

00:47:13.850 --> 00:47:17.590

depletion of our natural environment to be able to respond to the climate

766

00:47:17.630 --> 00:47:20.890

emergency, and we also experience reduced community

767

00:47:20.910 --> 00:47:24.610

benefits because of the impacts of this site.

768

00:47:24.690 --> 00:47:28.250

So, we're really flagging up many concerns about the

769

00:47:28.310 --> 00:47:29.450

potential of

770

00:47:31.250 --> 00:47:34.490

this tight rope that we're all walking as part of this development.

771

00:47:34.510 --> 00:47:38.250

Thank you.

772

00:47:40.290 --> 00:47:42.810

Thank you, Mrs. Turner-Holls. Would the applicant like to respond,

773

00:47:43.110 --> 00:47:47.410

please?

774

00:47:49.610 --> 00:47:52.090

Uh, Claire Podziewicz for the applicant.

775

00:47:52.150 --> 00:47:56.120

Um, it might be helpful if, um, I think I did mention it at,

776

00:47:56.150 --> 00:47:59.650

at the previous issue-specific hearing, but again, just to reiterate how the

777

00:47:59.710 --> 00:48:03.000

powers in the DCO are, um,

778

00:48:03.590 --> 00:48:06.880

limited and constrained by the outline management plans.

779

00:48:06.970 --> 00:48:10.450

Um, so, um, uh, Ms.

780

00:48:10.510 --> 00:48:14.370

Turner-Holls is correct that the DCO does include a broad range of

781

00:48:14.490 --> 00:48:18.270

powers, um, and lists, um, the, uh,

782

00:48:18.330 --> 00:48:22.310

majority of hedgerows within the order limits in terms of where the power

783

00:48:22.370 --> 00:48:25.790

can apply to. However, um, that power

784

00:48:26.350 --> 00:48:30.190

is, um, limited in, um, article 40,

785

00:48:30.290 --> 00:48:34.170

um, sub-paragraph four, um, so that the

786

00:48:34.350 --> 00:48:38.310

trees that are, uh, trees and hedgerows that are actually removed as part of the

787

00:48:38.350 --> 00:48:42.100

scheme, um, have to be in accordance with the final approved

788

00:48:42.730 --> 00:48:46.500

landscape and ecological management plan, which itself is secured

789

00:48:46.610 --> 00:48:50.530

by requirement seven in Schedule Two to the DCO.

790

00:48:50.830 --> 00:48:54.710

And the reason for this, um, as has been alluded to, is because the exact

791

00:48:54.780 --> 00:48:58.170

gap in hedgerows where either the cable route or an access

792

00:48:58.290 --> 00:49:02.220

track, um, isn't known at this stage in the process and won't be known

793

00:49:02.290 --> 00:49:05.062

until the detailed design, uh... stage.

794

00:49:05.072 --> 00:49:08.962

So for the purposes of a statutory power to remove

795

00:49:09.022 --> 00:49:12.662

part of a hedgerow, that power has to apply to the entire

796

00:49:12.722 --> 00:49:16.702

length of that hedgerow so that we can micro-site the, um,

797

00:49:16.722 --> 00:49:20.582

gap, uh, which is set out in the, uh, outline management

798

00:49:20.622 --> 00:49:23.242

plans somewhere along that length of hedgerow.

799

00:49:23.282 --> 00:49:26.822

So as is consistent, um, with other nationally significant

800

00:49:26.882 --> 00:49:30.502

infrastructure projects and the DCOs that are granted, a wide power

801

00:49:30.902 --> 00:49:34.882  
is granted so that you can micro-site that gap in

802  
00:49:34.922 --> 00:49:37.222  
the hedgerow at the detailed design stage.

803  
00:49:37.242 --> 00:49:40.882  
But in terms of, um, the DC0 permitting, um, vast

804  
00:49:40.922 --> 00:49:44.822  
removals of hedgerow, that's, that's simply not correct, um, because  
the,

805  
00:49:44.862 --> 00:49:48.232  
a, management plan that will need to be approved by the relevant  
planning

806  
00:49:48.282 --> 00:49:51.362  
authority will need to set out the specific

807  
00:49:51.882 --> 00:49:55.842  
sections of hedgerow that are going to be removed, um, and the

808  
00:49:55.942 --> 00:49:59.622  
outline landscape and ecological management plan that was referred

809  
00:49:59.702 --> 00:50:03.162  
to, which, um, uh, in section

810  
00:50:03.282 --> 00:50:06.471  
1.2, um, does state the,

811  
00:50:06.582 --> 00:50:10.382  
um, the ranges of, uh, of gaps within the cable route corridor,

812  
00:50:10.442 --> 00:50:13.822  
and that being between three and 10, uh, meters.

813  
00:50:13.832 --> 00:50:16.602  
So when the applicant, um, comes to

814

00:50:16.802 --> 00:50:20.572

discharge, uh, requirements and submits the,

815

00:50:20.662 --> 00:50:24.582

um, final management plan to the, uh, local planning

816

00:50:24.642 --> 00:50:27.982

authority for approval, um, they will need to

817

00:50:28.022 --> 00:50:31.662

comply with the discharge process which is set out

818

00:50:32.082 --> 00:50:36.032

in the, um, draft DC0, um, as well. And

819

00:50:36.122 --> 00:50:37.622

that is set out

820

00:50:39.802 --> 00:50:43.682

in schedule 16 of the draft DC0. And as

821

00:50:43.742 --> 00:50:46.962

part of that process, um, the applicant has to

822

00:50:47.022 --> 00:50:50.962

identify whether that final plan is likely to give rise

823

00:50:51.002 --> 00:50:54.962

to any materially new or materially different, um, environmental

824

00:50:55.022 --> 00:50:58.842

effects compared with those set out in the environmental statement.

825

00:50:58.922 --> 00:51:02.842

So should the applicant, um, for whatever reason during the

826

00:51:02.882 --> 00:51:06.622

detailed design stage, um, need to identify or need to

827

00:51:06.662 --> 00:51:10.622

remove a greater amount of hedgerow than was originally,

828

00:51:10.702 --> 00:51:14.382

um, anticipated, then the applicant has a positive duty to

829

00:51:14.462 --> 00:51:18.082

flag that, point to the relevant planning authority when they

830

00:51:18.122 --> 00:51:21.882

discharge the requirements, and it would be for the local planning authority to

831

00:51:21.902 --> 00:51:25.402

decide whether it was appropriate to, um,

832

00:51:25.462 --> 00:51:28.292

approve that document at that point in time.

833

00:51:28.362 --> 00:51:32.102

So whilst the power is very broad, it is, uh, very much

834

00:51:32.202 --> 00:51:35.582

limited by way of, um, the discharge of requirement

835

00:51:35.642 --> 00:51:39.371

process, um, and that is very typical for, um, statutory

836

00:51:39.422 --> 00:51:42.622

instruments, um, granting development consent for this type of

837

00:51:42.662 --> 00:51:44.002

project. Thank

838

00:51:44.082 --> 00:51:46.742

you.

839

00:51:48.402 --> 00:51:52.262

Thank you. Are there any other interested parties who wish to comment in the room

840

00:51:52.462 --> 00:51:55.842

on the item, please?

841

00:51:57.702 --> 00:51:57.892  
(no audio)

842

00:51:59.462 --> 00:52:01.262  
Thank you. And is there anybody online?

843

00:52:01.342 --> 00:52:13.782  
(no audio)

844

00:52:16.402 --> 00:52:19.422  
Um, we just, we wanted to know if the applicants also wish to  
respond on the tree

845

00:52:19.502 --> 00:52:22.612  
loss points raised by Mrs. Turner-Hawes at all,

846

00:52:22.642 --> 00:52:23.682  
please?

847

00:52:27.402 --> 00:52:29.982  
Uh, Claire Burch for the applicant. Um, I'll just see if Mr.

848

00:52:30.022 --> 00:52:33.792  
Lowe had anything to add in terms of both the, um,

849

00:52:33.882 --> 00:52:35.882  
protections that are currently in the management

850

00:52:35.982 --> 00:52:37.882  
plans.

851

00:52:38.742 --> 00:52:42.142  
Thank you. Alex Lowe for the applicant.

852

00:52:42.262 --> 00:52:46.222  
Um, in terms of the tree removals, I

853

00:52:46.262 --> 00:52:49.902  
can summarize from the Arboricultural Impact Assessment

854

00:52:50.162 --> 00:52:52.102

APP171.

855

00:52:52.902 --> 00:52:56.702

So at, at the sites, the solar PV sites, it was concluded that

856

00:52:56.802 --> 00:53:00.682

seven individual trees would require removal for the

857

00:53:00.722 --> 00:53:03.902

development as well as the partial removal of two groups of trees.

858

00:53:04.962 --> 00:53:08.642

Um, for the cable route corridor, this is where we have more potential tree

859

00:53:08.722 --> 00:53:11.722

removal with a maximum of 98 individual

860

00:53:11.782 --> 00:53:15.312

trees, 29 groups of trees. Some of those groups are only

861

00:53:15.442 --> 00:53:19.182

partial removals, and the partial removal of up to, to two

862

00:53:19.222 --> 00:53:20.432

woodlands. Um,

863

00:53:21.401 --> 00:53:24.982

so the, the removals are assessed on a

864

00:53:25.002 --> 00:53:28.942

precautionary basis. Um, for example, in the cable

865

00:53:29.002 --> 00:53:32.562

route corridor where there will be open cut sections of

866

00:53:32.602 --> 00:53:36.482

cabling going in, all the trees that bisect the

867

00:53:36.522 --> 00:53:40.122  
cable route corridor have precautionary been shown to be removed.

868  
00:53:40.242 --> 00:53:44.222  
Um, in reality, there will be micro-siting,

869  
00:53:44.322 --> 00:53:45.382  
um, which will

870  
00:53:46.562 --> 00:53:49.542  
reduce the amount of trees that require removal in the cable route

871  
00:53:49.602 --> 00:53:53.462  
corridor. Um, there's a robust package of mitigation

872  
00:53:53.502 --> 00:53:57.462  
measures within the Arboricultural Method Statement, um,

873  
00:53:57.522 --> 00:54:01.382  
including a commitment to avoid tree removal wherever possible,

874  
00:54:01.502 --> 00:54:05.262  
um, with an arboricultural clerk of works in attendance,

875  
00:54:05.362 --> 00:54:09.282  
um, throughout the construction of the cable route corridor, um,  
helping

876  
00:54:09.342 --> 00:54:12.702  
to advise on, um, avoidance of tree

877  
00:54:12.782 --> 00:54:16.662  
removal. Um, tree protection fencing will also be in place along the

878  
00:54:16.722 --> 00:54:20.622  
cable route corridor to protect those trees which are retained.

879  
00:54:20.682 --> 00:54:24.622  
Um, any trees which are unavoidably have to be removed, um, there's

880  
00:54:24.662 --> 00:54:28.142

a robust, um, set of

881

00:54:28.182 --> 00:54:31.872

mitigat- uh, compensatory planting within the landscape and ecological management

882

00:54:31.872 --> 00:54:35.002

plans, including planting of new trees, woodlands, and

883

00:54:35.062 --> 00:54:38.682

hedgerows.

884

00:54:41.142 --> 00:54:44.842

Claire Burch for the applicant. And so just to reiterate, obviously there

885

00:54:44.922 --> 00:54:48.642

are obligations within the management plans to try and

886

00:54:48.682 --> 00:54:51.382

r- avoid, um, tree removal wherever

887

00:54:51.402 --> 00:54:55.372

practicable. Um, it needs to be noted however that

888

00:54:55.372 --> 00:54:59.182

across the cable route corridor, there are a wide range of different constraints

889

00:54:59.202 --> 00:55:03.042

and all of those will need to be balanced, um, at the detailed design

890

00:55:03.162 --> 00:55:07.102

stage. So for example, um, there may be certain ground condition

891

00:55:07.182 --> 00:55:10.822

constraints or there may be other existing utilities

892

00:55:10.962 --> 00:55:14.932

that the applicant has to cross at a particular angle or

893

00:55:14.982 --> 00:55:18.942

a particular depth that could, um, therefore have an impact on whether

894

00:55:18.962 --> 00:55:21.292

or not it is able to micro-site, um-...

895

00:55:21.362 --> 00:55:24.202

um, and avoid those existing trees that Mr.

896

00:55:24.221 --> 00:55:28.022

Lowe mentioned, um, could potentially, uh, be removed.

897

00:55:28.042 --> 00:55:29.212

But it is, um,

898

00:55:30.122 --> 00:55:33.702

as he said, um, a worst case assessment, um, that's been

899

00:55:33.761 --> 00:55:34.721

undertaken. Thank

900

00:55:34.781 --> 00:55:38.542

you.

901

00:55:41.801 --> 00:55:45.772

Thank you. (smacks lips) So if there's no further questions from

902

00:55:45.801 --> 00:55:49.511

the interested parties, I've got some questions of my own, um, starting, uh, with

903

00:55:49.522 --> 00:55:51.321

the applicant, please.

904

00:55:51.392 --> 00:55:55.211

(pauses)

905

00:55:55.741 --> 00:55:59.482

So firstly, um, could I check, would the ancient woodland buffer zones

906

00:55:59.622 --> 00:56:01.522

be within the order limits, please?

907

00:56:07.382 --> 00:56:08.682

Clare Prosherpe for the applicant.

908

00:56:08.761 --> 00:56:10.452

In terms of the, um,

909

00:56:11.301 --> 00:56:15.042

solar PV sites or the Capewick corridor, or both, is the question relating

910

00:56:15.102 --> 00:56:16.182

to?

911

00:56:16.241 --> 00:56:18.882

In terms of both. Yeah.

912

00:56:18.982 --> 00:56:27.352

Uh...

913

00:56:27.352 --> 00:56:29.362

Chris Paul on behalf of the applicant.

914

00:56:29.462 --> 00:56:29.962

Um, so

915

00:56:30.962 --> 00:56:34.321

the, the ancient woodlands, uh, are, uh, I

916

00:56:34.362 --> 00:56:38.202

believe, almost entirely off site, um, outside of the

917

00:56:38.261 --> 00:56:41.741

order limits themselves, uh, and then the buffers have been

918

00:56:41.781 --> 00:56:45.042

applied, uh, where the 30 meter

919

00:56:45.622 --> 00:56:48.082

buffer area intersects with the order

920

00:56:48.122 --> 00:56:53.002

limits.

921

00:56:55.241 --> 00:56:59.281

(pauses)

922

00:56:59.301 --> 00:57:02.862

Thank you. (smacks lips) So looking at the most recent works plan,

923

00:57:02.902 --> 00:57:06.542

um, revision C, together with the draft development consent

924

00:57:06.642 --> 00:57:10.301

order, on the works plan some of the works adjacent

925

00:57:10.342 --> 00:57:14.082

to Sywell Wood ancient woodland which would extend

926

00:57:14.182 --> 00:57:17.882

over its 30 meter buffer, um, include work number

927

00:57:18.182 --> 00:57:21.982

5B which can include tunneling, boring and drilling works, car parking and

928

00:57:22.062 --> 00:57:24.882

drainage. Work number nine which can include

929

00:57:25.102 --> 00:57:28.761

earthworks. Um, some of the works which extend over the Horn Wood

930

00:57:28.942 --> 00:57:32.551

ancient woodland buffer are work number 1D which is electrical and

931

00:57:32.622 --> 00:57:36.382

communications cabling, and work number six which can include

932

00:57:36.482 --> 00:57:39.562

earthworks, drainage systems and construction lay down

933

00:57:39.602 --> 00:57:43.542

areas. The same is true for Threeshire Wood

934

00:57:43.582 --> 00:57:47.301

ancient woodland buffer. I note your response to our first written

935

00:57:47.362 --> 00:57:50.882

questions on the matter and provisions in the outline ecological

936

00:57:50.982 --> 00:57:54.502

protection and mitigation strategy seeking to exclude development

937

00:57:54.602 --> 00:57:58.502

activity from buffer zones. But the order and works

938

00:57:58.622 --> 00:58:02.562

plan currently permit the stated works and others within the

939

00:58:02.761 --> 00:58:06.582

ancient woodland buffer zones, so to me that's somewhat

940

00:58:06.662 --> 00:58:10.422

inconsistent with the ecological strategies provisions in this

941

00:58:10.482 --> 00:58:14.261

respect. Would- could the 30 meter buffer

942

00:58:14.322 --> 00:58:18.281

zones generally be excluded from the works polygons on

943

00:58:18.322 --> 00:58:22.161

the works plans in order to give clarity on the matter?

944

00:58:22.232 --> 00:59:11.582

(pauses)

945

00:59:12.281 --> 00:59:13.702

Uh, Clare Prosherpe for the applicant.

946

00:59:13.741 --> 00:59:17.382

Um, in respect to those specific examples, we will

947

00:59:17.862 --> 00:59:21.721

take the point away to double check the position, but as a general

948

00:59:21.761 --> 00:59:25.372

point, obviously, the works plans are only one

949

00:59:25.402 --> 00:59:29.392

control mechanism, um, for the project and you have to read the works

950

00:59:29.462 --> 00:59:33.332

plans in conjunction with the concept design parameters and the various

951

00:59:33.382 --> 00:59:36.852

management plans. So to the extent a buffer is not shown on

952

00:59:37.442 --> 00:59:41.411

a works plan but is committed to in one of the management plans then

953

00:59:41.442 --> 00:59:45.031

that still provides, um, the commitment.

954

00:59:45.082 --> 00:59:47.452

It's not, it's not the case that the works plans

955

00:59:49.202 --> 00:59:52.982

c- have, do, don't per- the permission of works on a

956

00:59:53.022 --> 00:59:56.402

works plan does have to be read in conjunction with the management plan

957

00:59:56.582 --> 01:00:00.442

so it's, it is quite typical for the works area to be wide

958

01:00:00.502 --> 01:00:02.502

but then subject, um,

959

01:00:03.642 --> 01:00:06.781

to the provisions in the, in the management plans, particularly in relation to

960

01:00:06.841 --> 01:00:10.582

other things like drainage works and, um, and those sorts of things.

961

01:00:10.602 --> 01:00:13.922

But for those particular points, um, that you've mentioned we

962

01:00:13.962 --> 01:00:17.392

will, um, review the works plans to see whether there is a particular

963

01:00:17.422 --> 01:00:21.322

reason which requires their continued, um, inclusion on the

964

01:00:21.382 --> 01:00:25.091

works plans. Um, but we don't have

965

01:00:25.122 --> 01:00:28.402

that exact information available. Thank you.

966

01:00:28.712 --> 01:00:32.232

That's fine thank you, um... Sorry...

967

01:00:32.261 --> 01:00:35.392

Yes if we could note this as an action point please. Thank you.

968

01:00:35.442 --> 01:00:39.042

Um, I do understand in that respect that a suitable work number may need to remain

969

01:00:39.082 --> 01:00:42.902

covering access tracks by Threeshire and Horn Wood to allow for

970

01:00:42.942 --> 01:00:46.792

no dig servicing, um, to be used for operational and decommissioning purposes if

971

01:00:46.882 --> 01:00:50.752

necessary. Um, just speaking of the management plan, um,

972

01:00:50.801 --> 01:00:54.562

it states at page 51 that all excavation within ancient woodland buffer

973

01:00:54.602 --> 01:00:58.382

zones would be avoided. Uh, the section additionally provides

974

01:00:58.402 --> 01:01:02.292

measures for cases where construction activities must occur within

975

01:01:02.322 --> 01:01:06.162

root protection areas and for unavoidable work within root

976

01:01:06.182 --> 01:01:10.162

protection areas. It later states that no work would occur within the root

977

01:01:10.182 --> 01:01:14.152

protection areas of veteran and category A trees but it does not

978

01:01:14.202 --> 01:01:17.822

mention ancient woodland. It further states that a method

979

01:01:17.922 --> 01:01:21.682

statement would be produced if any work is required within ancient woodland buffer

980

01:01:21.741 --> 01:01:25.474

zones of retrain- sorry retained trees...Um,

981

01:01:25.594 --> 01:01:29.434

so part of the function of buffer zones will be to act as root protection

982

01:01:29.494 --> 01:01:33.394

areas for the ancient woodland, which is defined as an irreplaceable ha-

983

01:01:33.414 --> 01:01:37.014

habitat. Together, all of these measures within the outline

984

01:01:37.074 --> 01:01:40.534

construction environmental management plan introduce

985

01:01:40.614 --> 01:01:44.434

uncertainty regarding whether development would or would not occur

986

01:01:44.474 --> 01:01:48.234

within the buffer zones. Do the documents need to be clarified in this

987

01:01:48.274 --> 01:01:51.194

respect?

988

01:01:51.204 --> 01:02:23.594

(pauses)

989

01:02:23.634 --> 01:02:25.154

Uh, Claire Project for the applicant.

990

01:02:25.214 --> 01:02:25.394

Um,

991

01:02:26.334 --> 01:02:29.374

we recognize that obviously mitigation measures relating to ancient woodland

992

01:02:29.634 --> 01:02:33.344

are, are found across the suite of the different management plans as you've me-

993

01:02:33.344 --> 01:02:35.674

ment- as you've sort of highlighted there.

994

01:02:35.754 --> 01:02:39.534

Um, I wonder if it might be helpful if the applicant, um, sort of prepares

995

01:02:39.574 --> 01:02:43.094

a, a signposting document to lift out

996

01:02:43.154 --> 01:02:47.094

where the various mitigation measures are for ancient

997

01:02:47.234 --> 01:02:50.454

woodland. And as part of that exercise, in the event that we

998

01:02:50.514 --> 01:02:54.494

do identify an inconsistency between the suite of management

999

01:02:54.514 --> 01:02:58.444

plans then we can obviously rectify that in a, an updated, uh,

1000

01:02:58.614 --> 01:03:02.544

version of that management plan. As far as we're aware that it is a

1001

01:03:02.574 --> 01:03:06.274

consistent approach across the suite of documents, but if we lift those out then it

1002

01:03:06.314 --> 01:03:09.074

might be easier to, um, to see how they fit

1003

01:03:09.114 --> 01:03:10.494

together.

1004

01:03:11.774 --> 01:03:12.804

Yes, that would be helpful thank you.

1005

01:03:12.814 --> 01:03:16.714

If we can note that as a further action point please.

1006

01:03:18.274 --> 01:03:21.974

(pauses) So our fourth question is, um, please explain how the no-dig

1007

01:03:22.074 --> 01:03:25.614

surfacing propo- proposed within some buffer zones, um,

1008

01:03:25.834 --> 01:03:27.674

namely Horn and Three Shire Woods

1009

01:03:28.514 --> 01:03:31.454

would function to protect the ancient woodland from harm.

1010

01:03:31.534 --> 01:03:35.014

Um, how would it avoid, for instance, root damage or soil

1011

01:03:35.094 --> 01:03:36.934

compaction within the root protection area

1012

01:03:36.994 --> 01:03:39.744

please? (pauses)

1013

01:03:41.014 --> 01:03:43.274

Uh, Claire Project for the applicant. Um, Mr.

1014

01:03:43.294 --> 01:03:45.494

Low, I think, can respond to that question.

1015

01:03:45.514 --> 01:03:47.554

Thank you.

1016

01:03:47.594 --> 01:03:51.174

Alex Low for the applicant. So the no-dig surfacing,

1017

01:03:51.294 --> 01:03:55.174

um, within Three Shires Wood, uh, and Horn

1018

01:03:55.194 --> 01:03:58.984

Wood would work in that the surface...

1019

01:03:59.014 --> 01:04:02.474

The new improved track would be built on top of the existing ground

1020

01:04:02.514 --> 01:04:06.434

level, so no excavation would be required within the

1021

01:04:06.454 --> 01:04:10.134

buffer zone of those two woodlands in order to improve the

1022

01:04:10.174 --> 01:04:13.734

track. All of the new material will be on top of the

1023

01:04:13.794 --> 01:04:16.834

existing ground level so root impacts would be avoided

1024

01:04:16.874 --> 01:04:19.974

entirely.

1025

01:04:25.194 --> 01:04:26.404

(pauses)

1026

01:04:26.974 --> 01:04:30.134

Thank you, um, that's helpful. Um, could you further

1027

01:04:30.194 --> 01:04:34.154

clarify, for instance, whether heavy machinery

1028

01:04:34.164 --> 01:04:37.214

will be required to construct the no-dig surfacing?

1029

01:04:37.294 --> 01:04:41.054

Um, addressing particularly whether compaction of

1030

01:04:41.074 --> 01:04:44.614

roots may occur? Thank you. Or soil.

1031

01:04:46.074 --> 01:04:49.374

Generally no-dig surfacing is installed

1032

01:04:49.814 --> 01:04:53.394

piecemeal. So you kind of start from one end of the track,

1033

01:04:54.094 --> 01:04:57.694

and then you lay the next surface down and any machinery that's required to

1034

01:04:57.734 --> 01:04:59.614

install that track works off of

1035

01:05:00.634 --> 01:05:03.634  
the preexisting laid track that you've piecemeal

1036  
01:05:03.674 --> 01:05:07.464  
added, added on. So there shouldn't be a need for any

1037  
01:05:07.534 --> 01:05:09.674  
heavy machinery to

1038  
01:05:10.754 --> 01:05:13.854  
go across the track when it's not yet been

1039  
01:05:13.894 --> 01:05:19.234  
improved.

1040  
01:05:21.354 --> 01:05:24.714  
(pauses) I should also note in, in

1041  
01:05:25.094 --> 01:05:29.014  
both cases of both woodlands, that there are preexisting

1042  
01:05:29.054 --> 01:05:30.654  
farm tracks, um,

1043  
01:05:31.474 --> 01:05:35.214  
in those locations which are used by farm machinery.

1044  
01:05:35.254 --> 01:05:37.614  
So there's a preexisting level of compaction that's already

1045  
01:05:37.694 --> 01:05:42.113  
there.

1046  
01:05:45.094 --> 01:05:49.314  
(pauses)

1047  
01:05:50.474 --> 01:05:54.334  
Thank you. (breaths) So development can

1048  
01:05:54.414 --> 01:05:58.334  
cause direct and indirect harm to ancient woodland and the wildlife

1049

01:05:58.374 --> 01:06:02.294

it supports. For example, by increasing levels of air, water, soil,

1050

01:06:02.314 --> 01:06:05.784

and light pollution, noise and vibration, and increasing

1051

01:06:05.784 --> 01:06:09.234

disturbance to wildlife such as noise from additional people and

1052

01:06:09.274 --> 01:06:13.154

vehicles. Has consideration been given to the potential for

1053

01:06:13.194 --> 01:06:16.604

such effects on the ancient woodland given for instance that the largest

1054

01:06:16.714 --> 01:06:20.694

proposed construction compound number one would be directly adjacent to the

1055

01:06:20.714 --> 01:06:23.474

Sywell Wood ancient woodland?

1056

01:06:23.544 --> 01:06:29.294

(pauses)

1057

01:06:33.074 --> 01:06:36.974

Chris Paul for the applicant. Um, yeah, I would just highlight

1058

01:06:36.994 --> 01:06:40.624

that, um, the chapter nine ecology and

1059

01:06:40.714 --> 01:06:44.574

biodiversity, um, chapter nine of the environmental statement

1060

01:06:45.334 --> 01:06:47.074

uh, revision A which is

1061

01:06:47.194 --> 01:06:50.174

REP1033,

1062

01:06:51.234 --> 01:06:55.014

um, does include an assessment of, uh, disturbance

1063

01:06:55.454 --> 01:06:58.314

through, um, through noise and

1064

01:06:58.394 --> 01:07:02.334

vibrations, uh, where this is considered relevant and, and likely to

1065

01:07:02.374 --> 01:07:05.934

arise through construction, um, or, or the operational

1066

01:07:06.054 --> 01:07:09.654

or, or, uh, decommissioning stages on each sort of relevant

1067

01:07:09.734 --> 01:07:13.584

ecological receptor. And that includes, uh, the

1068

01:07:13.634 --> 01:07:15.314

woodland and, and the species using it.

1069

01:07:16.194 --> 01:07:16.374

Thank

1070

01:07:16.434 --> 01:07:20.754

you.

1071

01:07:23.294 --> 01:07:24.434

(pauses)

1072

01:07:24.534 --> 01:07:28.334

So the potential Green Hill CBESS, um, would lie close to the ancient

1073

01:07:28.374 --> 01:07:32.034

woodland of Sywell Wood, how would the woodland be protected from

1074

01:07:32.074 --> 01:07:35.212

pollution and fire risk in the event of a fire? (pauses) ... please.

1075

01:07:35.212 --> 01:07:43.382

(pauses for response)

1076

01:07:44.902 --> 01:07:46.462

Uh, Claire Project for the applicant.

1077

01:07:46.502 --> 01:07:50.102

If it's a question in relation to sort of BEZ fire safety, we do

1078

01:07:50.142 --> 01:07:54.102

have Mr. Paul Gregory who can talk to BEZ

1079

01:07:54.182 --> 01:07:57.402

fire safety measures in terms of the

1080

01:07:57.442 --> 01:07:59.012

mitigation, um,

1081

01:08:00.242 --> 01:08:02.512

put in place to ensure fire safety.

1082

01:08:02.542 --> 01:08:06.192

So it's, it's just trying to understand whether...

1083

01:08:06.192 --> 01:08:09.391

It- it's the question whether there is any specific mitigation in

1084

01:08:09.442 --> 01:08:13.222

the fire, uh, battery Fire Safety Management Plan in

1085

01:08:13.242 --> 01:08:16.102

relation to ancient woodland or is it a question relating to

1086

01:08:17.261 --> 01:08:20.422

BEZ safety generally?

1087

01:08:22.342 --> 01:08:24.071

It's, it's more the former and what...

1088

01:08:24.102 --> 01:08:27.382

But given that ancient woodland's an irreplaceable habitats is whether there's any

1089

01:08:27.462 --> 01:08:31.221

specific attention and given the proximity of the potential

1090

01:08:31.261 --> 01:08:34.962

BEZ to the Sywell Wood, please. Has any spec-

1091

01:08:35.062 --> 01:08:37.102

special attention been given to the ancient

1092

01:08:37.122 --> 01:08:39.742

woodland?

1093

01:08:39.752 --> 01:08:43.852

(pauses for response)

1094

01:08:56.761 --> 01:08:58.082

Uh, Claire Project for the applicant.

1095

01:08:58.202 --> 01:08:59.142

I think we will

1096

01:09:00.582 --> 01:09:03.662

take the point away. We might be able to come back in, in the break on that one in

1097

01:09:03.702 --> 01:09:07.622

terms of whether the, um, mm, sort of the siting of the

1098

01:09:07.662 --> 01:09:11.242

BEZ within that, um, Green Hill C

1099

01:09:11.402 --> 01:09:14.242

has taken... It has been specifically determined

1100

01:09:15.761 --> 01:09:19.562

and given a specific distance away from the, um, ancient

1101

01:09:19.622 --> 01:09:23.551

woodland. In that respect we don't, can't initially find (laughs)

1102

01:09:23.562 --> 01:09:24.922

the answer now, but we will

1103

01:09:25.742 --> 01:09:28.801

perhaps come back to you in the break and if we're not able to find it in the break

1104

01:09:28.862 --> 01:09:32.582

then we, um, will take it away as a, as a written action.

1105

01:09:32.642 --> 01:09:36.062

Um, obviously the fire safety, uh, measures that are put in

1106

01:09:36.142 --> 01:09:39.942

place are, um, considered, um, to be appropriate for all

1107

01:09:39.982 --> 01:09:43.642

different kinds of receptors. So that's both, uh, human

1108

01:09:43.662 --> 01:09:47.582

receptors and ecological receptors.

1109

01:09:48.462 --> 01:09:52.382

(pauses for response)

1110

01:09:55.442 --> 01:09:59.062

Thank you. I understand that trenchless

1111

01:09:59.102 --> 01:10:03.022

techniques such as horizontal directional drilling will be used where micro

1112

01:10:03.112 --> 01:10:06.822

siting could not be achieved around veteran and cattery- category A

1113

01:10:06.882 --> 01:10:10.712

trees and for some hedgerow. Could you outline how such trenchless

1114

01:10:10.822 --> 01:10:13.762

techniques would avoid impacts on trees and hedgerow

1115

01:10:13.782 --> 01:10:16.242

please?

1116

01:10:16.262 --> 01:10:20.851

(pauses for response)

1117

01:10:22.002 --> 01:10:25.442

Uh, Claire Project for the applicant. Um, I'll see if Mr.

1118

01:10:25.482 --> 01:10:28.962

Low wants to comment on that. It would, it would be in relation to the depth

1119

01:10:29.002 --> 01:10:32.722

beneath, um, the, those features but

1120

01:10:32.762 --> 01:10:36.351

Mr. Low might be able to add some more information as to how that's determined, um,

1121

01:10:36.362 --> 01:10:39.532

depending on the, the hedgerow or the particular tree specie.

1122

01:10:39.562 --> 01:10:41.842

Thank you.

1123

01:10:41.962 --> 01:10:45.682

Alex Low for the applicant. Yes, the horizontal

1124

01:10:45.762 --> 01:10:49.282

directional drilling, um, will be controlled in the

1125

01:10:49.322 --> 01:10:51.562

Arboricultural Method Statement, uh,

1126

01:10:51.762 --> 01:10:55.112

APP171. Um,

1127

01:10:55.822 --> 01:10:59.432

and impacts to trees will be avoided by siting all entry and

1128

01:10:59.622 --> 01:11:03.262

exit points of the drill more than 15 meters

1129

01:11:03.322 --> 01:11:06.062

away from any arboricultural features.

1130

01:11:06.162 --> 01:11:09.802

Um, 15 meters is the maximum root protection area

1131

01:11:10.202 --> 01:11:13.922

for a non-veteran tree. Um, in addition, the

1132

01:11:13.962 --> 01:11:17.882

Arboricultural Method Statement has a provision for ensuring that the

1133

01:11:17.902 --> 01:11:21.842

horizontal directional drill, um, is deeper than one

1134

01:11:21.902 --> 01:11:25.622

meter when it's passing underneath any trees to avoid

1135

01:11:25.682 --> 01:11:29.462

roots. Typically, roots are in the top 600 millimeters

1136

01:11:29.722 --> 01:11:33.562

of soil so that should avoid any, um, impacts to

1137

01:11:33.602 --> 01:11:35.902

roots of trees that are being passed

1138

01:11:35.962 --> 01:11:41.661

underneath.

1139

01:11:41.732 --> 01:11:46.972

(pauses for response)

1140

01:11:47.002 --> 01:11:47.762

Thank you.

1141

01:11:50.182 --> 01:11:53.381

Um, so important hedgerows are defined in the Hedgerows Regulations

1142

01:11:53.462 --> 01:11:57.292

1997 as those which have existed for more than 30 years and

1143

01:11:57.322 --> 01:12:00.562

which satisfy at least one of the criteria in part two of schedule

1144

01:12:00.662 --> 01:12:04.412

one. Have important hedgerows within the order limits

1145

01:12:04.742 --> 01:12:06.822

been assessed according to this definition

1146

01:12:06.862 --> 01:12:08.942

please?

1147

01:12:11.322 --> 01:12:15.242

Chris Pool for the applicant. Yeah, so, um, the Hedgerow

1148

01:12:15.282 --> 01:12:19.022

Regulations and determination of important hedgerows

1149

01:12:19.142 --> 01:12:22.602

have, um, essentially two sections to the definition.

1150

01:12:22.642 --> 01:12:26.622

One is on cultural heritage, uh, grounds, and the other is

1151

01:12:26.682 --> 01:12:30.562

on ecological grounds. Um, with regard to the ecological

1152

01:12:30.642 --> 01:12:34.632

side of things, um, every hedgerow within the order limits, uh,

1153

01:12:34.762 --> 01:12:38.742

so that includes all of the accessible areas of the cable route corridor as well as

1154  
01:12:38.822 --> 01:12:42.502  
the sites themselves, um, have had a specific, uh, important

1155  
01:12:42.562 --> 01:12:46.302  
hedgerows survey, um, completed on them to

1156  
01:12:46.342 --> 01:12:49.762  
determine whether they meet the criteria for

1157  
01:12:49.802 --> 01:12:50.602  
designation.

1158  
01:12:52.262 --> 01:12:56.202  
Um, and I believe that the importance status,

1159  
01:12:56.302 --> 01:13:00.072  
um, is, is provided for each of the hedgerows, um,

1160  
01:13:00.202 --> 01:13:04.152  
on, on one of the submitted plans. I think we can just

1161  
01:13:04.182 --> 01:13:07.541  
get that reference up.

1162  
01:13:07.612 --> 01:13:14.022  
(pauses for response)

1163  
01:13:14.182 --> 01:13:18.042  
So it's, um, environmental statement figure 3.2,

1164  
01:13:18.062 --> 01:13:20.762  
important hedgerows.

1165  
01:13:21.922 --> 01:13:23.522  
APP192

1166  
01:13:25.202 --> 01:13:25.502  
and

1167  
01:13:25.582 --> 01:13:29.662

also,

1168

01:13:30.562 --> 01:13:32.162

uh, the Hedgerow and Tree

1169

01:13:33.722 --> 01:13:36.642

Protection Order Plan Revision A,

1170

01:13:37.542 --> 01:13:40.382

CR1012. Thank you.

1171

01:13:45.772 --> 01:13:46.382

Thank you. Um,

1172

01:13:47.932 --> 01:13:51.712

is the, are the actual assessments of important hedgerow, are they

1173

01:13:51.932 --> 01:13:54.332

set out and explained anywhere in the evidence,

1174

01:13:54.412 --> 01:13:56.272

please?

1175

01:13:58.752 --> 01:14:02.612

Chris Pool for the applicant. Uh, I don't believe that that survey data,

1176

01:14:02.692 --> 01:14:05.712

uh, that in terms of the, the raw assessment has been

1177

01:14:05.752 --> 01:14:09.672

submitted, um, purely on the basis of, of how many hedgerows,

1178

01:14:09.792 --> 01:14:12.912

uh, there are within the old limits.

1179

01:14:13.012 --> 01:14:16.272

Um, but that data could be provided if it would be helpful.

1180

01:14:16.312 --> 01:14:18.212

Thank you.

1181

01:14:19.812 --> 01:14:23.492

I think if any future reviews of a suitable document, um, a

1182

01:14:23.512 --> 01:14:27.392

summary of, um, how the assessment was made and by whom and

1183

01:14:27.452 --> 01:14:29.732

when, et cetera, um, that will be helpful.

1184

01:14:29.752 --> 01:14:31.672

Thank you.

1185

01:14:33.592 --> 01:14:37.052

Um, that's an action point, please.

1186

01:14:38.852 --> 01:14:58.562

(silence)

1187

01:14:58.562 --> 01:15:05.412

Okay.

1188

01:15:07.292 --> 01:15:10.962

Thank you. Um, so I now have a question, please, for Wellingborough Walks Action

1189

01:15:11.032 --> 01:15:12.362

Group, please. Um,

1190

01:15:13.472 --> 01:15:17.152

requirement nine of the draft development consent order would secure a

1191

01:15:17.192 --> 01:15:20.732

minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain in hedgerow

1192

01:15:20.852 --> 01:15:24.652

units during the development's operational phase.

1193

01:15:24.672 --> 01:15:28.032

The biodiversity net gain assessment revision A quantifies

1194

01:15:28.052 --> 01:15:31.812

biodiversity loss and gain. Uh, for instance, it takes the potential

1195

01:15:31.852 --> 01:15:35.572

hedgerow loss into account, as well as retention, enhancement, and

1196

01:15:35.712 --> 01:15:39.692

creation. Do you wish to comment on any relevance of the

1197

01:15:39.732 --> 01:15:43.402

biodiversity net gain assessments to the group's concerns regarding

1198

01:15:43.452 --> 01:15:45.992

hedgerow and trees, please?

1199

01:16:01.752 --> 01:16:03.972

Um, Marion Turner-Hawes, Wellingborough Walks Action Group.

1200

01:16:04.012 --> 01:16:06.112

Thank you very much for the question.

1201

01:16:06.192 --> 01:16:10.132

Um, at this stage, I am not personally able to comment, but

1202

01:16:10.312 --> 01:16:14.052

'cause we have found it challenging (laughs) to get across all this

1203

01:16:14.092 --> 01:16:17.772

information. Um, but clearly there are, um,

1204

01:16:19.272 --> 01:16:22.852

likely impacts. It, it, again, it, it is, it depends on

1205

01:16:23.652 --> 01:16:26.972

the reality of hedgerow loss that could exist if,

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01:16:27.012 --> 01:16:30.112

if... I appreciate comments that the applicant has made about the development

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01:16:30.172 --> 01:16:31.852  
consent order and the broad nature

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01:16:32.672 --> 01:16:36.572  
of the requests that they standard, you know, commonly,

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01:16:36.752 --> 01:16:40.232  
uh, seek as part of DCO agreements.

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01:16:40.272 --> 01:16:43.972  
But, you know, clearly, (laughs)

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01:16:44.432 --> 01:16:48.132  
from our point of view, it's still a, a big guess about how much of  
the, those

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01:16:48.172 --> 01:16:52.042  
impacts will actually occur, whether it's to do with the hedgerows  
or the

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01:16:52.092 --> 01:16:56.012  
trees. And given the broad nature of the request that the applicant

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01:16:56.032 --> 01:16:59.382  
has made in terms of hedgerow loss, uh, for the reasons that...

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01:16:59.392 --> 01:17:02.882  
And I understand the reasons they're, they're doing that, it could  
be extensive

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01:17:02.932 --> 01:17:06.632  
that biodiversity impacts could be way more than are presently, uh,

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01:17:06.752 --> 01:17:10.612  
assessed. And I guess they're presently assessed based on the  
assumption

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01:17:11.012 --> 01:17:14.532  
that the full breadth of that hedgerow loss would be nowhere near

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01:17:15.132 --> 01:17:18.912

what, um, the applicant ultimately, uh, needs to

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01:17:18.972 --> 01:17:22.132

do. But, so therefore, it's hard to answer the

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01:17:22.172 --> 01:17:26.062

question. I think that's something that as a group we'd like to take away and

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01:17:26.112 --> 01:17:29.732

think about, but it's a bit like, how do you assess a moving

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01:17:29.792 --> 01:17:32.312

target? You know, the,

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01:17:33.392 --> 01:17:36.172

whether, whether it's because of the hedgerow loss or whether in relation to the

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01:17:36.232 --> 01:17:40.042

trees, there's so many if, buts, and maybes about this.

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01:17:40.092 --> 01:17:43.892

And I think one of the... Just going back to your question though, the whole

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01:17:43.952 --> 01:17:47.512

concern about the hedgerow situation will have a significant

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01:17:47.592 --> 01:17:51.222

impact on the impact of the biodiversity in the area and

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01:17:51.252 --> 01:17:53.352

potentially on the biodiversity net gain.

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01:17:53.372 --> 01:17:57.172

And that's something that we are concerned about but we haven't been able to spend

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01:17:57.212 --> 01:18:01.072

much time assessing. It doesn't mean to say that it won't happen,

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01:18:01.092 --> 01:18:05.072

though. Um, equally, it might not be, um,

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01:18:05.392 --> 01:18:08.812

the, the assertions by the applicant may well be valid.

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01:18:08.822 --> 01:18:12.052

It's hard for us to say. But given the potentials

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01:18:12.112 --> 01:18:15.332

here, um, there are real concerns.

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01:18:15.352 --> 01:18:18.052

I hope that response helps. Thank you.

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01:18:20.012 --> 01:18:22.692

Thank you.

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01:18:24.512 --> 01:18:26.182

So, a final question, please. Um,

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01:18:27.192 --> 01:18:30.322

I was going to address this to Natural England, um, if they attend, but I don't

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01:18:30.332 --> 01:18:33.542

believe there's anyone in attendance today from Natural England, but, um, perhaps

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01:18:33.592 --> 01:18:37.362

the applicant can help. Um, reference is made to

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01:18:37.452 --> 01:18:41.332

post-construction identification of increased pollution levels at

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01:18:41.372 --> 01:18:44.832

the Gwent Levels SSSI, uh, following the

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01:18:44.872 --> 01:18:48.852

Llanwern solar development. Is the applicant satisfied

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01:18:48.862 --> 01:18:52.312

that adequate pollution controls and monitoring would be in place during

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01:18:52.352 --> 01:18:55.252

construction, please?

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01:18:55.262 --> 01:18:56.552

(silence)

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01:19:05.352 --> 01:19:09.232

Oh, yes. Sorry, I should mention that's a Stop Greenhill, um, representation,

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01:19:09.292 --> 01:19:13.152

and the reference is REP1193, uh, in case

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01:19:13.192 --> 01:19:16.012

that's needed.

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01:19:18.752 --> 01:19:22.432

There is also REP1217, uh, which is the

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01:19:22.532 --> 01:19:26.172

Llanwern evidence supporting it.

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01:19:27.732 --> 01:19:31.612

Chris Pool for the applicant. Yeah, um, I would just, uh,

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01:19:31.632 --> 01:19:34.812

iterate that, um, impacts from

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01:19:34.952 --> 01:19:38.932

pollution, um, during construction have been, have been fully assessed

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01:19:39.592 --> 01:19:42.952

within chapter nine, uh, of the environmental statement, ecology and

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01:19:43.012 --> 01:19:45.332

biodiversity, um, which is

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01:19:45.612 --> 01:19:49.572  
REP1033, um, with relevant

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01:19:49.582 --> 01:19:53.282  
mitigation measures as required detailed within

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01:19:53.332 --> 01:19:56.822  
the outline ecological protection and mitigation

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01:19:56.912 --> 01:19:59.512  
strategy, um, which is

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01:19:59.612 --> 01:20:02.932  
REP1139 and 140,

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01:20:04.032 --> 01:20:07.552  
and also the outline construction and environmental management

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01:20:07.632 --> 01:20:09.932  
plan,

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01:20:10.072 --> 01:20:14.002  
REP1131, and they're considered, uh,

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01:20:14.072 --> 01:20:17.132  
appropriate and proportionate for this scheme.

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01:20:17.212 --> 01:20:18.632  
Thank you.

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01:20:20.752 --> 01:20:21.652  
Thank you very much.

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01:20:23.872 --> 01:20:27.042  
So does anyone else wish to comment on, um, the ecology and

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01:20:27.092 --> 01:20:28.692  
biodiversity issue, please?

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01:20:28.762 --> 01:20:38.532  
(silence)

1272  
01:20:39.132 --> 01:20:40.252  
Yeah, sure.

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01:20:41.492 --> 01:20:45.432  
Thank you, everybody. So that concludes, uh, the first agenda item  
on eco- ecology

1274  
01:20:45.472 --> 01:20:49.032  
and biodiversity. We will now take a 15-minute break.

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01:20:49.092 --> 01:20:52.892  
Uh, so the time now is 20 past 11:00, and we will resume

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01:20:52.952 --> 01:20:56.092  
at 11:35. See everyone back here at

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01:20:56.192 --> 01:20:59.912  
11:35, and the hearing is adjourned.