



Event Transcript

Project:	Green Hill Solar Farm
Event:	Open Floor Hearing 1 (OFH1)
Date:	10 December 2025

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

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

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1

00:00:04.200 --> 00:00:07.710

Well, good evening. Um, so it is now 6:00

2

00:00:07.720 --> 00:00:11.160

p.m. and time for this hearing to begin.

3

00:00:11.240 --> 00:00:14.900

Um, I'd like to welcome you all to this open floor hearing

4

00:00:15.100 --> 00:00:18.780

for the Green Hill Solar Farm project.

5

00:00:18.880 --> 00:00:22.800

Um, we're a little bit closer to the- the audience, but can I just confirm

6

00:00:22.820 --> 00:00:25.900

that everybody in the room can hear me clearly? Great.

7

00:00:25.920 --> 00:00:27.330

Thank you. Uh,

8

00:00:28.320 --> 00:00:32.250

um, and could I just check that, uh, people online, um,

9

00:00:32.439 --> 00:00:36.400

can hear us okay? Um, if anybody could put a thumbs up or

10

00:00:36.460 --> 00:00:36.840

a-

11

00:00:36.920 --> 00:00:37.810

Yeah, that's perfect. Thank you.

12

00:00:37.810 --> 00:00:41.400

... some... Great, thank you very much.

13

00:00:41.480 --> 00:00:45.140

Um, and could I just also confirm with the case manager that the

live streaming and

14

00:00:45.200 --> 00:00:47.340

recording of this event has commenced?

15

00:00:47.380 --> 00:00:50.460

Thank you. Um, so my name's Mark

16

00:00:50.500 --> 00:00:54.200

Harrison. I am a planning inspector and a chartered town

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00:00:54.260 --> 00:00:58.100

planner. I've been appointed by the secretary of state to be

18

00:00:58.140 --> 00:01:00.880

the lead member of the panel to examine this

19

00:01:00.960 --> 00:01:04.620

application. Um, and I'll now ask the other panel

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00:01:04.700 --> 00:01:07.940

members to introduce themselves.

21

00:01:07.980 --> 00:01:10.060

Thank you. Good evening. My name is Catherine Beeby.

22

00:01:10.120 --> 00:01:13.200

I'm a town planner and an ex- examining inspector.

23

00:01:13.240 --> 00:01:15.540

I've been appointed as a panel member of the examining

24

00:01:15.600 --> 00:01:18.100

authority.

25

00:01:18.240 --> 00:01:19.960

Good evening. My name's Rebecca Norman.

26

00:01:20.000 --> 00:01:22.850

I'm a chartered town planner and examining inspector.

27

00:01:22.920 --> 00:01:25.300

I've been appointed as a panel member of the examining

28

00:01:25.360 --> 00:01:29.000

authority. So together, we constitute the examining

29

00:01:29.060 --> 00:01:31.360

authority for this ex- application.

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00:01:31.400 --> 00:01:34.740

Our role is to examine the application and report to the Secretary of State for

31

00:01:34.820 --> 00:01:38.740

Energy Security and Net Zero with a recommendation as to whether or not

32

00:01:38.760 --> 00:01:40.900

the development consent order should be made.

33

00:01:40.910 --> 00:01:44.660

All right, I'd also like to introduce members of the planning inspectorate's

34

00:01:44.760 --> 00:01:48.540

case team who are supporting us today. You may have already spoken with them.

35

00:01:48.580 --> 00:01:52.330

We have in the room Ryan Sedgman, who is case manager for this project, and

36

00:01:52.400 --> 00:01:56.070

Jessica Dunlop, who's providing case support, and they're towards the back of the

37

00:01:56.140 --> 00:02:00.100

room. Um, another case officer, Sa- Sam Stephens, is providing

38

00:02:00.140 --> 00:02:02.830

support for those of you joining us online.

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00:02:02.840 --> 00:02:06.700

In addition, we have technicians from the audiovisual company Event Video

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00:02:06.860 --> 00:02:10.850

& TM Services in attendance, and that's solely for the purpose of managing

41

00:02:10.860 --> 00:02:14.140

the recording and live streaming for this hearing.

42

00:02:14.150 --> 00:02:17.980

So I'll move on to deal with a few housekeeping matters, uh, for those attending in

43

00:02:18.080 --> 00:02:21.190

person. Can everyone please set devices and phones to

44

00:02:21.220 --> 00:02:25.150

silent? Um, you've probably already seen the toilets on your way into the

45

00:02:25.200 --> 00:02:28.620

room. They're located immediately outside the doors to the room on the right-hand

46

00:02:28.700 --> 00:02:32.060

side, and there is no planned fire alarm test today.

47

00:02:32.100 --> 00:02:35.520

So if the fire alarm does sound, please leave the building via the marked fire

48

00:02:35.580 --> 00:02:39.500

exits at the side and rear of the room and go to the assembly point, which is

49

00:02:39.560 --> 00:02:43.350

the hotel car park. I'll now move on to briefly

50

00:02:43.420 --> 00:02:47.340

talk about the agenda and the le- logistics for this hearing.

51

00:02:47.420 --> 00:02:50.910

So (clears throat) we published a short agenda for this hearing on the 1st of

52

00:02:50.920 --> 00:02:53.840

December with an examination library reference of

53

00:02:53.940 --> 00:02:57.840

EV8001. I don't know whether there's anyone from the applicant's team

54

00:02:57.880 --> 00:03:00.160

that could probably put the agenda up on the screen

55

00:03:00.200 --> 00:03:04.180

briefly? That's...

56

00:03:04.240 --> 00:03:08.140

Thank you. Thanks. Um, the purpose of this hearing is

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00:03:08.180 --> 00:03:12.040

to hear the representations of interested parties who've registered to make oral-

58

00:03:12.100 --> 00:03:16.060

oral submissions elaborating on their written representation to date.

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00:03:16.080 --> 00:03:19.440

The order in which you will be invited to speak will follow the list provided to us

60

00:03:19.480 --> 00:03:20.580

by the case team.

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00:03:21.500 --> 00:03:25.140

Today's hearing is being undertaken in a hybrid way, meaning some of you are

62

00:03:25.180 --> 00:03:28.980

present with us at the venue and some are join- joining us

63
00:03:29.020 --> 00:03:32.840
virtually on Microsoft Teams. We will make sure that however you've
decided to

64
00:03:32.900 --> 00:03:35.540
attend today, you will be given a fair opportunity to

65
00:03:35.640 --> 00:03:39.480
participate. A recording of today's hearing will be

66
00:03:39.540 --> 00:03:42.800
made available on the Green Hill project section of the National
Infrastructure

67
00:03:42.880 --> 00:03:46.580
Planning website as soon as possible after the hearing is finished.

68
00:03:46.590 --> 00:03:49.860
And with this in mind, please ensure that you speak clearly into a
microphone,

69
00:03:49.920 --> 00:03:52.500
stating your name and who you are representing.

70
00:03:52.510 --> 00:03:55.859
It's worth noting that the microphone on the desk is permanently on,
so there's no

71
00:03:55.920 --> 00:03:59.790
need to press any buttons or anything when you come up to speak.

72
00:03:59.840 --> 00:04:03.230
Um, there's a link to the planning inspectorate's privacy notice
provided in the

73
00:04:03.300 --> 00:04:06.740
notification for this hearing. We assume that everyone here today
has

74
00:04:06.760 --> 00:04:10.540
familiarized themselves with the document which establishes how the

personal data

75

00:04:10.580 --> 00:04:14.140

of our customers is handled in accordance with the principles set out in data

76

00:04:14.160 --> 00:04:18.120

protection laws. Please speak to the case manager if you have any questions

77

00:04:18.180 --> 00:04:21.920

about this. So moving on, I'll just briefly explain the

78

00:04:21.959 --> 00:04:24.760

purpose of this open floor hearing.

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00:04:24.840 --> 00:04:28.440

Open floor hearings are your opportunity to raise anything directly to the

80

00:04:28.460 --> 00:04:32.140

examining authority that is important and relevant and that you think we should

81

00:04:32.180 --> 00:04:35.760

know about and consider. They are not about a particular topic or

82

00:04:35.800 --> 00:04:39.219

location, and the topic of your representations about the

83

00:04:39.260 --> 00:04:42.200

proposals is therefore up to yourself.

84

00:04:42.210 --> 00:04:45.500

We're familiar with your representations, so when speaking, you don't need to

85

00:04:45.540 --> 00:04:49.420

repeat these at length. What we're seeking today is for you to provide further

86

00:04:49.460 --> 00:04:52.790

detail or evidence to help us understand these issues.

87

00:04:52.820 --> 00:04:56.160

To make the best use of time, and while not wishing to limit

88

00:04:56.180 --> 00:05:00.060

contributions, it would be of great assistance if points were not repeated, and

89

00:05:00.100 --> 00:05:03.420

you can rest assured that we will understand the points made the first time.

90

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

We do not intend on setting a strict time limit on people speaking, but as stated

91

00:05:08.580 --> 00:05:11.910

in the published agenda, would ask that your submissions are concise and to the

92

00:05:12.000 --> 00:05:15.080

point and to be concluded within about 10 minutes.

93

00:05:15.120 --> 00:05:18.540

If many unregistered people wish to speak, then we may have to introduce a time

94

00:05:18.580 --> 00:05:18.960

limit.

95

00:05:19.960 --> 00:05:22.940

Once you've spoken, the panel may wish to ask you some questions.

96

00:05:22.950 --> 00:05:26.400

And finally, the applicant will be given an opportunity to respond to any matters

97

00:05:26.460 --> 00:05:30.060

raised once all speakers have been heard, either orally or in

98

00:05:30.100 --> 00:05:33.460

writing by deadline three, which is the 17th of December.

99

00:05:34.480 --> 00:05:37.860

Uh, for those attending virtually, uh, can I please request that to minimize

100

00:05:37.900 --> 00:05:40.980

background noise, you make sure that you stay muted and with your camera turned

101

00:05:41.040 --> 00:05:44.660

off? I'd also ask that when it's your turn to speak, please turn your camera

102

00:05:44.720 --> 00:05:48.640

on. And can I also remind people that the chat function on Microsoft Teams

103

00:05:48.650 --> 00:05:51.050

has been switched off? So please do not try to use this.

104

00:05:54.300 --> 00:05:57.140

Uh, it's perfectly normal for people to feel nervous when having to speak in

105

00:05:57.180 --> 00:06:00.840

public. Please be reassured that we completely understand and that if you stumble

106

00:06:00.880 --> 00:06:04.860

over your words or need to repeat something, this isn't a problem at all.

107

00:06:04.920 --> 00:06:08.540

Uh, does anyone have any questions on the speaking process?

108

00:06:10.350 --> 00:06:14.030

Nope, anyone online? Oh.

109

00:06:14.090 --> 00:06:14.410

Nope.

110

00:06:15.730 --> 00:06:19.590

Okay. So just to confirm, um, before we

111

00:06:19.610 --> 00:06:23.130

hear from any speakers, um, I just want to run through who will be

112

00:06:23.190 --> 00:06:26.030

speaking for the applicant today, if anyone.

113

00:06:27.150 --> 00:06:28.890

(laughs) Yeah. Ms. Broderick? Yeah, thank

114

00:06:28.950 --> 00:06:31.730

you.

115

00:06:34.170 --> 00:06:38.080

Thank you. Um, so I'll shortly invite representations from those interested

116

00:06:38.170 --> 00:06:41.610

parties who gave the requested notice of, uh, to us of their intention to

117

00:06:41.670 --> 00:06:45.630

speak. Um, so can I just check, have we got a

118

00:06:45.730 --> 00:06:48.870

Laura Cooper with us today? Yep. Fantastic, thank you.

119

00:06:48.950 --> 00:06:50.270

Uh, Nick Frampton?

120

00:06:51.210 --> 00:06:54.290

Lovely, thank you. Kay Brown? Lovely,

121

00:06:54.310 --> 00:06:57.630

thanks. And Dawn Partridge? Thank

122

00:06:57.690 --> 00:07:00.970

you. And then I think online we've got Victoria Jane

123

00:07:01.030 --> 00:07:03.040
Smith. Is there a hand up,

124
00:07:03.040 --> 00:07:05.630
or...

125
00:07:08.150 --> 00:07:10.270
Oh, yes.

126
00:07:11.310 --> 00:07:13.170
Okay, thank you.

127
00:07:14.050 --> 00:07:17.690
Um, can I ask, is there anyone else here today, either in the room
or online, who

128
00:07:17.730 --> 00:07:19.070
wishes to speak but did not

129
00:07:19.090 --> 00:07:22.150
register?

130
00:07:24.650 --> 00:07:27.910
Nope, I'm not seeing any hands. Okay, thank you.

131
00:07:27.970 --> 00:07:30.970
So I'm now going to invite those registered parties to speak.

132
00:07:31.010 --> 00:07:33.920
When I read out your name, if you're in the room, please come to the
table at the

133
00:07:34.010 --> 00:07:37.130
front, and if online please turn your camera on.

134
00:07:37.150 --> 00:07:40.810
When it's your turn to speak, um, you can start by introducing
yourself and, if

135
00:07:40.890 --> 00:07:43.250
relevant, who you're representing.

136

00:07:43.310 --> 00:07:47.030

Um, could I remind you not to supply any personal details when speaking?

137

00:07:47.050 --> 00:07:50.560

For example, do not state your home address, your age, any medical conditions, or

138

00:07:50.590 --> 00:07:54.550

anything like that. If you feel like you need to supply such personal information

139

00:07:54.610 --> 00:07:58.250

to us, please talk to the case team about how this can be done without going on the

140

00:07:58.290 --> 00:07:59.160

public record.

141

00:08:00.090 --> 00:08:04.030

Um, so if we start then, um, with the order that we've got them registered.

142

00:08:04.050 --> 00:08:06.390

Uh, um, we've got Laura Cooper first.

143

00:08:08.070 --> 00:08:10.120

It's always worst going first.

144

00:08:10.120 --> 00:08:10.120

145

00:08:10.120 --> 00:08:10.140

(laughs) No worries. (laughs)

146

00:08:10.140 --> 00:08:13.810

Hello. Do I just go? Okay.

147

00:08:13.870 --> 00:08:15.790

Um, (laughs) yeah, my name's Laura.

148

00:08:15.890 --> 00:08:19.730

I've lived on Mears Ashby, so I'm representing, um, Mears Ashby as an

149

00:08:19.770 --> 00:08:23.350

interested party. And, um, I've lived there since 2016 with my

150

00:08:23.390 --> 00:08:26.770

husband and our daughter. I'm a children and young persons

151

00:08:26.810 --> 00:08:30.760

therapist working within a local secondary school, um, whereas I

152

00:08:30.760 --> 00:08:34.110

s- I serve there as the mental health lead, and I head a team of eight

153

00:08:34.150 --> 00:08:37.830

therapists. Um, I'd like to begin by expressing my

154

00:08:37.850 --> 00:08:41.410

concern about how difficult it's been to register to speak this evening.

155

00:08:41.490 --> 00:08:44.670

I recognize that this issue, um, doesn't lie with the planning inspectorate.

156

00:08:44.690 --> 00:08:48.570

However, I feel compelled to highlight it, um, because many

157

00:08:48.610 --> 00:08:51.590

residents would have attended and voiced their views had they known that they had

158

00:08:51.630 --> 00:08:55.250

the opportunity, um, and if they'd been given clear guidance on how to

159

00:08:55.270 --> 00:08:59.210

register. Um, I feel that, um, there's been a lack of transparency throughout the

160

00:08:59.250 --> 00:09:03.210
process. Um, and although nothing can be done or changed at this stage, I

161
00:09:03.290 --> 00:09:06.070
really feel strongly about it and I just wanted to say that.

162
00:09:06.110 --> 00:09:09.810
Um, and with that in mind, um, I'd firstly like to read out some comments on behalf

163
00:09:09.870 --> 00:09:13.750
of friends and neighbors of mine in Mears Ashby who are unable to speak, um, this

164
00:09:13.830 --> 00:09:17.300
evening. So from, uh, my main concerns are the

165
00:09:17.350 --> 00:09:20.710
disruption of hedgerows and the impact of prey species

166
00:09:20.790 --> 00:09:24.770
interactions and the wonderful ecosystem balance that I witness every day

167
00:09:24.810 --> 00:09:28.660
when I'm walking the fields. We have such a species, um,

168
00:09:28.670 --> 00:09:32.370
rich diversity and our fields sustain a very impressive array of aerial

169
00:09:32.410 --> 00:09:36.360
predators. I see everything from red kites, buzzards, kestrels,

170
00:09:36.390 --> 00:09:40.190
and even osprey, populations that the ecology and conservation

171
00:09:40.230 --> 00:09:43.270
efforts of Sidewell Reservoir work hard to support.

172
00:09:43.280 --> 00:09:47.210

I know many of these raptors by sight, and it would make me extremely sad if

173
00:09:47.270 --> 00:09:50.610
any relocated due to the disruption.

174
00:09:50.670 --> 00:09:54.430
Working full-time in education and for public health, we both rely on running for

175
00:09:54.450 --> 00:09:56.310
our physical and mental wellbeing.

176
00:09:56.330 --> 00:09:59.770
With the building of the solar farm, our regular running routes will be disrupted

177
00:09:59.790 --> 00:10:02.070
and it will become dangerous for us to do so.

178
00:10:03.610 --> 00:10:07.530
While I support renewable energy, I'm deeply concerned about the proposed solar

179
00:10:07.570 --> 00:10:11.050
farm's impact on our small village, particularly the years of

180
00:10:11.060 --> 00:10:14.890
disruption to our countryside walks and running routes, as well as the strain it

181
00:10:14.930 --> 00:10:18.870
may place on a community already struggling to attract and retain pupils at

182
00:10:18.910 --> 00:10:22.750
our local school. As a parent of a young child, I'm also worried about the

183
00:10:22.770 --> 00:10:25.929
increased construction traffic on a country road that is already

184

00:10:25.970 --> 00:10:29.770

hazardous. I respectfully ask that you consider the long-term wellbeing and

185

00:10:29.850 --> 00:10:33.030

safety of our residents, especially our children, when reviewing this

186

00:10:33.070 --> 00:10:36.850

proposal. I cycle to Northampton for

187

00:10:36.890 --> 00:10:40.470

work every day. I'm concerned that this is going to make my journey to work more

188

00:10:40.510 --> 00:10:44.470

dangerous. I cycle around the village and the surrounding area, as do

189

00:10:44.510 --> 00:10:48.270

many other cyclists. This will make cycling both dangerous, and it will be

190

00:10:48.290 --> 00:10:52.010

impossible to enjoy the open road which is so important for our physical and

191

00:10:52.050 --> 00:10:55.670

emotional wellbeing. I'm concerned about the wildlife in the surrounding

192

00:10:55.790 --> 00:10:59.670

fields. I regularly see foxes and deer on Highfield Road as well

193

00:10:59.710 --> 00:11:03.590

as the white owl. I'm reminded of the film Watership Down, and it

194

00:11:03.650 --> 00:11:07.470

fills me with deep sadness. I know that I'm not the only one that feels

195

00:11:07.510 --> 00:11:11.319

this way, and I'm concerned about the emotional wellbeing of my

fellow villagers

196

00:11:11.330 --> 00:11:15.230

and the additional stress that the construction of the solar farm will cause.

197

00:11:15.270 --> 00:11:18.770

Lastly, I feel that the scale of the project is outrageous.

198

00:11:18.830 --> 00:11:22.530

If it was along one road or in one area, this would be easier to digest and

199

00:11:22.570 --> 00:11:24.990

wouldn't cause such a huge amount of disruption to our

200

00:11:25.030 --> 00:11:28.740

lives. Whilst I do not object to solar

201

00:11:28.830 --> 00:11:32.310

power, it is the siting of the panels which we object to when there are

202

00:11:32.370 --> 00:11:35.920

alternatives. Once constructed, the vast unsightly solar

203

00:11:36.030 --> 00:11:39.330

structures will replace invaluable farmland, thus destroying

204

00:11:39.370 --> 00:11:42.220

countryside and local habitats forever.

205

00:11:42.250 --> 00:11:45.870

In the future, the energy that will be produced will not be used locally, but sent

206

00:11:45.950 --> 00:11:49.560

elsewhere. The likelihood is that solar farms will be sold on

207

00:11:49.710 --> 00:11:53.590

maybe several times to buyers that are not local and have no regard for local

208

00:11:53.650 --> 00:11:56.390

inhabitants. Um, and now on to my

209

00:11:56.430 --> 00:12:00.230

thoughts. So my first and most pressing concern is the impact of this

210

00:12:00.250 --> 00:12:04.150

proposal on Mears Ashby School. As a very small village primary school,

211

00:12:04.230 --> 00:12:06.310

it is already extremely vulnerable.

212

00:12:06.330 --> 00:12:10.170

Having previously served as a parent governor, I know how vital it is to

213

00:12:10.190 --> 00:12:12.990

maintain pupil numbers to keep the school open.

214

00:12:13.050 --> 00:12:16.730

In past years, the school has come close to falling below the required threshold

215

00:12:16.750 --> 00:12:20.050

and is currently has fewer than 80 pupils on roll.

216

00:12:20.070 --> 00:12:23.850

Around 75% of those children travel in from outside of the

217

00:12:23.890 --> 00:12:26.744

village, and many of those are from Wellingborough....

218

00:12:26.774 --> 00:12:30.214

during the construction of the proposed solar farm, the introduction of three or

219

00:12:30.274 --> 00:12:33.954

four-way temporary traffic lights at the top of Glebe and Highfield Roads will

220

00:12:34.014 --> 00:12:37.214

cause significant delays at school drop-off and pick-up times.

221

00:12:37.274 --> 00:12:41.034

North Street, where the school is located, is used extensively as a cut-through for

222

00:12:41.114 --> 00:12:43.654

traffic traveling to and from Wellingborough.

223

00:12:43.734 --> 00:12:47.514

Even if construction vehicles avoid the village or only operates outside

224

00:12:47.594 --> 00:12:51.074

peak times, the temporary traffic controls will still impede the normal flow of

225

00:12:51.154 --> 00:12:54.884

traffic. Currently, parents working in Wellingborough with a 9:00

226

00:12:54.914 --> 00:12:57.854

AM start can just about manage the school run.

227

00:12:57.874 --> 00:13:01.734

This will no longer be feasible. For families who must drive to reach the school,

228

00:13:01.794 --> 00:13:05.313

the added congestion and time pressure will be a major deterrent.

229

00:13:05.444 --> 00:13:09.154

It would take only a small number of parents deciding that the journey is no longer

230

00:13:09.194 --> 00:13:12.084

workable for the school to face the risk of closure.

231

00:13:12.134 --> 00:13:15.914

That would be a devastating loss, not only to our community, but to the children

232

00:13:15.974 --> 00:13:19.014

who thrive in this small, nurturing environment.

233

00:13:19.054 --> 00:13:22.334

Mears Ashby Primary has served the village for nearly 250

234

00:13:22.354 --> 00:13:25.814

years. Its closure would mark the end of a cornerstone of our community's

235

00:13:25.874 --> 00:13:29.214

history. There are also serious safety concerns.

236

00:13:29.234 --> 00:13:32.094

Increased traffic, particularly around the dangerous bend at the top of North

237

00:13:32.133 --> 00:13:35.674

Street, poses additional risks to our children, especially when the parish council

238

00:13:35.694 --> 00:13:39.554

have been working towards a reduced speed limit to keep the children safe.

239

00:13:39.594 --> 00:13:42.564

Furthermore, construction activity will directly affect the children's daily

240

00:13:42.614 --> 00:13:45.994

experience at school. Dust and debris threaten their playground and outdoor

241

00:13:46.134 --> 00:13:49.974

areas. The outdoor classroom, which was painstakingly funded and built

242

00:13:50.034 --> 00:13:53.324

only last year, will no longer offer a peaceful place for learning.

243

00:13:53.414 --> 00:13:57.114

Instead, it risks becoming noisy, dusty, and effectively unusable,

244

00:13:57.154 --> 00:14:00.584

undermining the hard work and investment of the entire school community.

245

00:14:01.594 --> 00:14:04.674

As I mentioned earlier, I'm a children and young persons therapist working with a

246

00:14:04.714 --> 00:14:08.654

wide range of complex and often deeply distressing presentations.

247

00:14:08.694 --> 00:14:11.814

Many of the young people I support have experienced severe trauma, including

248

00:14:11.854 --> 00:14:15.624

gang-related violence, child sexual exploitation, domestic abuse, emotional and

249

00:14:15.674 --> 00:14:18.994

sexual abuse, and neglect. Much of this occurs within our local

250

00:14:19.034 --> 00:14:21.974

community and within Wellingborough.

251

00:14:22.014 --> 00:14:25.994

In order to maintain my own emotional wellbeing and to continue carrying out this

252

00:14:26.054 --> 00:14:29.894

work safely and effectively, I rely profoundly on the ability to

253

00:14:29.914 --> 00:14:33.764

immerse myself in nature. Every day, after spending hours listening to

254

00:14:33.814 --> 00:14:37.694

stories that most people could not imagine, I put on my wellies, take my two

255

00:14:37.754 --> 00:14:41.723
terriers, and walk just 30 seconds from my home into the fields, and
256
00:14:41.754 --> 00:14:45.034
that's known in this application as Area D.

257
00:14:45.094 --> 00:14:48.814
There, I find the peace, solitude, and space that I need to process
the

258
00:14:48.834 --> 00:14:52.534
horrors that I hear every day. I walk the footpath along Highfield
Road,

259
00:14:52.614 --> 00:14:56.084
reflecting and grounding myself and feeling genuine gratitude for
the

260
00:14:56.174 --> 00:14:58.814
simplicity and beauty of the landscape.

261
00:14:58.824 --> 00:15:02.804
This is where I come to heal, where nature helps me carry the trauma
that others

262
00:15:02.834 --> 00:15:06.684
entrust me with. Green Hills Solar may argue that I will still be
able to

263
00:15:06.734 --> 00:15:10.094
walk the same path once the panels are installed, but it will not be
the

264
00:15:10.134 --> 00:15:14.014
same. Instead of open fields and natural beauty, I will be
surrounded by

265
00:15:14.074 --> 00:15:18.014
manmade structures, an intrusive reminder of the very ugliness of

266
00:15:18.054 --> 00:15:20.934
humanity that I seek these fields to escape.

267

00:15:20.974 --> 00:15:24.454

Instead of solitude, I'll be monitored by CCTV cameras.

268

00:15:24.474 --> 00:15:28.034

Instead of freedom and openness, I'll be enclosed by an eight-foot security fence,

269

00:15:28.074 --> 00:15:31.624

creating an oppressive tunnel that will make me feel vulnerable, particularly when

270

00:15:31.654 --> 00:15:35.414

I'm walking with my daughter. There'll be no safe space to pass large dogs or

271

00:15:35.474 --> 00:15:38.774

horse riders, removing the ease and safety that currently make these walks so

272

00:15:38.814 --> 00:15:42.594

restorative. Our children's landscapes are already changing beyond

273

00:15:42.634 --> 00:15:46.594

recognition. At a time when we are urging young people to step away from their

274

00:15:46.634 --> 00:15:50.574

screens, fully aware of the harm excessive device use can cause,

275

00:15:50.614 --> 00:15:54.074

and when I'm regularly referring children to their GPs to check their vitamin D

276

00:15:54.154 --> 00:15:58.034

levels because they spend so little time outdoors, how can we fight that battle

277

00:15:58.074 --> 00:16:01.574

on one hand, while restricting and replacing their open spaces on the

278

00:16:01.634 --> 00:16:04.414

other? It is utterly contradictory.

279

00:16:04.434 --> 00:16:08.254

There are young people, local young people, who want to farm our land.

280

00:16:08.274 --> 00:16:11.964

They are deeply committed to producing food here in the UK, to sustaining our

281

00:16:12.014 --> 00:16:15.934

communities and contributing to a resilient future, yet the very land they

282

00:16:15.994 --> 00:16:18.114

hope to steward is being taken from them.

283

00:16:18.134 --> 00:16:20.954

And to me, that doesn't make any sense at all.

284

00:16:21.074 --> 00:16:24.954

Finally, I would like to ensure that my daughter has the opportunity to be heard.

285

00:16:24.994 --> 00:16:28.834

Although I recall reading somewhere that you couldn't sort of

286

00:16:28.954 --> 00:16:32.914

say what children thought or they couldn't be formally included, I can't remember

287

00:16:32.974 --> 00:16:35.774

where that was now, I do feel it's important to share her

288

00:16:35.854 --> 00:16:39.834

perspective. Um, she actually even present- she, um, prepared a

289

00:16:39.874 --> 00:16:42.894

short presentation, a PowerPoint (laughs) presentation, but obviously I'm not gonna

290

00:16:42.934 --> 00:16:44.573

show that to you. (laughs) Um,

291

00:16:45.414 --> 00:16:48.354

when I first asked her what she thought about the proposed solar farm, she said

292

00:16:48.394 --> 00:16:52.334

that it seemed positive because we all need the energy that it would generate.

293

00:16:52.374 --> 00:16:56.154

However, as we walked together and I showed her the exact areas that it affected,

294

00:16:56.194 --> 00:16:59.874

pointing out the views and sharing images of what the landscape might become, she

295

00:16:59.894 --> 00:17:03.594

grew quiet for a while, and then after some time, she told me that she would

296

00:17:03.674 --> 00:17:07.454

really miss the dog log. The dog log perfectly captures the

297

00:17:07.494 --> 00:17:11.334

sense of community that defines Mears Ashby, and it reflects how closely

298

00:17:11.394 --> 00:17:14.294

our wellbeing is tied to the places around us.

299

00:17:14.314 --> 00:17:18.294

For years, children have built dens among the fields and hedgerows, and the dog

300

00:17:18.374 --> 00:17:21.974

log, which is a fallen tree, has become a small but meaningful landmark where

301

00:17:22.014 --> 00:17:25.583

villagers have carved the names of their dogs, 22 at the last count.

302

00:17:26.094 --> 00:17:29.834

It is a place we pass on countless walks, a simple joy that anchors us to our

303

00:17:29.894 --> 00:17:33.714

home. The thought that something so modest yet so deeply cherished could be

304

00:17:33.774 --> 00:17:37.083

taken from my daughter genuinely breaks my heart.

305

00:17:37.094 --> 00:17:41.054

And recently, while driving somewhere along the M6, we passed a series of enormous

306

00:17:41.134 --> 00:17:44.954

Amazon warehouses and Brooke's out of the window, and she asked why

307

00:17:44.994 --> 00:17:48.224

solar panels couldn't be placed on the rooftops.

308

00:17:48.234 --> 00:17:51.834

And I had no answer for her, and I still don't, and that, to me,

309

00:17:51.894 --> 00:17:55.614

makes no sense at all. If we cannot protect the places that

310

00:17:55.714 --> 00:17:59.554

shape our children's memories, then we are failing not only our landscape, but the

311

00:17:59.594 --> 00:18:03.174

very future that we claim to be planning for.

312

00:18:03.214 --> 00:18:04.514

Thank you.

313

00:18:06.174 --> 00:18:10.154

Thank you very much, Ms. Cooper. Um, so next on the list, we've got Nick

314

00:18:10.174 --> 00:18:12.854
Frampton.

315
00:18:16.474 --> 00:18:20.314
Thank you.

316
00:18:23.914 --> 00:18:26.174
(sighs) Thank you. My name is Nick Frampton.

317
00:18:26.234 --> 00:18:30.114
I'm a resident of Mears Ashby and have lived in the village most of my life.

318
00:18:30.134 --> 00:18:32.713
And I'm a retired civil engineer. (clears throat)

319
00:18:33.762 --> 00:18:37.642
I'm, I'm appalled at the proposal to build this solar farm around our beautiful

320
00:18:37.722 --> 00:18:41.461
village. 1,000 acres of solar panels on three sides of our village and a

321
00:18:41.502 --> 00:18:45.002
battery storage facility, all on prime agricultural land.

322
00:18:46.302 --> 00:18:50.222
It is totally e- outrageous. 90% of Mears Ashby Village

323
00:18:50.282 --> 00:18:54.142
is within the conservation area. It has 28 listed buildings, two of

324
00:18:54.182 --> 00:18:58.122
which are grade two star, 26 are grade two, and a beautiful

325
00:18:58.222 --> 00:19:01.102
medieval church which dates back to the Saxon period.

326
00:19:01.742 --> 00:19:05.721
The village is, the village setting is unique, being mostly square in plan,

327

00:19:05.742 --> 00:19:09.502

but with a stream running through the middle creating an open central valley within

328

00:19:09.542 --> 00:19:13.442

the conservation area. We're surrounded on all four sides by open

329

00:19:13.502 --> 00:19:16.522

countryside with put fa- footpaths and tracks.

330

00:19:16.562 --> 00:19:19.992

It's a beautiful place to live. There are five roads

331

00:19:20.202 --> 00:19:23.562

emanating from the village and none of these roads are rated for

332

00:19:23.702 --> 00:19:27.262

HGVs. All of these roads were originally single lane

333

00:19:27.762 --> 00:19:31.742

roads widened over time by overrunning of farm vehicles and then

334

00:19:31.802 --> 00:19:34.102

patching up by the local highways department.

335

00:19:35.502 --> 00:19:39.121

Highfield Road in particular will be one of the worst affected

336

00:19:39.162 --> 00:19:39.542

roads

337

00:19:41.102 --> 00:19:44.922

due to its narrow width, which is currently 4.3 meters

338

00:19:45.022 --> 00:19:48.842

wide. A standard HGV is 2.6

339

00:19:48.882 --> 00:19:52.722

meters wide, so they cannot pass without overriding and destroying the

340

00:19:52.762 --> 00:19:56.382

verge. Green Hill Solar Farm have

341

00:19:56.582 --> 00:20:00.422

decide, have designated four access points on this road within half a

342

00:20:00.502 --> 00:20:04.182

mile and one cable crossing access.

343

00:20:04.202 --> 00:20:08.082

HGVs will be using all access points and will have to pass other

344

00:20:08.242 --> 00:20:12.162

HGVs when leaving the site. Cars will be using this

345

00:20:12.222 --> 00:20:16.162

road and many will feel intimidated and be forced off the road.

346

00:20:17.662 --> 00:20:21.582

Moonshine Gap and the link into Highfield Road is a busy commuter

347

00:20:21.662 --> 00:20:25.522

run from Kettering and Burton Latimer and North Wellingborough through to Earls

348

00:20:25.602 --> 00:20:29.592

Barton and onto the A45, as well as a significant route into the

349

00:20:29.642 --> 00:20:33.422

village for the, for the many parents bringing their children to the

350

00:20:33.482 --> 00:20:34.262

village school.

351

00:20:35.282 --> 00:20:36.942

The Wilby Road also

352

00:20:37.842 --> 00:20:41.782

goes through the middle of Area E into the village and is a commuter

cut through

353

00:20:41.842 --> 00:20:45.362
to Sywell and beyond and another route to the village school.

354

00:20:46.322 --> 00:20:49.402
HGVs on this road will create significant dangers

355

00:20:50.482 --> 00:20:54.082
and, um, particularly on the, the bad bends

356

00:20:54.142 --> 00:20:56.582
halfway along where the cable crossing will be.

357

00:20:56.602 --> 00:20:59.462
This is a regular accident spot.

358

00:21:01.862 --> 00:21:05.852
School pickups in the afternoon face the same issues as the
likelihood of temporary

359

00:21:05.942 --> 00:21:09.202
traffic lights will cause more delays and frustrations.

360

00:21:09.262 --> 00:21:13.002
Parents who get delayed will get angry, will take risks to get to

361

00:21:13.062 --> 00:21:15.222
school on time, and that's when accidents

362

00:21:15.282 --> 00:21:17.742
happen.

363

00:21:19.682 --> 00:21:22.102
Moving on to the construction compound.

364

00:21:22.122 --> 00:21:25.902
The, uh, construction compound CC1 and access

365

00:21:26.002 --> 00:21:29.882
CR4. This compound is proposed adjacent to the

366
00:21:29.922 --> 00:21:33.842
shooting range on the A43 Kettering to Northampton Road, one of

367
00:21:33.862 --> 00:21:37.522
the most dangerous roads in the county for traffic accidents.

368
00:21:37.562 --> 00:21:41.442
It's an extremely busy road and there have been two deaths this year

369
00:21:41.522 --> 00:21:44.422
on the stretch between Holcote roundabout and the Walgrave

370
00:21:44.522 --> 00:21:47.662
turn. Five deaths in the last five years and

371
00:21:48.162 --> 00:21:51.762
78 collisions. The proposal by

372
00:21:52.602 --> 00:21:55.682
GAHS is to use the gated entrance

373
00:21:56.262 --> 00:22:00.042
to, which is the access to the shooting range.

374
00:22:00.122 --> 00:22:03.962
This has always and only been a car access

375
00:22:04.162 --> 00:22:08.122
used at weekends. The issue is the speed of cars on this

376
00:22:08.182 --> 00:22:11.722
road and the introduction of slow moving HGVs pulling out of this

377
00:22:11.822 --> 00:22:12.342
access

378
00:22:13.302 --> 00:22:14.702
is a major problem.

379

00:22:15.662 --> 00:22:19.532
I can find no reference to a safety audit having ever been carried out and

380
00:22:19.542 --> 00:22:23.371
would suggest this location is totally ins- unsuitable and

381
00:22:23.422 --> 00:22:27.392
inherently dangerous. Beckworth

382
00:22:27.442 --> 00:22:31.402
Emporium. Beckworth Emporium sits on the

383
00:22:31.462 --> 00:22:35.382
corner of Sywell Road and Glebe Road directly opposite the farm

384
00:22:35.462 --> 00:22:38.902
track designated for the access to BESS

385
00:22:39.182 --> 00:22:42.602
C1. This now forms a crossroads at this

386
00:22:42.642 --> 00:22:46.522
junction. Beckworth Emporium, a large retail and food

387
00:22:46.582 --> 00:22:50.482
outlet owned by the Blue Diamond Group regularly receives over

388
00:22:50.642 --> 00:22:54.402
1,000 visitors a day. And yes, I have counted the cars in the

389
00:22:54.482 --> 00:22:58.422
carpark. On two days in September and October and the numbers

390
00:22:58.462 --> 00:23:02.182
exceeded 400 each day. Allowing for churn

391
00:23:02.262 --> 00:23:05.762
throughout the day and cars having two people in, that must

392
00:23:05.822 --> 00:23:09.582

exceed 1,000 visitors a day, mostly coming along the Sywell

393

00:23:09.682 --> 00:23:13.622

Road from either direction to this T-junction soon to be a crossroads

394

00:23:14.062 --> 00:23:17.762

with limited visibility from the Sywell approach.

395

00:23:17.802 --> 00:23:21.662

Given that GAHS propose to build a substation and a battery storage

396

00:23:21.702 --> 00:23:25.362

with 92 containers on an area not 300

397

00:23:25.402 --> 00:23:29.302

meters from Beckworth Emporium utilizing a farm track

398

00:23:29.342 --> 00:23:32.902

and creating a dangerous crossroads at this, at this

399

00:23:32.962 --> 00:23:34.922

incredibly busy junction is beyond

400

00:23:35.002 --> 00:23:38.922

belief. Yes, it can be managed to a degree

401

00:23:39.002 --> 00:23:42.842

with four-way traffic lights, but traffic delays will be significant.

402

00:23:42.902 --> 00:23:46.542

Queuing around the bad bends from Sywell Airport will also be very

403

00:23:46.562 --> 00:23:50.362

dangerous. This is a disaster waiting to happen.

404

00:23:50.402 --> 00:23:54.362

Visitors n- visitor numbers to Beckworth will drop and Blue Diamond Group

405

00:23:54.562 --> 00:23:58.342
will not be happy. Also, more visitors will avoid the
406
00:23:58.382 --> 00:24:02.162
Sywell Road entrance and divert through Mears Ashby causing more
407
00:24:02.202 --> 00:24:05.282
chaos and congestion, particularly at school pickup
408
00:24:05.292 --> 00:24:06.582
times.
409
00:24:08.362 --> 00:24:12.182
Battery storage at BESS Green Hill C.
410
00:24:12.222 --> 00:24:16.022
This battery storage facility is less than 300 meters from Beckworth
411
00:24:16.062 --> 00:24:19.422
Emporium. Battery storage is in- inherently
412
00:24:19.432 --> 00:24:22.602
unsafe and fires are becoming commonplace.
413
00:24:22.642 --> 00:24:25.862
To have a BESS this close to a retail outlet is
414
00:24:25.882 --> 00:24:28.762
unprecedented and no reference has been made to this
415
00:24:28.822 --> 00:24:32.462
fact. Although two days ago we were advised
416
00:24:32.522 --> 00:24:34.482
that it had been highlighted as a
417
00:24:34.502 --> 00:24:38.498
receptor. A fire at Bessie, with the
418
00:24:38.538 --> 00:24:40.958
wind direction from the north, would be a

419

00:24:41.038 --> 00:24:44.638

disaster, particularly with the position that Beckworth

420

00:24:44.698 --> 00:24:48.678

is. 30 meters on a down slope from the corner

421

00:24:48.718 --> 00:24:52.198

of Bessie is, is a stream called Sywell

422

00:24:52.298 --> 00:24:55.178

Bottom, which feeds directly into Sywell

423

00:24:55.258 --> 00:24:58.598

Reservoir. Major aquifers in the area with

424

00:24:58.618 --> 00:25:01.798

groundwater, overlying drift deposits, supplying the

425

00:25:01.898 --> 00:25:05.098

area's historical water needs, including the

426

00:25:05.138 --> 00:25:08.918

reservoir. It's no longer a drinking water reservoir, but an

427

00:25:08.938 --> 00:25:12.538

important country park for wildlife, the county's top

428

00:25:12.638 --> 00:25:15.978

tench fishery, and an important op- open water swimming

429

00:25:15.998 --> 00:25:19.758

venue. Any spillage of contaminated water following a

430

00:25:19.818 --> 00:25:23.758

fire into this stream, Sywell Bottom, would be an ecological

431

00:25:23.878 --> 00:25:26.378

di- disaster for the country park and the local

432

00:25:26.418 --> 00:25:28.338
area.

433
00:25:30.138 --> 00:25:33.638
World War II plane crash called Mission 48.

434
00:25:34.058 --> 00:25:37.878
On the 31st of March 1943, two B-17

435
00:25:37.888 --> 00:25:41.618
bombers from the 303 Bomb Group collided in mid-air and

436
00:25:41.658 --> 00:25:44.818
crashed in the fields just to the east of Mears Ashby.

437
00:25:44.858 --> 00:25:48.178
15 crew members were killed. Each plane was carrying six

438
00:25:48.478 --> 00:25:52.278
1,000-pound bombs. This crash site is recorded on the

439
00:25:52.318 --> 00:25:54.358
Northampton HER record as number

440
00:25:54.718 --> 00:25:58.578
1995-0-8 and is a

441
00:25:58.618 --> 00:26:02.498
monument and... as a monument World

442
00:26:02.558 --> 00:26:06.258
War II aircraft, aircraft crash site.

443
00:26:06.278 --> 00:26:10.238
A memorial plaque is on show at the entrance to Duchess End, which
is

444
00:26:10.338 --> 00:26:12.558
midway between the two crash sites.

445
00:26:12.578 --> 00:26:16.298

And there is also a memorial plaque at the aircraft museum at, on

446

00:26:16.378 --> 00:26:20.058

Sywell Airfield. The location of the final resting

447

00:26:20.158 --> 00:26:24.038

place of the two bombers is known and the bomb sites from a local

448

00:26:24.078 --> 00:26:27.098

historian who recalls the crashes and visited the crash

449

00:26:27.118 --> 00:26:29.878

sites, and he recorded them in his own

450

00:26:29.938 --> 00:26:33.408

memoirs. He is no longer with us, but we have his

451

00:26:33.418 --> 00:26:36.958

documented records. We know that between the two crash

452

00:26:36.998 --> 00:26:40.938

sites, a significant amount of ordinance was scattered as well as body

453

00:26:41.038 --> 00:26:41.478

parts.

454

00:26:42.738 --> 00:26:46.697

From my many conversations with the MOD, we know that all military sites are

455

00:26:46.718 --> 00:26:50.618

protected under the Protection of Military Remains Act, and it is an

456

00:26:50.658 --> 00:26:54.198

offense to tamper with, damage, or remove, or unearth any

457

00:26:54.318 --> 00:26:57.918

items at such crash sites unless the MOD has issued a

458

00:26:57.958 --> 00:27:01.918

license. We're keen to protect this site,

459

00:27:01.958 --> 00:27:05.478

and as a minimum, we would expect the developer to comply with the design

460

00:27:05.518 --> 00:27:08.998

requirements and locate infrastructure at a suitable

461

00:27:09.118 --> 00:27:12.638

distance from the whole crash site area.

462

00:27:12.678 --> 00:27:16.598

There is an identified corridor including and between the

463

00:27:16.618 --> 00:27:20.568

two crash sites where all the ordinance and body parts are in the ground.

464

00:27:20.598 --> 00:27:22.888

We therefore request that this...

465

00:27:22.918 --> 00:27:26.858

should this project go ahead, we would expect panels to be left

466

00:27:27.058 --> 00:27:30.558

off the fields EF13, EF14,

467

00:27:30.618 --> 00:27:34.378

EF10, EF22, EF24, and

468

00:27:34.438 --> 00:27:38.318

EF21. Mears Ashby Parish Council

469

00:27:38.418 --> 00:27:41.758

minutes from the Monday the 10th of November responded to the

470

00:27:41.838 --> 00:27:45.778

GHSF impact statement. And in particular,

471

00:27:45.798 --> 00:27:49.698

the parish council would seek a piece of land to be set aside as

472

00:27:49.758 --> 00:27:53.158

a SANG, S-A-N-G, which is suitable

473

00:27:53.298 --> 00:27:56.918

alternative natural green space close to the village with

474

00:27:56.938 --> 00:27:59.298

safe, easy walking for residents.

475

00:27:59.338 --> 00:28:03.318

The council would seek to have the above fields removed from the project and

476

00:28:03.338 --> 00:28:06.498

declared as SANG. Thank

477

00:28:06.538 --> 00:28:08.738

you.

478

00:28:08.758 --> 00:28:12.378

Thank you very much, Mr. Bampton.

479

00:28:14.418 --> 00:28:17.398

Okay, next, uh, we have Kay Brown.

480

00:28:19.338 --> 00:28:19.498

Thank

481

00:28:19.578 --> 00:28:24.358

you.

482

00:28:26.758 --> 00:28:30.678

Uh, my name's Kay Brown. I'm an interested party in Mears Ashby

483

00:28:30.718 --> 00:28:33.987

as well, um, and also on the Stop Greenhill

484

00:28:34.078 --> 00:28:37.318

Solar, um, project team.

485

00:28:37.418 --> 00:28:40.918

Um, I've got two key points to make.

486

00:28:40.938 --> 00:28:44.758

Um, one is from earlier today, um, and then the second point that I was gonna

487

00:28:44.798 --> 00:28:48.098

raise tonight. So my first point is around the overall

488

00:28:48.138 --> 00:28:51.158

impact on the environmental side of things.

489

00:28:52.198 --> 00:28:56.117

Um, I believe the whole scheme will have a material impact through all phases,

490

00:28:56.177 --> 00:28:59.738

from production to decommissioning, and will destroy our

491

00:28:59.778 --> 00:29:03.478

royal... rural environment forever. Production.

492

00:29:03.538 --> 00:29:07.418

According to joint report in February '24 by the Centre of Research

493

00:29:07.478 --> 00:29:11.178

on Energy and Clear Air and the Global Energy Monitor,

494

00:29:11.258 --> 00:29:15.138

GEM, China began building 94.5

495

00:29:15.178 --> 00:29:19.128

gigawatts of new coal power capacity and

496

00:29:19.218 --> 00:29:23.138

resumed 3.3 gigawatts of suspended projects just

497

00:29:23.198 --> 00:29:26.998

in 2024, the highest level of construction in the past 10

498

00:29:27.058 --> 00:29:30.858

years. According to the Solar Energy UK briefing of

499

00:29:30.918 --> 00:29:34.238

March '25, it says, "The supply chain is

500

00:29:34.278 --> 00:29:37.478

complex. It is made up of companies who design,

501

00:29:37.518 --> 00:29:41.258

manufacture, transport, and install solar systems around the

502

00:29:41.298 --> 00:29:45.198

world, including solar panels, mounting systems,

503

00:29:45.278 --> 00:29:48.898

cables, batteries, and other equipment." It includes

504

00:29:48.938 --> 00:29:52.858

businesses which mine raw materials using coal-fired

505

00:29:53.478 --> 00:29:57.438

stations, um, such as metals a- and quartz

506

00:29:57.638 --> 00:30:01.198

used for solar panels. Many of the companies involved in the different

507

00:30:01.278 --> 00:30:04.058

stages of solar panel manufacturing are based in

508

00:30:04.098 --> 00:30:06.998

China. Carbon

509

00:30:07.078 --> 00:30:10.418

footprint. The manufacturing process entails

510

00:30:10.458 --> 00:30:14.358

extraction, which actually entails a lot of

511
00:30:14.438 --> 00:30:17.158
water, which I understand is, um,

512
00:30:17.838 --> 00:30:20.758
depleting the water in those countries and

513
00:30:20.858 --> 00:30:24.748
areas, and the processing of polysilicon, glass,

514
00:30:24.758 --> 00:30:28.318
and metals. To produce one square meter of PV

515
00:30:28.358 --> 00:30:31.898
models needs a huge demand of energy and emits between

516
00:30:32.138 --> 00:30:35.278
32 to 72 CO₂ kilowatt per

517
00:30:35.378 --> 00:30:39.358
hour. In addition, transport, installation, maintenance,

518
00:30:39.438 --> 00:30:43.338
and decommissioning is on top of this, and there is no current

519
00:30:43.458 --> 00:30:47.018
measurement of the environmental impacts of this according to

520
00:30:47.058 --> 00:30:49.118
Infilic Consulting February

521
00:30:49.178 --> 00:30:53.126
'25. In addition

522
00:30:53.166 --> 00:30:57.046
to this, an amendment to the Great British Energy Bill in April '25
says,

523
00:30:57.066 --> 00:31:00.826
"All applicants must include an ethical and comprehensive

524

00:31:00.926 --> 00:31:02.146
supply chain plan."

525
00:31:03.186 --> 00:31:07.026
The applicant has added one paragraph to their outline skills,
supply

526
00:31:07.146 --> 00:31:08.965
chain and employee plan,

527
00:31:09.066 --> 00:31:13.026
APP/552, which indicates they will

528
00:31:13.066 --> 00:31:15.466
adhere to the UK Solar Energy

529
00:31:15.566 --> 00:31:19.126
Standards. I would urge the

530
00:31:19.166 --> 00:31:23.116
committee t-that there should be a detailed plan as

531
00:31:23.166 --> 00:31:27.146
part of this sub-mission, which we can scrutinize and would be part

532
00:31:27.166 --> 00:31:31.006
of the DCO. And ask, who would be responsible for the

533
00:31:31.046 --> 00:31:32.426
due diligence of this?

534
00:31:34.126 --> 00:31:37.726
And that should be from the initial production all the way through
that supply

535
00:31:37.826 --> 00:31:40.726
chain to the end.

536
00:31:42.286 --> 00:31:46.086
Not only do I believe that the energy and the global carbon
footprint is

537

00:31:46.146 --> 00:31:49.926

too high, I question the need to put this on BMV land, which we

538

00:31:49.966 --> 00:31:53.886

discussed this afternoon. Which the applicant's Agricultural

539

00:31:53.966 --> 00:31:57.786

Circumstances Report: Volume three, November '24, I'm

540

00:31:57.866 --> 00:32:01.686

sorry, I couldn't find a more ref- recent reference, but it

541

00:32:01.766 --> 00:32:05.336

quotes 66.6% of the land is AC...

542

00:32:05.366 --> 00:32:07.466

ALC1 to 3A.

543

00:32:08.586 --> 00:32:12.366

This is so high and against government advice,

544

00:32:12.426 --> 00:32:15.706

which says they should only use in strong

545

00:32:15.806 --> 00:32:19.686

mitigating circumstances. I don't believe they've given us

546

00:32:19.726 --> 00:32:23.306

those strong mitigating circumstances so far.

547

00:32:23.346 --> 00:32:26.606

With this in mind, I urge the examination process to review the

548

00:32:26.666 --> 00:32:27.506

pipeline

549

00:32:28.766 --> 00:32:31.966

and to question the need to put solar in these areas with good grade

550

00:32:32.026 --> 00:32:36.006

land. We know that solar on rooftops is growing across all w- all

551

00:32:36.046 --> 00:32:39.406

of our three council areas, and we are sited in the center of the

552

00:32:39.486 --> 00:32:42.446

UK, which is a hub for big warehouse sheds.

553

00:32:43.386 --> 00:32:47.226

Just in Northampton, commercial builds are now used in the BREEAM standards

554

00:32:47.626 --> 00:32:51.596

across all new builds. Marks and Spencers, Gregg's,

555

00:32:51.606 --> 00:32:54.876

the new rail freight depots, and Prologis, to name but a

556

00:32:54.986 --> 00:32:58.306

few. Plus, solar is now going on n- all new house

557

00:32:58.406 --> 00:33:00.806

builds, of which there's a huge amount in our

558

00:33:00.886 --> 00:33:04.106

area. So, if the current

559

00:33:04.326 --> 00:33:06.915

gigawatts is, is up to 20

560

00:33:08.466 --> 00:33:12.106

and the UK needs are circa 70 to 80,

561

00:33:12.206 --> 00:33:16.086

why do we need a pipeline queue of renewable projects of over 700

562

00:33:16.126 --> 00:33:19.666

gigawatts? Which is over four times the UK's

563

00:33:19.766 --> 00:33:23.606

needs. It is pleasing to note that NES0, as of

564

00:33:23.626 --> 00:33:27.486

the 8th of December, has announced a rejection of some projects

565

00:33:27.526 --> 00:33:31.386

and refined the queue to 200 plus gigawatts, which is still

566

00:33:31.446 --> 00:33:35.226

higher than our needs. There is now even more reason for Planning

567

00:33:35.246 --> 00:33:38.966

Inspectorate teams to assess the best projects across the country

568

00:33:39.466 --> 00:33:43.286

so that we put solar in the right locations, with those that have the

569

00:33:43.346 --> 00:33:47.286

least impact on food security and the destruction of our rural

570

00:33:47.326 --> 00:33:49.746

environments, which I fear will never

571

00:33:49.826 --> 00:33:53.366

recover. I note the applicant is not on the

572

00:33:53.406 --> 00:33:56.436

NESO list. Um,

573

00:33:57.346 --> 00:34:01.246

that's the National Energy System Operator for the EA Register

574

00:34:01.286 --> 00:34:04.786

for Gate Two. Where are they on that

575

00:34:04.846 --> 00:34:08.426

list? Are we at Gate One or are... W- I've got no

576

00:34:08.586 --> 00:34:12.286

idea where they are, so I'd like an answer to that question.

577
00:34:12.386 --> 00:34:16.005
Um, so that's the end of my first point on

578
00:34:16.045 --> 00:34:16.815
environmental

579
00:34:17.926 --> 00:34:21.906
impact. The second key points I want to make are

580
00:34:21.985 --> 00:34:25.966
around economics of the project. I'm very concerned

581
00:34:26.005 --> 00:34:29.746
about the foreign investment of this project, and it appears to be a

582
00:34:29.786 --> 00:34:33.346
desire for profit and corporate greed.

583
00:34:33.386 --> 00:34:37.346
The funding statement provided by the applicant, APP-020, May

584
00:34:37.355 --> 00:34:40.726
'25, quotes they've spent seven and a half million

585
00:34:40.786 --> 00:34:44.086
already and estimate it will cost up to one

586
00:34:44.166 --> 00:34:48.045
billion. And I suspect this is hugely underestimated.

587
00:34:48.106 --> 00:34:50.656
We all know that many NSIPs run over budget.

588
00:34:50.686 --> 00:34:54.646
HAYTS II is a prime example, with reports of up to 50

589
00:34:54.686 --> 00:34:58.556
billion overspend. What is concerning is the applicant does not have
a

590

00:34:58.586 --> 00:35:02.536
credible plan to fund this. They say that they have experience in
raising funds

591
00:35:02.566 --> 00:35:05.886
for this kind of project, however, do not propose to do this until a

592
00:35:06.146 --> 00:35:10.086
d-decision is made on the DC0. Based on Cleeve Hill funding

593
00:35:10.206 --> 00:35:12.605
statement costs,

594
00:35:13.906 --> 00:35:17.726
a 450 million for 890 acres, this gives a

595
00:35:17.806 --> 00:35:20.946
straight line calculation of 1.5 billion.

596
00:35:20.986 --> 00:35:24.916
Both Cleeve Hill and Sunacre provided a far more in-depth breakdown
in

597
00:35:24.926 --> 00:35:28.836
their funding statements. I know that the applicant has referenced
other

598
00:35:28.846 --> 00:35:32.806
projects frequently out th- throughout this process, and I just
wanted to bring

599
00:35:32.826 --> 00:35:33.686
that to the fore.

600
00:35:34.986 --> 00:35:38.826
Why is there not a minimum standard so it's clear and transparent
about funding

601
00:35:38.926 --> 00:35:42.726
statements? I would ask that investigators delve deeper into the due

602
00:35:42.766 --> 00:35:46.726

diligence of the applicant and their ability to fund this over

603

00:35:46.786 --> 00:35:50.766

a 60-year term. Clearly, the

604

00:35:50.826 --> 00:35:54.306

contracts for difference, annual investment allowance and purchase power

605

00:35:54.366 --> 00:35:58.046

agreement schemes are attracting the applicant to the UK, but

606

00:35:58.146 --> 00:36:01.746

profits are going outside the UK and not for reinvestment in the

607

00:36:01.866 --> 00:36:05.666

UK. This feels really wrong. The

608

00:36:05.726 --> 00:36:09.446

Spain solar tax incentives helped grow its business, but many

609

00:36:09.506 --> 00:36:13.206

faced bankruptcy after the incentives drops and now schemes lie

610

00:36:13.286 --> 00:36:16.986

half-built and abandoned. Even now, successful projects

611

00:36:17.086 --> 00:36:21.006

face curtailment, as the grid c- did not keep up with capacity

612

00:36:21.306 --> 00:36:24.826

and Spain gets a lot more sun than us, so should have been able to made it

613

00:36:24.886 --> 00:36:28.586

viable. Will our grid keep up? What will

614

00:36:28.626 --> 00:36:32.206

happen if we have a change in h- in incentive policies and/or

615

00:36:32.266 --> 00:36:34.346

government?

616

00:36:35.946 --> 00:36:39.426

Can I ask that the Planning Inspectorate take a nationwide view of the cumulative

617

00:36:39.466 --> 00:36:43.406

development of solar in the UK and how this fits with the distribution,

618

00:36:43.446 --> 00:36:46.886

transmission, as set out by NES0, and ensure that the best

619

00:36:46.926 --> 00:36:48.986

locations are chosen for us and our future

620

00:36:49.086 --> 00:36:52.966

generations? Can the applicant also produce

621

00:36:53.006 --> 00:36:56.446

more detailed reports on how they will manage funding across 60 years and

622

00:36:56.486 --> 00:37:00.055

guarantee funds that will be available either by way of bonds or a

623

00:37:00.086 --> 00:37:03.966

financial mechanism, and confirm how they will manage this if they sell the

624

00:37:03.986 --> 00:37:07.946

project on? And can the Inspectorate team verify

625

00:37:07.986 --> 00:37:09.136

this using their knowledge and

626

00:37:09.226 --> 00:37:12.270

expertise?More

627

00:37:12.310 --> 00:37:16.230

locally, residents will be severely impacted by loss of values in

628

00:37:16.250 --> 00:37:20.210

our home. A document in the NSP, NSIP for Botley

629

00:37:20.290 --> 00:37:23.970

West, found by S, Dr. David Rogers, has looked at various

630

00:37:24.049 --> 00:37:27.960

models and confirms two to 16% loss in value, depending on

631

00:37:27.969 --> 00:37:31.490

the proximity to the panels. When this is added up across all the

632

00:37:31.569 --> 00:37:35.549

properties, in all the affected areas, it will be quite an eye-watering

633

00:37:35.690 --> 00:37:36.230

sum.

634

00:37:37.190 --> 00:37:40.990

He also quotes that individual payments and compensation for house values

635

00:37:41.410 --> 00:37:45.129

and a contribution to the enercot, energy costs is often used in the

636

00:37:45.230 --> 00:37:45.790

U.S.

637

00:37:46.710 --> 00:37:50.330

The applicant refused any compensation to local households at the

638

00:37:50.370 --> 00:37:53.950

initial stakeholder meetings, although have offered a community

639

00:37:53.970 --> 00:37:57.940

fund. As far as I can see, in the many documents, this has not

640

00:37:57.950 --> 00:38:01.790

been fully scoped out, and today only offers examples of what the

641
00:38:01.830 --> 00:38:05.770
fund could do. Please can the expectorate team ensure its

642
00:38:05.830 --> 00:38:09.390
mandatory condition for a fully engaged session with the relevant

643
00:38:09.399 --> 00:38:13.220
parties to ensure a clearly laid out community fund is a

644
00:38:13.270 --> 00:38:17.009
formal part of the process, and before the

645
00:38:17.029 --> 00:38:20.609
DCO's accepted, so that it's not lost if, for some

646
00:38:20.670 --> 00:38:24.640
reason, this is approved. Um, this is something that

647
00:38:24.670 --> 00:38:27.770
Michael Shanks has insisted on for Tilbridge as part of their

648
00:38:27.810 --> 00:38:31.589
acceptance. And I've got the links for that, if you need

649
00:38:31.629 --> 00:38:34.529
it. And

650
00:38:34.569 --> 00:38:38.089
finally, a request. Please don't approve this project.

651
00:38:38.509 --> 00:38:41.710
(laughs) I can give you a copy of my notes, if that's required.

652
00:38:41.750 --> 00:38:43.029
Thank you.

653
00:38:44.670 --> 00:38:47.710
Thank you very much, Ms. Brown. Uh, now we've got Dawn

654
00:38:47.790 --> 00:38:51.790

Partridge.

655
00:38:53.990 --> 00:38:55.690
Thank you.

656
00:38:56.870 --> 00:38:59.230
Hello. (laughs) My name's Dawn Partridge.

657
00:38:59.250 --> 00:39:02.859
I'm a resident of Wellingborough, and it's regarding, uh,

658
00:39:02.910 --> 00:39:06.430
land owned by the family.

659
00:39:06.509 --> 00:39:09.589
Um, it, it's very brief. Um, it's

660
00:39:09.609 --> 00:39:13.210
regarding, um, the cabling corridor

661
00:39:13.529 --> 00:39:16.170
which will be going through the land.

662
00:39:16.250 --> 00:39:18.970
And from what I understand from this

663
00:39:18.990 --> 00:39:22.470
morning, um, and from what I've seen on the

664
00:39:22.549 --> 00:39:26.230
plans, there is a buffer zone. Um,

665
00:39:27.049 --> 00:39:30.290
and that buffer zone is quite wide, and my

666
00:39:30.330 --> 00:39:32.339
concerns would be if it

667
00:39:32.370 --> 00:39:36.230
deviates, i- i- if, uh, it deviates

668
00:39:36.270 --> 00:39:39.790
from the path that its, its, its tracked to go through the land at
the

669
00:39:39.870 --> 00:39:43.629
moment and goes to s, to the edge of the buffer zone,

670
00:39:43.710 --> 00:39:47.470
technically it could then go into, um, a small copse,

671
00:39:47.730 --> 00:39:51.509
a wood, um, and I think that the company

672
00:39:51.589 --> 00:39:55.490
would deem that that area, the trees would be a category of

673
00:39:55.509 --> 00:39:58.310
view, because they've,

674
00:39:58.390 --> 00:40:02.129
um, were planted in the '80s.

675
00:40:03.029 --> 00:40:06.830
Um, but obviously, as a whole, that habitat is

676
00:40:06.870 --> 00:40:10.810
very important, um, to wildlife, and that would be

677
00:40:10.850 --> 00:40:12.509
of great concern to the

678
00:40:12.569 --> 00:40:15.549
family.

679
00:40:18.350 --> 00:40:19.310
That's it.

680
00:40:19.330 --> 00:40:22.990
Thank you very much. Thank you.

681

00:40:24.810 --> 00:40:26.310
Okay, and that's everyone-

682
00:40:26.319 --> 00:40:26.359
'Kay.

683
00:40:26.359 --> 00:40:29.930
... who's registered in the room. Um, so if we move on to

684
00:40:29.970 --> 00:40:30.850
Victoria Smith

685
00:40:30.890 --> 00:40:35.149
online?

686
00:40:39.670 --> 00:40:42.890
Hello. Can you hear me?

687
00:40:42.950 --> 00:40:44.149
Yes. We can hear you. Thank you.

688
00:40:44.230 --> 00:40:48.009
Oh. Great. Um, I am actually, uh, registered to

689
00:40:48.029 --> 00:40:49.230
speak on Friday,

690
00:40:50.529 --> 00:40:53.549
um, and I was coming to the Friday morning

691
00:40:53.629 --> 00:40:54.629
meeting.

692
00:40:56.049 --> 00:40:59.089
So, there's some element of duplication here.

693
00:40:59.129 --> 00:41:00.310
What would you like me to

694
00:41:00.370 --> 00:41:04.690
do?

695
00:41:05.170 --> 00:41:07.230
Um, yeah, it's whichever you prefer.

696
00:41:07.270 --> 00:41:11.210
If you're happy to, um, uh, say what you want to say now, by all means.

697
00:41:11.270 --> 00:41:14.710
If you'd prefer to do Friday morning, um, that's absolutely fine.

698
00:41:14.790 --> 00:41:17.129
Um, it's your, your choice.

699
00:41:17.210 --> 00:41:19.310
Or I could say it twice.

700
00:41:19.319 --> 00:41:21.589
(laughs)

701
00:41:21.600 --> 00:41:23.029
(laughs) Would it make any difference?

702
00:41:23.270 --> 00:41:26.509
I mean, what I would like to say, I've been listening

703
00:41:26.629 --> 00:41:30.350
to, um, Laura Cooper, uh, Nick

704
00:41:30.410 --> 00:41:34.069
Frampton, and Kay Brown. Um,

705
00:41:35.170 --> 00:41:38.470
their representations are absolutely

706
00:41:38.810 --> 00:41:42.270
100% spot on. Uh, they don't really

707
00:41:42.310 --> 00:41:45.890
duplicate what I was going to say, but they have

708

00:41:46.069 --> 00:41:49.569

my, uh, wholehearted support.

709

00:41:49.670 --> 00:41:53.450

Um, I don't suppose it matters a lot, but I'm chairman

710

00:41:53.509 --> 00:41:57.350

of, of the Mears Ashby Parish Council, for my sins,

711

00:41:57.450 --> 00:42:01.250

and, um, uh, you know, just as an ordinary

712

00:42:01.310 --> 00:42:05.189

housewife, um, if that's politically correct

713

00:42:05.230 --> 00:42:08.750

to say that these days, I've been drawn into this,

714

00:42:09.210 --> 00:42:13.189

uh, because of my position. And, um,

715

00:42:13.330 --> 00:42:16.649

I couldn't have put, uh, what's been said

716

00:42:17.170 --> 00:42:20.509

anywhere near as well as the points that have already been

717

00:42:20.589 --> 00:42:22.790

made. Um,

718

00:42:22.830 --> 00:42:26.710

w- I think

719

00:42:26.750 --> 00:42:30.670

I'll leave it there for now, if that's of any use, and I

720

00:42:30.790 --> 00:42:34.770

will further consider what I'm going to say on

721

00:42:34.810 --> 00:42:38.480

Friday morning, set against what's been said this evening.

722
00:42:38.549 --> 00:42:42.170
And, um, I'll see you at the Hilton

723
00:42:43.370 --> 00:42:45.170
at 10:30.

724
00:42:46.149 --> 00:42:47.970
Uh, 10:00. (laughs)

725
00:42:48.089 --> 00:42:48.100
10:00.

726
00:42:48.109 --> 00:42:49.890
10:00 it starts on Friday, yes.

727
00:42:50.149 --> 00:42:51.330
Oh my God. Well, I'm glad we spoke.

728
00:42:51.339 --> 00:42:53.430
(laughs)

729
00:42:53.439 --> 00:42:53.439

730
00:42:53.450 --> 00:42:55.250
Yeah. Thank you very much then. Thank you.

731
00:42:55.270 --> 00:42:56.029
And we'll, we'll-

732
00:42:56.040 --> 00:42:56.359
All right. Thank you very

733
00:42:56.359 --> 00:42:58.450
much. ... um, hear from you on Friday. Thank you.

734
00:42:58.490 --> 00:42:58.750
Thank

735

00:42:58.830 --> 00:43:12.350
you.

736
00:43:19.958 --> 00:43:23.558
Hello. Sorry, if I could just ask a question, um, to Ms. Partridge, please.

737
00:43:23.598 --> 00:43:26.258
Um, (clears throat) if you can hear me.

738
00:43:26.318 --> 00:43:30.228
Um, we wanted to check which copse you were talking

739
00:43:30.318 --> 00:43:33.638
about. Does it have a name, um, and which site would it be

740
00:43:33.718 --> 00:43:36.038
near?

741
00:43:40.318 --> 00:43:52.418
(silence)

742
00:43:52.428 --> 00:43:55.878
OK. No, I mean, that, that should be sufficient, I think. Yeah.

743
00:43:55.918 --> 00:43:57.458
Old Quarry. Yeah, that's lovely. Thank

744
00:43:57.538 --> 00:44:15.538
you.

745
00:44:15.548 --> 00:44:21.538
(silence)

746
00:44:21.618 --> 00:44:23.718
OK, thank you very much for your contributions.

747
00:44:23.798 --> 00:44:25.278
Um, I'll just hand over to the applicant.

748
00:44:25.298 --> 00:44:28.898

Is there anything you wanted to come back on at this stage, or did you want

749
00:44:28.938 --> 00:44:31.628
to respond in writing, um, at one of the forthcoming

750
00:44:31.678 --> 00:44:33.398
deadlines?

751
00:44:34.098 --> 00:45:00.078
(silence)

752
00:45:00.098 --> 00:45:02.018
Uh, Claire Brodrick for the applicant.

753
00:45:02.078 --> 00:45:05.618
Um, and I apologise because I've got my back to people that I'm
(laughs), uh,

754
00:45:05.798 --> 00:45:09.598
speaking to, but the, um, are just, the applicant's team did just
want to thank

755
00:45:09.618 --> 00:45:13.578
everyone for attending, um, this evening's hearing and for

756
00:45:13.598 --> 00:45:17.408
the very detailed and eloquent submissions that have been made.

757
00:45:17.578 --> 00:45:21.528
We have been making very detailed notes of all of the points, um,
across a

758
00:45:21.578 --> 00:45:24.928
variety of different topics, um, and we will be responding

759
00:45:25.018 --> 00:45:28.818
in, in writing, um, to all of the points that have been

760
00:45:28.878 --> 00:45:32.758
made. There are a couple of points I thought I would just touch on
as a

761

00:45:32.778 --> 00:45:36.518

sort of signposting, and then the written submission will provide more

762

00:45:36.558 --> 00:45:40.538

detail and the relevant cross-references so that, um, those

763

00:45:40.578 --> 00:45:44.368

that have made submissions, um, can locate the correct document that

764

00:45:44.398 --> 00:45:48.198

provides a bit more information in relation to the specific,

765

00:45:48.258 --> 00:45:51.948

uh, points that were raised. Some of the points, um,

766

00:45:52.578 --> 00:45:56.138

raised today have been, um, considered in more

767

00:45:56.218 --> 00:46:00.058

detail in the issue-specific hearings, which I'm conscious not everyone has

768

00:46:00.098 --> 00:46:03.648

been able to attend. Um, so in our, uh,

769

00:46:03.838 --> 00:46:07.818

summary, um, in relation to this open floor hearing, we will also provide

770

00:46:07.838 --> 00:46:11.818

the cross-references to the written summary, both for issue-specific hearing

771

00:46:11.978 --> 00:46:15.178

one, um, which dealt with a number of points, um,

772

00:46:15.278 --> 00:46:19.248

on, uh, that were raised today. Particularly in relation to,

773

00:46:19.358 --> 00:46:23.187

um, uh, the treatment of footpaths, both existing and

774

00:46:23.238 --> 00:46:26.958

permissive paths, um, how those will be laid out.

775

00:46:26.967 --> 00:46:30.518

Uh, points regarding, um, any potential fencing, where that will be

776

00:46:30.558 --> 00:46:33.738

located, um, and, and the sort of the sense of

777

00:46:34.318 --> 00:46:38.158

enclosure that was mentioned and how that will be managed, um, in
the

778

00:46:38.198 --> 00:46:41.627

design of the scheme. Um, in addition, in

779

00:46:41.658 --> 00:46:45.638

today's issue-specific hearing, we provided, um, quite

780

00:46:45.698 --> 00:46:49.358

detailed comments on, um, BESS safety matters which we'll

781

00:46:49.418 --> 00:46:52.958

refer to, um, which will set out, um, the

782

00:46:53.518 --> 00:46:54.778

very detailed, um,

783

00:46:55.758 --> 00:46:59.298

uh, battery safety management plan and the measures that will be put
in place

784

00:46:59.378 --> 00:47:03.038

to, um, prevent, um, fire safety

785

00:47:03.238 --> 00:47:07.038

and, and where those, um, uh, the measures that will be put in

786

00:47:07.058 --> 00:47:10.678
place should, um, a fire event occur, what the mitigation

787
00:47:10.718 --> 00:47:12.808
measures and the procedures are in place then.

788
00:47:12.838 --> 00:47:16.498
So we'll provide some cross-referencing, um, to

789
00:47:16.558 --> 00:47:20.398
that. And we've had a number of comments raised today, particularly
in

790
00:47:20.438 --> 00:47:23.938
relation to traffic, which is again something that has been,

791
00:47:24.018 --> 00:47:27.838
um, discussed. Um, we provided, at, um,

792
00:47:27.878 --> 00:47:31.678
the last deadline, um, a, a sort of a comprehensive set of

793
00:47:31.718 --> 00:47:35.558
plans showing each of the construction traffic

794
00:47:35.598 --> 00:47:38.387
routes, um, that we will cross-refer to.

795
00:47:38.437 --> 00:47:42.098
In terms of, um, sort of traffic regulation

796
00:47:42.178 --> 00:47:46.038
measures, um, as was mentioned in the hearing earlier today,

797
00:47:46.098 --> 00:47:49.908
those are being, um, discussed in detail with the, um,

798
00:47:50.038 --> 00:47:53.178
local highway authority. So the use of,

799
00:47:53.298 --> 00:47:56.908

um, traffic regulation measures such as, um, junction

800

00:47:56.978 --> 00:48:00.898

controls or, um, uh, traffic, uh, lights, et cetera.

801

00:48:00.938 --> 00:48:04.738

Those are all, um, being discussed in detail, um, and

802

00:48:04.838 --> 00:48:08.558

the intention is for those to be agreed indicatively

803

00:48:08.658 --> 00:48:11.958

and, um, documented in the statement of common ground.

804

00:48:11.978 --> 00:48:15.878

But, as is typical for DCO projects, the detailed

805

00:48:15.898 --> 00:48:19.838

design of those measures will take place at the post-consent stage,

806

00:48:19.878 --> 00:48:23.638

and those will all individually need to be, um, approved by the relevant

807

00:48:23.698 --> 00:48:27.528

planning authority and any necessary, um, s- road safety

808

00:48:27.638 --> 00:48:31.238

audits, um, will need to be supplied at that point in time in order for them

809

00:48:31.738 --> 00:48:35.118

to receive, um, approval.

810

00:48:37.498 --> 00:48:41.278

There were some comments made in relation to, um, supply

811

00:48:41.358 --> 00:48:45.148

chain standards, and it was noted that there is a specific requirement in the

812

00:48:45.178 --> 00:48:48.618
dr- draft DCO relating to supply chain.

813
00:48:48.678 --> 00:48:51.618
Um, that again is an outline management plan and a more

814
00:48:51.678 --> 00:48:55.668
detailed, uh, plan will be submitted post-consent setting out

815
00:48:55.678 --> 00:48:57.898
more details on supply

816
00:48:57.938 --> 00:49:01.258
chain.

817
00:49:01.327 --> 00:49:04.778
(silence) . Thank you. Um,

818
00:49:05.378 --> 00:49:09.098
just in relation to that, the, the comments that were being made
there, that the,

819
00:49:09.138 --> 00:49:13.118
the DCO process, as we've mentioned before, is e-effectively
equivalent

820
00:49:13.128 --> 00:49:16.868
to an outline planning permission and the detailed design is

821
00:49:16.898 --> 00:49:20.798
dealt with post-consent. Um, however, the outline

822
00:49:20.808 --> 00:49:24.638
management plans that are submitted as part of the DCO application

823
00:49:24.678 --> 00:49:28.198
and which, um, are live documents, um, and they are being

824
00:49:28.238 --> 00:49:31.778
amended as the examination-...progresses specifically in

825

00:49:31.798 --> 00:49:35.078
response to comments made by stakeholders, by the local planning

826

00:49:35.118 --> 00:49:38.178
authority, and by, um, interested parties.

827

00:49:38.218 --> 00:49:42.098
So where concerns have been raised and we, the applicant feels

828

00:49:42.138 --> 00:49:45.598
it's appropriate or the examining authority has, uh,

829

00:49:45.718 --> 00:49:49.567
suggested that the applicant might like to consider whether those
plans can be, um,

830

00:49:49.578 --> 00:49:53.298
amended or clarified to provide some comfort that concerns

831

00:49:53.857 --> 00:49:56.918
raised are being addressed, then we are looking to do those.

832

00:49:56.978 --> 00:50:00.478
So to the extent that anybody has any specific

833

00:50:00.488 --> 00:50:03.998
suggestions on the drafting of those management plans, then the
applicant

834

00:50:04.038 --> 00:50:07.518
would, um, recommend that, uh, interested

835

00:50:07.578 --> 00:50:10.897
parties put, um, that drafting in their, their written

836

00:50:10.998 --> 00:50:14.958
submissions, and the applicant will happily consider any amendments
that can be

837

00:50:15.018 --> 00:50:18.426
made to those outline, uh, management plans.

838

00:50:18.458 --> 00:50:21.337

One of the other points that was raised related to the community benefit

839

00:50:21.458 --> 00:50:24.558

fund. Um, as we've mentioned before, at the

840

00:50:24.618 --> 00:50:27.877

moment, community benefit funds sit outside of the

841

00:50:27.897 --> 00:50:31.627

DCO, um, process. Um, it's not a planning

842

00:50:31.698 --> 00:50:35.578

consideration that, um, the examining authority can take into account or the

843

00:50:35.618 --> 00:50:39.038

Secretary of State can take into account, and those are the, that's the current

844

00:50:39.098 --> 00:50:41.678

system within which we're working.

845

00:50:41.778 --> 00:50:41.978

Um,

846

00:50:43.078 --> 00:50:46.998

there are, uh, measures all being consulted on to bring

847

00:50:47.058 --> 00:50:50.897

into place a compulsory community benefit scheme, but those are not

848

00:50:50.958 --> 00:50:54.938

yet in force. However, um, the applicant here, as

849

00:50:54.978 --> 00:50:58.578

is the case with the majority of large-scale solar developers, is voluntarily

850

00:50:58.587 --> 00:51:00.758

providing a community benefit fund.

851

00:51:00.817 --> 00:51:04.658

Um, but the detail of that, um, ha- won't be confirmed until

852

00:51:04.698 --> 00:51:05.828

post-consent.

853

00:51:07.158 --> 00:51:07.897

I think those were the

854

00:51:08.837 --> 00:51:11.778

particular points that I just wanted to touch on orally in this hearing.

855

00:51:11.798 --> 00:51:15.418

But as I said at the beginning, we've taken a detailed note and we will respond in

856

00:51:15.458 --> 00:51:17.697

writing, um, to the comments raised.

857

00:51:17.768 --> 00:51:19.518

Thank you.

858

00:51:19.558 --> 00:51:21.478

Thank you, Ms. Brodrick.

859

00:51:22.938 --> 00:51:26.908

Um, so that, uh, leads me to thank everyone for your contributions

860

00:51:26.958 --> 00:51:29.897

this evening. It's all, um, they've all been really helpful, so thank you for

861

00:51:29.938 --> 00:51:33.478

taking the time to come. Um, the time is now

862

00:51:33.758 --> 00:51:37.698

6:50, and so the hearing is closed. Thank you again for your contributions.