



## Hearing Transcript

<b>Project:</b>	Green Hill Solar Farm
<b>Hearing:</b>	Open Floor Hearing 3 (OFH3) - Part 1
<b>Date:</b>	10 March 2026

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

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

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1

00:00:00.000 --> 00:00:01.725

Well good afternoon everyone.

2

00:00:02.585 --> 00:00:06.125

Um, it is now 2:00 PM and time for this hearing.

3

00:00:06.265 --> 00:00:10.045

To begin, I would like to welcome you all

4

00:00:10.065 --> 00:00:14.565

to this open floor hearing, um, which you may find referred

5

00:00:14.625 --> 00:00:16.685

to as OFH three

6

00:00:17.425 --> 00:00:20.125

for the Greenhill Solar Farm Project.

7

00:00:21.345 --> 00:00:23.005

Um, could I just confirm

8

00:00:23.005 --> 00:00:26.165

that everybody can hear me clearly, um, in the room?

9

00:00:27.015 --> 00:00:28.725

Great, thank you. Um,

10

00:00:28.905 --> 00:00:31.405

and anyone on online, if they could just indicate,

11

00:00:33.835 --> 00:00:34.885

okay, great, thank you.

12

00:00:36.545 --> 00:00:40.205

Um, and could I also confirm with the case manager

13

00:00:40.315 --> 00:00:41.885

that the live streaming

14

00:00:41.945 --> 00:00:44.485

and recording of this event has commenced?

15

00:00:45.425 --> 00:00:47.085

Got a thumbs up from the back. Thank you.

16

00:00:48.025 --> 00:00:49.805

Um, so my name is Mark Harrison.

17

00:00:50.265 --> 00:00:52.125

I'm a charter, uh, a planning inspector

18

00:00:52.265 --> 00:00:53.525

and charter town planner.

19

00:00:54.555 --> 00:00:56.685

I've been appointed by the Secretary of State

20

00:00:56.745 --> 00:00:59.285

to be the lead member of the panel

21

00:00:59.825 --> 00:01:01.685

to examine this application.

22

00:01:02.465 --> 00:01:06.285

Um, I'll now ask the other panel members, uh, one

23

00:01:06.285 --> 00:01:09.005

of whom is online to introduce themselves.

24

00:01:11.725 --> 00:01:13.575

Good afternoon. My name is Catherine Bebe.

25

00:01:13.635 --> 00:01:16.215

I'm a town planner as an examining inspector.

26

00:01:17.125 --> 00:01:19.335

Been appointed as a panel member by the of

27

00:01:19.335 --> 00:01:20.855

of the examining authority.

28

00:01:23.905 --> 00:01:25.755

Good afternoon. My name's Rebecca Norman.

29

00:01:25.775 --> 00:01:28.075

I'm a chartered town planner and examining inspector.

30

00:01:28.545 --> 00:01:30.235

I've been appointed as a panel member

31

00:01:30.255 --> 00:01:31.435

of the examining authority.

32

00:01:32.615 --> 00:01:35.155

So together we constitute the examining authority

33

00:01:35.215 --> 00:01:36.275

for this application.

34

00:01:37.095 --> 00:01:38.875

Our role is to examine the application

35

00:01:38.935 --> 00:01:41.715

and to report to the Secretary of State for energy security

36

00:01:41.895 --> 00:01:44.235

and net zero with a recommendation as to whether

37

00:01:44.235 --> 00:01:46.595

or not the development consent order should be made.

38

00:01:47.495 --> 00:01:49.195

I'd also like to introduce the members

39

00:01:49.195 --> 00:01:50.715

of the Punning Inspector's case team

40

00:01:50.735 --> 00:01:51.915

who are supporting us today.

41

00:01:52.655 --> 00:01:54.355

Um, you may have already spoken with them.

42

00:01:54.455 --> 00:01:57.195

We have in the room Ryan Sedgman, who's case manager

43

00:01:57.255 --> 00:02:00.315

for this project, together with Sam Stevens, case Officer

44

00:02:01.355 --> 00:02:03.755

Gerwin Rigby assisted with online registrations

45

00:02:04.095 --> 00:02:07.075

and in addition, technicians from the audio Visual company

46

00:02:07.205 --> 00:02:10.435

event video and TM services are in attendance at the back

47

00:02:10.435 --> 00:02:11.915

of the rooms solely for the purpose

48

00:02:12.055 --> 00:02:13.235

of managing the recording

49

00:02:13.355 --> 00:02:14.955

and the live streaming for this hearing.

50

00:02:16.215 --> 00:02:18.435

So I'll now deal with a few housekeeping matters

51

00:02:18.495 --> 00:02:19.795

for those attending in person.

52

00:02:20.575 --> 00:02:22.355

Uh, please can everyone set all devices

53

00:02:22.455 --> 00:02:23.475

and phones to silent?

54

00:02:24.375 --> 00:02:26.875

Um, you'll be aware that toilets are located just outside

55

00:02:26.875 --> 00:02:29.435  
of this room and there is no fire alarm

56

00:02:29.465 --> 00:02:30.555  
test planned for today.

57

00:02:30.695 --> 00:02:33.235  
So if we hear the alarm, we'll need to make our way out

58

00:02:33.235 --> 00:02:34.595  
through the doors at the rear of the room

59

00:02:35.335 --> 00:02:37.755  
and to the assembly area, which is the carpark.

60

00:02:38.745 --> 00:02:41.195  
I'll now move on to briefly talk about the agenda

61

00:02:41.615 --> 00:02:43.075  
and logistics for the hearing.

62

00:02:44.975 --> 00:02:46.595  
So we published a short agenda

63

00:02:46.595 --> 00:02:48.155  
for this hearing on the 2nd of March

64

00:02:48.155 --> 00:02:52.635  
with an examination library reference of E 10 0 0 1.

65

00:02:53.295 --> 00:02:55.995  
The purpose of this hearing is to hear the representations

66

00:02:55.995 --> 00:02:58.115  
of interested parties who have registered

67

00:02:58.415 --> 00:03:01.085  
to make oral representations elaborating on their

68

00:03:01.085 --> 00:03:02.205

written representations.

69

00:03:02.265 --> 00:03:04.845

To date, the order in which you'll be invited

70

00:03:04.865 --> 00:03:06.165

to speak will follow the list

71

00:03:06.485 --> 00:03:07.805

provided to us by the case team.

72

00:03:09.035 --> 00:03:11.605

Today's hearing is being undertaken in a hybrid way,

73

00:03:11.605 --> 00:03:13.405

meaning some of you're present with us at the venue

74

00:03:13.505 --> 00:03:16.205

and some are joining virtually via Microsoft Teams.

75

00:03:16.785 --> 00:03:17.965

We all make sure that

76

00:03:17.965 --> 00:03:19.685

however you've decided to attend today,

77

00:03:19.785 --> 00:03:22.525

you will be given a fair opportunity to participate.

78

00:03:24.405 --> 00:03:27.165

A recording of today's hearing will be made available on the

79

00:03:27.165 --> 00:03:28.325

Greenhill project section

80

00:03:28.385 --> 00:03:30.045

of the National Infrastructure Planning

81

00:03:30.045 --> 00:03:31.405

website as soon as possible.

82

00:03:31.405 --> 00:03:32.565  
After the hearing is finished.

83

00:03:33.515 --> 00:03:35.165  
With this in mind, please ensure

84

00:03:35.165 --> 00:03:37.885  
that you speak clearly into the microphone stating your name

85

00:03:37.905 --> 00:03:40.605  
and who you are representing a

86

00:03:40.605 --> 00:03:41.645  
link to the planning inspector.

87

00:03:41.675 --> 00:03:43.005  
It's privacy notice was

88

00:03:43.285 --> 00:03:45.045  
provided in the notification for this hearing.

89

00:03:45.665 --> 00:03:47.885  
We assume that everybody here today has familiarized

90

00:03:47.885 --> 00:03:50.165  
themselves with this document, which establishes

91

00:03:50.165 --> 00:03:53.485  
how personal data of our customers is handled in accordance

92

00:03:53.485 --> 00:03:56.005  
with the principles set out in data protection laws.

93

00:03:56.465 --> 00:03:58.285  
Please speak to the case manager if you

94

00:03:58.285 --> 00:03:59.405  
have any questions about this.

95

00:04:00.665 --> 00:04:03.325

So let me move on to briefly explain the purpose

96

00:04:03.385 --> 00:04:04.605

of this open floor hearing.

97

00:04:05.675 --> 00:04:07.485

Open floor hearings are your opportunity

98

00:04:07.505 --> 00:04:09.765

to raise anything directly to the examining authority

99

00:04:09.765 --> 00:04:11.165

that is important and relevant

100

00:04:11.165 --> 00:04:13.525

and that you think we should know about and consider.

101

00:04:13.995 --> 00:04:16.325

They're not about a particular locational topic.

102

00:04:16.785 --> 00:04:19.485

The topic of your representations about the proposals is

103

00:04:19.485 --> 00:04:20.525

therefore up to yourself.

104

00:04:21.495 --> 00:04:23.285

We're familiar with your representations,

105

00:04:23.425 --> 00:04:25.885

so when speaking you don't need to repeat these at length.

106

00:04:26.315 --> 00:04:29.045

What we are seeking is for you to provide further detail

107

00:04:29.045 --> 00:04:31.045

or evidence to help us understand these issues

108

00:04:32.225 --> 00:04:33.485

to make best use of time.

109

00:04:33.865 --> 00:04:35.925

And whilst we're not wishing to limit contributions,

110

00:04:35.925 --> 00:04:38.765

it would be of great assistance if points were not repeated.

111

00:04:39.385 --> 00:04:40.405

You can rest assured

112

00:04:40.405 --> 00:04:43.005

that we will have understood the points made the first time

113

00:04:44.075 --> 00:04:46.605

similarly if you spoke either OFH one

114

00:04:46.605 --> 00:04:49.045

or OFH two in December, 2025

115

00:04:49.585 --> 00:04:50.805

and there's no need for you

116

00:04:50.805 --> 00:04:53.285

to repeat your comments at OFH three today.

117

00:04:53.555 --> 00:04:56.485

However, if you have any new comments to make in relation

118

00:04:56.485 --> 00:05:00.685

to the applicant's change request documents C 1 0 0 1

119

00:05:00.685 --> 00:05:03.285

to C 1 0 4 oh and

120

00:05:03.425 --> 00:05:07.445

or change request two which are documents C 2 0 0 1

121

00:05:07.865 --> 00:05:10.525

to CR 2 0 2 4, then you may do so.

122

00:05:12.145 --> 00:05:15.205

We do not intend on setting a strict time limit on people

123

00:05:15.485 --> 00:05:17.965

speaking, but as stated in the published agenda,

124

00:05:18.025 --> 00:05:19.805

we would ask that your submissions are concise

125

00:05:20.225 --> 00:05:21.245

and to the point and

126

00:05:21.245 --> 00:05:23.165

to be concluded within about 10 minutes.

127

00:05:23.745 --> 00:05:27.045

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

128

00:05:27.045 --> 00:05:28.205

to introduce a time limit.

129

00:05:29.515 --> 00:05:31.205

Once you have spoken, the panel may

130

00:05:31.205 --> 00:05:32.285

wish to ask you questions.

131

00:05:32.705 --> 00:05:34.965

And finally, the applicant will be given an opportunity

132

00:05:35.065 --> 00:05:38.325

to respond to any matters raised once all speakers have been

133

00:05:38.325 --> 00:05:39.445

heard either orally

134

00:05:39.745 --> 00:05:42.765

or in writing by deadline six, which is the 24th of March.

135

00:05:44.425 --> 00:05:47.245

Uh, for those attending virtually, please can I request that

136

00:05:47.245 --> 00:05:49.245

to minimize background noise, you make sure

137

00:05:49.245 --> 00:05:51.085

that you stay muted when you're not speaking

138

00:05:51.225 --> 00:05:52.405

and have camera turned off.

139

00:05:53.085 --> 00:05:55.245

I would also ask that when it's your turn to speak,

140

00:05:55.245 --> 00:05:56.485

please turn your camera on.

141

00:05:57.025 --> 00:05:58.605

Um, and can I also remind people

142

00:05:58.635 --> 00:06:00.525

that the chat function on Microsoft

143

00:06:00.525 --> 00:06:01.645

Teams has been switched off?

144

00:06:01.665 --> 00:06:03.085

So please do not try to use this

145

00:06:03.085 --> 00:06:04.765

to ask questions or post comments.

146

00:06:06.075 --> 00:06:07.405

It's perfectly normal for people

147

00:06:07.405 --> 00:06:09.285

to feel nervous when having to speak in public.

148

00:06:09.625 --> 00:06:11.725

Please be reassured that we completely understand

149

00:06:11.825 --> 00:06:13.245

and that if you stumble over your words

150

00:06:13.345 --> 00:06:15.845

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

151

00:06:17.275 --> 00:06:19.125

Does anyone have any questions on the speaking

152

00:06:19.125 --> 00:06:20.445

process in the room?

153

00:06:21.755 --> 00:06:24.165

Nope. Anyone online? Any questions?

154

00:06:26.465 --> 00:06:27.605

No. Okay.

155

00:06:27.745 --> 00:06:30.325

So we'll move on to confirm those who've notified the EXA

156

00:06:30.325 --> 00:06:31.605

of A wish to be heard at the hearing.

157

00:06:32.425 --> 00:06:36.325

So before we hear from any speakers, um, can I ask, um, who,

158

00:06:36.325 --> 00:06:38.565

if anyone will be speaking for the applicant today?

159

00:06:41.425 --> 00:06:44.085

Oh yeah, Ms. Budget. Thank you very much.

160

00:06:47.335 --> 00:06:50.845

Thank you. So I will shortly invite representations from

161

00:06:50.845 --> 00:06:53.645

those interested parties who have given the requested notice

162

00:06:54.225 --> 00:06:55.885

to us of their intention to speak.

163

00:06:56.625 --> 00:06:58.245

Um, so I'll just run through these.

164

00:06:58.705 --> 00:07:00.845

Um, can I check that we have present either

165

00:07:00.865 --> 00:07:02.005

in the room or online?

166

00:07:02.745 --> 00:07:05.565

Um, Mr. Phillip Mason from g Grendon Parish Council?

167

00:07:06.115 --> 00:07:08.725

Yeah, thank you. Um,

168

00:07:09.845 --> 00:07:12.205

I did have Deborah Rush, um,

169

00:07:12.355 --> 00:07:14.245

from Cogno Western Parish Council,

170

00:07:14.345 --> 00:07:16.485

but she may or may not tend. Do

171

00:07:16.485 --> 00:07:17.485

We have Deborah?

172

00:07:17.995 --> 00:07:20.965

Nope. Okay, thank

173

00:07:20.965 --> 00:07:21.965

You. Um,

174

00:07:21.965 --> 00:07:23.805

I've got Stuart Andrew mp.

175

00:07:24.815 --> 00:07:28.405

Thank you. Uh, Sarah Ball mp. Thank you.

176

00:07:30.505 --> 00:07:32.725

Uh, Trevor Higgs from Grendon Walking Group.

177

00:07:33.375 --> 00:07:38.285

Thank you. Uh, Brian Skit from CPRE, Northampton

178

00:07:38.285 --> 00:07:39.405

and Boje Parish Council.

179

00:07:39.545 --> 00:07:43.645

Yep. Thank you. Uh, Dr. Linda Tuy.

180

00:07:44.335 --> 00:07:48.445

Thank you. Uh, we've got, uh,

181

00:07:48.545 --> 00:07:50.165

Tim Ma may, he

182

00:07:50.165 --> 00:07:52.285

Might not be here, but Possibly not here.

183

00:07:52.995 --> 00:07:57.365

Nope. Okay. No.

184

00:07:58.625 --> 00:08:00.725

Uh, Kay Brown for stop. Greenhill Solar.

185

00:08:03.145 --> 00:08:04.145

Uh, Tim Graham.

186

00:08:04.935 --> 00:08:08.765

Thank you. Uh, Bernard. Ey?

187

00:08:09.675 --> 00:08:13.485

Yeah, thank you. Uh, Susan Brady.

188

00:08:17.705 --> 00:08:21.845

So Susan, I don't think she's on my list. No.

189

00:08:22.065 --> 00:08:24.085

Oh, okay.

190

00:08:25.385 --> 00:08:28.325

Uh, Dr. Marie Midgley. Thank you.

191

00:08:29.625 --> 00:08:31.805

Sheena Howell. Thank

192

00:08:31.805 --> 00:08:32.805

You.

193

00:08:33.945 --> 00:08:38.245

Um, and then I've also got, um, Tony Mulvaney.

194

00:08:38.795 --> 00:08:41.005

Yeah. Thank you. And Keith Burl.

195

00:08:41.935 --> 00:08:42.405

Thank you.

196

00:08:45.705 --> 00:08:47.685

Uh, yeah.

197

00:08:47.685 --> 00:08:49.085

Yeah. Okay.

198

00:08:49.505 --> 00:08:51.445

Uh, can I ask if there's anyone here today,

199

00:08:51.445 --> 00:08:53.845

either in the room or online who wishes to speak, um,

200

00:08:53.845 --> 00:08:56.285

that hasn't registered and hasn't been covered on that list?

201

00:08:57.745 --> 00:08:57.965

Yep.

202

00:09:02.625 --> 00:09:04.845

Can you, uh, tell us your name then please?

203

00:09:05.605 --> 00:09:06.445

I think there's A microphone.

204

00:09:06.525 --> 00:09:07.565

I think there's a microphone coming.

205

00:09:07.635 --> 00:09:08.635

Yeah.

206

00:09:13.825 --> 00:09:15.765

My name is Steve Townsend.

207

00:09:22.945 --> 00:09:27.935

Thank you. Is there anyone else in the room? No.

208

00:09:28.115 --> 00:09:33.095

Is there anyone online? No.

209

00:09:33.365 --> 00:09:35.575

Okay. So I'm now gonna move on

210

00:09:35.575 --> 00:09:37.495

to invite those registered parties to speak.

211

00:09:37.955 --> 00:09:40.015

Um, when I read out your name, if you're in the room,

212

00:09:40.015 --> 00:09:42.055

please come to the table in front.

213

00:09:42.475 --> 00:09:44.375

Um, and if online, please turn camera on

214

00:09:44.725 --> 00:09:46.015

when it's your turn to speak.

215

00:09:46.195 --> 00:09:47.575

Um, please turn on the microphone

216

00:09:48.035 --> 00:09:49.735

and start by introducing yourself

217

00:09:49.755 --> 00:09:51.575

and if relevant to who you are representing.

218

00:09:52.355 --> 00:09:53.895

Uh, can I please remind you not

219

00:09:53.895 --> 00:09:56.135

to supply any personal details when speaking?

220

00:09:56.275 --> 00:09:58.735

For example, do not state your home, address your age,

221

00:09:58.835 --> 00:09:59.975

any medical conditions,

222

00:10:00.315 --> 00:10:01.455

and if you feel like you need

223

00:10:01.455 --> 00:10:04.375

to supply such personal information to us, please talk

224

00:10:04.375 --> 00:10:06.135

to the case team about how you can do that.

225

00:10:08.315 --> 00:10:10.575

So we'll begin with Mr. Mason then.

226

00:10:19.105 --> 00:10:19.575

Thank you.

227

00:10:20.395 --> 00:10:21.415

Do you want us to sit down?

228

00:10:32.445 --> 00:10:36.105

Is this on? Yes, uh, good afternoon.

229

00:10:36.365 --> 00:10:39.745

My name is uh, Philip Mason, counselor for uh,

230

00:10:39.745 --> 00:10:40.745  
grand Barrish Council.

231

00:10:41.965 --> 00:10:43.265  
I'm here on behalf of the council

232

00:10:43.365 --> 00:10:47.225  
and our residents who object to the proposal, uh,

233

00:10:47.255 --> 00:10:49.945  
Greenhill Solar Farm due to its very close proximity

234

00:10:50.725 --> 00:10:53.865  
to the upper Neen Valley gravel pits special protection area

235

00:10:54.305 --> 00:10:56.945  
SBA and the Neen Valley Ramsar site.

236

00:10:57.645 --> 00:10:59.865  
And this would inevitably place 'em at risk.

237

00:11:00.555 --> 00:11:01.705  
These sites, as you know,

238

00:11:01.725 --> 00:11:03.665  
are internationally protected wetlands

239

00:11:03.765 --> 00:11:05.825  
of the highest ecological importance

240

00:11:07.985 --> 00:11:10.665  
Examining authorities report on the implications

241

00:11:10.665 --> 00:11:12.025  
for European sites.

242

00:11:12.505 --> 00:11:15.385  
Reese identifies a number of negative impacts,

243

00:11:15.915 --> 00:11:18.985

which it concludes cannot be ruled out at this stage.

244

00:11:19.415 --> 00:11:21.585

Several of these remain unresolved and

245

00:11:21.585 --> 00:11:23.465

therefore give rise to serious concern.

246

00:11:25.125 --> 00:11:27.825

Our main areas of concern regarding this particular aspect

247

00:11:28.405 --> 00:11:31.065

are the location of the proposed solar farm

248

00:11:31.165 --> 00:11:32.585

and associated infrastructure

249

00:11:32.645 --> 00:11:33.745

and bears in particular

250

00:11:34.325 --> 00:11:37.265

as it's immediately adjacent being just 10 meters.

251

00:11:37.365 --> 00:11:41.185

In places to these protected SPA and Ramsar wetlands.

252

00:11:42.525 --> 00:11:44.825

We consider that there is no meaningful separation

253

00:11:44.825 --> 00:11:47.225

between the development and the protected wetlands.

254

00:11:48.365 --> 00:11:52.145

Any changes to drainage, land management or activity levels

255

00:11:52.655 --> 00:11:54.125

therefore have the potential

256

00:11:54.145 --> 00:11:56.085

to affect the integrity of these sites.

257

00:11:57.585 --> 00:11:58.605

The Reese confirms

258

00:11:58.605 --> 00:12:02.605

that probable significant effects have been identified in

259

00:12:02.885 --> 00:12:03.925

relation to a number of areas

260

00:12:04.825 --> 00:12:08.565

and include disturbance to qualifying bird species

261

00:12:08.585 --> 00:12:09.805

during construction

262

00:12:09.985 --> 00:12:13.765

and their operation habitat fragmentation

263

00:12:14.065 --> 00:12:18.325

and loss of functionality linked land, airborne

264

00:12:18.325 --> 00:12:21.205

and waterborne pollution, surface water runoff,

265

00:12:21.665 --> 00:12:24.725

and the spread of invasive and non-native species.

266

00:12:26.615 --> 00:12:30.285

These, uh, these effects apply to both the SPA

267

00:12:30.465 --> 00:12:31.685

and the Ramsar site

268

00:12:32.505 --> 00:12:35.285

and in several cases are still subject to disagreement

269

00:12:35.835 --> 00:12:38.045

between the applicant natural England

270

00:12:38.105 --> 00:12:39.525

and other interested parties.

271

00:12:41.425 --> 00:12:44.005

The council is particularly concerned about the risk

272

00:12:44.005 --> 00:12:46.565

of polluted surface water entering the wetland system.

273

00:12:48.225 --> 00:12:50.125

The site lies within the floodplain

274

00:12:50.465 --> 00:12:52.925

and there are ongoing concerns about whether the proposed

275

00:12:52.925 --> 00:12:56.685

drainage and pollution control measures would effectively,

276

00:12:57.105 --> 00:13:00.045

uh, would operate effectively during the flood events.

277

00:13:01.145 --> 00:13:03.445

The presence of the bears increases this concern,

278

00:13:03.805 --> 00:13:06.405

particularly the event of a fire where contaminated

279

00:13:06.915 --> 00:13:08.965

fire water could reach watercourse

280

00:13:09.155 --> 00:13:10.645

connected to these wetlands.

281

00:13:12.095 --> 00:13:13.105

Both the wetlands

282

00:13:13.125 --> 00:13:16.265

and the proposed development sit within the same floodplain.

283

00:13:17.245 --> 00:13:19.025

Our local experience shows

284

00:13:19.025 --> 00:13:21.225

that flooding is not uncommon in this area.

285

00:13:22.355 --> 00:13:24.345

These flood conditions increase the risk.

286

00:13:24.365 --> 00:13:27.785

The control measures that control measures do not work

287

00:13:27.845 --> 00:13:30.025

or are overtopped allowing sediment

288

00:13:30.085 --> 00:13:33.345

or pollutants to be carried towards the SPA

289

00:13:33.345 --> 00:13:34.465

and the Ramsar sites.

290

00:13:35.575 --> 00:13:37.945

According to the state of Nature report,

291

00:13:38.645 --> 00:13:41.785

the UK has already lost 90% of its wetlands

292

00:13:42.125 --> 00:13:45.065

and only 38% of these are in a healthy condition.

293

00:13:46.185 --> 00:13:47.525

So you can see our concern.

294

00:13:48.905 --> 00:13:51.605

The re also raises concerns about the adequacy

295

00:13:51.605 --> 00:13:55.905

of bird surveys, the identification of land used

296

00:13:55.905 --> 00:13:58.465

by qualifying species outside the SPA

297

00:13:59.045 --> 00:14:02.265

and the timing of proposed, uh, proposed mitigation.

298

00:14:03.405 --> 00:14:07.375

In particular, it remains unclear whether a suitable

299

00:14:07.405 --> 00:14:10.495

replacement habitat will be available before any loss

300

00:14:10.495 --> 00:14:11.735

or disturbance occurs.

301

00:14:13.035 --> 00:14:16.295

The council considers this uncertainty unacceptable given

302

00:14:16.315 --> 00:14:18.255

the sensitivity of the sites involved.

303

00:14:20.135 --> 00:14:22.465

We'd also like to inform the examination authority

304

00:14:22.535 --> 00:14:24.825

that the rare and endangered waterfall

305

00:14:25.355 --> 00:14:29.665

which are on the red list were recently reintroduced

306

00:14:29.725 --> 00:14:32.825

to the SSI and Ramsar and Neen wetlands last year

307

00:14:33.765 --> 00:14:36.265

and have already been cited in the proposed Bess area

308

00:14:37.045 --> 00:14:39.585

and to our knowledge has not been included in

309

00:14:39.585 --> 00:14:40.705

the environmental report.

310

00:14:42.865 --> 00:14:46.085

The council notes that the Greenhill Solar Farm does not

311

00:14:46.095 --> 00:14:47.205

exist in isolation.

312

00:14:48.625 --> 00:14:49.925

The risk confirms that

313

00:14:50.675 --> 00:14:53.205

that effects must be considered in combination

314

00:14:53.205 --> 00:14:54.645

with other plans and projects.

315

00:14:55.395 --> 00:14:58.805

However, concerns remain that cumulative impacts,

316

00:14:58.805 --> 00:15:01.845

particularly in relation to disturbance, hydrology,

317

00:15:02.395 --> 00:15:05.725

hydrology and pollution have not been fully resolved yet

318

00:15:07.255 --> 00:15:08.885

Given The very close proximity

319

00:15:08.945 --> 00:15:10.285

of the proposed development

320

00:15:10.285 --> 00:15:12.165

to the internationally protected wetlands,

321

00:15:13.335 --> 00:15:14.475

the council considers

322

00:15:14.475 --> 00:15:16.635

that Greenhill Solar Farm carries an inherently

323

00:15:16.705 --> 00:15:17.715

high risk of harm.

324

00:15:19.075 --> 00:15:22.075

Examining authorities report identifies a number

325

00:15:22.075 --> 00:15:24.115  
of impacts which cannot yet be ruled out

326

00:15:24.335 --> 00:15:27.195  
and important matters remain unresolved

327

00:15:29.015 --> 00:15:30.075  
in these circumstances

328

00:15:30.495 --> 00:15:32.235  
and applying the precautionary approach

329

00:15:32.875 --> 00:15:36.315  
required under the habitat's regulations, we consider

330

00:15:36.705 --> 00:15:38.555  
that adverse effects on the integrity

331

00:15:38.575 --> 00:15:40.315  
of the Upper NE Valley gravel pits.

332

00:15:40.515 --> 00:15:42.715  
SPA and Ramsar sites cannot be excluded.

333

00:15:43.575 --> 00:15:46.315  
The UK is already recognized as one

334

00:15:46.315 --> 00:15:49.315  
of the most nature depleted countries in the world ranking

335

00:15:49.375 --> 00:15:50.595  
in the bottom 10%.

336

00:15:53.095 --> 00:15:56.835  
We also have grave concerns over the proposed compound site

337

00:15:56.975 --> 00:15:58.555  
of the Yardley Road Grendon

338

00:15:58.895 --> 00:16:00.515  
and the expected increase in traffic

339

00:16:01.575 --> 00:16:03.155  
during your visit to Grendon.

340

00:16:03.175 --> 00:16:04.235  
You will have seen the parking

341

00:16:04.295 --> 00:16:06.915  
and the resulting restricted carriageway width along main

342

00:16:06.915 --> 00:16:11.115  
road and that area this often causes traffic jams

343

00:16:11.585 --> 00:16:14.115  
with hf, HVS buses

344

00:16:15.055 --> 00:16:17.235  
and heavy vehicles encroaching onto the

345

00:16:17.235 --> 00:16:18.395  
pavement in order to pass.

346

00:16:19.375 --> 00:16:21.875  
The photo has been sent to the examiners showing an example

347

00:16:21.875 --> 00:16:24.995  
of this, but this makes it extremely dangerous

348

00:16:24.995 --> 00:16:27.875  
for pedestrians and school children walking to

349

00:16:27.875 --> 00:16:31.755  
and from school and when going to the playing field, We

350

00:16:31.755 --> 00:16:33.195  
therefore considering the sighting

351

00:16:33.195 --> 00:16:34.795

of such a compound is inappropriate

352

00:16:34.795 --> 00:16:38.155

and dangerous, the council therefore objects the proposal

353

00:16:38.255 --> 00:16:40.075

and considers the consent should not be granted.

354

00:16:41.685 --> 00:16:42.685

Thank you very much.

355

00:16:50.335 --> 00:16:53.885

Thank you Mr. Mason. Uh, next we've got Stuart Andrew.

356

00:17:02.915 --> 00:17:04.105

Thank you. Hello.

357

00:17:05.205 --> 00:17:06.705

Um, thank you very much

358

00:17:06.765 --> 00:17:09.105

and um, just to note that both Sarah Bull

359

00:17:09.105 --> 00:17:10.585

and I are expected back in

360

00:17:10.585 --> 00:17:12.105

Westminster this evening for a vote.

361

00:17:12.125 --> 00:17:13.585

So if you have to leave, I do apologize,

362

00:17:14.205 --> 00:17:16.145

but I want to take this opportunity to say thank you

363

00:17:16.245 --> 00:17:18.305

for giving me the opportunity

364

00:17:18.485 --> 00:17:20.505

to represent the literally hundreds

365

00:17:20.505 --> 00:17:23.865

and hundreds of constituents who have contacted me

366

00:17:23.865 --> 00:17:25.225

regarding this proposal.

367

00:17:25.975 --> 00:17:27.185

What a significant number

368

00:17:27.185 --> 00:17:28.785

of points have been presented to me.

369

00:17:28.785 --> 00:17:31.585

With your permission, I will concentrate on the most

370

00:17:31.585 --> 00:17:33.345

significant points that have been raised

371

00:17:33.345 --> 00:17:34.665

given the time constraints.

372

00:17:35.605 --> 00:17:38.625

The first is the loss of high quality agricultural land.

373

00:17:39.465 --> 00:17:42.705

A major concern is, uh, is the proposed developments use

374

00:17:42.705 --> 00:17:47.225

of best and most versatile agricultural land defined as land

375

00:17:47.925 --> 00:17:49.525

within grades one, two,

376

00:17:49.585 --> 00:17:53.365

and three A of the agricultural land classification system.

377

00:17:54.345 --> 00:17:57.285

The MPPF states that where significant development

378

00:17:57.285 --> 00:18:00.005

of agricultural land is necessary, areas

379

00:18:00.145 --> 00:18:02.645

of poorer quality land should be preferred

380

00:18:02.645 --> 00:18:03.805

to those of higher quality.

381

00:18:04.795 --> 00:18:08.205

Similarly, the national planning policy statement, uh,

382

00:18:08.225 --> 00:18:10.805

for renewable energy infrastructure EN three

383

00:18:11.555 --> 00:18:13.805

advises developers to consider the quality

384

00:18:13.865 --> 00:18:16.085

of agricultural land when selecting sites

385

00:18:16.145 --> 00:18:17.285

for solar development.

386

00:18:18.195 --> 00:18:20.165

Available information indicates

387

00:18:20.195 --> 00:18:21.805

that a substantial proportion

388

00:18:21.805 --> 00:18:25.845

of the site area lies within BMV classifications.

389

00:18:26.785 --> 00:18:27.885

The proposed development

390

00:18:27.885 --> 00:18:29.965

therefore risks the long-term loss

391

00:18:29.965 --> 00:18:34.165

of productive farmland across a large rural area and

392

00:18:34.165 --> 00:18:36.725

therefore this raises wider concerns in relation

393

00:18:36.725 --> 00:18:38.005

to national food security,

394

00:18:38.445 --> 00:18:40.845

particularly given the increasing pressures caused

395

00:18:40.905 --> 00:18:42.445

by climate change and

396

00:18:42.445 --> 00:18:44.965

of course the global supply instability.

397

00:18:45.155 --> 00:18:48.445

That is particularly highlighted given the current global

398

00:18:48.595 --> 00:18:49.845

political situation

399

00:18:50.825 --> 00:18:52.725

and also the irreversible change

400

00:18:52.785 --> 00:18:55.325

to soil quality resulting from construction,

401

00:18:55.775 --> 00:18:58.445

cable installation and NE decommissioning.

402

00:18:59.805 --> 00:19:02.205

Although solar development is sometimes described

403

00:19:02.225 --> 00:19:03.685

as a temporary land use,

404

00:19:04.465 --> 00:19:07.605

the proposed 60 year operational period represents

405

00:19:08.125 --> 00:19:10.005

multiple agricultural generations

406

00:19:10.545 --> 00:19:14.005

during which time the land would effectively be removed from

407

00:19:14.075 --> 00:19:15.245

full productive use.

408

00:19:16.185 --> 00:19:18.765

Indeed, I will probably be dead by the end time of the end

409

00:19:18.765 --> 00:19:22.125

of this project, as will probably most of its sponsors.

410

00:19:22.985 --> 00:19:25.885

But given these factors, the proposal doesn't align

411

00:19:25.885 --> 00:19:28.965

with the national policy objectives aimed at safeguarding

412

00:19:28.995 --> 00:19:31.085

high quality agricultural land

413

00:19:31.545 --> 00:19:34.165

for future food production.

414

00:19:35.085 --> 00:19:37.125

Secondly, I want to talk about the inappropriate

415

00:19:37.135 --> 00:19:38.165

scale and location.

416

00:19:38.545 --> 00:19:42.885

The development covers approximately 1200 acres, nine sites,

417

00:19:42.905 --> 00:19:45.445

and 31 kilometers making it one

418

00:19:45.445 --> 00:19:48.045

of the largest solar projects proposed in the uk.

419

00:19:48.985 --> 00:19:51.565

The scale of the development is comparable to the footprint

420

00:19:51.565 --> 00:19:54.405

of Heathrow Airport highlighting the magnitude

421

00:19:54.405 --> 00:19:57.405

of the proposed scheme, the dispersed nature

422

00:19:57.425 --> 00:20:00.485

of the scheme spread across multiple solar sites

423

00:20:01.285 --> 00:20:04.965

surrounding numerous villages risk, creating the perception

424

00:20:04.965 --> 00:20:06.565

that communities are encircled

425

00:20:06.565 --> 00:20:09.285

by industrial scale energy infrastructure.

426

00:20:10.075 --> 00:20:12.845

This is a real concern to the concern

427

00:20:12.905 --> 00:20:15.925

to the residents in Wal grave, old Meres Ashby

428

00:20:15.925 --> 00:20:17.885

and Earls Barton to name just a few.

429

00:20:18.635 --> 00:20:21.685

They feel that they will be transformed from an idyllic

430

00:20:21.685 --> 00:20:25.485

rural landscape to an overbearing industrial one.

431

00:20:26.785 --> 00:20:30.365

The proposal therefore raises significant concerns

432

00:20:30.395 --> 00:20:31.525

regarding compliance

433

00:20:31.595 --> 00:20:35.085

with the design principles contained in the national policy

434

00:20:35.085 --> 00:20:36.925

statement for energy EN one,

435

00:20:37.375 --> 00:20:39.685

which requires infrastructure projects

436

00:20:39.685 --> 00:20:41.525

to minimize environmental impacts

437

00:20:41.675 --> 00:20:45.045

through appropriate site selection, layout and scale.

438

00:20:45.945 --> 00:20:47.045

In particular, the scale

439

00:20:47.145 --> 00:20:49.285

of the development appears disproportionate

440

00:20:49.425 --> 00:20:52.085

to the rural landscape in which it sits.

441

00:20:52.865 --> 00:20:55.925

The distribution of sites risks, creating coalescence

442

00:20:55.925 --> 00:20:58.485

between settlements, reducing the visual

443

00:20:58.585 --> 00:21:00.765

and spatial separation between villages

444

00:21:01.385 --> 00:21:03.125

and also the landscape character

445

00:21:03.125 --> 00:21:07.085

of the northamptonshire countryside defined by open farmland

446

00:21:07.085 --> 00:21:09.525  
and historic settlement patterns would be

447

00:21:09.525 --> 00:21:10.845  
fundamentally altered.

448

00:21:11.575 --> 00:21:14.085  
While national policy recognizes the importance

449

00:21:14.085 --> 00:21:17.645  
of renewable energy infrastructure, it also requires

450

00:21:17.645 --> 00:21:19.645  
that developments be sensitively located

451

00:21:20.025 --> 00:21:22.285  
and proportionate to the surroundings,

452

00:21:22.735 --> 00:21:25.725  
which is this proposal does not appear to achieve.

453

00:21:26.875 --> 00:21:28.845  
They want to move on to alternative sites

454

00:21:28.845 --> 00:21:31.565  
because many residents support the expansion

455

00:21:31.625 --> 00:21:32.925  
of renewable energy,

456

00:21:33.545 --> 00:21:36.765  
but believe that alternative locations should be prioritized

457

00:21:36.765 --> 00:21:39.365  
before developing productive agricultural land.

458

00:21:40.485 --> 00:21:42.605  
National planning policy encourages this.

459

00:21:43.255 --> 00:21:45.005

There is a strong public support

460

00:21:45.105 --> 00:21:47.645

for expanding solar deployment on warehouses

461

00:21:47.645 --> 00:21:50.765

and industrial rooftops, supermarket car parks

462

00:21:50.765 --> 00:21:51.805

and brownfield land.

463

00:21:52.385 --> 00:21:53.725

And whilst it is recognized

464

00:21:53.725 --> 00:21:56.005

that not all buildings have suitable orientation

465

00:21:56.785 --> 00:21:59.565

in the rapid growth of large logistic

466

00:21:59.705 --> 00:22:02.405

and warehouse developments across northamptonshire

467

00:22:02.545 --> 00:22:06.445

and my constituency presents significant opportunities

468

00:22:06.785 --> 00:22:08.885

for rooftop solar generation

469

00:22:09.615 --> 00:22:12.685

sites are literally being prepared as we speak today.

470

00:22:13.545 --> 00:22:16.445

The application document appears to provide limited evidence

471

00:22:16.445 --> 00:22:20.165

of a detailed sequential site assessment demonstrating

472

00:22:20.285 --> 00:22:22.765

that brownfield sites rooftop installations

473

00:22:22.785 --> 00:22:26.325

and lower grade agricultural land were thoroughly evaluated

474

00:22:26.325 --> 00:22:30.085

before selecting large areas of BMV farmland.

475

00:22:30.635 --> 00:22:34.405

Without a transparent comparison of these alternatives,

476

00:22:34.405 --> 00:22:37.965

it is difficult to conclude that the current proposal

477

00:22:38.645 --> 00:22:39.925

represents the most sustainable

478

00:22:40.145 --> 00:22:42.925

or policy compliant location for solar development.

479

00:22:44.345 --> 00:22:45.805

Moving on to environmental

480

00:22:45.905 --> 00:22:47.005

and heritage impacts,

481

00:22:47.145 --> 00:22:49.245

the proposed development raises concerns

482

00:22:49.245 --> 00:22:53.245

regarding landscape character, heritage assets, biodiversity

483

00:22:53.625 --> 00:22:55.125

and environmental risk.

484

00:22:56.105 --> 00:22:58.845

For example, from elevated viewpoints, particularly

485

00:22:58.845 --> 00:23:02.245

around Wal grave and near uh, nearby ridge lines,

486

00:23:02.815 --> 00:23:07.165

solar clusters may be highly visible creating a substantial

487

00:23:07.165 --> 00:23:09.485

change to the visual character of the countryside.

488

00:23:10.105 --> 00:23:13.045

The project also lies within historic landscape containing

489

00:23:13.045 --> 00:23:15.365

listed buildings, conservation areas,

490

00:23:15.885 --> 00:23:18.245

historic field patterns, and archeological remains.

491

00:23:18.985 --> 00:23:21.885

The national planning policy framework requires decision

492

00:23:21.905 --> 00:23:23.125

makers to conserve

493

00:23:23.745 --> 00:23:27.725

and enhance the historic environment, ensuring

494

00:23:27.725 --> 00:23:30.325

that the developments do not cause unacceptable harm

495

00:23:30.665 --> 00:23:33.125

to heritage assets or their settings.

496

00:23:34.605 --> 00:23:37.365

Specific concerns have also been raised with me

497

00:23:37.505 --> 00:23:39.845

by residents over the World War II

498

00:23:40.445 --> 00:23:42.285

aircraft crash site near me as Ashby,

499

00:23:42.615 --> 00:23:45.165

which may fall under the protections of the protection

500

00:23:45.440 --> 00:23:47.525  
of the military remains Act 1986.

501

00:23:48.305 --> 00:23:51.005  
The possibility that the site may contain ordinance

502

00:23:51.005 --> 00:23:54.925  
or human remains warranting careful arche archeological

503

00:23:55.925 --> 00:23:57.525  
investigation and preservation.

504

00:23:58.315 --> 00:24:00.845  
Environmental impacts are also associated

505

00:24:00.845 --> 00:24:02.085  
with hedge row removal

506

00:24:02.385 --> 00:24:07.085  
and clearance during construction, potential disturbance

507

00:24:07.105 --> 00:24:08.525  
to wildlife habitats

508

00:24:08.525 --> 00:24:11.645  
and long-term fragmentation of ecological corridors.

509

00:24:12.545 --> 00:24:15.045  
In addition, the loss of jobs such as farming

510

00:24:15.145 --> 00:24:17.125  
and livery threatens to change the way

511

00:24:17.125 --> 00:24:20.725  
of life in this unique area forever taken together,

512

00:24:20.935 --> 00:24:23.365  
these issues suggest the proposal could lead

513

00:24:23.365 --> 00:24:26.005

to significant environment, environmental

514

00:24:26.185 --> 00:24:29.605

and heritage impacts that have not been fully resolved.

515

00:24:30.545 --> 00:24:33.685

Moving on to the lifespan, as I said earlier, the project

516

00:24:34.205 --> 00:24:37.205

proposal has a lifespan of approximately 60 years,

517

00:24:37.815 --> 00:24:41.565

which is significantly longer than the lifespan typically

518

00:24:41.565 --> 00:24:43.645

associated with solar panel technology,

519

00:24:44.655 --> 00:24:48.485

which usually has a lifespan of 25 to 35 years, meaning

520

00:24:48.485 --> 00:24:50.085

that significant replacement

521

00:24:50.105 --> 00:24:51.965

or refurbishment could be required

522

00:24:52.265 --> 00:24:55.485

during the project's lifetime, which raises questions

523

00:24:55.485 --> 00:24:57.925

regarding the long term environmental impact

524

00:24:57.925 --> 00:24:59.085

of panel replacement

525

00:24:59.165 --> 00:25:02.525

and disposal, the potential increase in waste materials

526

00:25:02.525 --> 00:25:04.445

and resource consumption, consumption

527

00:25:05.025 --> 00:25:08.445

and whether the project's overall lifecycle emissions remain

528

00:25:08.445 --> 00:25:11.085

consistent with its stated environmental objectives.

529

00:25:11.855 --> 00:25:14.205

There is also concern that if the project were

530

00:25:14.205 --> 00:25:16.445

to become economically viable in the future,

531

00:25:17.265 --> 00:25:20.445

it could be abandoned without full restoration of the land.

532

00:25:21.105 --> 00:25:23.365

For this reason, many residents believe

533

00:25:23.365 --> 00:25:26.565

that a financial decommissioning bond should be required

534

00:25:26.565 --> 00:25:29.645

from the developer to ensure that funds are available

535

00:25:29.745 --> 00:25:30.765

to restore the land

536

00:25:30.765 --> 00:25:33.005

to agricultural use once the project ends.

537

00:25:33.475 --> 00:25:36.325

Without such safeguards, there is concern

538

00:25:36.445 --> 00:25:39.845

that the land could become permanently degraded,

539

00:25:39.975 --> 00:25:42.805

eventually being reclassified as brownfield land

540

00:25:42.945 --> 00:25:47.685

and potentially redeveloped for housing on construction.

541

00:25:48.025 --> 00:25:50.885

The phase, the construction phase of the project expected

542

00:25:50.905 --> 00:25:53.605

to involve large volumes of heavy goods vehicles,

543

00:25:54.965 --> 00:25:58.805

transporting solar panels, mounting structures, cables,

544

00:25:58.805 --> 00:26:01.605

and other equipment to multiple dispersed sites.

545

00:26:02.395 --> 00:26:05.485

Many of the surrounding roads are narrow rural lanes

546

00:26:05.805 --> 00:26:08.325

designed primarily for agricultural vehicles rather than

547

00:26:08.325 --> 00:26:09.645

sustained HGV traffic,

548

00:26:10.455 --> 00:26:13.645

which brings about potential impacts including increased

549

00:26:13.675 --> 00:26:16.485

road safety risks for pedestrian cyclists

550

00:26:16.485 --> 00:26:20.285

and horse riders, noise pollution affecting nearby

551

00:26:20.485 --> 00:26:23.165

residents, damage to the local road infrastructure,

552

00:26:23.385 --> 00:26:25.165

not designed for heavy construction

553

00:26:25.665 --> 00:26:27.205

and disruption to daily life.

554

00:26:28.155 --> 00:26:29.765

With construction, anticipate

555

00:26:29.765 --> 00:26:31.565

to take years rather than months.

556

00:26:32.185 --> 00:26:34.325

The impact of this needs to be considered

557

00:26:35.625 --> 00:26:37.045

and then onto the disruption

558

00:26:37.065 --> 00:26:38.885

for local access and recreation.

559

00:26:39.345 --> 00:26:42.365

The countryside surrounding the proposed development is

560

00:26:42.465 --> 00:26:44.765

widely used for walking, cycling

561

00:26:44.765 --> 00:26:47.205

and horse riding, forming an important part

562

00:26:47.205 --> 00:26:49.645

of the area's recreational cultural identity.

563

00:26:50.515 --> 00:26:53.445

Several well-used routes are located wind or

564

00:26:53.785 --> 00:26:55.725

or adjacent to the proposed sites.

565

00:26:56.765 --> 00:26:59.125

Construction activities increased traffic in the present

566

00:26:59.765 --> 00:27:02.685

presence of extensive solar infrastructure risk,

567

00:27:03.045 --> 00:27:05.085

reducing the icy value of these routes,

568

00:27:05.735 --> 00:27:08.685

disrupting established recreational patterns,

569

00:27:09.245 --> 00:27:11.885

altering the rural experience that residents

570

00:27:11.885 --> 00:27:13.445

and visitors currently enjoy.

571

00:27:14.405 --> 00:27:16.805

Although permissive paths are sometimes offered

572

00:27:16.825 --> 00:27:21.285

as mitigation, these do not carry the same legal protections

573

00:27:21.345 --> 00:27:25.045

as formal rights of way and can be withdrawn in the future.

574

00:27:25.915 --> 00:27:29.045

Many residents therefore feel that the social

575

00:27:29.225 --> 00:27:31.685

and community value of these landscapes has not

576

00:27:31.685 --> 00:27:33.165

been adequately considered.

577

00:27:33.505 --> 00:27:36.445

So in conclusion, while there is broad recognition

578

00:27:36.445 --> 00:27:38.525

of the importance of renewable energy

579

00:27:38.945 --> 00:27:42.285

and the role of solar panel can play in supporting the UK's

580

00:27:42.285 --> 00:27:46.525

transition to a low carbon energy system, the location,

581

00:27:47.335 --> 00:27:50.885

scale, and land use implications of this particular proposal

582

00:27:51.535 --> 00:27:54.925

raise significant concerns for many local communities.

583

00:27:55.705 --> 00:27:59.885

In particular, the loss of best and most versatile farmland

584

00:28:00.265 --> 00:28:01.765

and the industrial scale

585

00:28:02.065 --> 00:28:06.445

of the development across a very rural landscape suggests

586

00:28:06.445 --> 00:28:09.005

that the project project as proposed

587

00:28:09.675 --> 00:28:12.005

does not represent the most appropriate

588

00:28:12.145 --> 00:28:13.525

or sustainable approach

589

00:28:13.985 --> 00:28:17.725

to delivering renewable energy infrastructure in the uk.

590

00:28:18.215 --> 00:28:19.215

Thank you.

591

00:28:21.415 --> 00:28:23.165

Thank you very much Ms. Thank you.

592

00:28:26.305 --> 00:28:27.685

Um, and now we have Al

593

00:28:35.575 --> 00:28:36.045

thank you.

594

00:28:36.295 --> 00:28:39.125

Thank you very much. Uh, so my name is Sarah Bull

595

00:28:39.125 --> 00:28:41.685

and I'm the member of Parliament for South Northamptonshire.

596

00:28:42.605 --> 00:28:45.045

I just start by saying I do think there's a slight irony

597

00:28:45.045 --> 00:28:48.085

here that a scheme that is designed to bring vast quantities

598

00:28:48.085 --> 00:28:50.445

of power to an area simultaneously takes away the

599

00:28:50.685 --> 00:28:53.325

decisionmaking power from locals in being an nip.

600

00:28:53.785 --> 00:28:56.365

But given that background it come becomes very important

601

00:28:56.365 --> 00:28:57.685

that the terms that the Secretary

602

00:28:57.685 --> 00:28:59.645

of State operates in are understood.

603

00:29:00.695 --> 00:29:04.765

Under section 104 of the Planning Act 2008, the Secretary

604

00:29:04.765 --> 00:29:07.285

of State must decide the application in accordance

605

00:29:07.285 --> 00:29:10.125

with the national policy statement that has effect here,

606

00:29:10.545 --> 00:29:12.845

namely EN one and EN three.

607

00:29:13.665 --> 00:29:15.285

Now these set out the policy tests

608

00:29:15.345 --> 00:29:19.005

for citing design mitigation, cumulative effects, land use,

609

00:29:19.025 --> 00:29:22.405

and the acceptability, um, of impacts in particular places

610

00:29:23.725 --> 00:29:25.725

critically under section paragraph seven,

611

00:29:25.815 --> 00:29:29.045

under section 1 0 4 of the Planning Act, the Secretary

612

00:29:29.045 --> 00:29:31.765

of State may decide that the adverse impact

613

00:29:31.785 --> 00:29:34.485

of the proposed development would outweigh its benefits.

614

00:29:35.185 --> 00:29:38.005

So the question for this examination is not whether solar is

615

00:29:38.005 --> 00:29:40.245

needed because national policy makes that clear.

616

00:29:40.745 --> 00:29:43.925

The question is whether this particular scheme meets the

617

00:29:43.925 --> 00:29:46.245

expectations in the national policy statements

618

00:29:46.585 --> 00:29:48.165

and whether the adverse impact

619

00:29:48.165 --> 00:29:50.805

of the proposed development would outweigh its benefits.

620

00:29:51.465 --> 00:29:53.605

So I'm going to speak about what this means on the ground

621

00:29:53.865 --> 00:29:55.125

for communities in South North

622

00:29:55.125 --> 00:29:56.405  
Hamptonshire that I represent.

623

00:29:56.835 --> 00:29:58.005  
I'll address six issues

624

00:29:58.105 --> 00:29:59.525  
and I will show how each

625

00:29:59.525 --> 00:30:02.325  
of these either contradicts national policy statements

626

00:30:02.585 --> 00:30:04.365  
or contributes to the overall picture

627

00:30:04.595 --> 00:30:06.525  
that the adverse impacts are severe

628

00:30:06.585 --> 00:30:08.485  
and outweigh the benefit of this proposal.

629

00:30:09.425 --> 00:30:11.925  
So the first area is the scheme's fragmentation

630

00:30:11.985 --> 00:30:13.165  
and the spread of harm.

631

00:30:13.865 --> 00:30:17.005  
Now this scheme is not just large, it is unusually

632

00:30:17.685 --> 00:30:19.365  
fragmented as you're aware.

633

00:30:19.625 --> 00:30:22.765  
It comprises nine separate sites linked by

634

00:30:22.765 --> 00:30:26.405  
around 31 kilometers of cabling, a proposal the size

635

00:30:26.405 --> 00:30:29.365

of Heathrow airport but spread over 16 miles.

636

00:30:30.025 --> 00:30:32.365

Now that is not a neutral design feature.

637

00:30:33.445 --> 00:30:37.085

EN one section 4 3 15 is explicit

638

00:30:37.315 --> 00:30:40.285

that applicants must include information about reasonable

639

00:30:40.285 --> 00:30:41.965

alternatives that they have studied,

640

00:30:42.315 --> 00:30:45.445

including the main reasons for the choice taking account

641

00:30:45.445 --> 00:30:48.125

of environmental, social and economic effects.

642

00:30:49.145 --> 00:30:50.885

So I want to put a simple question on the record.

643

00:30:51.785 --> 00:30:55.245

Is the evidence supplied to date by the applicant sufficient

644

00:30:55.505 --> 00:30:57.805

to justify this level of fragmentation

645

00:30:57.875 --> 00:30:59.125

that it is unavoidable

646

00:30:59.425 --> 00:31:02.765

and rather than simply uh, convenient for land assembly

647

00:31:03.345 --> 00:31:06.205

and ensure that it does not drive a materially wider

648

00:31:06.345 --> 00:31:07.405

and more severe spread

649

00:31:07.405 --> 00:31:09.645

of harm than a more condensed layout would've done?

650

00:31:10.835 --> 00:31:13.885

This application structure makes it very easy for the harm

651

00:31:13.885 --> 00:31:15.125

to be assessed piecemeal,

652

00:31:15.545 --> 00:31:19.925

but the national policy statement EN one tells you not to do

653

00:31:19.925 --> 00:31:21.885

that and to take this in the round.

654

00:31:22.675 --> 00:31:26.885

Furthermore, EN 1 4 7 2 requires a proposal

655

00:31:26.905 --> 00:31:28.205

to be efficient in the use

656

00:31:28.205 --> 00:31:30.685

of natural resources including land use.

657

00:31:31.665 --> 00:31:33.965

How is it reasonable for a scheme that is

658

00:31:33.965 --> 00:31:38.285

so inefficiently spread over such a large area to claim

659

00:31:38.285 --> 00:31:39.925

to be efficient in its land use?

660

00:31:41.385 --> 00:31:43.725

Now the second area is on landscape visual immunity

661

00:31:43.825 --> 00:31:45.845

and the encirclement of Eastern morde.

662

00:31:46.495 --> 00:31:50.925

Under this proposal over 750 acres around Eastern

663

00:31:51.635 --> 00:31:54.645

boit and grendon would be taken up by solar panels

664

00:31:54.645 --> 00:31:57.245

and battery storage infrastructure under sites F

665

00:31:57.425 --> 00:32:00.525

and the BES Eastern mor would be surrounded

666

00:32:00.525 --> 00:32:04.085

by panels on three sides leaving only one

667

00:32:04.085 --> 00:32:05.485

remaining open approach.

668

00:32:06.355 --> 00:32:09.245

This goes far beyond the standard expectation

669

00:32:09.365 --> 00:32:10.845

of views of infrastructure.

670

00:32:11.345 --> 00:32:13.805

It a case, it is a case of spatial enclosure

671

00:32:14.065 --> 00:32:18.605

of a historic village Ian one requires an applicant

672

00:32:18.605 --> 00:32:19.885

to submit a landscape

673

00:32:19.885 --> 00:32:22.885

and visual impact assessment which the applicant has done,

674

00:32:23.145 --> 00:32:26.085

but I do question its analysis for example,

675

00:32:26.515 --> 00:32:28.725

outlining the impact of Site F.

676

00:32:29.465 --> 00:32:32.005

It proudly states that there are no listed buildings on the

677

00:32:32.005 --> 00:32:34.805

site but of course not it's an agricultural field

678

00:32:35.185 --> 00:32:37.285

but there are four grade one listed

679

00:32:37.465 --> 00:32:40.405

and 91 grade two listed buildings nearby.

680

00:32:41.475 --> 00:32:44.965

Even with a triples I it says there's no triples I on this

681

00:32:44.965 --> 00:32:48.645

site, but there is one it says located approximately 70

682

00:32:48.785 --> 00:32:51.205

meters east of the eastern site boundary.

683

00:32:52.145 --> 00:32:53.205

If I were use same bolt

684

00:32:53.215 --> 00:32:55.485

where there's a hundred meter record, I could easily reach

685

00:32:55.485 --> 00:32:58.405

that triples I in less than 9.58 seconds

686

00:32:59.985 --> 00:33:01.685

to return to my initial point.

687

00:33:02.115 --> 00:33:03.645

With this design as it stands,

688

00:33:04.145 --> 00:33:06.125

can you realistically avoid the outcome

689

00:33:06.125 --> 00:33:07.965

that eastern mortar becomes functionally

690

00:33:07.965 --> 00:33:10.525

and visually enclosed by energy infrastructure for decades?

691

00:33:11.305 --> 00:33:12.685

The answer is no.

692

00:33:13.425 --> 00:33:16.925

And on heritage Eastern mortar as I've just noted,

693

00:33:16.925 --> 00:33:18.965

contains a grade one listed church

694

00:33:19.065 --> 00:33:21.085

and multiple grade two listed buildings

695

00:33:21.085 --> 00:33:22.765

with the development altering the setting

696

00:33:23.145 --> 00:33:24.885

for the full operational period,

697

00:33:26.245 --> 00:33:28.565

EN one sections 5 9 28

698

00:33:28.565 --> 00:33:32.365

and 29 require the Secretary of State to great weight

699

00:33:32.625 --> 00:33:35.085

to a heritage assets conservation

700

00:33:35.465 --> 00:33:38.365

and any harm to its significance should require clear

701

00:33:38.505 --> 00:33:40.205

and convincing justification.

702

00:33:41.465 --> 00:33:43.005

Has this test been met?

703

00:33:43.185 --> 00:33:44.205

If East and Mortared

704

00:33:44.205 --> 00:33:46.645

and its listed buildings are surrounded for a minimum

705

00:33:46.745 --> 00:33:49.765

of 60 years, it does not appear.

706

00:33:49.825 --> 00:33:52.925

So the third area best

707

00:33:52.945 --> 00:33:54.285

and most versatile land

708

00:33:55.725 --> 00:33:58.605

EN one sections 5, 11, 12 and 34.

709

00:33:58.945 --> 00:34:01.125

Not only state that applicants should seek

710

00:34:01.145 --> 00:34:03.525

to minimize impacts on BVM land

711

00:34:03.625 --> 00:34:05.645

and preferably use poorer quality land,

712

00:34:06.065 --> 00:34:07.525

but also that the Secretary

713

00:34:07.525 --> 00:34:11.085

of State should ensure applicants do not cite their scheme

714

00:34:11.145 --> 00:34:13.725

on BVM land without justification.

715

00:34:14.885 --> 00:34:18.045

EN three section 2 10 21 goes further

716

00:34:18.425 --> 00:34:20.205  
and for solar schemes it says

717

00:34:20.215 --> 00:34:24.325  
where possible it should utilize suitably uh, suitable,

718

00:34:24.845 --> 00:34:27.205  
previously developed brownfield contaminated

719

00:34:27.205 --> 00:34:30.885  
or industrial land Where agricultural land is necessary,

720

00:34:31.425 --> 00:34:33.605  
poorer quality land should be preferred

721

00:34:34.245 --> 00:34:35.965  
avoiding BMV where possible.

722

00:34:36.945 --> 00:34:40.485  
Now this project covers approximately 1,200 hectares

723

00:34:40.485 --> 00:34:42.365  
of predominantly agricultural land.

724

00:34:43.065 --> 00:34:48.045  
The total BMV land affected is 854.5 hectares

725

00:34:48.225 --> 00:34:51.045  
around 65% of the scheme.

726

00:34:51.585 --> 00:34:54.325  
And some individual sites have exceptionally high

727

00:34:54.565 --> 00:34:59.005  
proportions of BMV including site D at 20.92%

728

00:34:59.545 --> 00:35:02.325  
at, sorry, 90.2% BMV.

729

00:35:03.345 --> 00:35:04.405

Now I have three stresses

730

00:35:04.405 --> 00:35:07.125

that the applicant must demonstrate the policy expectation

731

00:35:07.305 --> 00:35:10.805

of minimization and preference for poorer quality land

732

00:35:11.105 --> 00:35:13.645

and whether the justification meets the standard implied

733

00:35:13.705 --> 00:35:16.285

by EN one a scheme

734

00:35:16.355 --> 00:35:20.765

that is 65% BMV is not starting from a position

735

00:35:20.765 --> 00:35:23.365

of minimization, it's starting from a position

736

00:35:23.365 --> 00:35:26.285

that contradicts these national policy statements.

737

00:35:27.955 --> 00:35:30.415

The fourth area duration repowering

738

00:35:30.435 --> 00:35:34.855

and the absence of hard decommissioning security EN three,

739

00:35:34.965 --> 00:35:39.325

section two ten a hundred and forty to 142 states.

740

00:35:39.425 --> 00:35:43.285

An upper limit of 40 years is typical and that is the time

741

00:35:43.505 --> 00:35:45.725

and that the time limited nature is likely

742

00:35:45.745 --> 00:35:47.925

to be an important consideration for the Secretary

743  
00:35:47.925 --> 00:35:50.205  
of state including a DCA requirement

744  
00:35:50.205 --> 00:35:53.005  
to secure decommissioning after the permitted operation.

745  
00:35:54.225 --> 00:35:58.165  
The critical question therefore is if 40 years is typical

746  
00:35:58.465 --> 00:36:01.325  
and time limited consent is an important consideration,

747  
00:36:01.995 --> 00:36:05.005  
what is the justified basis for 60 years here

748  
00:36:05.425 --> 00:36:09.325  
and what precisely is secured not promised to ensure that

749  
00:36:09.325 --> 00:36:12.405  
after the period of land that period the land is restored

750  
00:36:12.585 --> 00:36:14.685  
and the infrastructure is removed.

751  
00:36:15.585 --> 00:36:18.085  
On this point, ownership change is possible.

752  
00:36:18.225 --> 00:36:21.005  
Indeed, island Green Power's own ownership has changed

753  
00:36:21.265 --> 00:36:23.885  
to the Macquarie group and there seems to be no

754  
00:36:24.405 --> 00:36:26.685  
guaranteed mechanism to secure decommissioning funding

755  
00:36:27.125 --> 00:36:28.165  
regardless of ownership.

756  
00:36:29.525 --> 00:36:33.845

EN three two ten one three eight requires the Secretary

757

00:36:33.845 --> 00:36:37.325

of State to ensure outline decommissioning plans are put

758

00:36:37.325 --> 00:36:39.645

forward and that the land is restored to a suitable use.

759

00:36:40.705 --> 00:36:42.005

Are we really satisfied

760

00:36:42.005 --> 00:36:43.645

that there is an enforceable mechanism

761

00:36:43.645 --> 00:36:46.525

that makes decommissioning credible over 60 years?

762

00:36:48.655 --> 00:36:50.715

My fifth area is the BES near Grham.

763

00:36:52.035 --> 00:36:55.515

A 500 megawatt BES is proposed by this scheme

764

00:36:56.265 --> 00:36:58.755

with the other BES installations either operational

765

00:36:58.895 --> 00:37:00.355

or consented locally.

766

00:37:00.505 --> 00:37:03.435

This amounts to nearly 600 megawatts

767

00:37:03.715 --> 00:37:04.835

concentrated near grham.

768

00:37:05.575 --> 00:37:08.035

The question today is whether this scale and consult

769

00:37:08.295 --> 00:37:11.315

and concentration is acceptable in this location.

770

00:37:12.695 --> 00:37:15.235

The risks posed by BES will have been previously detailed,

771

00:37:15.295 --> 00:37:17.355

but I note that the government itself seems

772

00:37:17.355 --> 00:37:19.875

to be recognizing these in a letter

773

00:37:19.895 --> 00:37:22.835

to me on the 24th of November, 2025,

774

00:37:23.435 --> 00:37:25.475

minister Michael Shanks outlined that the government is

775

00:37:25.995 --> 00:37:29.155

considering integrating BES into the existing environmental

776

00:37:29.165 --> 00:37:32.355

permitting regulations framework in order to deal

777

00:37:32.385 --> 00:37:33.595

with safety concerns.

778

00:37:34.695 --> 00:37:36.115

So if the existing framework

779

00:37:36.115 --> 00:37:39.915

of BES regulations are insufficient, I find it hard to see

780

00:37:39.915 --> 00:37:42.635

how this existing proposal can be safe for residents.

781

00:37:43.245 --> 00:37:46.075

There is also well-documented flood risk history

782

00:37:46.175 --> 00:37:49.515

and obvious proximity to sensitive receptors and waterways.

783

00:37:50.215 --> 00:37:53.475

We know this part of the site is located next to a Triple SI

784

00:37:54.135 --> 00:37:56.835

an area protected by law to avoid harm

785

00:37:57.175 --> 00:37:59.355

and yet this development may be permitted,

786

00:37:59.355 --> 00:38:03.835

which cuts straight across that EN one also requires

787

00:38:03.835 --> 00:38:06.675

that residual flood risk be managed including the presence

788

00:38:06.675 --> 00:38:08.795

of flood warning and evacuation planning.

789

00:38:10.055 --> 00:38:11.355

Are we really satisfied

790

00:38:11.465 --> 00:38:13.755

that these have been addressed correctly?

791

00:38:14.545 --> 00:38:19.075

Furthermore, the greenhill BES will be located on 43.27

792

00:38:19.145 --> 00:38:21.155

hectare site to put that into context.

793

00:38:21.225 --> 00:38:24.235

That is a size of around 60 football pitches

794

00:38:24.575 --> 00:38:28.235

and which as the applicant admits is on agricultural land

795

00:38:28.465 --> 00:38:31.475

over 50% of which is BMV.

796

00:38:31.985 --> 00:38:33.515

This is just wrong.

797

00:38:34.815 --> 00:38:37.355

And finally the sixth area is the cumulative impacts.

798

00:38:38.315 --> 00:38:39.875

EN one requires decision makers

799

00:38:39.875 --> 00:38:41.355

to consider the cumulative effects

800

00:38:41.375 --> 00:38:43.475

of a scheme on the environment, economy

801

00:38:43.695 --> 00:38:47.635

or community as a whole, even if acceptable individually.

802

00:38:48.415 --> 00:38:51.835

For my constituents the cumulative effect is not theoretical

803

00:38:52.235 --> 00:38:55.955

planning concept, it is the lived reality of a development

804

00:38:56.135 --> 00:38:58.315

for all the reasons cited before.

805

00:38:59.455 --> 00:39:01.235

So I will close with the core questions

806

00:39:01.235 --> 00:39:03.355

that your recommendation must confront.

807

00:39:04.245 --> 00:39:06.035

Again, firstly, alternatives

808

00:39:06.135 --> 00:39:09.395

and design Has the applicant complied sufficiently

809

00:39:09.395 --> 00:39:10.955

with EM one's requirements

810

00:39:10.955 --> 00:39:13.955

to provide information about reasonable alternatives

811

00:39:14.135 --> 00:39:16.355

and justify the chosen configuration.

812

00:39:16.815 --> 00:39:18.195

And can you be satisfied?

813

00:39:18.415 --> 00:39:21.675

The unusually fragmented layout does not unnecessarily

814

00:39:22.035 --> 00:39:23.755

multiply harm across communities.

815

00:39:24.695 --> 00:39:25.975

Secondly, on eastern mortar

816

00:39:26.035 --> 00:39:29.935

and heritage has harm to the setting of heritage assets

817

00:39:30.355 --> 00:39:33.255

and the settlements character genuinely being minimized

818

00:39:33.255 --> 00:39:34.815

through citing and design.

819

00:39:35.035 --> 00:39:37.575

And if not, what is the clear

820

00:39:37.635 --> 00:39:40.655

and convincing justification EN one requires

821

00:39:40.875 --> 00:39:44.375

for harm within the setting of designated assets assets?

822

00:39:45.585 --> 00:39:46.875

Thirdly, BMV Land.

823

00:39:47.655 --> 00:39:50.795

How does a scheme that is 65%

824

00:39:51.435 --> 00:39:53.275

BMV meet EN one

825

00:39:53.295 --> 00:39:57.035

and EN three expectation to minimize BMV impacts

826

00:39:57.335 --> 00:39:59.275

and prefer poorer quality land

827

00:39:59.735 --> 00:40:03.635

and is the justification EN one anticipates when BMV is used

828

00:40:04.235 --> 00:40:07.065

satisfactorily for lifetime

829

00:40:07.165 --> 00:40:11.945

and decommissioning given EN three requirements is 60 years,

830

00:40:12.155 --> 00:40:16.305

sorry, given EN three's requirements is 60 years justifiable

831

00:40:16.725 --> 00:40:19.145

and what enforcement mechanism makes decommissioning

832

00:40:19.145 --> 00:40:20.505

incredible over the period?

833

00:40:21.165 --> 00:40:22.345

And finally then the bes.

834

00:40:22.765 --> 00:40:25.505

Can you be satisfied of the safety of the scheme

835

00:40:25.725 --> 00:40:28.705

and mitigation measures required by EN one?

836

00:40:29.865 --> 00:40:31.425

I think you'll see that this proposal

837

00:40:31.685 --> 00:40:34.665

and reasonably contradicts the national policy statements

838

00:40:34.665 --> 00:40:37.505

that govern it and at the very least it is clear

839

00:40:37.655 --> 00:40:39.425

that the section 104 test

840

00:40:39.445 --> 00:40:42.985

of adverse impact outweighing benefit is triggered.

841

00:40:43.875 --> 00:40:44.875

Thank you.

842

00:40:52.625 --> 00:40:54.095

Thank you very much. Um,

843

00:40:54.275 --> 00:40:56.815

and now we've got Trevor Higgs Grendon Walking Group.

844

00:41:06.485 --> 00:41:07.435

Thank you very much.

845

00:41:07.525 --> 00:41:10.435

Thank you. Uh, my name is Trevor Higgs.

846

00:41:10.795 --> 00:41:13.075

I am the footpath warden for Grendon

847

00:41:14.095 --> 00:41:17.955

and I wish to make it clear that I'm not anti-solar panels.

848

00:41:18.715 --> 00:41:19.955

I believe they have their place

849

00:41:20.535 --> 00:41:24.435

and balanced in a balanced carbon three

850

00:41:25.675 --> 00:41:27.715

electricity generation scheme.

851

00:41:28.945 --> 00:41:30.315

I've been footpath warden

852

00:41:30.315 --> 00:41:32.475

for close on 40 years over this time.

853

00:41:36.015 --> 00:41:40.565

Thank you. I have helped to promote the use

854

00:41:40.585 --> 00:41:42.925

of public rights of way in

855

00:41:42.925 --> 00:41:45.685

and around gring, ensuring that they're maintained

856

00:41:45.865 --> 00:41:49.485

and are well marked and they are used regularly promoted

857

00:41:49.555 --> 00:41:52.245

through articles in the local parish magazine

858

00:41:52.825 --> 00:41:55.245

and via the Grendon Walking group website.

859

00:41:56.225 --> 00:41:59.525

The landscape around our village can maybe be disguised

860

00:41:59.525 --> 00:42:03.085

as open skies countryside with a rolling landscape,

861

00:42:03.585 --> 00:42:06.965

giving open views on an aura of freedom and space.

862

00:42:08.795 --> 00:42:10.525

Over the years I've seen

863

00:42:10.785 --> 00:42:13.885

and been involved in many changes to the public rights

864

00:42:13.885 --> 00:42:16.085

of way in and around Gron

865

00:42:16.085 --> 00:42:19.845

and if most not all have been sympathetic with the landscape

866

00:42:20.425 --> 00:42:23.605

and have little or no impact on the walking environment.

867

00:42:25.065 --> 00:42:29.085

The poster parish path warden gives me a U unique position

868

00:42:29.185 --> 00:42:31.325

to understand and comment on.

869

00:42:31.325 --> 00:42:33.485

The impact of the proposed solar farm

870

00:42:34.275 --> 00:42:36.005

will have on both the landscape

871

00:42:36.145 --> 00:42:39.445

and the wellbeing of many people who claim pressure

872

00:42:39.825 --> 00:42:42.525

and respite from the pressures of modern day living

873

00:42:42.985 --> 00:42:47.365

by just walking in our beautiful open countryside.

874

00:42:49.425 --> 00:42:50.765

I'm also a walk leader

875

00:42:51.385 --> 00:42:54.005

and organizer of the Grendon Walking group,

876

00:42:54.375 --> 00:42:57.405

which has been operating on and off for those 40 years.

877

00:42:57.995 --> 00:42:59.245

Subject to demand

878

00:42:59.865 --> 00:43:02.325

and the numbers of walk-ins who wish to walk.

879

00:43:02.635 --> 00:43:05.405

Currently it's in rude health with up

880

00:43:05.485 --> 00:43:10.385

to 20 walkers on each walk history.

881

00:43:11.295 --> 00:43:13.425

Many of the local routes are designated

882

00:43:13.565 --> 00:43:16.705

as into village paths with significant traffic

883

00:43:16.735 --> 00:43:17.905

between the villages.

884

00:43:18.565 --> 00:43:21.145

In the past, these routes would've had daily traffic.

885

00:43:21.925 --> 00:43:24.105

It is lived in living memory

886

00:43:24.255 --> 00:43:27.705

that workers from Grendon would walk to both Williston

887

00:43:27.765 --> 00:43:30.585

and Boje, which had shoe and boot factories.

888

00:43:31.525 --> 00:43:34.465

The villages of Grendon would walk to work ready

889

00:43:34.525 --> 00:43:36.865

for today's work and return in the evening.

890

00:43:37.765 --> 00:43:40.265

Almost certainly the paths would've had this type

891

00:43:40.265 --> 00:43:41.945

of use over centuries

892

00:43:42.575 --> 00:43:45.745

when the rural population was much larger than now

893

00:43:47.285 --> 00:43:51.105

And In the general population would only be able

894

00:43:51.105 --> 00:43:54.505

to walk to local villages for both work and social activity.

895

00:43:55.575 --> 00:43:57.985

This is not to say that change would've not have happened

896

00:43:57.985 --> 00:44:01.905

during this period, but it would've almost certainly been in

897

00:44:02.185 --> 00:44:03.385

sympathy with the landscape.

898

00:44:03.775 --> 00:44:07.385

Whereas this proposal will be dramatic and turn

899

00:44:07.925 --> 00:44:12.665

and turn a rural pastoral landscape ensuring an industrial

900

00:44:12.995 --> 00:44:16.945

scene can com and completely ruin these roots immediately.

901

00:44:16.965 --> 00:44:21.785

And historic value, It is a well proven fact

902

00:44:21.785 --> 00:44:24.985

that walking particularly in groups provides the basis

903

00:44:25.285 --> 00:44:28.905

for improved wellbeing, mental health and physical fitness.

904

00:44:29.925 --> 00:44:31.445

The open skies aspects

905

00:44:31.465 --> 00:44:34.445

of the roots provide the perfect backdrop for walking

906

00:44:35.035 --> 00:44:38.445

with gentle rolling countryside and easy walking.

907

00:44:39.625 --> 00:44:42.245

It attracts walkers of all ages and abilities.

908

00:44:43.585 --> 00:44:47.805

No amount of mitigation with new hedges, trees, et cetera,

909

00:44:48.035 --> 00:44:49.485

will compensate for the loss

910

00:44:49.605 --> 00:44:51.725

of the current openness of the countryside.

911

00:44:52.305 --> 00:44:55.165

It will just add to the massive industrial change.

912

00:44:55.555 --> 00:44:58.805

This proposal will bring to all aspects, particularly

913

00:44:58.865 --> 00:45:00.405

to the level of amenity.

914

00:45:02.325 --> 00:45:05.545

The Grendon Walker Group is a casual group based in Grendon.

915

00:45:06.085 --> 00:45:08.665

It is sponsored by the Grham Parish Council

916

00:45:09.325 --> 00:45:11.665

to provide regular planned walks in

917

00:45:11.665 --> 00:45:12.985

and around the Grandin area.

918

00:45:13.915 --> 00:45:16.505

These walks are always on public rights of way

919

00:45:17.045 --> 00:45:19.265

and are designed to improve the wellbeing

920

00:45:19.325 --> 00:45:21.105

and the physical fitness as well

921

00:45:21.105 --> 00:45:23.465

as providing social interaction within the group.

922

00:45:24.845 --> 00:45:28.545

The impact of the installation on the solar panels well the

923

00:45:28.545 --> 00:45:31.625

roads will be used by the group will be massive

924

00:45:32.325 --> 00:45:33.345

and with the majority

925

00:45:33.405 --> 00:45:36.545

of the local paths being enclosed in or enclosed.

926

00:45:38.165 --> 00:45:42.305

In summary, it is clear from the Green Hill Solar proposal

927

00:45:42.305 --> 00:45:45.985

will have a catastrophic impact on the public rights of way

928

00:45:46.525 --> 00:45:49.745

within its proposed locations across all the sites.

929

00:45:50.645 --> 00:45:53.225

It is my firmly, my view that no about

930

00:45:53.245 --> 00:45:55.745

of mitigation can compensate for the loss

931

00:45:55.745 --> 00:46:00.145

of the open skies aspect of the roads on a wide open

932

00:46:00.715 --> 00:46:02.505  
views across the countryside.

933

00:46:02.925 --> 00:46:05.785  
It shows that many locations are likely to be

934

00:46:06.585 --> 00:46:08.705  
severely impacted by the installation

935

00:46:09.205 --> 00:46:12.545  
and many paths will be completely closed in

936

00:46:12.545 --> 00:46:13.705  
on many occasions.

937

00:46:14.525 --> 00:46:16.105  
The main question is why,

938

00:46:17.095 --> 00:46:20.215  
particularly when the vast majority feels designated

939

00:46:20.215 --> 00:46:24.375  
for the panels consistently produce a high quality crop.

940

00:46:25.235 --> 00:46:29.295  
And when there are so many alternatives

941

00:46:30.125 --> 00:46:33.015  
such as warehouse roofs

942

00:46:33.955 --> 00:46:36.175  
and new build roof house roofs

943

00:46:37.715 --> 00:46:41.215  
is my view Thatk regards has been given to these options

944

00:46:41.835 --> 00:46:45.335  
or specific the planning, the plan citing location

945

00:46:45.395 --> 00:46:48.215

of the panels that the greenhill solar panels have,

946

00:46:48.835 --> 00:46:51.815

in my opinion being selected, selected with little

947

00:46:52.115 --> 00:46:53.375

or no consideration

948

00:46:53.435 --> 00:46:55.615

to the impact they would have on the landscape

949

00:46:55.915 --> 00:46:59.135

or the local villages and the public rights of way.

950

00:47:00.235 --> 00:47:03.455

The selection seems to be made on expedient grounds,

951

00:47:03.835 --> 00:47:05.015

driven by cost.

952

00:47:05.675 --> 00:47:08.655

And I have no explanation why these fields have been

953

00:47:08.935 --> 00:47:11.255

selected when the landowner has acres

954

00:47:11.275 --> 00:47:12.895

of alternative land available

955

00:47:13.165 --> 00:47:15.095

with no public rights of way across them.

956

00:47:15.725 --> 00:47:19.655

It's also not surprising that many local people that

957

00:47:19.795 --> 00:47:21.975

to many local people that the land adjacent

958

00:47:22.035 --> 00:47:23.295

to Castle Ashby house

959

00:47:23.435 --> 00:47:26.695

and Castle Ashby Village does not seem to be considered

960

00:47:26.695 --> 00:47:28.215

for the installation of the panels.

961

00:47:30.195 --> 00:47:33.845

Therefore, and I was gonna say implore you,

962

00:47:34.025 --> 00:47:36.925

but that's a bit emotive, but I will use it

963

00:47:37.205 --> 00:47:38.245

'cause I am emotive

964

00:47:39.235 --> 00:47:42.245

that you the inspector refuse this application.

965

00:47:43.025 --> 00:47:44.885

All that you insist on land

966

00:47:44.885 --> 00:47:48.725

that has public rights away across it or adjacent to it

967

00:47:48.945 --> 00:47:52.805

or is adjacent to the local villages, is not used

968

00:47:52.825 --> 00:47:54.205

to cite solar panels.

969

00:47:54.865 --> 00:47:56.725

And the other locations are found

970

00:47:57.545 --> 00:48:00.005

the only meaning magnification for this

971

00:48:00.505 --> 00:48:03.325

to cite the panels are nonfood producing fields

972

00:48:03.895 --> 00:48:05.965

which are not adjacent to villages

973

00:48:06.345 --> 00:48:08.365

and crucially exclude any fields

974

00:48:08.365 --> 00:48:10.245

that have public rights of way.

975

00:48:13.085 --> 00:48:15.465

That's all I was gonna say about footpaths.

976

00:48:15.765 --> 00:48:16.985

The other aspect,

977

00:48:17.685 --> 00:48:21.985

and this is completely not scripted, uh, is

978

00:48:23.125 --> 00:48:24.585

the public consultation

979

00:48:24.925 --> 00:48:28.385

for this proposal has been absolutely lamentable.

980

00:48:30.315 --> 00:48:33.065

We've, in Grham, we have had one

981

00:48:34.725 --> 00:48:36.025

public consultation

982

00:48:37.525 --> 00:48:39.905

and then with a project of this size

983

00:48:40.205 --> 00:48:42.865

and this impact not

984

00:48:42.865 --> 00:48:45.865

to have more is just appalling.

985

00:48:46.775 --> 00:48:47.775

Thank you.

986

00:48:55.945 --> 00:48:59.015

Thank You very much. Um, now we've got Brian skit.

987

00:49:05.845 --> 00:49:08.495

Yeah, well yeah. Thank you

988

00:49:10.605 --> 00:49:11.605

Mr. Skecher. Can

989

00:49:11.605 --> 00:49:13.305

I just check, are you speaking on behalf

990

00:49:13.305 --> 00:49:15.025

of CPRE or the parish council

991

00:49:15.245 --> 00:49:17.545

or yourself or all of the above? Uh,

992

00:49:18.245 --> 00:49:20.025

The, well which Hat have you got on? Yeah,

993

00:49:20.425 --> 00:49:24.385

I, I'm just speak on behalf of Bo Parish Council

994

00:49:25.245 --> 00:49:27.785

and, and the second point I make will be

995

00:49:27.785 --> 00:49:29.465

for both organizations.

996

00:49:30.885 --> 00:49:34.225

Um, most of our, um,

997

00:49:34.915 --> 00:49:37.665

input into this is three written representations.

998

00:49:37.725 --> 00:49:38.985

So this will be brief.

999

00:49:39.965 --> 00:49:43.785

Um, the, the one thing that we've really struggled is

1000

00:49:43.785 --> 00:49:47.025

to get a clear answer from the applicant

1001

00:49:47.445 --> 00:49:51.585

or clear justification from the applicant of the, uh,

1002

00:49:52.115 --> 00:49:56.625

route for development that passes through Bo for,

1003

00:49:57.805 --> 00:50:02.145

um, uh, ISH one, they agreed

1004

00:50:02.215 --> 00:50:06.415

that they could access F two from

1005

00:50:07.495 --> 00:50:12.375

F three and thereby there, there didn't seem

1006

00:50:12.375 --> 00:50:15.335

to be a justification for, for using a route

1007

00:50:15.335 --> 00:50:18.995

through the village, um, in,

1008

00:50:19.135 --> 00:50:22.355

in their written responses since they, they've

1009

00:50:24.485 --> 00:50:26.715

tried to say that they need it and,

1010

00:50:26.775 --> 00:50:30.205

but the, the very latest one I,

1011

00:50:30.345 --> 00:50:33.885

as I interpret it, just says they'd like it and,

1012

00:50:34.025 --> 00:50:38.005

and the uh, the traffic wouldn't be too bad.

1013

00:50:38.945 --> 00:50:43.645

Um, so the, the parish in particular would, would like

1014

00:50:43.645 --> 00:50:47.125

to see the route three beier removed from the scheme.

1015

00:50:49.235 --> 00:50:53.255

The second point, uh, has already been touched on by, by

1016

00:50:53.875 --> 00:50:55.055

the, the mps

1017

00:50:55.435 --> 00:50:59.655

and that is the security of funding for the decommissioning.

1018

00:51:00.315 --> 00:51:04.495

Um, there's been a complete reluctance for

1019

00:51:04.755 --> 00:51:09.055

by the applicant to have any financial, um,

1020

00:51:09.805 --> 00:51:13.575

agreement on this tied to the DCO and,

1021

00:51:13.875 --> 00:51:16.255

and without that being guaranteed,

1022

00:51:16.905 --> 00:51:19.975

there is a very high risk, um, that

1023

00:51:20.505 --> 00:51:22.215

there won't be funds at the end

1024

00:51:22.215 --> 00:51:24.295

of the project to decommission it.

1025

00:51:24.755 --> 00:51:27.295

Uh, there's no no incentive to for them

1026

00:51:27.355 --> 00:51:29.055

to retain funds in the company

1027

00:51:29.875 --> 00:51:33.805

and They could, they could just simply walk away.

1028

00:51:34.545 --> 00:51:39.285

Um, but the same concern also applies to the, uh,

1029

00:51:39.915 --> 00:51:41.445

community benefit fund.

1030

00:51:42.465 --> 00:51:46.965

Um, again, they don't want anything tied to the DCO and,

1031

00:51:47.145 --> 00:51:51.885

and we've already seen at Earth Chester that the, uh,

1032

00:51:51.995 --> 00:51:54.485

community fund never materialized

1033

00:51:54.835 --> 00:51:58.285

because it, it, the project changed hands and,

1034

00:51:58.305 --> 00:52:01.325

and so we strongly request that that

1035

00:52:01.875 --> 00:52:06.865

that also is tied into the DCO, that

1036

00:52:06.865 --> 00:52:08.185

that's all I want to add today.

1037

00:52:08.195 --> 00:52:09.195

Thank you.

1038

00:52:09.875 --> 00:52:11.625

Thank you Mr. Shaw. Thank you very much.

1039

00:52:13.365 --> 00:52:15.905

Uh, so next on my list I've got Dr. Linda Tuy.

1040

00:52:23.355 --> 00:52:23.825

Thank you.

1041

00:52:23.995 --> 00:52:26.585

Thank you. Yes, I'm I'm, I'm Dr. Linda Tui.

1042

00:52:26.605 --> 00:52:27.985

I'm a resident of Wal Grave

1043

00:52:28.005 --> 00:52:29.665

and a member of Stop Greenhill Solar.

1044

00:52:30.285 --> 00:52:32.785

And thank you for the opportunity to speak, uh, directly

1045

00:52:32.785 --> 00:52:35.705

to you again in my open floor hearing address in December,

1046

00:52:36.275 --> 00:52:38.185

which was rep 3 1 1 4.

1047

00:52:38.465 --> 00:52:41.385

I concentrated on the within site layout of site A

1048

00:52:42.005 --> 00:52:43.105

and how better choices

1049

00:52:43.365 --> 00:52:45.825

by the applicant could significantly reduce the harm

1050

00:52:45.825 --> 00:52:48.745

and impact on the of the development in a variety of ways,

1051

00:52:48.745 --> 00:52:51.425

including that on wildlife and the local community.

1052

00:52:51.985 --> 00:52:53.065

Subsequently, I

1053

00:52:53.065 --> 00:52:54.825

and other war grave residents are very grateful

1054

00:52:55.055 --> 00:52:57.625

that the examiners um, have determined not

1055

00:52:57.625 --> 00:53:00.905

to accept solar development within the triangular

1056

00:53:00.905 --> 00:53:02.225

field AF 29.

1057

00:53:03.085 --> 00:53:06.745

And so the applicant has now included this in change request

1058

00:53:07.005 --> 00:53:11.185

two and see, so the latest plan for the field numbering

1059

00:53:11.445 --> 00:53:13.705

and revised detailed site layout

1060

00:53:14.405 --> 00:53:17.825

for site A is shown in CR 2 0 0 8.

1061

00:53:19.235 --> 00:53:21.505

Subsequent to this change, I plan

1062

00:53:21.505 --> 00:53:25.025

to address why development should now also be removed from

1063

00:53:25.085 --> 00:53:26.365

field AF nine

1064

00:53:27.105 --> 00:53:30.485

and the interrelated issue of the construction access

1065

00:53:30.545 --> 00:53:33.045

to fields AF two, three and four.

1066

00:53:34.785 --> 00:53:38.205

Now that the designated quiet lane Newland road will be less

1067  
00:53:38.565 --> 00:53:40.005  
directly impacted by the proximity

1068  
00:53:40.065 --> 00:53:44.525  
of 4.5 meter solar panels, I wish to question any necessity

1069  
00:53:44.785 --> 00:53:47.245  
to place solar arrays in field AF nine.

1070  
00:53:47.945 --> 00:53:50.725  
By my calculations, the area of panels planned

1071  
00:53:50.745 --> 00:53:53.605  
for this small field is only about 2%

1072  
00:53:53.825 --> 00:53:55.725  
of the total within site A.

1073  
00:53:56.945 --> 00:53:59.205  
The use of this field is complicated by the fact

1074  
00:53:59.205 --> 00:54:00.245  
that there is a to utility,

1075  
00:54:00.245 --> 00:54:03.965  
presumably a water main running diagonally underneath it.

1076  
00:54:04.155 --> 00:54:07.165  
This is shown in CR 2 0 0 8 which needs

1077  
00:54:07.165 --> 00:54:08.365  
to remain accessible.

1078  
00:54:09.225 --> 00:54:11.965  
It is also next to a watercourse which is

1079  
00:54:11.965 --> 00:54:14.285  
otherwise being preserved from disturbance

1080  
00:54:14.475 --> 00:54:17.165

because of good suitability as a probable commuting

1081

00:54:17.165 --> 00:54:20.085

and foraging route for otters from for reservoir

1082

00:54:20.785 --> 00:54:22.925

and good suitability for water bowls

1083

00:54:22.955 --> 00:54:24.885

amongst other ecological reasons.

1084

00:54:25.625 --> 00:54:29.765

So for this please see a PP oh nine oh paragraph

1085

00:54:29.905 --> 00:54:32.405

1 4 10 and the appendices

1086

00:54:33.115 --> 00:54:35.605

maps 9 7 1 9 78.

1087

00:54:37.325 --> 00:54:40.405

Reference again to the Plan C 2 0 8 shows

1088

00:54:40.405 --> 00:54:44.605

that the other fields bordering this watercourse AF five,

1089

00:54:44.905 --> 00:54:46.165

AF six, AF seven

1090

00:54:46.225 --> 00:54:49.805

and AF 12 have been designated either for enhanced

1091

00:54:50.405 --> 00:54:52.725

existing vegetation or for damp grassland.

1092

00:54:54.165 --> 00:54:57.165

I wish to address the confusion that appears to me

1093

00:54:57.265 --> 00:55:00.445

to surround the access route for construction

1094

00:55:00.445 --> 00:55:03.565

of solar arrays within the fields AF two, three,

1095

00:55:03.625 --> 00:55:08.045

and four on the west side of site A as this is integral

1096

00:55:08.225 --> 00:55:09.605

to my argument in favor

1097

00:55:09.705 --> 00:55:12.645

of removing AF nine from solar array usage

1098

00:55:13.825 --> 00:55:16.325

in the applicant's original documents submitted

1099

00:55:16.445 --> 00:55:20.925

for examination A PP 4 4 4 figure 13.

1100

00:55:21.505 --> 00:55:25.445

Um, point 13 shows access locations for sites

1101

00:55:25.545 --> 00:55:27.685

and cable route corridors for site A.

1102

00:55:28.435 --> 00:55:33.165

This clearly shows access a dash two which is just northeast

1103

00:55:33.305 --> 00:55:35.845

of the village of Old on the Broom road.

1104

00:55:36.715 --> 00:55:41.605

However, in rep three dash oh six four which appeared today,

1105

00:55:42.065 --> 00:55:45.645

the outline construction traffic management plan revision B

1106

00:55:46.705 --> 00:55:48.405

in table 4.1,

1107

00:55:49.195 --> 00:55:53.005

this access a dash two on the Broon road is only listed

1108

00:55:53.265 --> 00:55:57.285

for use during the operational phase, not construction

1109

00:55:57.745 --> 00:55:59.965

as had been in previous UM versions.

1110

00:56:01.345 --> 00:56:05.245

On the latest revision of this site, a map CR 2 0 8,

1111

00:56:05.425 --> 00:56:07.565

it is clear that a length of the brownton road

1112

00:56:07.585 --> 00:56:09.445

by Old is within the sche order limits

1113

00:56:09.905 --> 00:56:14.605

but confusingly the access track marked within fields AF

1114

00:56:14.705 --> 00:56:17.205

1, 2, 3 and four does not appear

1115

00:56:17.225 --> 00:56:18.885

to connect to the road here.

1116

00:56:19.555 --> 00:56:24.165

However, it also does not connect Eastwood across the water

1117

00:56:24.165 --> 00:56:27.285

course to Newland Road the quiet lane.

1118

00:56:27.865 --> 00:56:31.565

So my question is how are construction vehicles expected

1119

00:56:31.625 --> 00:56:33.845

to access fields AF two, three

1120

00:56:33.865 --> 00:56:36.245

and four for the erection of solar arrays

1121

00:56:36.245 --> 00:56:37.805

and the associated works planned?

1122

00:56:38.665 --> 00:56:41.045

In my previous OFH submission,

1123

00:56:41.885 --> 00:56:44.565

I questioned why construction access to the west side

1124

00:56:44.565 --> 00:56:47.845

of site A was not designated to be from the Broon road

1125

00:56:47.845 --> 00:56:50.485

by old because that would minimize any need

1126

00:56:50.485 --> 00:56:53.605

to cross Newland road disappointingly.

1127

00:56:53.825 --> 00:56:55.885

The applicant's response to my submission,

1128

00:56:55.885 --> 00:56:58.365

which is in pages 33 to 39

1129

00:56:58.365 --> 00:57:02.445

of rep 3 1 2 9 did not answer this point at all.

1130

00:57:03.915 --> 00:57:05.615

If the applicant had intended

1131

00:57:05.725 --> 00:57:07.615

that construction in fields a F two

1132

00:57:07.615 --> 00:57:09.095

to four would be accessed

1133

00:57:09.095 --> 00:57:12.055

by crossing Newland Road at the crossing points

1134

00:57:12.855 --> 00:57:17.655

a dash one east to a dash one West in rep 1 1 57,

1135

00:57:17.885 --> 00:57:19.415

then it would be necessary

1136

00:57:19.515 --> 00:57:22.735

to construct an access route across the ecologically

1137

00:57:23.095 --> 00:57:24.935

valuable watercourse already mentioned.

1138

00:57:26.045 --> 00:57:30.255

However, the applicant states in a PP dash oh four six

1139

00:57:30.695 --> 00:57:33.735

ecology and by diversity under embedded construction

1140

00:57:33.735 --> 00:57:36.375

mitigation measures paragraph 9 8 4

1141

00:57:36.645 --> 00:57:39.495

that buffers from ecological features are applied according

1142

00:57:39.495 --> 00:57:41.815

to a set of ecological importance criteria

1143

00:57:42.205 --> 00:57:46.095

that buffers shall be 15 meters minimum from all hedge rows,

1144

00:57:46.385 --> 00:57:49.055

minor watercourse, small stream perhaps

1145

00:57:49.655 --> 00:57:51.055

I assume this is designated as

1146

00:57:51.635 --> 00:57:54.055

and that the buffers will not contain any str,

1147

00:57:54.235 --> 00:57:57.175

any ray structures, hard standing or electrical hardware.

1148

00:57:57.395 --> 00:58:00.335

And that protective construction phase fencing will also

1149

00:58:00.335 --> 00:58:01.975

observe these buffer distances.

1150

00:58:02.905 --> 00:58:07.135

Power 9, 8, 6 states that uh, um, to quote

1151

00:58:07.695 --> 00:58:10.095

internal access stroke maintenance tracks have also been

1152

00:58:10.095 --> 00:58:11.335

rooted so as

1153

00:58:11.355 --> 00:58:13.935

to avoid designated ecological buffer

1154

00:58:13.985 --> 00:58:15.255

zones wherever possible.

1155

00:58:16.735 --> 00:58:18.975

I have looked through the plans for all the other sites

1156

00:58:19.315 --> 00:58:20.735

and can find no example

1157

00:58:20.795 --> 00:58:24.055

of a construction access track crossing an ecologically I

1158

00:58:24.055 --> 00:58:25.855

port important watercourse.

1159

00:58:26.315 --> 00:58:29.975

So those were a PP 2 1 11 to 2 1 9 inclusive.

1160

00:58:31.125 --> 00:58:34.095

Therefore I believe it is essential for the applicant

1161

00:58:34.115 --> 00:58:35.215

to address this issue

1162

00:58:35.215 --> 00:58:36.935

before the end of the examination process.

1163

00:58:37.485 --> 00:58:41.615

That is they must state clearly in amended documentation

1164

00:58:41.615 --> 00:58:44.415

and mapping what route they do intend to use

1165

00:58:44.475 --> 00:58:47.575

to construct solar arrays in fields AF two to four.

1166

00:58:49.175 --> 00:58:52.195

It follows then the DEF access for constructions

1167

00:58:52.195 --> 00:58:55.995

for these fields has to be from access point A to dash two,

1168

00:58:56.295 --> 00:58:59.395

the Broon road by old as I believe it has to be.

1169

00:59:00.465 --> 00:59:01.955

Then if the very small area

1170

00:59:01.955 --> 00:59:05.035

of solar arrays in field AF nine were removed from

1171

00:59:05.035 --> 00:59:08.675

development within the scheme, there would be no need at all

1172

00:59:08.855 --> 00:59:12.675

for crossing points A one east and west on the Newland road.

1173

00:59:13.335 --> 00:59:16.195

So then no permanent access trap would be required

1174

00:59:16.195 --> 00:59:18.595

through the northern end of field AF 29,

1175

00:59:19.245 --> 00:59:21.645

which has already been removed from solar air use.

1176

00:59:21.995 --> 00:59:24.285

This field would then benefit from, from being able

1177

00:59:24.285 --> 00:59:26.805

to support arable farming in the entire field.

1178

00:59:27.965 --> 00:59:30.965

Ecological benefits would include no longer needing

1179

00:59:30.965 --> 00:59:34.005

to remove two portions of important hedge one

1180

00:59:34.005 --> 00:59:36.605

between fields AF 29 and AF 14

1181

00:59:37.065 --> 00:59:39.005

and the other between AF 29

1182

00:59:39.205 --> 00:59:42.245

and Newland Road for the access A one East.

1183

00:59:42.785 --> 00:59:44.805

And also then other benefits.

1184

00:59:44.955 --> 00:59:47.085

Skylark territories in that field would not have

1185

00:59:47.085 --> 00:59:48.285

to be disturbed at all.

1186

00:59:50.225 --> 00:59:52.565

And other benefits would include the fact

1187

00:59:52.565 --> 00:59:56.085

that field AF nine could be continued in food production

1188

00:59:56.505 --> 00:59:59.485

and the soil in that field is all in agricultural

1189

00:59:59.485 --> 01:00:00.805

land classification two.

1190

01:00:01.945 --> 01:00:03.485

So absolutely best

1191

01:00:03.485 --> 01:00:06.605

and most versatile, But most importantly

1192

01:00:06.605 --> 01:00:07.685

to the local community.

1193

01:00:07.945 --> 01:00:10.925

The only required then disturbance then to Newland Road,

1194

01:00:11.025 --> 01:00:12.325

the designated quiet lane.

1195

01:00:12.585 --> 01:00:15.005

So important for recreation for villagers

1196

01:00:15.185 --> 01:00:18.325

as I've demonstrated previously, would be the need

1197

01:00:18.385 --> 01:00:22.125

for the cable route from a fields AF two to four to cross

1198

01:00:22.145 --> 01:00:23.485

to the side of the site.

1199

01:00:24.105 --> 01:00:26.925

But otherwise there would be no need for any closure

1200

01:00:27.305 --> 01:00:29.805

or other regular disruption of the use of this road

1201

01:00:29.805 --> 01:00:32.045

during the construction or maintenance phases.

1202

01:00:33.105 --> 01:00:35.965

It would help to preserve some measure of tranquility

1203

01:00:36.465 --> 01:00:37.965

for users of this resource

1204

01:00:38.265 --> 01:00:41.365

and b of great benefit in limiting the very harmful

1205

01:00:41.515 --> 01:00:45.045

disturbance during construction of the proposed scheme both

1206

01:00:45.105 --> 01:00:47.445

to humans and all other wildlife.

1207

01:00:48.605 --> 01:00:50.365

I should therefore respectfully request

1208

01:00:50.365 --> 01:00:52.925

that the examiners recognize the logic of this argument

1209

01:00:53.435 --> 01:00:57.085

with its very small reduction in energy generation set

1210

01:00:57.085 --> 01:00:59.725

against enormous benefit to local residents

1211

01:01:00.105 --> 01:01:01.285

and consider the removal

1212

01:01:01.305 --> 01:01:06.165

of field AF nine from development in any eventual DCO if

1213

01:01:06.235 --> 01:01:07.765

they are reminded to Grant one.

1214

01:01:08.635 --> 01:01:09.685

Many thanks for listening.

1215

01:01:12.505 --> 01:01:14.175

Thank you very much. Thank you.

1216

01:01:18.515 --> 01:01:20.295

Uh, so next we've got Kay Brown, please.

1217

01:01:27.465 --> 01:01:30.955

Good afternoon. Um, I'm Kay Brown, a resident of me Ashby,

1218

01:01:31.015 --> 01:01:33.235

and a member of the Stop Greenhill Solar Group.

1219

01:01:34.045 --> 01:01:36.515

Today we'd like to raise a point which may not have been

1220

01:01:36.715 --> 01:01:38.475

considered in this examination so far

1221

01:01:39.215 --> 01:01:40.875

within the Greenhill Solar scheme,

1222

01:01:40.875 --> 01:01:43.395

there are some large landowners who have agreed

1223

01:01:43.695 --> 01:01:45.035

to their land being used.

1224

01:01:45.915 --> 01:01:49.475

A number of residents who live in rented accommodation owned

1225

01:01:49.655 --> 01:01:50.915

by such a landlord

1226

01:01:51.215 --> 01:01:54.555

or who depend on their livelihoods on a working relationship

1227

01:01:54.555 --> 01:01:57.875

with the landlord may be strongly opposed to the scheme,

1228

01:01:58.135 --> 01:01:59.595

but are afraid to speak out

1229

01:01:59.905 --> 01:02:03.235

because they fear it could jeopardize their livelihood,

1230

01:02:03.405 --> 01:02:05.035

their home, or both.

1231

01:02:06.455 --> 01:02:07.795

One hopes that this would not happen

1232

01:02:08.135 --> 01:02:10.555

and we stress that there is no evidence at this stage

1233

01:02:10.615 --> 01:02:11.715

to suggest that it has.

1234

01:02:12.345 --> 01:02:14.795

However, we hope the inspectors will understand

1235

01:02:15.185 --> 01:02:17.395

that it would not be an unreasonable concern,

1236

01:02:17.675 --> 01:02:21.365

particularly in such precarious times we have plenty

1237

01:02:21.385 --> 01:02:25.365

of anecdotal evidence for it, for example, around Site F.

1238

01:02:25.785 --> 01:02:29.605

It is a significant factor in discouraging people from

1239

01:02:29.605 --> 01:02:31.645

coming forward to voice their concerns.

1240

01:02:33.145 --> 01:02:35.445

Though the fear is real, we accept

1241

01:02:35.445 --> 01:02:36.645

that there is probably nothing

1242

01:02:36.645 --> 01:02:39.165

that can be done about it within the terms

1243

01:02:39.165 --> 01:02:40.525  
of the public examination.

1244

01:02:41.635 --> 01:02:44.845  
Nonetheless, stop Hill Green Solar would like to bring it

1245

01:02:44.845 --> 01:02:48.645  
to the attention of the examine authority in this context

1246

01:02:49.385 --> 01:02:51.245  
and with particular regard to Site F.

1247

01:02:51.705 --> 01:02:53.605  
We would also commend the inspectors

1248

01:02:53.605 --> 01:02:56.685  
to review two earlier submissions by Stop Greenhill solar

1249

01:02:57.885 --> 01:03:02.605  
documents rep 1 2 0 4 and rep 1 2 0 3.

1250

01:03:03.735 --> 01:03:06.085  
These present very strong local concerns

1251

01:03:06.395 --> 01:03:08.885  
with photographs about the industrialization

1252

01:03:08.885 --> 01:03:10.045  
of the beautiful landscape

1253

01:03:10.265 --> 01:03:12.165  
around Eastern mortar and Horwood.

1254

01:03:12.905 --> 01:03:17.325  
As things stand, the design involves closure of ancient

1255

01:03:17.325 --> 01:03:18.605  
and attractive rights of way

1256

01:03:19.105 --> 01:03:22.845

and destruction of excellent views of o open country

1257

01:03:23.185 --> 01:03:25.245

and churches across a wide area.

1258

01:03:26.495 --> 01:03:28.405

These are a vital source of physical

1259

01:03:28.425 --> 01:03:30.005

and mental wellbeing for local people

1260

01:03:30.625 --> 01:03:32.325

and also for the many walkers

1261

01:03:33.305 --> 01:03:36.645

and other social users who come to use from further afield

1262

01:03:37.385 --> 01:03:39.165

on the south side of Eastern Morde.

1263

01:03:39.225 --> 01:03:43.565

The public rights of way, TD nine, TD five, TD seven,

1264

01:03:44.185 --> 01:03:48.285

and adjacent fields FF 28 to 32 are particularly affected.

1265

01:03:50.075 --> 01:03:53.055

In addition to this Meres Ashby, the public footpath,

1266

01:03:53.055 --> 01:03:57.255

which runs alongside EEF 33 would be a corridor

1267

01:03:57.365 --> 01:03:59.935

that may feel very enclosed with high fencing,

1268

01:04:01.035 --> 01:04:04.135

as will the path running between Eef 1314

1269

01:04:04.435 --> 01:04:07.775

and EF 22, which many local villagers use.

1270

01:04:10.595 --> 01:04:12.495

In addition, the Grendon path.

1271

01:04:12.995 --> 01:04:15.575

So the pathway from Grendon to ca LPE

1272

01:04:16.525 --> 01:04:18.615

will be completely removed for two years,

1273

01:04:20.145 --> 01:04:22.135

apart from the Wendell walk exception,

1274

01:04:22.925 --> 01:04:26.295

with no permissive path being suggested or put in place.

1275

01:04:27.325 --> 01:04:31.055

Currently, this is the only path that is able

1276

01:04:31.075 --> 01:04:32.975

for local villagers to walk

1277

01:04:33.075 --> 01:04:35.655

to a destination to even get a coffee.

1278

01:04:38.565 --> 01:04:41.665

We do appreciate that you visited Eastern Mor site recently

1279

01:04:41.665 --> 01:04:42.865

on an unaccompanied site.

1280

01:04:42.865 --> 01:04:45.065

Visit us two on the 26th of February.

1281

01:04:45.685 --> 01:04:47.665

At this time of year, the woods

1282

01:04:47.685 --> 01:04:52.665

and hedges are coming alive, of course,

1283

01:04:53.005 --> 01:04:56.065

and the air is once again filled with the songs of Skylarks.

1284

01:04:56.285 --> 01:04:59.025

It lifts the human spirit as it does every year.

1285

01:04:59.405 --> 01:05:02.225

The thought that it might soon be carved up fenced in,

1286

01:05:02.575 --> 01:05:06.265

paneled over industrial industrialized in the countryside

1287

01:05:06.645 --> 01:05:10.505

for 60 years is now weighing very heavily on the hearts

1288

01:05:10.505 --> 01:05:13.145

of all our local people, even though they feel

1289

01:05:14.055 --> 01:05:15.385

some might feel afraid

1290

01:05:15.565 --> 01:05:17.325

to actually voice their concerns publicly.

1291

01:05:18.145 --> 01:05:21.505

So we thank you for being able to put this on record.

1292

01:05:22.895 --> 01:05:23.895

Thank you.

1293

01:05:29.495 --> 01:05:32.365

Thank you very much. Um, and now we've got Tim Graham

1294

01:05:35.435 --> 01:05:36.605

Left my name Up.

1295

01:05:36.825 --> 01:05:39.445

Um, I've got you next. Mr. Sey? Yes. Yeah. Mr.

1296

01:05:39.865 --> 01:05:41.005

Mr. Graham first. Thank you.

1297

01:05:51.325 --> 01:05:53.455

Good afternoon. My name is Tim Graham.

1298

01:05:53.595 --> 01:05:55.335

I'm a resident of Mayors Ashby.

1299

01:05:55.475 --> 01:05:57.455

I'm on the Mayors Bash Ashby Parish Council.

1300

01:05:58.235 --> 01:06:00.015

I'm speaking also independently

1301

01:06:00.235 --> 01:06:02.735

and on behalf of many, many people

1302

01:06:02.835 --> 01:06:04.975

who have raised the following topic with me

1303

01:06:05.475 --> 01:06:07.455

and I make no apologies for raising this topic.

1304

01:06:07.565 --> 01:06:09.815

It's been raised several times already this afternoon

1305

01:06:10.245 --> 01:06:11.495

because it's important.

1306

01:06:13.995 --> 01:06:15.645

I've seen many glossy

1307

01:06:15.645 --> 01:06:18.725

and professional documents presented by the applicant,

1308

01:06:19.065 --> 01:06:21.325

and these show the supposed benefits to be offered

1309

01:06:21.345 --> 01:06:23.085

by the construction of this solar farm.

1310

01:06:24.275 --> 01:06:27.045

What I have yet to see is any specific detail

1311

01:06:27.065 --> 01:06:29.365

or plan which deals with the decommissioning

1312

01:06:29.385 --> 01:06:33.125

of the then redundant facility in some 40 to 60 years time.

1313

01:06:34.965 --> 01:06:36.375

What is to become of the miles

1314

01:06:36.395 --> 01:06:38.455

of plastic coated underground cables?

1315

01:06:39.075 --> 01:06:41.495

Do they stay buried? What happens

1316

01:06:41.515 --> 01:06:43.335

to the toxic battery banks, which

1317

01:06:43.515 --> 01:06:45.855

by then will be leaking into the environment?

1318

01:06:46.815 --> 01:06:49.505

What will be done with the crumbling concrete foundations

1319

01:06:49.825 --> 01:06:51.385

sunk deep into our countryside?

1320

01:06:52.995 --> 01:06:54.695

How will thousands of tons

1321

01:06:54.835 --> 01:06:57.415

of plastic solar paneling be disposed of?

1322

01:06:57.925 --> 01:06:59.655

Does this all end up in landfill

1323

01:06:59.705 --> 01:07:02.935

where it will never decom decompose until the end of time?

1324

01:07:04.045 --> 01:07:07.025

And above all, who is going to be responsible

1325

01:07:07.285 --> 01:07:08.985

for this environmental disaster?

1326

01:07:10.045 --> 01:07:12.865

Who is going to pay for the restitution

1327

01:07:12.885 --> 01:07:15.025

and decontamination of the countryside?

1328

01:07:17.135 --> 01:07:19.995

The ownership and responsibility will by then

1329

01:07:20.515 --> 01:07:23.515

probably be far removed from a company called Green Hill.

1330

01:07:24.455 --> 01:07:27.635

The site may have undergone multiple ownership transfers,

1331

01:07:28.335 --> 01:07:30.795

and each time this happens, the case for liability

1332

01:07:31.055 --> 01:07:35.035

for the final cleanup will be further and further diluted.

1333

01:07:36.535 --> 01:07:38.235

The final owners, whoever they are,

1334

01:07:38.705 --> 01:07:42.035

will not be remotely interested in a restoration bill

1335

01:07:42.255 --> 01:07:44.395

of many tens of millions of pounds,

1336

01:07:45.785 --> 01:07:47.705

I suspect an eventual bankruptcy

1337

01:07:47.925 --> 01:07:49.625

and the financial burden transferred

1338

01:07:49.625 --> 01:07:51.465

to the local councils and rate payers.

1339

01:07:53.145 --> 01:07:56.325

It is the fundamental task of this planning inspectorate

1340

01:07:56.665 --> 01:07:59.965

to ensure that there is more than adequate financial

1341

01:07:59.965 --> 01:08:02.885

provision allowing for future inflation

1342

01:08:03.665 --> 01:08:05.845

and approved by independent accountants

1343

01:08:06.265 --> 01:08:09.325

to make good the damage that will have been done.

1344

01:08:10.385 --> 01:08:14.475

This must be in the form of a cast iron financial bond

1345

01:08:14.995 --> 01:08:17.565

held in trust by an officially approved,

1346

01:08:17.565 --> 01:08:20.725

appointed third party in a UK bank.

1347

01:08:22.015 --> 01:08:24.395

If Greenhill can raise the investment capital

1348

01:08:24.815 --> 01:08:25.835

to build this site,

1349

01:08:26.105 --> 01:08:29.315

then it can also raise the capital eventually to dispose

1350

01:08:29.315 --> 01:08:30.755

of the site in the correct manner.

1351

01:08:32.065 --> 01:08:35.005

If there is the slightest resistance to this proposal,

1352

01:08:35.355 --> 01:08:38.325

then it becomes obvious that there is no plan

1353

01:08:38.545 --> 01:08:40.165

or no intention to clean up

1354

01:08:40.665 --> 01:08:44.125

and the planning inspectorate will have no option other than

1355

01:08:44.145 --> 01:08:45.925

to refuse it in the first place.

1356

01:08:46.835 --> 01:08:49.685

That is the responsible side of a planning.

1357

01:08:50.825 --> 01:08:55.055

There will be only one time to put this safeguard into place

1358

01:08:55.595 --> 01:08:58.095

and that time is now.

1359

01:08:59.145 --> 01:09:00.145

Thank you.

1360

01:09:07.765 --> 01:09:09.475

Thank you Mr. Ey.

1361

01:09:27.505 --> 01:09:29.605

My full name is Bernard Ey.

1362

01:09:30.245 --> 01:09:34.845

I speak here representing myself, my wife, um,

1363

01:09:35.555 --> 01:09:37.165

members of our village.

1364  
01:09:38.125 --> 01:09:40.125  
I live in the village of Eastern Morty

1365  
01:09:40.945 --> 01:09:44.765  
and also members of the, um,

1366  
01:09:46.025 --> 01:09:50.965  
the, the the committee, uh, which is Stop Green Hills.

1367  
01:09:55.465 --> 01:09:59.925  
Um, it is a feature

1368  
01:10:00.065 --> 01:10:03.485  
of all lithium iron batteries

1369  
01:10:04.505 --> 01:10:06.245  
in the Grendon Bess

1370  
01:10:06.755 --> 01:10:10.805  
that they have a su susceptibility to thermal,

1371  
01:10:11.515 --> 01:10:14.845  
runaway self combustion and explosion.

1372  
01:10:17.565 --> 01:10:22.105  
Uh, this was all explained by professor,

1373  
01:10:24.005 --> 01:10:27.905  
um, by Professor Peter Dobson,

1374  
01:10:28.805 --> 01:10:33.145  
who spoke earlier on behalf

1375  
01:10:33.605 --> 01:10:36.665  
of the Stop Greenhill Solar

1376  
01:10:38.125 --> 01:10:41.105  
and, uh, explained how it happened.

1377  
01:10:42.715 --> 01:10:46.535

But if in fact it happens, the chemical changes

1378

01:10:47.355 --> 01:10:50.375

are extremely difficult to bring under control.

1379

01:10:51.115 --> 01:10:53.655

And in the meantime, the batteries can generate

1380

01:10:55.015 --> 01:10:57.535

considerable quantities of noxious fumes

1381

01:10:58.195 --> 01:11:02.255

and chemicals which are harmful to humans, to birds,

1382

01:11:02.475 --> 01:11:05.495

to animals, and to the environment.

1383

01:11:07.905 --> 01:11:11.515

Greenhill Solar will certainly have known all of this

1384

01:11:11.535 --> 01:11:13.685

during the whole of the time

1385

01:11:14.275 --> 01:11:16.685

that they've been advancing this application.

1386

01:11:18.375 --> 01:11:20.945

They and their present owners,

1387

01:11:21.965 --> 01:11:26.555

the Australian investors Macquarie, have set aside,

1388

01:11:27.185 --> 01:11:31.555

they disclose almost a billion pounds sterling

1389

01:11:32.455 --> 01:11:34.795

to invest in this scheme.

1390

01:11:36.875 --> 01:11:41.135

And at the same time, uh, during this process,

1391

01:11:42.245 --> 01:11:46.855

Macquarie has actually bought out Green Hills Solars

1392

01:11:46.855 --> 01:11:50.295

50%, and they are

1393

01:11:51.405 --> 01:11:54.815

also preparing to invest, uh, more money

1394

01:11:55.555 --> 01:11:56.695

in half a dozen

1395

01:11:56.875 --> 01:11:58.975

or so other solar farms

1396

01:11:59.715 --> 01:12:02.975

of comparable magnitude in this country.

1397

01:12:03.725 --> 01:12:08.005

Even now, it's unthinkable

1398

01:12:08.075 --> 01:12:11.165

that they will not have researched thoroughly

1399

01:12:12.135 --> 01:12:16.955

the availability of li uh, lithium iron

1400

01:12:17.555 --> 01:12:21.715

batteries in the market and have a very, very good idea

1401

01:12:22.445 --> 01:12:27.075

about the specific batteries which they intend

1402

01:12:27.095 --> 01:12:30.915

to install in the best areas around Grendon

1403

01:12:31.415 --> 01:12:33.075

and in Greenhill Sea.

1404

01:12:34.645 --> 01:12:39.335

What is more during the considerable time that, um,

1405

01:12:41.555 --> 01:12:45.005

Greenhill Solar and its experts have been thinking about

1406

01:12:45.705 --> 01:12:49.325

and planning the best layout in detail,

1407

01:12:50.435 --> 01:12:55.125

they cannot fail to have realized the considerable risk

1408

01:12:55.145 --> 01:12:58.205

of pollution entering the n

1409

01:12:59.225 --> 01:13:01.925

and adversely affecting the N Valley

1410

01:13:02.665 --> 01:13:04.325

and the Ramsar site.

1411

01:13:07.055 --> 01:13:10.785

When I first learned about their intentions

1412

01:13:11.965 --> 01:13:16.945

in March, 2024 in mere Ashby

1413

01:13:17.055 --> 01:13:20.495

Hall, when I learned that, uh,

1414

01:13:20.585 --> 01:13:24.375

green Hill was proposing to apply for permission

1415

01:13:24.375 --> 01:13:27.575

to construct a solar farm around

1416

01:13:29.035 --> 01:13:30.165

Eastern Morde

1417

01:13:30.625 --> 01:13:34.045

and several other villages in Northamptonshire,

1418

01:13:34.765 --> 01:13:39.205

I was alarmed at the loss of agricultural land, the damage

1419

01:13:39.305 --> 01:13:42.525

to the environment and the loss of amenity.

1420

01:13:44.025 --> 01:13:47.325

But I was ignorant of the potential damage likely

1421

01:13:47.505 --> 01:13:51.885

to be caused by the lie iron batteries.

1422

01:13:53.165 --> 01:13:54.385

And, um,

1423

01:13:55.565 --> 01:14:00.495

and I wasn't told by the applicant

1424

01:14:00.955 --> 01:14:05.215

or its representatives that that was a risk.

1425

01:14:07.365 --> 01:14:10.095

Greenhill instead explained that the function

1426

01:14:10.095 --> 01:14:14.885

of the batteries was to help store the surplus electricity

1427

01:14:15.865 --> 01:14:18.685

and return it to the grid when it was needed,

1428

01:14:20.065 --> 01:14:23.885

an explanation, which I thought was a bit sensible

1429

01:14:23.985 --> 01:14:25.845

and accepted at face value.

1430

01:14:28.575 --> 01:14:33.195

Now, that was March in June,

1431

01:14:33.815 --> 01:14:35.795

and on a number of other occasions,

1432

01:14:36.905 --> 01:14:39.075

Greenhill published a newsletter

1433

01:14:39.935 --> 01:14:43.475

in which it repeated in passing the function

1434

01:14:43.475 --> 01:14:45.195

of the batteries was storage.

1435

01:14:46.335 --> 01:14:50.045

There was no mention of the potential harm

1436

01:14:50.045 --> 01:14:52.685

that the batteries might cause then,

1437

01:14:53.865 --> 01:14:57.925

and this continued into the scoping report

1438

01:14:59.265 --> 01:15:03.725

In July, 2024, uh,

1439

01:15:04.435 --> 01:15:09.405

Greenhill Solar was sought to persuade the planners

1440

01:15:10.665 --> 01:15:14.805

in the scoping report to scope out

1441

01:15:15.505 --> 01:15:18.005

the consequences of fire

1442

01:15:18.185 --> 01:15:21.485

and explosions caused by quote,

1443

01:15:21.985 --> 01:15:23.645

the battery storage element.

1444

01:15:25.735 --> 01:15:29.195

In fact, pins rejected this

1445

01:15:29.495 --> 01:15:31.715  
and required that it be scoped in

1446

01:15:32.415 --> 01:15:35.915  
and placed under the heading Fires

1447

01:15:36.215 --> 01:15:40.875  
and explosions For the statutory

1448

01:15:41.215 --> 01:15:42.755  
con consultation.

1449

01:15:44.055 --> 01:15:46.595  
The asset, the applicant issued

1450

01:15:47.435 --> 01:15:51.515  
a non-technical consultation information booklet

1451

01:15:52.885 --> 01:15:57.235  
dated November, 2014, containing

1452

01:15:57.785 --> 01:16:02.035  
preliminary, um, um, assessments

1453

01:16:02.735 --> 01:16:05.595  
of the, of the environment

1454

01:16:09.335 --> 01:16:12.795  
on this date, November, 2014.

1455

01:16:13.915 --> 01:16:15.905  
Under the heading Air Quality

1456

01:16:17.165 --> 01:16:20.825  
at paragraph 16.4 0.4,

1457

01:16:22.975 --> 01:16:26.945  
they stated that fires to batteries

1458

01:16:27.735 --> 01:16:32.115

were rare, that there was limited real world

1459

01:16:32.345 --> 01:16:36.615  
information and insufficient information

1460

01:16:36.915 --> 01:16:41.295  
to determine if the effects of a fire to a Bess

1461

01:16:42.605 --> 01:16:46.965  
will be significant, significant in the sense that

1462

01:16:47.965 --> 01:16:50.845  
dangerous to people, dangerous to the environment.

1463

01:16:53.225 --> 01:16:57.605  
And under chapter 23 of this

1464

01:16:58.315 --> 01:17:02.205  
non-technical, uh, consultation booklet,

1465

01:17:02.945 --> 01:17:07.285  
it stated under the heading Major accidents

1466

01:17:07.345 --> 01:17:11.885  
and disasters, there is no discussion

1467

01:17:12.465 --> 01:17:16.965  
of battery fires saved for a one line entry

1468

01:17:17.675 --> 01:17:20.685  
that they were going to put together

1469

01:17:21.385 --> 01:17:26.005  
an outline battery fire safety plan.

1470

01:17:28.595 --> 01:17:29.895  
Now I jump.

1471

01:17:30.315 --> 01:17:34.615  
Now, the, the remarkable thing is that, uh,

1472

01:17:35.275 --> 01:17:40.205  
at no time in that period of

1473

01:17:41.365 --> 01:17:45.625  
a year or so did the applicant,

1474

01:17:46.725 --> 01:17:51.395  
uh, enter into consultation,

1475

01:17:52.105 --> 01:17:56.675  
letting it be known of the risk that it could be

1476

01:17:57.255 --> 01:18:00.475  
to the community for, um, uh,

1477

01:18:01.745 --> 01:18:05.355  
because of the lie iron quality of the batteries.

1478

01:18:08.205 --> 01:18:10.005  
I jumped forward to May

1479

01:18:11.405 --> 01:18:16.135  
because the environmental statement came in

1480

01:18:16.315 --> 01:18:19.745  
May and in accordance with

1481

01:18:20.285 --> 01:18:25.185  
the requirements imposed upon them by pins, they,

1482

01:18:25.765 --> 01:18:29.345  
uh, set out a, a detail of the batteries

1483

01:18:29.375 --> 01:18:33.745  
that they were going to, the, the features

1484

01:18:33.765 --> 01:18:36.985  
of batteries that they were going to, uh, require

1485

01:18:37.125 --> 01:18:40.985

and the possibility of risk of

1486

01:18:42.095 --> 01:18:45.225  
risk of fire and damage.

1487

01:18:46.985 --> 01:18:51.805  
And they introduced also in detail

1488

01:18:52.625 --> 01:18:54.725  
an outline battery storage

1489

01:18:55.465 --> 01:18:58.405  
and safety management plan.

1490

01:19:01.055 --> 01:19:05.235  
Now, if you look through all of

1491

01:19:05.265 --> 01:19:06.835  
what they then put,

1492

01:19:08.835 --> 01:19:12.795  
IW wish to raise with you, um,

1493

01:19:13.775 --> 01:19:16.035  
one or two, uh, queries.

1494

01:19:16.615 --> 01:19:18.795  
I'm not going to go through the detail of it,

1495

01:19:19.695 --> 01:19:21.955  
but for example,

1496

01:19:24.335 --> 01:19:29.315  
in the, um, environmental statement under chapter 23,

1497

01:19:30.125 --> 01:19:31.475  
major accidents

1498

01:19:31.695 --> 01:19:36.395  
and disaster, they have got risk of battery fires

1499

01:19:37.335 --> 01:19:40.035  
and they set out that health

1500

01:19:40.335 --> 01:19:42.875  
and safety on site would be managed

1501

01:19:43.015 --> 01:19:47.355  
by a third party contractor appointed by the applicant

1502

01:19:47.855 --> 01:19:49.635  
during construction

1503

01:19:50.375 --> 01:19:55.355  
and decommissioning to mitigate the risk of fire in line

1504

01:19:55.355 --> 01:19:57.635  
with legislative safety requirements.

1505

01:19:59.295 --> 01:20:01.195  
An outline battery storage

1506

01:20:01.855 --> 01:20:04.715  
safety management plan has been prepared.

1507

01:20:06.055 --> 01:20:10.875  
Now there is then an assessment,

1508

01:20:12.175 --> 01:20:17.155  
an explanation of certain features of the battery storage

1509

01:20:17.775 --> 01:20:19.035  
safety plan.

1510

01:20:20.895 --> 01:20:24.235  
But what you then find

1511

01:20:25.905 --> 01:20:30.525  
is that there are a number of queries

1512

01:20:30.995 --> 01:20:33.805

that I think, um,

1513

01:20:35.675 --> 01:20:37.325

Have been raised in my mind.

1514

01:20:39.345 --> 01:20:44.125

The first thing to mention is that in the, um,

1515

01:20:45.005 --> 01:20:49.445

original documents that I have of the, um,

1516

01:20:51.105 --> 01:20:54.675

outline battery storage safety management plan,

1517

01:20:56.085 --> 01:21:00.195

there are 38 references to

1518

01:21:01.905 --> 01:21:04.875

reports which have been given

1519

01:21:05.655 --> 01:21:09.875

and are to do with certain, um, uh,

1520

01:21:10.835 --> 01:21:14.995

features of the dangers of having,

1521

01:21:15.895 --> 01:21:20.715

uh, the batteries, um, at all.

1522

01:21:22.015 --> 01:21:25.285

Um, so, um, I

1523

01:21:26.475 --> 01:21:30.925

have got the references as the last two pages

1524

01:21:31.025 --> 01:21:34.645

of the LY Battery Storage Safety Management plan,

1525

01:21:35.825 --> 01:21:38.565

but no of the reference

1526

01:21:39.165 --> 01:21:41.085  
documents for supplied.

1527

01:21:43.145 --> 01:21:47.285  
May I ask, sir, I wonder whether you

1528

01:21:47.285 --> 01:21:50.485  
and your colleagues have had the references,

1529

01:21:52.575 --> 01:21:55.155  
the, the reference doc documents?

1530

01:21:56.255 --> 01:21:59.535  
Um, I haven't had them

1531

01:22:00.235 --> 01:22:03.855  
and I couldn't find them either when I tried to look.

1532

01:22:04.845 --> 01:22:09.745  
And I just wonder whether it is helpful to have references

1533

01:22:10.575 --> 01:22:14.865  
when in no stage are they otherwise referred to.

1534

01:22:17.455 --> 01:22:21.675  
Um, so those footnotes have gone there.

1535

01:22:23.055 --> 01:22:28.035  
Uh, the second thing is that when the

1536

01:22:29.135 --> 01:22:33.315  
online outline battery storage safety management

1537

01:22:33.945 --> 01:22:37.715  
plan was written, it put

1538

01:22:38.515 --> 01:22:39.515  
argument forwards

1539

01:22:39.515 --> 01:22:44.315

and backwards about the, um, um, qualities

1540

01:22:45.055 --> 01:22:48.115

and the dangers that they had to deal with.

1541

01:22:49.845 --> 01:22:53.745

Uh, equally, if you look at it carefully,

1542

01:22:54.725 --> 01:22:57.025

uh, a number of things are obvious.

1543

01:22:58.875 --> 01:23:01.675

First of all, um,

1544

01:23:06.615 --> 01:23:11.005

they do not mention at all any

1545

01:23:11.345 --> 01:23:14.205

of the batteries that they are talking about.

1546

01:23:16.435 --> 01:23:18.325

They don't indicate

1547

01:23:19.195 --> 01:23:21.645

what batteries they want to use.

1548

01:23:22.595 --> 01:23:27.315

They, I suppose, are putting it

1549

01:23:27.315 --> 01:23:31.755

to one side until they, uh, can deal with it

1550

01:23:32.365 --> 01:23:36.785

after you have in effect

1551

01:23:37.405 --> 01:23:41.025

not made a judgment about what it's set out in that, uh,

1552

01:23:41.045 --> 01:23:42.905

in environmental report.

1553  
01:23:43.925 --> 01:23:48.665  
Uh, because, uh, they can, I suppose,

1554  
01:23:49.655 --> 01:23:52.265  
rely upon the Rochdale principles.

1555  
01:23:53.775 --> 01:23:58.505  
That means they're simply going

1556  
01:23:58.505 --> 01:24:02.745  
to say that they're not in a position to make up their mind.

1557  
01:24:03.925 --> 01:24:07.065  
But, um, why should that stop them?

1558  
01:24:07.895 --> 01:24:11.385  
They must having, uh, basically put

1559  
01:24:12.065 --> 01:24:16.825  
a a million pounds down in order to, I'm sorry,

1560  
01:24:17.425 --> 01:24:21.985  
a billion pounds down in order to build the thing.

1561  
01:24:23.005 --> 01:24:27.865  
Surely they must have an idea as to what it is they're going

1562  
01:24:27.885 --> 01:24:30.745  
to put by way of batteries there.

1563  
01:24:32.245 --> 01:24:36.045  
And, um, in my submission,

1564  
01:24:37.355 --> 01:24:42.005  
they are just simply making it more difficult for people.

1565  
01:24:42.905 --> 01:24:46.805  
And I endorsed the remark of Trevor Higgs

1566  
01:24:47.425 --> 01:24:51.845

who pointed out that their, um, um,

1567

01:24:54.075 --> 01:24:56.005

consultations statutory

1568

01:24:56.155 --> 01:25:00.845

otherwise has included, um, places where

1569

01:25:01.515 --> 01:25:06.185

they have, I suggest deliberately not

1570

01:25:07.465 --> 01:25:10.625

identified what it is they have in mind

1571

01:25:11.485 --> 01:25:15.625

simply in order to make it more difficult for anyone

1572

01:25:16.285 --> 01:25:20.665

to be able to discuss it and challenge it.

1573

01:25:22.255 --> 01:25:26.085

Apart from which, although it reads quite well,

1574

01:25:27.115 --> 01:25:31.045

it's quite obvious that they're not talking about one type

1575

01:25:31.105 --> 01:25:33.965

of battery rather than a number

1576

01:25:34.145 --> 01:25:35.925

of different types of battery.

1577

01:25:36.945 --> 01:25:40.245

Uh, leaving it to us to guess what,

1578

01:25:40.465 --> 01:25:42.485

if anything they refer to.

1579

01:25:44.155 --> 01:25:46.065

There are two other things I'd mention,

1580  
01:25:49.015 --> 01:25:53.815  
although it appears to give a good explanation

1581  
01:25:54.635 --> 01:25:58.375  
of how certain, uh,

1582  
01:25:58.475 --> 01:26:00.455  
safety measures are designed.

1583  
01:26:01.355 --> 01:26:06.045  
Uh, they haven't in fact dealt with sheer

1584  
01:26:06.655 --> 01:26:07.925  
human failure

1585  
01:26:11.965 --> 01:26:16.545  
and nor have they noticed that they have

1586  
01:26:17.645 --> 01:26:20.225  
failed to heed the fact

1587  
01:26:20.935 --> 01:26:25.335  
That The substances that the batteries are going

1588  
01:26:25.335 --> 01:26:28.975  
to contain is a hazard,

1589  
01:26:29.235 --> 01:26:32.615  
are hazardous substances which are

1590  
01:26:33.635 --> 01:26:38.175  
for which they have no consent under the, um,

1591  
01:26:38.515 --> 01:26:42.735  
um, under the statute, uh,

1592  
01:26:42.735 --> 01:26:45.095  
which is the, um,

1593  
01:26:48.035 --> 01:26:52.405

control of major accident hazards Regulations two,

1594

01:26:53.265 --> 01:26:54.605

2015

1595

01:26:55.505 --> 01:26:58.085

and Hazard Substances Regulations

1596

01:26:58.865 --> 01:27:00.605

2015.

1597

01:27:01.905 --> 01:27:06.685

Uh, there has been no attempt to get consent

1598

01:27:06.745 --> 01:27:11.525

for that, and that appears to be something

1599

01:27:11.525 --> 01:27:13.605

that they've not noticed.

1600

01:27:16.235 --> 01:27:17.235

Thank you.

1601

01:27:18.515 --> 01:27:19.625

Thank you, Mr. Ey.

1602

01:27:27.525 --> 01:27:27.815

Okay.

1603

01:27:31.155 --> 01:27:35.295

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, take a quick break.

1604

01:27:35.755 --> 01:27:37.055

Do 15 minutes.

1605

01:27:40.805 --> 01:27:42.135

Okay. Thank you very much. Um,

1606

01:27:42.135 --> 01:27:43.415

we just propose at this stage

1607

01:27:43.575 --> 01:27:44.935

'cause we've been going for an hour and a half, just

1608

01:27:44.935 --> 01:27:46.295

to take a quick 10 minute break.

1609

01:27:46.875 --> 01:27:50.095

Um, so if we come back at 20 to four, um,

1610

01:27:50.095 --> 01:27:51.295

so the hearing's adjourned.

1611

01:27:51.295 --> 01:27:51.455

Thank you.