



Hearing Transcript

Project:	Green Hill Solar Farm
Hearing:	Open Floor Hearing 3 (OFH3) - Part 2
Date:	10 March 2026

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

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

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

Created by event.video

1

00:00:00.080 --> 00:00:03.420

Uh, good afternoon, everyone. Oops.

2

00:00:03.440 --> 00:00:07.100

It's now twenty to four, so it's time to resume the hearing.

3

00:00:07.200 --> 00:00:09.360

Um, and next on my list I've got Dr. Marie

4

00:00:09.420 --> 00:00:13.480

Midgley.

5

00:00:16.000 --> 00:00:16.780

Thank you.

6

00:00:16.860 --> 00:00:20.460

Hello. Thank you. I'm Dr. Marie, Marie Midgley.

7

00:00:20.540 --> 00:00:24.300

I'm a resident of Grendon Village, and a supporter of Stock Green Hill

8

00:00:24.400 --> 00:00:27.840

Solar. I've just got two, quick

9

00:00:27.920 --> 00:00:31.580

questions because I believe that the, devil is always in the

10

00:00:31.660 --> 00:00:35.580

details, so this is some details. Could we please ask Green

11

00:00:35.640 --> 00:00:39.420

Hills Solar Farm Limited to provide an answer to the following question?

12

00:00:39.440 --> 00:00:43.200

Do they have an agreed connection date with Nesso,

13

00:00:43.260 --> 00:00:47.160

and does that in- an agreed and confirmed connection date with

14

00:00:47.180 --> 00:00:51.160

Nesso, and does that include protected status for the BEZ?

15

00:00:51.180 --> 00:00:54.430

And if they do, then can they please provide this information as part of their

16

00:00:54.560 --> 00:00:58.360

submission? Because without this information, obviously this project is

17

00:00:58.380 --> 00:01:02.080

going to stall, and that will leave us in limbo.

18

00:01:02.140 --> 00:01:05.100

The second, question I have

19

00:01:05.320 --> 00:01:09.240

is, as of, sort of, their, the submissions they've made so

20

00:01:09.320 --> 00:01:12.880

far, a number of the fields that they originally,

21

00:01:13.900 --> 00:01:16.960

put a s- a ring around to say that they wanted them as part

22

00:01:17.000 --> 00:01:20.600

of their plans, have now been removed from the scheme in

23

00:01:20.700 --> 00:01:24.300

terms of siting solar panels. And I'd like to

24

00:01:24.700 --> 00:01:28.660

s- ask why these s- now these, these fields which have now

25

00:01:28.720 --> 00:01:32.200

been set aside are still part of their scheme.

26

00:01:32.220 --> 00:01:35.990

They've said, for example, near Horne Wood, that they are going to
s-

27

00:01:36.060 --> 00:01:39.780
turn, BEZ, a most versatile

28

00:01:39.840 --> 00:01:43.560
grade agricultural land from that use i- and

29

00:01:43.780 --> 00:01:46.200
instead it's gonna be set aside wildflower

30

00:01:46.300 --> 00:01:49.760
fields. It would be safer for the

31

00:01:49.820 --> 00:01:53.480
residents of the area, I believe, if those fields were returned

32

00:01:53.740 --> 00:01:57.700
or taken out of the scheme completely and allowed to continue

33

00:01:57.720 --> 00:02:01.480
in their, their current purpose. Because a cynic might think

34

00:02:01.580 --> 00:02:05.360
that, by having them within their compulsory

35

00:02:05.420 --> 00:02:09.380
control, further down the road they could easily be

36

00:02:09.420 --> 00:02:12.800
added, to in terms of further development and made into

37

00:02:12.820 --> 00:02:16.800
industrial land ra- for industrial use rather than

38

00:02:16.940 --> 00:02:20.760
for agricultural use. So basically the request is that

39

00:02:20.820 --> 00:02:24.200
can the land that they're not gonna use for the scheme be removed

from the scheme

40

00:02:24.620 --> 00:02:28.060

and from their, p- their planning proposals?

41

00:02:28.100 --> 00:02:31.220

Thank you very much indeed.

42

00:02:31.260 --> 00:02:32.410

Thank you very much.

43

00:02:37.480 --> 00:02:39.410

Um, and now I've got, Sheena Howell.

44

00:02:39.440 --> 00:02:41.660

Thank you.

45

00:02:45.800 --> 00:02:46.880

Thank you.

46

00:02:48.910 --> 00:02:52.860

Good afternoon. Sheena Howell on behalf of Stock Green Hill Solar.

47

00:02:53.760 --> 00:02:56.540

I have three points I'd like to make, please. The first is a question.

48

00:02:57.440 --> 00:03:01.360

Uh, and the first question is about noise and vibration.

49

00:03:01.440 --> 00:03:03.600

Rep one one six eight

50

00:03:04.620 --> 00:03:06.740

point one point two point

51

00:03:06.900 --> 00:03:10.700

20 states that there may be a need

52

00:03:10.780 --> 00:03:14.540

for nighttime works to be carried out.

53

00:03:15.640 --> 00:03:19.160

The same point, one point two point 20, table one point five

54

00:03:20.540 --> 00:03:24.140

illustrates that around certain receptor points, the noise

55

00:03:24.220 --> 00:03:26.480

levels could be almost 60

56

00:03:26.520 --> 00:03:28.600

decibels.

57

00:03:29.720 --> 00:03:31.200

65 decibels

58

00:03:32.440 --> 00:03:35.760

is regarded as the unsafe limit incurring need for

59

00:03:35.820 --> 00:03:37.840

temporary rehousing.

60

00:03:39.800 --> 00:03:43.700

Is the applicant planning to potentially rehouse the entire village

61

00:03:43.760 --> 00:03:45.600

of Grendon?

62

00:03:47.540 --> 00:03:51.020

Two-thirds of the measured receptors around Grendon

63

00:03:51.500 --> 00:03:52.080

and BEZ

64

00:03:52.920 --> 00:03:56.860

are registering high or medium levels and would require,

65

00:03:56.900 --> 00:03:59.740

in the applicant's own words, significant

66

00:03:59.940 --> 00:04:03.340
mitigation. We live in the

67
00:04:03.400 --> 00:04:05.990
countryside. It is

68
00:04:06.040 --> 00:04:09.520
dark, and it is quiet in the countryside at

69
00:04:09.580 --> 00:04:13.180
nighttime. It is not an industrial

70
00:04:13.240 --> 00:04:13.880
landscape

71
00:04:14.780 --> 00:04:18.240
with HDD drills making significant

72
00:04:18.519 --> 00:04:22.140
decibel noise, endangering the

73
00:04:22.200 --> 00:04:25.790
wildlife, disturbing the wildlife, and of course the floodlighting
that would

74
00:04:25.840 --> 00:04:29.580
accompany it. Please give this

75
00:04:29.590 --> 00:04:33.530
extra regard and do not give consent for any night working within

76
00:04:33.580 --> 00:04:37.210
the DC0, which was certainly not the original

77
00:04:37.240 --> 00:04:38.969
intention.

78
00:04:40.080 --> 00:04:40.940
That's my first point.

79
00:04:42.960 --> 00:04:45.350

My second point is an information point, really.

80

00:04:45.440 --> 00:04:48.410

Stock Green Hill Solar have submitted a vi- video to the

81

00:04:48.460 --> 00:04:52.140

inspectorate, which will be available to view in the document

82

00:04:52.220 --> 00:04:56.160

library quite shortly. We were hoping to be able to show today,

83

00:04:56.200 --> 00:04:58.250

but unfortunately technology was not playing ball.

84

00:04:59.360 --> 00:05:01.720

Uh, we have spoken to your guys, and we think we've got a

85

00:05:01.740 --> 00:05:05.640

resolution. The video will show the completed

86

00:05:05.780 --> 00:05:09.360

NSIP at Cleeve Hill, and it highlights whether the

87

00:05:09.400 --> 00:05:12.100

DCO, the IGP DCO

88

00:05:12.260 --> 00:05:16.200

submission, clearly illustrates the worst case scenario

89

00:05:16.300 --> 00:05:19.060

as required to do so under the Rochdale envelope.

90

00:05:20.520 --> 00:05:23.960

Our contention is it does not currently do so,

91

00:05:24.780 --> 00:05:27.300

and we would request that the inspectorate take that into full

92

00:05:27.340 --> 00:05:28.960

consideration.

93

00:05:31.160 --> 00:05:34.560

Finally, I note with interest that the inspectorate made an

94

00:05:34.600 --> 00:05:36.960

unaccompanied site visit to the area on February the

95

00:05:37.140 --> 00:05:40.880

26th. You mention in your report that you crossed the

96

00:05:40.920 --> 00:05:43.200

Hardwater Bridge and noted the water

97

00:05:43.260 --> 00:05:47.040

levels. The water levels that day

98

00:05:47.100 --> 00:05:51.020

were .44 meters. I had

99

00:05:51.060 --> 00:05:54.310

sent a representation to the inspectorate a couple of weeks previously on the

100

00:05:54.340 --> 00:05:55.170

eighth of February

101

00:05:56.660 --> 00:06:00.320

when both bridges were shut as the water levels had reached 1.01

102

00:06:00.380 --> 00:06:03.920

meters high, generating flood alerts across the area,

103

00:06:03.980 --> 00:06:06.300

including for the proposed site for BEZ

104

00:06:06.600 --> 00:06:09.950

2That was two and a half times

105

00:06:10.620 --> 00:06:13.860

the height on the day of your visit.

106

00:06:13.900 --> 00:06:17.460

However, you'll be aware that on the twenty-fourth of

107

00:06:17.520 --> 00:06:20.960

September two thousand and twenty-four, our area

108

00:06:20.980 --> 00:06:22.740

experienced massive flooding

109

00:06:23.700 --> 00:06:27.280

reported nationwide, with many villages being

110

00:06:27.300 --> 00:06:31.180

displaced for months on end. The height of the water during

111

00:06:31.200 --> 00:06:34.100

those floods was one point four eight

112

00:06:34.140 --> 00:06:37.480

meters, as verified by the Environment Agency's

113

00:06:37.840 --> 00:06:38.600

report.

114

00:06:40.380 --> 00:06:44.130

Inspectors, that was three times the height of the

115

00:06:44.180 --> 00:06:47.520

waters that you witnessed on the twenty-sixth of

116

00:06:47.600 --> 00:06:50.380

February.

117

00:06:52.160 --> 00:06:55.780

That's why we as locals keep trying to stress the importance of

118

00:06:55.820 --> 00:06:59.800

listening to us and paying careful attention, very careful attention

119

00:07:00.560 --> 00:07:02.380

to the siting of the development

120

00:07:03.200 --> 00:07:05.380
and the flood risk in BEZ

121

00:07:05.440 --> 00:07:09.320
two. One of the key criteria for the siting

122

00:07:09.340 --> 00:07:12.460
of BEZ is for the site to be environmentally

123

00:07:12.600 --> 00:07:14.220
acceptable.

124

00:07:15.140 --> 00:07:18.760
We at Stop Green Hill Solar would strongly

125

00:07:18.800 --> 00:07:22.380
contest that the proposed BEZ site two

126

00:07:23.260 --> 00:07:26.020
is most definitely not

127

00:07:26.060 --> 00:07:28.630
environmentally acceptable.

128

00:07:29.780 --> 00:07:33.400
Thank you.

129

00:07:36.960 --> 00:07:40.020
Thank you very much. Um, and now I've got, Tony

130

00:07:40.060 --> 00:07:46.440
Mulvaney.

131

00:07:50.260 --> 00:07:50.930
Thank you.

132

00:07:51.420 --> 00:07:54.400
Okay. Okay, thanks. Um, my name is Tony

133

00:07:54.440 --> 00:07:58.320
Mulvaney. I've been with Walgr-- I've lived in Walgrave for

134
00:07:58.360 --> 00:08:00.020
the past twenty-two years

135
00:08:00.880 --> 00:08:04.380
and hold a master's degree in environmental philosophy.

136
00:08:05.460 --> 00:08:09.200
I'd just like to offer some personal thoughts about the

137
00:08:09.260 --> 00:08:13.040
project. I was raised in a large northern

138
00:08:13.100 --> 00:08:16.469
city, but despite this I developed an interest and

139
00:08:16.520 --> 00:08:19.720
affinity with nature and the countryside.

140
00:08:20.140 --> 00:08:23.680
This grew into an ambition to live in a rural area and

141
00:08:23.700 --> 00:08:27.040
achieve this when I finally left the city.

142
00:08:27.100 --> 00:08:31.080
I ended up living in a variety of landscapes and finally came

143
00:08:31.180 --> 00:08:33.821
to live in Walgrave, Northamptonshire.

144
00:08:35.081 --> 00:08:38.980
My local landscape and nature have become very important to

145
00:08:39.120 --> 00:08:42.941
me. I have a strong need to get out walking

146
00:08:42.980 --> 00:08:44.060
whenever I can,

147

00:08:44.880 --> 00:08:48.600

and since retirement I have tried to make this the way in which I start

148

00:08:48.720 --> 00:08:52.580

my day. These days I'm not overly ambitious in

149

00:08:52.640 --> 00:08:55.980

terms of the length or comp-complexity of the

150

00:08:56.020 --> 00:08:58.780

walk, but rather sticking to the same

151

00:08:58.840 --> 00:09:01.340

route. This has some important

152

00:09:01.440 --> 00:09:05.280

benefits. The obvious one being regular

153

00:09:05.340 --> 00:09:08.380

physical exercise, particularly,

154

00:09:08.400 --> 00:09:11.460

particularly as I have grown older.

155

00:09:11.480 --> 00:09:15.380

I find that the daily walk over a familiar route simply

156

00:09:15.460 --> 00:09:18.220

makes me so-- feel so much better.

157

00:09:19.140 --> 00:09:22.960

Probably what is most important of all are the

158

00:09:23.000 --> 00:09:23.780

beneficial

159

00:09:25.940 --> 00:09:29.480

effects on my mental health. I've

160

00:09:29.580 --> 00:09:30.469

always found

161

00:09:31.640 --> 00:09:35.270

that when confronted by the stresses and worries of everyday

162

00:09:35.380 --> 00:09:39.340

life, that my familiar walk helps me put things into

163

00:09:39.380 --> 00:09:43.360

perspective and most importantly, always makes

164

00:09:43.380 --> 00:09:46.340

me feel relaxed w-with an enhanced sense of

165

00:09:46.380 --> 00:09:50.260

well-being. I've no medical knowledge, but

166

00:09:50.280 --> 00:09:53.280

I've come to understand that exercise releases body

167

00:09:53.340 --> 00:09:55.820

chemicals that relax and calm.

168

00:09:57.400 --> 00:10:01.180

Walking and rhythmic breathing while, after a while,

169

00:10:01.360 --> 00:10:05.220

frees my mind from everyday cares and liberates my

170

00:10:05.280 --> 00:10:06.210

imagination.

171

00:10:07.280 --> 00:10:10.900

Over the years, I have found that entering this

172

00:10:11.020 --> 00:10:14.000

state can release creative solutions or

173

00:10:14.080 --> 00:10:18.000

resolutions to problems or situations.

174

00:10:19.080 --> 00:10:21.820

This feeling cannot be induced. It happens

175

00:10:21.880 --> 00:10:25.440

spontaneously. It could be said that these

176

00:10:25.480 --> 00:10:29.200

benefits extend to the wider population.

177

00:10:29.210 --> 00:10:32.580

Medical and lifestyle advice often stresses the

178

00:10:32.600 --> 00:10:35.300

importance of exercise and access to

179

00:10:35.340 --> 00:10:39.060

nature. Extending this, we could

180

00:10:39.140 --> 00:10:42.820

argue that ensuring an environment that

181

00:10:42.860 --> 00:10:45.720

facilitates these needs is a public

182

00:10:45.880 --> 00:10:49.340

good. Another interesting spin-off

183

00:10:49.820 --> 00:10:53.140

is that I've become part of a kind of informal

184

00:10:53.260 --> 00:10:56.840

community. After a while, along my regular

185

00:10:56.900 --> 00:11:00.800

route, I've got to know people, and often it has

186

00:11:00.860 --> 00:11:04.280

amounted to no more than a good morning and a brief

187

00:11:04.360 --> 00:11:08.080

chat, sharing the feelings-- sharing feelings about the weather

188

00:11:08.420 --> 00:11:10.100

or the passage of the seasons.

189

00:11:11.460 --> 00:11:15.060

Most times I don't get to know much about these

190

00:11:15.120 --> 00:11:18.940

casual friends, but I have, over a number of years, made some

191

00:11:18.980 --> 00:11:22.580

very good friends this way. Although fleeting, these

192

00:11:22.640 --> 00:11:24.060

encounters are uplifting

193

00:11:24.860 --> 00:11:28.400

and enhance the feeling of community grounded in a

194

00:11:28.480 --> 00:11:31.240

familiar landscape and places along the

195

00:11:31.320 --> 00:11:34.800

route. An important

196

00:11:34.900 --> 00:11:36.840

aspect of a familiar landscape

197

00:11:37.880 --> 00:11:40.120

is that we, as it were,

198

00:11:41.260 --> 00:11:45.120

is that as it were grounds my sense of ti-- grounds my

199

00:11:45.180 --> 00:11:48.360

sense of time. I observe,

200

00:11:48.420 --> 00:11:51.270

experience, and anticipate the passage of the

201

00:11:51.380 --> 00:11:54.970

seasons, reducing the distortion of

202

00:11:55.080 --> 00:11:58.960

time that modern living often imposes through the

203

00:11:59.000 --> 00:12:02.940

media and advertising. The year is

204

00:12:02.960 --> 00:12:06.940

punctuated by certain events that are very important to

205

00:12:07.060 --> 00:12:07.480

me.

206

00:12:08.480 --> 00:12:12.060

In the depths of winter, the gloom is pierced by the

207

00:12:12.100 --> 00:12:15.420

appearance of a carpet of snowdrops in one

208

00:12:15.520 --> 00:12:19.452

particular place I follow their progress as they

209

00:12:19.552 --> 00:12:23.392

bravely emerge. They herald a spring that

210

00:12:23.412 --> 00:12:26.832

is to come and lift my spirits.

211

00:12:26.912 --> 00:12:30.692

Spring makes its first appearance with the emergence of hawthorn and

212

00:12:30.772 --> 00:12:33.232

blackthorn blossoms in the hedgerows

213

00:12:34.472 --> 00:12:36.992

and then the chestnut trees along my route

214

00:12:38.192 --> 00:12:40.492

display their candles against the spring

215

00:12:40.592 --> 00:12:44.332

sky. Ex-excuse me.

216

00:12:45.852 --> 00:12:49.132

Every landscape is unique. Our local

217

00:12:49.172 --> 00:12:53.041

landscape is not bold or dramatic, but

218

00:12:53.192 --> 00:12:56.492

rather it is su-subtle, gently

219

00:12:56.532 --> 00:12:57.572

undulating.

220

00:12:58.432 --> 00:13:01.232

It can give quite long vistas from vantage

221

00:13:01.352 --> 00:13:04.732

points. It has been described as the

222

00:13:04.812 --> 00:13:08.672

county of spires and squires and

223

00:13:08.712 --> 00:13:11.132

is predominantly arable farmland.

224

00:13:11.952 --> 00:13:15.752

This is quite a unique feature because from elevated

225

00:13:15.832 --> 00:13:19.752

land, the spires or towns, towers can

226

00:13:19.792 --> 00:13:23.552

be seen denoting individual villages, thank

227

00:13:23.612 --> 00:13:27.532

you, and separate communities, but at the same time

228

00:13:28.012 --> 00:13:31.452
conveys a togetherness. Each spire

229

00:13:31.592 --> 00:13:35.372
gathers to itself the sky in all its moods,

230

00:13:35.432 --> 00:13:37.902
together with the past, present, and the

231

00:13:37.992 --> 00:13:41.252
future. There are momentous events in

232

00:13:41.312 --> 00:13:44.102
history, ancient values and

233

00:13:44.192 --> 00:13:47.692
beliefs, lives lived, and the

234

00:13:47.852 --> 00:13:51.792
ordinary every day. They are all gathered at the base of each

235

00:13:51.892 --> 00:13:55.552
spire. There is a great diversity in a

236

00:13:55.592 --> 00:13:55.972
gentle

237

00:13:56.012 --> 00:14:02.372
landscape.

238

00:14:06.672 --> 00:14:10.392
This local landscape is embedded in what might be

239

00:14:10.432 --> 00:14:14.202
described as a rural corridor bounded

240

00:14:14.232 --> 00:14:17.792
by the urban areas of Northampton,

241

00:14:17.892 --> 00:14:19.712
Wellingborough, and Kettering.

242

00:14:20.572 --> 00:14:24.472
The solar farm would, occupy a very large portion

243

00:14:24.532 --> 00:14:28.372
of this corridor. The area is already

244

00:14:28.472 --> 00:14:31.932
under considerable pressure from encroachment of

245

00:14:31.992 --> 00:14:35.962
housing development from these three towns and

246

00:14:35.972 --> 00:14:39.792
the building of large distribution warehouses,

247

00:14:39.892 --> 00:14:43.032
no doubt driven by the area's nodal

248

00:14:43.132 --> 00:14:46.692
position in relation to the motorway system.

249

00:14:48.052 --> 00:14:51.532
It might also be added that it seems to be a

250

00:14:51.712 --> 00:14:55.632
favored location for wind turbines, so the area

251

00:14:55.692 --> 00:14:58.732
is already contributing to non-fossil power

252

00:14:58.812 --> 00:14:59.692
generation.

253

00:15:00.832 --> 00:15:03.792
From the outset, the solar farm would

254

00:15:03.852 --> 00:15:07.592

industrialize this area.

255

00:15:07.692 --> 00:15:10.952

So what might happen to our landscape in the

256

00:15:10.992 --> 00:15:14.752

future after sixty years of life the solar

257

00:15:14.832 --> 00:15:18.712

farm finally expires? My very worst

258

00:15:18.772 --> 00:15:19.092

fear

259

00:15:20.592 --> 00:15:24.452

is that housing estates and warehouses will continue

260

00:15:24.492 --> 00:15:28.402

to proliferate, and that the former solar farm,

261

00:15:28.452 --> 00:15:32.062

in whatever condition it might be in sixty

262

00:15:32.132 --> 00:15:35.892

years' time, will effectively further

263

00:15:35.932 --> 00:15:39.192

industrialize a vast tract of the former

264

00:15:39.652 --> 00:15:43.212

rural corridor, the land of spires and

265

00:15:43.292 --> 00:15:46.912

squires. Former productive farmland will be a

266

00:15:46.952 --> 00:15:50.612

distant memory. If such a bleak

267

00:15:50.672 --> 00:15:54.592

view were to become a reality, the villages will have

268

00:15:54.672 --> 00:15:58.532

coalesced with the towns and the whole area

269

00:15:58.572 --> 00:16:01.992

would become a bleak, suburban industrial

270

00:16:02.112 --> 00:16:04.852

landscape which will be numbingly

271

00:16:04.872 --> 00:16:08.752

repetitive, alienating, and devoid

272

00:16:08.812 --> 00:16:12.572

of interest and diversity. This is not much to

273

00:16:12.632 --> 00:16:14.082

pass on to children and

274

00:16:14.152 --> 00:16:16.752

great-grandchildren.

275

00:16:17.692 --> 00:16:21.432

This is a very bleak prospect, but it could conceivably

276

00:16:21.492 --> 00:16:24.472

occur. Who can really tell

277

00:16:25.352 --> 00:16:27.342

at a distance of at least sixty

278

00:16:27.432 --> 00:16:31.412

years? To my mind, important questions

279

00:16:31.452 --> 00:16:34.882

arise here. What conditions will

280

00:16:34.972 --> 00:16:38.952

prevail over such a long period of time?

281

00:16:39.012 --> 00:16:41.642

What unintended consequences might have

282

00:16:41.692 --> 00:16:43.272
occurred?

283

00:16:44.212 --> 00:16:47.662
Will the site of the former solar farm be redundant and

284

00:16:47.752 --> 00:16:48.532
derelict?

285

00:16:49.972 --> 00:16:53.572
And it's long been recognized that urban areas require a

286

00:16:53.632 --> 00:16:57.332
green belt. Are we to be deprived this

287

00:16:57.372 --> 00:16:58.112
amenity?

288

00:16:59.912 --> 00:17:03.852
Answering these questions requires an incredible act of the

289

00:17:03.892 --> 00:17:07.532
imagination to project ourselves forward

290

00:17:07.593 --> 00:17:09.572
sixty, maybe eighty years into the

291

00:17:09.613 --> 00:17:13.593
future. All that we can do is

292

00:17:13.633 --> 00:17:17.192
try to minimize the risk of this bleak scenario

293

00:17:17.512 --> 00:17:21.292
happening, and at least have the aspiration

294

00:17:21.593 --> 00:17:25.072
and the will to do all we can to

295

00:17:25.133 --> 00:17:29.032
facilitate a humane, decent environment

296

00:17:29.092 --> 00:17:30.692
for future generations

297

00:17:31.872 --> 00:17:35.812
that will still be able to experience the joys and benefits

298

00:17:35.822 --> 00:17:38.212
that I briefly outlined. Thank you very

299

00:17:38.252 --> 00:17:39.932
much.

300

00:17:45.312 --> 00:17:48.152
Thank you. Um, now I've got Keith

301

00:17:48.172 --> 00:18:05.192
Burrell.

302

00:18:05.892 --> 00:18:08.272
Good afternoon. My name is Keith Burrell.

303

00:18:08.352 --> 00:18:11.852
I'm a resident in the parish of Holcott,

304

00:18:12.672 --> 00:18:16.392
and we have, site B, which is located within the

305

00:18:16.432 --> 00:18:19.552
parish. I wish to address,

306

00:18:20.732 --> 00:18:24.292
the failure by the, Green Hill

307

00:18:24.372 --> 00:18:26.844
ConsortiumTo respond

308

00:18:28.104 --> 00:18:31.664

technically to my, previous,

309

00:18:32.844 --> 00:18:35.724
response, REP three dash one

310

00:18:35.864 --> 00:18:39.524
one two, where I went into some technical aspects

311

00:18:39.564 --> 00:18:43.484
associated with glint and glare associated with the solar

312

00:18:43.564 --> 00:18:47.544
panels. What this basically comes down

313

00:18:47.644 --> 00:18:51.544
to is that you have a sales pitch of an

314

00:18:51.764 --> 00:18:54.644
unknown specification for a solar

315

00:18:54.744 --> 00:18:58.724
panel. And when you talk about solar panel, is it in your

316

00:18:58.804 --> 00:19:01.804
mind's eye something that's maybe a, a meter

317

00:19:01.904 --> 00:19:04.524
square, or is it something like

318

00:19:05.504 --> 00:19:09.424
fifteen meters square? Uh, th-those aren't accurate figures,

319

00:19:09.444 --> 00:19:12.844
but the combination of solar panels adds up to a much

320

00:19:12.984 --> 00:19:16.344
larger surface area, and when you're talking about

321

00:19:16.474 --> 00:19:19.684
thousands of these in a field or fields,

322
00:19:20.304 --> 00:19:23.513
it's a major potential source of glint and

323
00:19:23.524 --> 00:19:27.484
glare. Now, as there is no

324
00:19:27.624 --> 00:19:30.724
specified anti-reflection

325
00:19:32.324 --> 00:19:36.004
component to these solar panels, it's

326
00:19:36.064 --> 00:19:38.384
reasonable to assume that my,

327
00:19:40.164 --> 00:19:43.284
submission under REP three dash one one two

328
00:19:44.604 --> 00:19:48.384
is valid. In that case, you can say

329
00:19:48.524 --> 00:19:51.044
when the sun is not directly over

330
00:19:53.044 --> 00:19:56.844
the solar panel, i.e. its, horizontal plane, so

331
00:19:56.884 --> 00:19:59.004
therefore the sun is vertical to that,

332
00:20:00.164 --> 00:20:03.424
the most optimum performance of the anti-reflection

333
00:20:03.704 --> 00:20:04.244
coating

334
00:20:05.124 --> 00:20:08.844
only occurs at that moment in, in time.

335
00:20:09.104 --> 00:20:12.244

Sun in a different position, different time of

336

00:20:12.304 --> 00:20:16.284

year, different day, time of day, et cetera, that

337

00:20:16.364 --> 00:20:19.184

means that you're going to get more glint and

338

00:20:19.324 --> 00:20:22.984

glare from that solar panel,

339

00:20:23.044 --> 00:20:26.854

multiply it up by many thousands. Now,

340

00:20:26.904 --> 00:20:30.414

it's been stated in previous, documents relating to

341

00:20:30.504 --> 00:20:33.724

landscape, mitigation, et cetera, to the visual

342

00:20:33.784 --> 00:20:35.164

observer, that

343

00:20:36.004 --> 00:20:39.624

you'll have trees, hedges, other things put in

344

00:20:39.704 --> 00:20:43.634

place to diminish the impact of the glint and

345

00:20:43.644 --> 00:20:46.804

glare or, or the visual appearance of these solar

346

00:20:46.904 --> 00:20:50.684

farms. Now, I just ask the

347

00:20:50.724 --> 00:20:53.473

basic question, under what

348

00:20:55.084 --> 00:20:58.784

technical statement are they basing the performance of the

349

00:20:58.804 --> 00:20:59.624

solar panel

350

00:21:01.064 --> 00:21:04.984

when the sun is optimally directly or vertically above

351

00:21:05.024 --> 00:21:07.984

the, the panel's horizontal plane?

352

00:21:08.004 --> 00:21:11.564

Therefore, either side of that optimum

353

00:21:11.744 --> 00:21:15.484

location, visual observer, nearby villages,

354

00:21:15.624 --> 00:21:19.564

towns, roads, motorists, et cetera, they will see

355

00:21:20.424 --> 00:21:24.344

far greater glint and glare than what's been alluded

356

00:21:24.424 --> 00:21:27.864

to by the submissions by, you could say, the sales

357

00:21:27.984 --> 00:21:31.973

pitch in the advocacy of these solar farms.

358

00:21:32.024 --> 00:21:34.864

It's not a difficult thing to, respond

359

00:21:35.004 --> 00:21:38.244

to, but they should be able to provide

360

00:21:38.484 --> 00:21:42.284

modeling to show, you could say, an average

361

00:21:42.344 --> 00:21:44.944

of, say, thirty-five, forty percent

362

00:21:45.944 --> 00:21:47.544

reflection as opposed to

363

00:21:48.364 --> 00:21:51.324

anti-reflection, an actual reflection.

364

00:21:51.364 --> 00:21:55.294

And depending on the location of the visual observer, whether on

365

00:21:55.324 --> 00:21:59.224

horseback, footpath, et cetera, what that means with the

366

00:21:59.284 --> 00:22:02.724

wide expanse of the solar panel coverage

367

00:22:03.204 --> 00:22:06.784

when they're walking down a footpath, road, et cetera,

368

00:22:07.064 --> 00:22:10.984

bridle path, that they are faced with seeing the

369

00:22:11.064 --> 00:22:14.964

glint and glare from such sizable acreages of

370

00:22:15.024 --> 00:22:18.904

these panels. Obviously, it depends on the time of day, time

371

00:22:18.973 --> 00:22:22.864

of year, but none of that is actually gone into by the

372

00:22:22.944 --> 00:22:24.554

submission by the applicant.

373

00:22:25.744 --> 00:22:29.564

I was expecting to get some pushback to my submission,

374

00:22:29.604 --> 00:22:33.584

the one one two, but I-- as far as I can tell, there has not

375

00:22:33.624 --> 00:22:37.604

been any contradiction on the facts of what I

376

00:22:37.704 --> 00:22:41.684

outlined. Obviously, in a perfect world,

377

00:22:41.724 --> 00:22:45.443

the actual solar panel manufacturer may say

378

00:22:45.784 --> 00:22:49.184

it's got a hundred percent anti-reflection coating,

379

00:22:49.944 --> 00:22:53.904

and this is valid for either side of the vertical

380

00:22:53.964 --> 00:22:56.564

axis, up to ninety degrees either side.

381

00:22:56.584 --> 00:23:00.284

So you could say, "Well, there's absolutely no reflection at all, no

382

00:23:00.384 --> 00:23:03.624

glint, no glare." But that product doesn't

383

00:23:03.664 --> 00:23:07.584

exist. And one of the other little factors that's not gone

384

00:23:07.644 --> 00:23:11.584

into is that whoever the manufacturer is and whatever materials are

385

00:23:11.704 --> 00:23:15.644

used in the construction of these solar panels, what is the

386

00:23:15.684 --> 00:23:19.544

effect of time on the specification that's announced

387

00:23:19.824 --> 00:23:23.194

through the sales pitch to yourselves in the planning

388

00:23:23.224 --> 00:23:27.164

inspectorate and to the big wide world?

389

00:23:27.304 --> 00:23:29.084

I can't find that information.

390

00:23:30.144 --> 00:23:33.724

If it is there somewhere, then please point it out to me.

391

00:23:33.744 --> 00:23:37.544

But can you p- can you, as far as, question of the

392

00:23:37.804 --> 00:23:41.324

applicant, you can ask, what is the actual

393

00:23:41.564 --> 00:23:45.464

brand stroke specification of the solar panels

394

00:23:45.504 --> 00:23:47.104

that's going to be utilized?

395

00:23:48.964 --> 00:23:49.344

Where

396

00:23:50.184 --> 00:23:53.164

are the stationary ones going to be installed?

397

00:23:53.184 --> 00:23:56.324

Where's the single axis, where's the dual axis going to be

398

00:23:56.384 --> 00:24:00.164

located? Because they are all extremely relevant to the

399

00:24:00.184 --> 00:24:03.784

amount of glint and glare you get from these installations,

400

00:24:04.164 --> 00:24:06.584

being an observer from different angles.

401

00:24:06.624 --> 00:24:10.364

I've not gone into the aviation issues yet, 'cause I've

402

00:24:10.424 --> 00:24:14.064

referred to them previously. But it calls into

403

00:24:14.164 --> 00:24:17.724
question how much broader is the glint and

404

00:24:17.744 --> 00:24:19.464
glare factors

405

00:24:20.624 --> 00:24:24.314
for, low-flying

406

00:24:24.384 --> 00:24:25.064
aircraft,

407

00:24:26.344 --> 00:24:30.328
aviation in the vicinity. Any pilot that looks in

408

00:24:30.388 --> 00:24:34.288
the direction where you've got glint and glare, well, glint, they'll

409

00:24:34.328 --> 00:24:37.458
draw their eyes to it, but if it's glare, their

410

00:24:38.068 --> 00:24:41.668
eye-- they won't fix their eyes on that location, they'll turn their
head

411

00:24:41.728 --> 00:24:45.558
away. If there's an aircraft coming from the direction of

412

00:24:45.588 --> 00:24:48.988
where the glint and glare is, they may be making an

413

00:24:49.048 --> 00:24:52.448
assumption that the pilot of the oncoming aircraft can see

414

00:24:52.508 --> 00:24:56.428
them. They won't. They'll avoid looking

415

00:24:56.468 --> 00:24:57.568
in that direction,

416

00:24:59.228 --> 00:25:03.087

and of course, the oncoming aircraft or from the vicinity of the

417

00:25:03.188 --> 00:25:07.148

solar farm will have to maybe take avoiding action or the risk of

418

00:25:07.168 --> 00:25:07.428

it

419

00:25:08.528 --> 00:25:11.668

because the pilot that he's heading towards cannot see

420

00:25:11.688 --> 00:25:14.418

him. That's putting it very basically.

421

00:25:14.428 --> 00:25:17.008

There's many other factors in-involved, of course.

422

00:25:17.028 --> 00:25:20.728

But it comes down to this, the sales pitch of

423

00:25:20.788 --> 00:25:22.958

the amount of anti-reflection

424

00:25:23.648 --> 00:25:26.168

component, and whether you call it

425

00:25:27.148 --> 00:25:30.308

fifteen percent, fifty percent, seventy-five percent, eighty

426

00:25:30.408 --> 00:25:34.348

percent, that's only applies to when the sun is

427

00:25:34.388 --> 00:25:37.568

vertically above the plane of the

428

00:25:37.848 --> 00:25:38.428

panel.

429

00:25:39.548 --> 00:25:43.508

All other in-- angles of incidence for the sun on that panel

430

00:25:43.988 --> 00:25:46.488
will generate glint and glare.

431

00:25:47.708 --> 00:25:50.548
I just do the sums and say, "Well, if you've got a large number of

432

00:25:50.648 --> 00:25:54.128
panels, that's quite a sizable amount of glint and glare

433

00:25:54.248 --> 00:25:56.728
potentially for you as the visual

434

00:25:56.788 --> 00:26:00.738
observer, motorists." And

435

00:26:00.768 --> 00:26:04.208
when you talk about winter, with the deciduous nature of our trees
and

436

00:26:04.288 --> 00:26:07.968
hedges, what might have been given as mitigation of

437

00:26:08.028 --> 00:26:11.588
being, covering the solar

438

00:26:11.708 --> 00:26:15.688
farm from the visual observer, in wintertime with the fall of

439

00:26:15.748 --> 00:26:19.668
leaf, you're going to see that through whatever mitigation they've
done with

440

00:26:19.728 --> 00:26:23.268
planting. Um,

441

00:26:23.888 --> 00:26:27.128
just trying to think of anything else to say to you.

442

00:26:27.308 --> 00:26:27.628
Um,

443

00:26:28.868 --> 00:26:32.048

no, I think that's it. Thank you very much for your time.

444

00:26:32.088 --> 00:26:34.028

Thank you very much.

445

00:26:36.228 --> 00:26:38.337

Thank you. Uh, and now we've got Steve

446

00:26:38.408 --> 00:26:42.948

Townsend.

447

00:26:48.948 --> 00:26:49.808

Thank you.

448

00:26:50.808 --> 00:26:51.788

Good afternoon.

449

00:26:52.688 --> 00:26:55.528

My name's Steve Townsend, and I'm representing

450

00:26:55.588 --> 00:26:59.428

myself. I'm a resident of Overstone,

451

00:26:59.468 --> 00:27:03.288

which is not directly within the area of these

452

00:27:03.328 --> 00:27:06.488

solar panels, but obviously I've lived in

453

00:27:06.528 --> 00:27:09.508

Northamptonshire all my life, and I'm not exactly a

454

00:27:09.568 --> 00:27:13.308

teenager. So consequently, I've traveled

455

00:27:13.378 --> 00:27:16.548

these roads on a regular basis around

456

00:27:16.588 --> 00:27:19.008
Northamptonshire. And this is a

457
00:27:19.088 --> 00:27:22.488
development that has

458
00:27:23.088 --> 00:27:26.538
been eloquently, expressed by other

459
00:27:26.568 --> 00:27:29.688
people, but that this is a

460
00:27:29.728 --> 00:27:33.468
development on an industrial scale and

461
00:27:33.568 --> 00:27:37.228
should, in planning terms, be treated as an

462
00:27:37.308 --> 00:27:40.148
industrial development in open

463
00:27:40.208 --> 00:27:43.647
countryside. It's been

464
00:27:43.768 --> 00:27:47.108
stated that one of the c- the concerns

465
00:27:47.948 --> 00:27:49.848
is the decommissioning of this

466
00:27:51.008 --> 00:27:54.768
and these panels. Well, one of the major investors, as we've

467
00:27:54.828 --> 00:27:57.318
heard, is Macquarie, who are

468
00:27:57.368 --> 00:28:01.248
Australian, and who were called out by

469
00:28:01.308 --> 00:28:04.568
a senator in the Queensland

470

00:28:05.148 --> 00:28:05.708
Senate

471

00:28:06.748 --> 00:28:10.568
as the kangaroo vampires.

472

00:28:11.888 --> 00:28:14.488
And you can see that with their track record

473

00:28:15.368 --> 00:28:18.128
of investing in utilities in the

474

00:28:18.228 --> 00:28:22.108
UK. Investors like these,

475

00:28:22.148 --> 00:28:25.978
yes, they will say that they'll invest a billion pounds in

476

00:28:26.028 --> 00:28:29.188
this development. However, what they will do

477

00:28:30.288 --> 00:28:33.808
is as soon as the development goes live,

478

00:28:34.188 --> 00:28:38.068
they will withdraw their billion pounds and

479

00:28:38.188 --> 00:28:42.108
stick the debt on the solar farm.

480

00:28:42.168 --> 00:28:45.708
Thus, they will not have any responsibil-

481

00:28:45.768 --> 00:28:47.807
financial responsibility

482

00:28:48.888 --> 00:28:51.468
for, for clearing it up at the end of the

483

00:28:51.508 --> 00:28:54.808
day. That's what investors like the

484
00:28:54.848 --> 00:28:58.168
Macquaries in this world do.

485
00:28:59.168 --> 00:29:03.088
Now, the, the economics of this

486
00:29:03.108 --> 00:29:06.868
development just don't stack up. They are gonna dump

487
00:29:07.148 --> 00:29:10.768
a substantial amount of the money is going to be

488
00:29:10.928 --> 00:29:14.108
paid for by us, the taxpayers,

489
00:29:14.668 --> 00:29:18.568
and also the people who pay the bills

490
00:29:18.628 --> 00:29:21.428
in this country for electric,

491
00:29:21.888 --> 00:29:25.448
particularly, especially as we move further and further

492
00:29:25.548 --> 00:29:26.008
into

493
00:29:26.868 --> 00:29:30.408
the ludicrous, this

494
00:29:30.448 --> 00:29:34.348
project n- zero. Now,

495
00:29:34.468 --> 00:29:37.288
the sky is not clear enough during the daylight

496
00:29:37.428 --> 00:29:40.968
hours to provide enough power output.

497

00:29:41.028 --> 00:29:44.608

You can see that from the charts of Northampton,

498

00:29:45.728 --> 00:29:49.168

and especially with the proliferation of chemical

499

00:29:49.288 --> 00:29:52.828

trails, of which we get an awful lot within the

500

00:29:52.888 --> 00:29:56.648

sky over this county. The,

501

00:29:57.408 --> 00:30:00.208

the, the o- one of the other concerns is the

502

00:30:00.248 --> 00:30:03.668

effect of the installation of

503

00:30:04.328 --> 00:30:08.168

four hundred and sixty thousand panels if they

504

00:30:08.308 --> 00:30:09.008

put out

505

00:30:09.988 --> 00:30:12.548

point four kilowatts per panel,

506

00:30:13.888 --> 00:30:17.768

and the output of these will deteriorate over

507

00:30:17.828 --> 00:30:18.448

time.

508

00:30:19.968 --> 00:30:23.738

During the months of winter, from October to March,

509

00:30:24.368 --> 00:30:27.588

the average sunsi- sunshine days

510

00:30:28.248 --> 00:30:32.148
betwe- of these months is between twelve and

511
00:30:32.328 --> 00:30:36.268
fifteen days a month. So it's

512
00:30:36.388 --> 00:30:39.708
less or just about half the

513
00:30:39.768 --> 00:30:41.308
month.

514
00:30:42.168 --> 00:30:46.008
If the requirement for this or the stated aim of

515
00:30:46.108 --> 00:30:49.728
this is to produce five hundred megawatts per

516
00:30:49.868 --> 00:30:53.288
year, that equals one point three

517
00:30:53.468 --> 00:30:57.428
seven megawatts per day, which is a

518
00:30:57.528 --> 00:30:59.728
very, very optimistic

519
00:31:00.768 --> 00:31:03.608
output of this development,

520
00:31:03.648 --> 00:31:06.508
particularly at wintertime.

521
00:31:08.568 --> 00:31:12.448
So the, the other concern is that the lithium

522
00:31:12.488 --> 00:31:13.657
battery fires

523
00:31:14.988 --> 00:31:18.028
are not uncommon in this country. See the number of

524

00:31:18.128 --> 00:31:21.828

cars, although it's very difficult to find the numbers

525

00:31:21.948 --> 00:31:25.477

because they seem to cloud it with saying that they were

526

00:31:25.568 --> 00:31:29.468

petrol cars. And it's-- they are

527

00:31:29.588 --> 00:31:33.508

toxic, unbelievably difficult

528

00:31:33.568 --> 00:31:34.788

to extinguish,

529

00:31:35.908 --> 00:31:39.888

and there'll probably be a large battery storage

530

00:31:40.008 --> 00:31:40.608

plant

531

00:31:41.628 --> 00:31:44.288

on each site in each area,

532

00:31:45.228 --> 00:31:47.068

which is a danger to

533

00:31:47.148 --> 00:31:50.188

everyone.

534

00:31:51.688 --> 00:31:54.448

So that's all I've got to say. Thank you.

535

00:31:55.348 --> 00:31:56.348

Goodbye.

536

00:31:56.408 --> 00:31:59.848

Thank you very much. Thank you.

537

00:32:01.908 --> 00:32:04.348
Yeah, that's everyone. Okay.

538
00:32:06.568 --> 00:32:09.008
Yeah, I would say, yeah, we think that's everyone.

539
00:32:09.028 --> 00:32:11.578
Okay, we think that's everyone who was on our list.

540
00:32:11.608 --> 00:32:14.798
Is there anyone else online or in the room who wishes to say something? Yes, Mr.

541
00:32:14.808 --> 00:32:16.948
Anthony.

542
00:32:21.508 --> 00:32:24.928
Thank you. Philip Anthony, Stop Greenhill Solar.

543
00:32:24.948 --> 00:32:26.648
I just want to ask

544
00:32:27.488 --> 00:32:31.308
if I might draw your attention to one issue that hasn't been

545
00:32:31.408 --> 00:32:32.728
touched on at all.

546
00:32:34.208 --> 00:32:37.848
Due to the nature of the configuration

547
00:32:38.868 --> 00:32:41.808
for the solar farm, it will

548
00:32:41.848 --> 00:32:45.568
involve, I think, in the

549
00:32:45.628 --> 00:32:49.088
region of thirty kilometers of cabling.

550
00:32:50.408 --> 00:32:52.668

Our understanding is that

551

00:32:53.688 --> 00:32:57.108

the applicant proposes that at the end

552

00:32:57.708 --> 00:33:01.188

of any period of operation,

553

00:33:01.348 --> 00:33:05.188

following decommission, the cabling will remain

554

00:33:05.588 --> 00:33:07.788

underground.

555

00:33:09.108 --> 00:33:12.928

We understand that the case for that is

556

00:33:13.008 --> 00:33:16.848

that to remove the cabling would cause,

557

00:33:16.928 --> 00:33:20.348

again, further significant disturbance to

558

00:33:20.408 --> 00:33:23.948

the soil, the hedges, and so on.

559

00:33:26.608 --> 00:33:30.388

During the consultation with local authorities,

560

00:33:31.148 --> 00:33:34.648

we understand that the Borough Council of

561

00:33:34.788 --> 00:33:35.828

Bedfordshire

562

00:33:36.908 --> 00:33:40.768

pointed out their opposition to that

563

00:33:41.128 --> 00:33:41.968

proposal

564
00:33:43.128 --> 00:33:46.908
and made the point that, in fact, the

565
00:33:46.948 --> 00:33:50.148
decay or deterioration associated

566
00:33:50.228 --> 00:33:54.168
with such cabling after,

567
00:33:54.748 --> 00:33:57.628
long period of time would actually cause

568
00:33:57.708 --> 00:34:01.678
significant damage to the soil and

569
00:34:01.768 --> 00:34:05.468
subsoil, and that hence, the

570
00:34:05.508 --> 00:34:08.468
return of the farmland

571
00:34:08.569 --> 00:34:12.368
to normal ag-agricultural use

572
00:34:12.548 --> 00:34:16.448
would pose various dangers. I

573
00:34:16.488 --> 00:34:18.488
want to be clear that we don't have any

574
00:34:19.708 --> 00:34:23.368
exact evaluation of either side of those arguments,

575
00:34:23.488 --> 00:34:26.669
but we wanted to draw it to your cons-- to your

576
00:34:26.728 --> 00:34:30.589
attention, in the event that you might wish

577
00:34:30.629 --> 00:34:33.828

to seek some additional information.

578

00:34:33.908 --> 00:34:35.968

Thank you.

579

00:34:37.109 --> 00:34:37.468

Thank you very

580

00:34:37.508 --> 00:34:45.348

much.

581

00:34:46.649 --> 00:34:50.428

Yeah. Okay. Um, thank you very much,

582

00:34:50.669 --> 00:34:53.488

everyone for your contributions. That was really helpful to us.

583

00:34:53.589 --> 00:34:55.908

Um, now I will hand over to Ms. Brodrick.

584

00:34:55.928 --> 00:34:59.828

If there's anything you want to come back on today, now is your opportunity,

585

00:34:59.868 --> 00:35:03.548

but if you'd prefer to do things in writing, that's absolutely fine.

586

00:35:18.148 --> 00:35:21.168

Uh, good afternoon. Uh, Claire Brodrick for the applicant.

587

00:35:21.248 --> 00:35:25.228

Um, I'm a partner at Pinsent Masons LLP, so solicitors

588

00:35:25.288 --> 00:35:29.108

acting for Greenhill, Solar. Um, on behalf of the

589

00:35:29.168 --> 00:35:32.948

applicant, we just wanted to thank everyone for attending,

590

00:35:33.128 --> 00:35:36.248

this afternoon and giving up their time to provide very

591

00:35:36.348 --> 00:35:39.968

detailed, comments. Um, we've been making very detailed notes in the

592

00:35:40.008 --> 00:35:43.348

background here, and we will be responding in

593

00:35:43.368 --> 00:35:46.748

writing. Um, a note that the majority of the comments

594

00:35:47.088 --> 00:35:50.528

made didn't-- today didn't specifically relate to

595

00:35:50.968 --> 00:35:54.848

change one or, or change two, but we will be responding to

596

00:35:54.868 --> 00:35:58.358

them either by cross-referring to where we may have, responded to that

597

00:35:58.368 --> 00:36:01.988

particular point, before, or where new points have been

598

00:36:02.308 --> 00:36:06.148

made, we will, respond to those, as part of our deadline

599

00:36:07.148 --> 00:36:11.108

six submission. It may well be on some of the more technical points

600

00:36:11.128 --> 00:36:13.908

they get covered in the issue-specific hearing,

601

00:36:14.128 --> 00:36:17.788

tomorrow, in which case we'll provide a cross-reference to that.

602

00:36:17.848 --> 00:36:21.628

Um, there were a couple of points that I just thought I would clarify,

603

00:36:21.888 --> 00:36:25.408

in case it's of assistance, now.

604

00:36:25.488 --> 00:36:27.268

Um, in respect of,

605

00:36:28.368 --> 00:36:32.278

a, a number of comments made about, interactions with,

606

00:36:32.608 --> 00:36:36.228

designated sites, it was just to confirm

607

00:36:36.328 --> 00:36:39.898

that, Natural England, in its response to the report on the

608

00:36:39.928 --> 00:36:43.868

implications for E-European sites, which was published on the PIN's website

609

00:36:43.908 --> 00:36:47.884

today, so I very much appreciate that not-Everyone here will have, had a

610

00:36:47.924 --> 00:36:51.604

chance to look at that document. Um, but Natural England have

611

00:36:51.644 --> 00:36:55.224

confirmed that, they are, content with the

612

00:36:55.364 --> 00:36:58.644

applicant's assessment and that there wouldn't be any adverse effects on

613

00:36:58.684 --> 00:37:02.544

integrity. Um, they are also satisfied with the mitigation measures that have

614

00:37:02.584 --> 00:37:05.864

been proposed. Um, that is consistent with the

615

00:37:05.874 --> 00:37:09.824

agreed statement of common ground, with Natural England that was submitted at

616

00:37:09.864 --> 00:37:13.584

deadline five and that is reference rep five dash

617

00:37:14.104 --> 00:37:16.424

zero, one zero

618

00:37:16.484 --> 00:37:20.464

six. Um, there are a number of comments

619

00:37:20.584 --> 00:37:24.224

made in relation to, the selection of the

620

00:37:24.244 --> 00:37:27.884

particular sites for inclusion within the project, in particular in relation

621

00:37:27.944 --> 00:37:31.794

to the use of BMV land. Um, these are points that have

622

00:37:31.804 --> 00:37:35.204

been covered in previous, open floor hearings and issue-specific

623

00:37:35.244 --> 00:37:39.004

hearings. But it was just to reiterate, that the applicant

624

00:37:39.084 --> 00:37:42.604

has carried out, a site selection, process and that's

625

00:37:42.644 --> 00:37:46.624

reported in this, site selection assessment, report which

626

00:37:46.744 --> 00:37:50.504

was rep one dash zero three seven, and also in

627

00:37:50.544 --> 00:37:54.064

chapter five of the environmental statement on alternatives which is

628

00:37:54.144 --> 00:37:57.994

APP dash zero four two. Um, and that sets

629

00:37:58.044 --> 00:38:01.944
out quite clearly why for this particular scheme in order to connect

630
00:38:02.044 --> 00:38:05.544
into the point of connection at Grendon, it has been necessary to

631
00:38:05.584 --> 00:38:08.624
utilize the best and most versatile land within this

632
00:38:08.684 --> 00:38:12.504
scheme. Um, and, and therefore there were a number

633
00:38:12.564 --> 00:38:16.424
of policies quoted at you from, both EN one and EN

634
00:38:16.484 --> 00:38:20.204
three. Um, and the applicant's position is that it has

635
00:38:20.224 --> 00:38:23.984
complied with those policies and that there is, a strong need for

636
00:38:24.004 --> 00:38:27.924
this, critically national priority infrastructure.

637
00:38:28.904 --> 00:38:32.814
Um, a couple of specific points that were raised, which might be helpful to

638
00:38:32.864 --> 00:38:36.724
just provide an update because information was given at, deadline five which

639
00:38:36.824 --> 00:38:40.544
perhaps people hadn't had the chance to, to see.

640
00:38:40.624 --> 00:38:44.384
Um, there was mention of, the, crash

641
00:38:44.464 --> 00:38:48.164
sites, and it was to add that the applicant had

642

00:38:48.224 --> 00:38:51.824
applied for a license from the Joint Casualty and Compassionate
Center

643
00:38:52.084 --> 00:38:55.844
Commemorations which is the JCCC, and it

644
00:38:55.884 --> 00:38:59.204
received, a license on the tenth of February, twenty

645
00:38:59.284 --> 00:39:02.844
twenty-six. Um, and that's been granted on a precautionary

646
00:39:02.904 --> 00:39:06.724
basis on the basis that it isn't anticipated that there are any
crash

647
00:39:06.784 --> 00:39:09.484
remains but the license has been issued in the event that there

648
00:39:10.424 --> 00:39:14.364
is. Um, and, amendments have been made to the draft DCA to

649
00:39:14.404 --> 00:39:17.604
make it clear that in that event, the terms of that

650
00:39:17.664 --> 00:39:21.564
license, will apply. So details of th-that are set out

651
00:39:22.504 --> 00:39:26.364
in the, consents and agreements position statement that

652
00:39:26.404 --> 00:39:30.244
was submitted at deadline, five.

653
00:39:30.344 --> 00:39:30.524
Um,

654
00:39:31.764 --> 00:39:34.784
there are a number of points, made in relation

655

00:39:34.964 --> 00:39:38.704
to, decommissioning. Um, and we

656
00:39:38.744 --> 00:39:42.684
note that that is something that again has come up, at the previous

657
00:39:43.424 --> 00:39:47.384
open floor hearings. Um, and indeed, the examining authority

658
00:39:47.444 --> 00:39:50.664
did, ask a question on that in their second written

659
00:39:50.724 --> 00:39:54.524
questions. So I would just refer, people at the

660
00:39:54.564 --> 00:39:58.184
hearing to, our response to question two point one point

661
00:39:58.264 --> 00:40:02.144
ten, wi- of, the responses to second

662
00:40:02.164 --> 00:40:05.504
written questions, where we, set out how

663
00:40:05.604 --> 00:40:09.464
decommissioning is secured in the draft DCA by

664
00:40:09.504 --> 00:40:12.394
way of requirement, and that that is,

665
00:40:13.724 --> 00:40:16.004
enforceable on the basis that it would constitute a criminal

666
00:40:16.044 --> 00:40:20.024
offense, not to comply with it, and that the Secretary of State has

667
00:40:20.084 --> 00:40:23.933
already considered, the need for, separate

668
00:40:24.304 --> 00:40:28.294
decommissioning funds to be secured in the DCO in the Oakland's Farm

Solar

669

00:40:28.384 --> 00:40:31.444

Park decision, and was satisfied that the

670

00:40:31.484 --> 00:40:34.264

decommissioning requirement, was

671

00:40:34.304 --> 00:40:37.164

sufficient. Um, we also set out in that

672

00:40:37.184 --> 00:40:40.134

response, confirmation that,

673

00:40:41.584 --> 00:40:43.924

option agreements, had been entered into

674

00:40:43.964 --> 00:40:47.244

with the, various landowners for the solar sites,

675

00:40:47.704 --> 00:40:51.564

and that, sec- security

676

00:40:51.644 --> 00:40:55.274

forms part of the terms of those, property

677

00:40:55.324 --> 00:40:59.144

agreements. So there are provisions for the provision of a fund or some form of

678

00:40:59.204 --> 00:41:02.884

security for decommissioning as part of those voluntary,

679

00:41:03.264 --> 00:41:05.144

agreements.

680

00:41:06.503 --> 00:41:10.494

In terms of the other quick points I just wanted to cover,

681

00:41:13.264 --> 00:41:17.164

there are a number of, questions being asked, and I can

682

00:41:17.224 --> 00:41:21.104

answer some of those now. One was in relation to, how

683

00:41:21.584 --> 00:41:25.344

we would access site AF nine, and it was just to

684

00:41:25.384 --> 00:41:29.344

confirm that there is an existing crossing over the watercourse

685

00:41:29.564 --> 00:41:33.184

in that, area, that is used by, farm

686

00:41:33.484 --> 00:41:35.904

agricultural, vehicles. And so the,

687

00:41:37.184 --> 00:41:41.084

proposal here is to utilize that existing watercourse crossing,

688

00:41:41.264 --> 00:41:44.624

for the purposes of construction of the panels in AF

689

00:41:44.944 --> 00:41:45.904

nine.

690

00:41:46.804 --> 00:41:46.964

Um,

691

00:41:47.964 --> 00:41:51.444

there are a number of comments in relation to the battery,

692

00:41:51.744 --> 00:41:54.024

outline battery safety management plan.

693

00:41:54.124 --> 00:41:57.414

Um, we'll provide a cross-reference, but sort of detailed

694

00:41:57.984 --> 00:42:00.874

technical information has been given on that,

695

00:42:01.984 --> 00:42:05.854
on that statement, and why it needs to be in outline at

696
00:42:05.904 --> 00:42:09.004
this po- in this point in the process, and that the

697
00:42:09.014 --> 00:42:12.764
specific make and model, of the battery,

698
00:42:13.004 --> 00:42:16.984
hasn't yet been selected. However, the former battery

699
00:42:17.024 --> 00:42:20.404
will need to, satisfy all of the requirements that are set out in
that

700
00:42:20.464 --> 00:42:24.164
outline battery, this battery storage and safety management

701
00:42:24.204 --> 00:42:27.854
plan. Um, a statement of common ground has been entered into with

702
00:42:27.864 --> 00:42:31.624
Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue, and they're happy with the
contents of that

703
00:42:31.684 --> 00:42:35.664
plan. There was comment on the, references that are

704
00:42:35.684 --> 00:42:37.954
given at the back of that document.

705
00:42:37.984 --> 00:42:41.944
It was just to note that those are a number of sort of safety
standards, and it

706
00:42:41.984 --> 00:42:45.724
wouldn't be typical for us to submit all of those safety standards

707
00:42:45.784 --> 00:42:46.504
into, into

708

00:42:46.584 --> 00:42:52.340

examination. There

709

00:42:52.360 --> 00:42:55.320

was also, a question, I'm just reading through my notes.

710

00:42:55.400 --> 00:42:59.360

Um, there was a question in relation to, the potential

711

00:42:59.420 --> 00:43:02.580

future need for environmental permits, for BEWS

712

00:43:02.700 --> 00:43:06.130

facilities. Um, obviously that's not currently a requirement, but should it

713

00:43:06.160 --> 00:43:10.130

become a requirement, there is nothing in the, in the draft ECO that would,

714

00:43:10.320 --> 00:43:14.100

restrict or not require the applicant from obtaining such an

715

00:43:14.120 --> 00:43:17.960

environmental permit. Um, if that regime came, came into force, we would

716

00:43:18.040 --> 00:43:21.720

have to apply for one. Similarly, if a coma,

717

00:43:22.250 --> 00:43:25.460

consent was required, which it's not envisaged to be required at the

718

00:43:25.520 --> 00:43:28.600

moment, but to the extent that, the hazardous

719

00:43:28.640 --> 00:43:32.570

materials, met the thresholds, in that regime, then

720

00:43:32.600 --> 00:43:36.320

again, we would need to apply for the relevant consents, and there's

nothing in the

721

00:43:36.340 --> 00:43:39.990
draft ECO that, restricts or,

722

00:43:40.300 --> 00:43:42.300
circumvents the need for those additional

723

00:43:42.660 --> 00:43:44.540
consents.

724

00:43:45.700 --> 00:43:49.580
Uh, one of the other questions, that was raised related

725

00:43:49.720 --> 00:43:52.310
to, the outcome of the,

726

00:43:53.220 --> 00:43:56.000
gated process that happened,

727

00:43:56.979 --> 00:44:00.520
towards the end of last year. Um, and so it's just to confirm

728

00:44:00.580 --> 00:44:04.440
that, the applicant received, the following information from NISO

729

00:44:04.480 --> 00:44:08.400
in December of twenty twenty-five, and that was that the solar
component of the

730

00:44:08.420 --> 00:44:12.300
proposed development received, an ag- what's called an agreement to
vary its

731

00:44:12.320 --> 00:44:15.700
existing connection agreement, to move it to gate two, phase

732

00:44:15.760 --> 00:44:19.660
one connection offer. Um, the firm connection date for such

733

00:44:19.720 --> 00:44:22.800

offers is expected to be in twenty-thirty or

734

00:44:22.860 --> 00:44:25.740

earlier, but that's subject to NISO's current

735

00:44:25.800 --> 00:44:29.740

timeline. Um, we understand, based on the current information being

736

00:44:29.760 --> 00:44:33.180

provided by NISO, that the, firm connection date will be

737

00:44:33.220 --> 00:44:37.060

notified before the end of September twenty twenty-six.

738

00:44:37.140 --> 00:44:39.700

Um, but as yet, we don't have the exact,

739

00:44:40.120 --> 00:44:43.570

date. Um, the BEWS component of the proposed

740

00:44:43.600 --> 00:44:46.700

development, also received an agreement to

741

00:44:46.760 --> 00:44:50.560

vary, and it is moved to a gate one connection

742

00:44:50.640 --> 00:44:54.400

offer, which is the same, as other BEWS, associated

743

00:44:54.480 --> 00:44:57.260

with NSIP schemes out or standalone BEWS.

744

00:44:57.380 --> 00:45:00.400

Um, the indicative connection date for such offers hasn't yet been

745

00:45:00.420 --> 00:45:04.050

confirmed, and it's expected, based on NISO's current

746

00:45:04.140 --> 00:45:08.040

timelines, to be notified, in twenty twenty-seven

747

00:45:08.600 --> 00:45:11.160

after the gate two offers have been sent out.

748

00:45:11.180 --> 00:45:14.960

Um, so that's based on the current information, that's available, but

749

00:45:14.980 --> 00:45:17.120

obviously it is, sort of a moving

750

00:45:17.960 --> 00:45:20.270

timeframe and, to the extent that,

751

00:45:21.120 --> 00:45:23.740

the Secretary of State requires an update following the close of the

752

00:45:23.780 --> 00:45:27.140

examination, then obviously we can provide one, if

753

00:45:27.160 --> 00:45:29.160

required.

754

00:45:35.770 --> 00:45:38.929

There were some other questions just in relation to,

755

00:45:40.800 --> 00:45:42.540

nighttime working, and

756

00:45:42.620 --> 00:45:46.050

also in relation to, the,

757

00:45:46.900 --> 00:45:50.010

decommissioning of cabling. Um, I will

758

00:45:51.820 --> 00:45:55.400

get the, technical authors of the chapter to respond on

759

00:45:55.440 --> 00:45:59.280

the specific noise points, but it was just to say that obviously nighttime

760

00:45:59.300 --> 00:46:02.869

working i- is an exception, and that's been made quite clear in the,

761

00:46:03.920 --> 00:46:06.120

in the environmental statement and in the management plans.

762

00:46:06.140 --> 00:46:10.000

But it does need to be, retained on the basis that there are

763

00:46:10.040 --> 00:46:13.800

some activities that, once started, will need to continue,

764

00:46:14.100 --> 00:46:15.840

and that may involve nighttime working.

765

00:46:15.880 --> 00:46:19.220

Additionally, there may be other activities where it is the preference for works to

766

00:46:19.260 --> 00:46:22.480

be undertaken overnight, to reduce impacts

767

00:46:23.140 --> 00:46:25.080

relating to road closures, et cetera.

768

00:46:25.120 --> 00:46:28.340

So that flexibility does need to be retained, for the

769

00:46:28.380 --> 00:46:32.020

project. Um, in terms of the very last point, which was the

770

00:46:32.060 --> 00:46:35.440

decommissioning of, the cables, at the

771

00:46:35.520 --> 00:46:39.300

moment, the, the standard position is

772

00:46:39.360 --> 00:46:43.290

to decommission in situ whereby where cables

773

00:46:43.320 --> 00:46:46.680

are ducted, the cable is actually removed, but the ducts are left in

774

00:46:46.780 --> 00:46:50.360

place. However, the way that the DCO

775

00:46:50.620 --> 00:46:54.520

works is the, the actual form of decommissioning will be determined at the point of

776

00:46:54.560 --> 00:46:58.380

decommissioning. And so whatever, legal and industry

777

00:46:58.680 --> 00:47:02.300

guidance is applicable at that point in time would need to be complied with.

778

00:47:02.360 --> 00:47:05.920

So if it transpires at the point of decommissioning that the

779

00:47:05.960 --> 00:47:09.640

preference is for the ducts to be removed, then that

780

00:47:09.710 --> 00:47:13.499

activity would need to be undertaken, and that's contained within the

781

00:47:13.520 --> 00:47:17.100

decommissioning, requirement, which is in the DCO, which

782

00:47:17.120 --> 00:47:20.980

requires the, a final decommissioning plan to be submitted for approval.

783

00:47:21.020 --> 00:47:24.060

So that, that f- that final plan will,

784

00:47:24.660 --> 00:47:28.540

specify the type of decommissioning that needs to be undertaken and, and that

785

00:47:28.560 --> 00:47:32.460

will need to be compliant with any rules, and requirements that, that apply

786

00:47:32.500 --> 00:47:36.410

at that point in time. Um, but to the extent that people have raised other points,

787

00:47:36.440 --> 00:47:39.620

they have been noted, and will respond in writing if I haven't

788

00:47:39.660 --> 00:47:42.220

responded, to them in today's

789

00:47:42.260 --> 00:47:44.680

hearing. Thank you very

790

00:47:44.720 --> 00:47:47.600

much.

791

00:47:49.440 --> 00:47:51.540

Thank you very much. Um, so-

792

00:47:53.560 --> 00:47:54.040

Yeah.

793

00:47:54.080 --> 00:47:57.800

Yeah. Yeah. Um, so thank you all very much for your contributions today.

794

00:47:57.860 --> 00:48:01.060

Um, we've heard everyone registered to speak and from additional speakers who had

795

00:48:01.100 --> 00:48:05.060

not registered. Uh, the time is now half past four, and it's

796

00:48:05.100 --> 00:48:08.330

time to close this hearing, so thank you again for your contributions.

797

00:48:08.340 --> 00:48:08.680

Thank you

