



Hearing Transcript

Project:	EN010170 - Green Hill Solar Farm
Hearing:	Open Floor Hearing 3 - Part 2
Date:	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

00:00:00.080 --> 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 DCO, 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

