



## Hearing Transcript

<b>Project:</b>	The Droves Solar Farm
<b>Hearing:</b>	Recording of Issue Specific Hearing 1 Part 4
<b>Date:</b>	7 May 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

00:00:11.940 --> 00:01:21.120

Okay.

2

00:01:21.160 --> 00:01:21.880

Good afternoon.

3

00:01:23.500 --> 00:01:24.040

If we can

4

00:01:25.440 --> 00:01:27.040

return to our seats, please.

5

00:01:36.360 --> 00:01:38.780

Good afternoon. This hearing is now resumed.

6

00:01:38.820 --> 00:01:39.840

It's 4:00,

7

00:01:40.900 --> 00:01:44.740

so we'll carry on with starting agenda item 3.7,

8

00:01:45.060 --> 00:01:47.680

which is flood risk and water resources.

9

00:01:49.600 --> 00:01:53.560

The first question then. So in its relevant representation,  
reference

10

00:01:53.760 --> 00:01:55.900

AS-062,

11

00:01:56.740 --> 00:02:00.520

the Environment Agency states their groundwater model suggests that

12

00:02:00.560 --> 00:02:04.220

groundwater flow direction below the proposed development is

13

00:02:04.240 --> 00:02:07.100

different to that predicted by the applicant's

14

00:02:07.120 --> 00:02:10.810

hydrogeological model, as stated in chapter

15

00:02:10.880 --> 00:02:13.900

12 of the environmental statement, reference

16

00:02:13.980 --> 00:02:16.160

APP-061.

17

00:02:17.300 --> 00:02:20.650

Environment Agency also state that discrepancies between

18

00:02:20.660 --> 00:02:24.600

recorded and interpolated groundwater elevations and

19

00:02:24.700 --> 00:02:28.360

interpolated groundwater elevations and surface elevations

20

00:02:29.000 --> 00:02:32.180

raise concerns about the level of confidence in the applicant's

21

00:02:32.190 --> 00:02:33.760

hydrogeological model.

22

00:02:35.000 --> 00:02:38.580

Given the importance of the applicant's hydrogeological model in

23

00:02:38.640 --> 00:02:42.360

assessing and supporting mitigation for effects on groundwater

24

00:02:42.400 --> 00:02:45.880

receptors, such as abstractors for water supply,

25

00:02:46.480 --> 00:02:50.080

could the applicant explain how the Environment Agency's comments on the

26

00:02:50.100 --> 00:02:52.580

model's accuracy are being addressed?

27

00:02:54.320 --> 00:02:56.720

Thank you, sir. Alex Treseden, on behalf of the applicant.

28

00:02:56.780 --> 00:03:00.160

I'm joined for this agenda item by Liam Nevins, Director at Raincloud,

29

00:03:00.680 --> 00:03:02.700

our water expert, and he'll be taking these matters.

30

00:03:03.580 --> 00:03:03.860

Thank you.

31

00:03:04.480 --> 00:03:07.400

Thank you, Mr. Treseden. Liam Nevins, on behalf of the applicant.

32

00:03:07.820 --> 00:03:08.820

The conceptual

33

00:03:09.700 --> 00:03:13.140

groundwater model presented in environmental statement chapter 12, which is

34

00:03:13.220 --> 00:03:16.350

APP-61, uses 18

35

00:03:16.880 --> 00:03:20.400

groundwater monitoring boreholes in the wider study area, five

36

00:03:20.460 --> 00:03:22.540

kilometers from the order limits,

37

00:03:23.340 --> 00:03:27.020

to generate a maximum elevation for groundwater.

38

00:03:28.120 --> 00:03:30.880

The proposed approach for this was discussed with the Environment Agency in

39

00:03:30.920 --> 00:03:32.220

September 2025.

40

00:03:33.280 --> 00:03:37.080

The interpolated groundwater surface derived from a triangulation

41

00:03:37.180 --> 00:03:37.780

process

42

00:03:38.680 --> 00:03:41.620

provides a relatively reasonable, accurate

43

00:03:42.620 --> 00:03:44.740

estimate of groundwater levels within the order limits.

44

00:03:45.200 --> 00:03:49.180

But flow patterns, I think, are less reliable in that regard

45

00:03:49.480 --> 00:03:53.140

because the model relies on some assumptions, principally

46

00:03:53.340 --> 00:03:56.360

that topography plays a large part in deriving

47

00:03:57.000 --> 00:04:00.710

groundwater elevation. So where you have sharp changes in elevation, groundwater

48

00:04:00.760 --> 00:04:03.660

levels change quite dramatically in that regard.

49

00:04:04.820 --> 00:04:08.710

We've been made aware that the Environment Agency have a groundwater

50

00:04:09.720 --> 00:04:13.060

model for the region, which is the Northeast

51

00:04:13.500 --> 00:04:17.221

Anglian Chalk groundwater model, and we have held meetings with the

52

00:04:17.240 --> 00:04:21.120

Environment Agency to discuss obtaining the data which pertains to

53

00:04:21.161 --> 00:04:24.900

that particular model, so that we can validate our own groundwater flow

54

00:04:24.920 --> 00:04:28.720

and elevation data which informed the assessment.

55

00:04:28.730 --> 00:04:31.909

That data was provided yesterday evening at 5 to 5:00.

56

00:04:32.220 --> 00:04:36.200

I've had a precautionary preliminary look at that data, and it

57

00:04:36.240 --> 00:04:40.140

would appear that the wet day scenario, which is the

58

00:04:40.200 --> 00:04:44.020

highest elevation within the groundwater model that the Environment Agency

59

00:04:44.060 --> 00:04:47.680

have, is less conservative than the

60

00:04:47.720 --> 00:04:50.270

elevations used within the environmental statement.

61

00:04:50.680 --> 00:04:51.260

And as such,

62

00:04:52.060 --> 00:04:55.680

the environmental statement uses a more worst-case scenario for groundwater

63

00:04:55.720 --> 00:04:59.620

elevations. It should be noted that some of the flow directions are

64

00:04:59.660 --> 00:05:03.420

different, and again, that is due to the limitation of the methodology used.

65

00:05:03.680 --> 00:05:07.600

However, the assessment doesn't principally rely

66

00:05:07.700 --> 00:05:11.020

on flow as a sole indicator

67

00:05:11.660 --> 00:05:12.160

of risk.

68

00:05:13.880 --> 00:05:17.820

The application does assess abstractions at Marham to the west,

69

00:05:17.900 --> 00:05:21.880

and as such, indicates that groundwater would flow in that direction and notes

70

00:05:21.940 --> 00:05:25.320

that there are no significant effects predicted for that particular

71

00:05:25.360 --> 00:05:27.320

abstraction or abstractions to the north.

72

00:05:32.820 --> 00:05:35.000

Thank you.

73

00:05:37.940 --> 00:05:42.340

Is

74

00:05:42.380 --> 00:05:43.580

Morgan Harrington--

75

00:05:45.860 --> 00:05:46.880

Are you there online?

76

00:05:48.820 --> 00:05:50.290

Yes, sir. Morgan Harrington here-

77

00:05:50.560 --> 00:05:50.780

Thank you

78

00:05:50.820 --> 00:05:52.360

... on behalf of the Environment Agency.

79

00:05:52.900 --> 00:05:53.700

Would you like to comment?

80

00:05:53.730 --> 00:05:54.360

Thank you for--

81

00:05:55.920 --> 00:05:59.320

Yes, we'd like to comment. Thank you for clarifying, Liam.

82

00:05:59.380 --> 00:06:03.060

We note that the site is located in a source protection zone, and as such,

83

00:06:03.120 --> 00:06:06.740

we are approaching this according to level of

84

00:06:06.760 --> 00:06:10.572

risk. Due to those environmental constraints, the

85

00:06:10.612 --> 00:06:14.032

national policy statement, the overarching one for energy,

86

00:06:14.352 --> 00:06:15.232

states that

87

00:06:17.632 --> 00:06:18.352

developments

88

00:06:19.252 --> 00:06:23.132

should avoid locating potentially polluting activities in the most sensitive

89

00:06:23.172 --> 00:06:26.672

locations for groundwater and in particular Source Protection Zone I, of which this

90

00:06:26.712 --> 00:06:30.092

development rests on. Therefore, we have taken a very strong

91

00:06:30.132 --> 00:06:34.111

approach to any potential

92

00:06:34.192 --> 00:06:37.951

risks to groundwater with this development.

93

00:06:39.552 --> 00:06:42.632

In regards to the modeling that you've mentioned,

94

00:06:43.572 --> 00:06:47.452

I think it is best if I bring in my

95

00:06:47.512 --> 00:06:50.992

groundwater and contaminated land specialist, Tom Sheen.

96

00:06:51.132 --> 00:06:55.112

However, it might be subject to us discussing this privately and

97

00:06:55.152 --> 00:06:58.052

responding with a written representation.

98

00:06:58.472 --> 00:07:02.202

However, Tom, if you'd like to mention anything, please

99

00:07:02.312 --> 00:07:03.992

unmute yourself.

100

00:07:09.392 --> 00:07:12.552

Hello. Tom Sheen speaking on behalf of the Environment Agency.

101

00:07:13.792 --> 00:07:14.832

Yes, thank you,

102

00:07:15.892 --> 00:07:16.452

sir, for--

103

00:07:22.172 --> 00:07:25.892

Sorry. Thank you, sir, for bringing up the question, and

104

00:07:27.072 --> 00:07:28.912

to the applicant for responding.

105

00:07:30.612 --> 00:07:34.052

I think it would be something we'd need to take away just to see

106

00:07:34.532 --> 00:07:34.772

what

107

00:07:35.952 --> 00:07:39.472

has been concluded from the review of the Environment Agency's model,

108

00:07:40.172 --> 00:07:44.062

as that's something I have not queried but directly in a great

109

00:07:44.112 --> 00:07:44.672

deal of detail.

110

00:07:48.152 --> 00:07:52.092

Okay. Thank you, Tom. We can take that away and get back to you with

111

00:07:52.272 --> 00:07:53.412

a written response

112

00:07:54.272 --> 00:07:57.012

to the planning inspector as well as the applicant.

113

00:07:57.592 --> 00:07:58.272

Yeah. Thank you.

114

00:07:58.892 --> 00:07:59.252

Thank you.

115

00:08:02.532 --> 00:08:05.832

Sir, would it be acceptable if we could come back in response to just one point

116

00:08:05.852 --> 00:08:06.712

that was made, please?

117

00:08:06.872 --> 00:08:07.372

Certainly, yeah.

118

00:08:08.712 --> 00:08:10.252

Liam Nevins on behalf of the applicant.

119

00:08:10.452 --> 00:08:13.922

I note that the Environment Agency mentioned Source Protection Zone I

120

00:08:14.412 --> 00:08:17.912

at an early stage within the development's life

121

00:08:17.932 --> 00:08:21.112

cycle. That particular constraint was identified.

122

00:08:21.172 --> 00:08:24.992

As such, the aspects of the scheme which have the most potential to

123

00:08:25.112 --> 00:08:28.072

have polluting effects, such as the battery storage

124

00:08:28.392 --> 00:08:32.273

substation and National Grid substation, were sited outside of

125

00:08:32.293 --> 00:08:36.172

Source Protection Zone I, and as such, only solar PV arrays

126

00:08:36.293 --> 00:08:37.712

remain within that particular zone.

127

00:08:41.592 --> 00:08:43.092

Thank you.

128

00:08:48.892 --> 00:08:51.092

Sorry, I'd just like confirmation

129

00:08:52.012 --> 00:08:55.472

that the Norfolk County Council local

130

00:08:57.272 --> 00:09:00.672

lead flood authority, is a representative left?

131

00:09:01.212 --> 00:09:02.052  
I'm afraid yes, sir.

132  
00:09:02.152 --> 00:09:02.412  
Yeah.

133  
00:09:02.452 --> 00:09:04.092  
Andrea Sherikovska from Norfolk County Council.

134  
00:09:04.132 --> 00:09:07.222  
Yeah, I'm afraid she was only able to attend till about three o'clock, so I'm

135  
00:09:07.292 --> 00:09:08.272  
afraid she has left now.

136  
00:09:09.172 --> 00:09:13.152  
Obviously, she made very lengthy and detailed comments, and I'm not quite

137  
00:09:13.192 --> 00:09:15.552  
sure what's the best way to deal with it today.

138  
00:09:15.592 --> 00:09:18.832  
She has given me a sort of bullet point summary, which I'm quite happy to read,

139  
00:09:18.892 --> 00:09:21.892  
which is a sort of plain English version, but I don't know whether that will help

140  
00:09:21.972 --> 00:09:22.552  
you or not.

141  
00:09:22.992 --> 00:09:23.292  
Yeah.

142  
00:09:23.301 --> 00:09:24.732  
Sorry. Alex Frison on behalf of the applicant.

143  
00:09:24.792 --> 00:09:28.392  
It might be worth just noting that a meeting has been set up on the

18th of May,

144

00:09:28.512 --> 00:09:32.472

i.e. before deadline one, between the parties, and perhaps we can

145

00:09:32.512 --> 00:09:34.772

leave it to that. I don't want to stop you from reading the list if you'd like, but

146

00:09:34.792 --> 00:09:37.812

perhaps we could do it in that meeting and then report back in writing at deadline

147

00:09:37.852 --> 00:09:38.032

one.

148

00:09:38.672 --> 00:09:40.252

Yeah. Andrea Sherikovska from Norfolk County Council.

149

00:09:40.272 --> 00:09:43.062

I'm happy with whichever way you want to deal with.

150

00:09:43.132 --> 00:09:46.012

So I can read the bullet points, but I don't know if it'll

151

00:09:46.992 --> 00:09:50.012

help you very much. There's so much comment there and there are a lot of issues to

152

00:09:50.032 --> 00:09:50.432

go through.

153

00:09:52.252 --> 00:09:53.801

How many bullet points are there?

154

00:09:53.832 --> 00:09:54.432

Ooh.

155

00:09:56.932 --> 00:09:59.452

There's probably about a dozen to 15.

156

00:09:59.532 --> 00:10:02.312

They're sort of one-line sentences. They're very simple.

157

00:10:02.322 --> 00:10:02.992

Okay. I think, yeah,

158

00:10:04.112 --> 00:10:04.372

we'll

159

00:10:05.252 --> 00:10:08.622

rely on the meeting on the 18th of May, I think, to move that

160

00:10:08.672 --> 00:10:09.312

forward.

161

00:10:09.352 --> 00:10:12.332

That's fine. Sorry, can I just confirm what date that meeting is you set up?

162

00:10:13.372 --> 00:10:16.272

Liam Nevins on behalf of the applicant. It is on the 18th of May.

163

00:10:16.412 --> 00:10:19.892

Monday, the 18th of May. And I should also note that I've also been in dialogue

164

00:10:19.972 --> 00:10:22.702

with the LLFA prior to this hearing in order to-

165

00:10:22.732 --> 00:10:23.952

That's with Sarah Luffett, presumably?

166

00:10:24.112 --> 00:10:24.471

Correct.

167

00:10:24.612 --> 00:10:24.872

Okay.

168

00:10:27.912 --> 00:10:29.952

Okay, I'll move on to my next question.

169

00:10:31.332 --> 00:10:34.111  
In its relevant representation, reference

170  
00:10:34.312 --> 00:10:38.012  
RR-043, Norfolk County Council, as the lead

171  
00:10:38.112 --> 00:10:42.052  
local flood authority, raised several concerns regarding

172  
00:10:42.062 --> 00:10:45.632  
the coverage and detail within the submitted flood risk assessment.

173  
00:10:46.372 --> 00:10:50.252  
Could the applicant describe its approach, including timescales, to engage with the

174  
00:10:50.292 --> 00:10:54.122  
local lead authority to provide further information, clarification, and

175  
00:10:54.172 --> 00:10:56.292  
work required for the flood risk assessment?

176  
00:10:58.272 --> 00:10:59.852  
Liam Nevins on behalf of the applicant.

177  
00:11:00.152 --> 00:11:02.832  
We, as I've just explained, have been in dialogue with the LLFA.

178  
00:11:03.352 --> 00:11:07.252  
We will continue to work with the LLFA to resolve the points raised

179  
00:11:07.272 --> 00:11:08.752  
within their relevant representation

180  
00:11:09.672 --> 00:11:10.812  
through the statement of common ground.

181  
00:11:11.192 --> 00:11:14.932  
We're confident that through a combination of clarification and

182

00:11:14.992 --> 00:11:18.872

updated reporting, that we can resolve these outstanding points in a timely

183

00:11:19.152 --> 00:11:20.452

manner during the examination.

184

00:11:26.792 --> 00:11:29.732

Thank you. Any comments, Mr. Cheroth? Can I speak?

185

00:11:29.912 --> 00:11:33.392

Nothing that I would care to comment on in detail, obviously, sir.

186

00:11:33.412 --> 00:11:36.672

You'll appreciate there's a lot of detail there.

187

00:11:36.852 --> 00:11:40.172

I suppose if I had to sort of summarize it from my own reading of it, and I'm not

188

00:11:40.512 --> 00:11:41.212

an expert on

189

00:11:42.172 --> 00:11:45.012

the sort of water environment issues by any means,

190

00:11:46.152 --> 00:11:49.932

there's a lot of points there in terms of the adequacy of the assessment

191

00:11:51.332 --> 00:11:53.092

and how the assessment's been undertaken.

192

00:11:53.492 --> 00:11:54.272

But I guess they're

193

00:11:55.372 --> 00:11:58.052

points that the applicant is going to have to work through with the LLFA.

194

00:11:59.992 --> 00:12:02.772

Okay. Thank you. I'll just go online.

195

00:12:02.972 --> 00:12:05.932

Do the Environment Agency have any comments on

196

00:12:07.892 --> 00:12:09.242

the applicant's response?

197

00:12:14.760 --> 00:12:17.480

Morgan Harringman on behalf of the Environment Agency.

198

00:12:17.720 --> 00:12:21.380

No further comments. Our comments solely related to the

199

00:12:21.420 --> 00:12:25.100

BESS and ensuring that it had certain mitigations in

200

00:12:25.140 --> 00:12:28.680

place to ensure it is operational in event of surface water flooding.

201

00:12:28.920 --> 00:12:32.840

We're content with the applicant's response for now.

202

00:12:43.140 --> 00:12:44.220

Any further comment?

203

00:12:45.600 --> 00:12:47.740

No. Okay, we'll move on to the next question.

204

00:12:50.440 --> 00:12:51.100

Question three,

205

00:12:52.140 --> 00:12:55.780

referring to the need to minimize flood risk to development, paragraph

206

00:12:56.140 --> 00:12:59.920

5.8.36 of NPSEN1

207

00:12:59.980 --> 00:13:03.840

requires the Secretary of State to be satisfied that a sequential

approach

208

00:13:03.920 --> 00:13:07.540

has been applied at the site level to minimize flood

209

00:13:07.620 --> 00:13:11.300

risk, and that this should be achieved through the placement of the most

210

00:13:11.420 --> 00:13:15.280

vulnerable uses of development proposal to areas of lowest flood

211

00:13:15.340 --> 00:13:15.640

risk.

212

00:13:16.680 --> 00:13:19.960

As noted by the lead local flood authority in its relevant

213

00:13:20.040 --> 00:13:22.320

reference

214

00:13:22.480 --> 00:13:26.280

RR-043, the flood risk assessment, reference

215

00:13:26.440 --> 00:13:29.900

AS-053, identifies that work

216

00:13:29.960 --> 00:13:33.620

numbers two to four, which are aspects of the proposed

217

00:13:33.630 --> 00:13:37.460

development considered more vulnerable to flood risk, are partly

218

00:13:37.500 --> 00:13:41.160

located in surface water flow paths modeled by the applicant.

219

00:13:41.840 --> 00:13:45.580

But that does not provide justification for why these aspects of the

220

00:13:45.660 --> 00:13:47.920

proposed development need to be located here.

221

00:13:48.680 --> 00:13:52.520

Could the applicant provide a justification for why work numbers two to four

222

00:13:52.660 --> 00:13:56.400

need to be located within the model areas of higher surface water

223

00:13:56.500 --> 00:13:57.060

flood risk?

224

00:13:58.580 --> 00:14:00.440

Liam Levins on behalf of the applicant.

225

00:14:00.960 --> 00:14:04.600

A 2D rainfall model confirmed an

226

00:14:04.620 --> 00:14:07.700

environment agency surface water pathway on the very

227

00:14:08.500 --> 00:14:10.780

western extremity of works numbers two,

228

00:14:11.660 --> 00:14:12.320

three, and four.

229

00:14:13.880 --> 00:14:17.380

As with the assessment, we assess a Rochdale parameter, envelope

230

00:14:17.440 --> 00:14:20.720

parameters in terms of maximum extents for works, and

231

00:14:20.760 --> 00:14:23.960

it's outlined within the flood risk assessment, which is

232

00:14:24.120 --> 00:14:27.800

AS053, that it is anticipated that

233

00:14:27.840 --> 00:14:31.460

during detailed design that the development can be designed to

234

00:14:31.540 --> 00:14:35.200

avoid that particular flow pathway, not maximizing the entire

235

00:14:35.260 --> 00:14:36.900

area of the work zones.

236

00:14:39.220 --> 00:14:42.940

And as such, can be located outside of that particular fluvial pathway and

237

00:14:43.140 --> 00:14:46.180

doesn't actually need to be located there for operational reasons.

238

00:14:48.320 --> 00:14:48.960

Okay, thank you.

239

00:14:50.340 --> 00:14:51.940

Mr. Szurkowski?

240

00:14:52.940 --> 00:14:55.160

I've nothing to add at the moment, no.

241

00:14:56.260 --> 00:14:59.979

Okay. Environment Agency, Morgan Harringman.

242

00:15:05.740 --> 00:15:07.880

Morgan Harringman on behalf of the Environment Agency.

243

00:15:08.240 --> 00:15:11.840

We know the development is outside of flood zones two

244

00:15:11.860 --> 00:15:15.780

and three fluvial, therefore for the surface water matters

245

00:15:15.840 --> 00:15:19.820

that have been raised by the lead local flood authority, we have no

246

00:15:19.840 --> 00:15:22.120

concerns in regards to fluvial flood risk.

247

00:15:23.740 --> 00:15:24.460  
Okay, thank you.

248  
00:15:26.360 --> 00:15:29.720  
That's the end of my questions. I'm now going to

249  
00:15:30.580 --> 00:15:34.460  
ask if there are any questions in the room on this item on the  
agenda, if you could

250  
00:15:34.500 --> 00:15:35.180  
raise your hand.

251  
00:15:36.860 --> 00:15:39.180  
Okay, I'll work from the front to the back.

252  
00:15:40.460 --> 00:15:41.520  
Mr. Bennett.

253  
00:15:44.400 --> 00:15:45.150  
Just a very

254  
00:15:46.040 --> 00:15:46.820  
quick question,

255  
00:15:47.820 --> 00:15:51.360  
sir. Mike Bennett, speaker with Palgrave Parish

256  
00:15:51.400 --> 00:15:51.860  
Council.

257  
00:15:53.140 --> 00:15:55.500  
A lot of schemes that I've seen,

258  
00:15:57.340 --> 00:15:58.300  
solar schemes,

259  
00:15:59.120 --> 00:16:00.820  
seem to struggle to get

260  
00:16:01.660 --> 00:16:05.380

grass and wildflowers to grow underneath solar panels.

261

00:16:07.300 --> 00:16:10.160

Water runs on sloped

262

00:16:11.500 --> 00:16:12.000

panels

263

00:16:13.080 --> 00:16:15.820

and drips off onto bare soil.

264

00:16:17.540 --> 00:16:19.780

And I've seen it, so it does happen.

265

00:16:20.660 --> 00:16:24.340

My question is, are we going to have a

266

00:16:24.400 --> 00:16:27.940

surface water problem off some of these panels in

267

00:16:28.020 --> 00:16:31.600

some fields where there's quite large slopes,

268

00:16:32.380 --> 00:16:33.720

and are we going to see

269

00:16:36.160 --> 00:16:40.040

the beginnings of gully erosion down those fields as a

270

00:16:40.060 --> 00:16:43.040

result of that along the lines of the solar arrays?

271

00:16:45.340 --> 00:16:45.380

I

272

00:16:48.240 --> 00:16:52.060

know you have every intention of looking

273

00:16:52.180 --> 00:16:56.160

after these panels, but I have yet to see a scheme

274

00:16:56.660 --> 00:16:58.640  
where there's really adequate

275

00:17:00.780 --> 00:17:04.260  
grass or vegetation cover underneath the panels,

276

00:17:04.980 --> 00:17:08.820  
and therefore, I would assume you will

277

00:17:08.940 --> 00:17:10.980  
get that erosion happening.

278

00:17:12.940 --> 00:17:13.800  
Mr. Tressiden.

279

00:17:15.280 --> 00:17:15.760  
Liam Levins-

280

00:17:15.770 --> 00:17:15.770  
Yeah

281

00:17:15.770 --> 00:17:18.901  
... on behalf of the applicant. The outline

282

00:17:19.840 --> 00:17:21.460  
landscape and environmental management plan,

283

00:17:22.860 --> 00:17:25.440  
which is APP, I can tell you. Yeah, thank

284

00:17:25.460 --> 00:17:27.200  
you.

285

00:17:27.240 --> 00:17:29.290  
That's APP-191.

286

00:17:29.450 --> 00:17:33.180  
Thank you very much. Commits to advanced sowing of the

287

00:17:33.240 --> 00:17:36.920

scheme prior to construction, and as such, there will be adequate time for

288

00:17:37.040 --> 00:17:40.240

grassland to establish prior to the installation of solar PV.

289

00:17:40.760 --> 00:17:44.680

As such, there shouldn't be a situation whereby

290

00:17:44.690 --> 00:17:46.300

rainfall is falling onto bare earth.

291

00:17:46.340 --> 00:17:49.880

And I take the interested parties' point

292

00:17:49.920 --> 00:17:52.910

regarding bare earth and gully erosion.

293

00:17:52.940 --> 00:17:55.040

That can occur if there is bare ground.

294

00:17:55.480 --> 00:17:58.580

However, the outline soil management plan outlines

295

00:17:58.920 --> 00:18:02.560

remediation measures should there be instances of bare

296

00:18:02.600 --> 00:18:06.280

ground following the construction period to re-sow, scarify, and

297

00:18:06.320 --> 00:18:09.780

ensure that that particular patch is reinstated with grassland.

298

00:18:10.420 --> 00:18:12.540

As such, runoff should not be

299

00:18:14.280 --> 00:18:17.660

worse than the current baseline agricultural scenario.

300

00:18:19.840 --> 00:18:21.480

Would also highlight

301

00:18:21.500 --> 00:18:25.670  
thatMPS

302

00:18:25.690 --> 00:18:29.530  
EN3 does encourage the use of natural flood management through  
grassland

303

00:18:29.690 --> 00:18:33.190  
for solar, and notes that as rainfall is falling

304

00:18:33.230 --> 00:18:37.050  
onto ground, that runoff should

305

00:18:37.060 --> 00:18:39.509  
not be substantial from solar.

306

00:18:44.410 --> 00:18:46.470  
Thank you. Dr. Mark Holmes.

307

00:18:48.090 --> 00:18:50.489  
Thank you. You may have partly answered my question.

308

00:18:51.210 --> 00:18:52.649  
For Liam Evans, please.

309

00:18:54.150 --> 00:18:57.650  
So I've lived in Southacre for 30 years, and

310

00:18:57.710 --> 00:19:01.650  
intermittently there have been heavy, torrential downpour episodes

311

00:19:02.150 --> 00:19:06.080  
where all the water is flowing off the fields on the northern aspect  
of

312

00:19:06.110 --> 00:19:09.790  
the valley. So where you're planning to build the Drovers Farm, it's

313

00:19:09.850 --> 00:19:13.610  
flowing down in rivers down the Drovers and collects

314

00:19:13.670 --> 00:19:17.590

in deep, a couple of foot of water on the main

315

00:19:17.670 --> 00:19:21.570

Southacre road through the village, and then overflows onto gardens such as

316

00:19:21.610 --> 00:19:23.070

mine on the north side.

317

00:19:24.030 --> 00:19:26.810

And we can have up to a foot of water in the gardens.

318

00:19:28.210 --> 00:19:30.890

And if that got much higher, we would actually get a flood into the houses.

319

00:19:32.550 --> 00:19:34.090

So my question is,

320

00:19:34.910 --> 00:19:38.650

are you sure that with doing something similar to concreting over the

321

00:19:38.670 --> 00:19:42.140

countryside, where we know that increases the incidence of flash floods,

322

00:19:42.590 --> 00:19:46.250

we're not going to see an increase in that potential flash

323

00:19:46.430 --> 00:19:47.570

flood scenario?

324

00:19:48.490 --> 00:19:48.770

Thank you.

325

00:19:50.090 --> 00:19:50.670

Mr. Evans.

326

00:19:52.090 --> 00:19:54.410  
Liam Nevins on behalf of the applicant.

327  
00:19:55.230 --> 00:19:59.180  
Regarding the statement about concreting over the countryside, the only aspects of

328  
00:19:59.210 --> 00:19:59.870  
hard standing

329  
00:20:00.810 --> 00:20:04.730  
for the scheme are essentially the battery storage

330  
00:20:04.750 --> 00:20:08.240  
and substation areas, and there is a commitment to have a

331  
00:20:08.370 --> 00:20:12.010  
sustainable drainage system installed for those aspects to cope with the one in

332  
00:20:12.050 --> 00:20:14.950  
100 year plus 40% climate change allowance.

333  
00:20:15.790 --> 00:20:19.290  
And as such, they will attenuate that heavy downpour,

334  
00:20:19.870 --> 00:20:23.810  
hold that water back, and then put it into a dedicated infiltration basin.

335  
00:20:24.710 --> 00:20:28.500  
Infiltration testing has been undertaken at that targeted area,

336  
00:20:28.670 --> 00:20:32.130  
and it's been proven that infiltration is a viable option for surface water

337  
00:20:32.190 --> 00:20:36.150  
disposal. As such, water will not be cascading off the site from those

338  
00:20:36.190 --> 00:20:37.490

particular aspects of the scheme.

339

00:20:37.980 --> 00:20:41.950

And I'll refer to my previous point regarding solar and runoff and the management

340

00:20:41.990 --> 00:20:42.970

of those through grassland.

341

00:20:50.790 --> 00:20:54.370

Thank you. Any other comments on this agenda item in the room?

342

00:20:57.090 --> 00:20:59.190

Andrew Szarkowski for Norfolk County Council.

343

00:20:59.610 --> 00:21:03.420

Just on that final point, a question, if I may put it through you,

344

00:21:03.490 --> 00:21:03.750

sir.

345

00:21:05.130 --> 00:21:07.530

This is actually one of the bullet points that was given in the summary.

346

00:21:07.890 --> 00:21:10.850

I'll just read it. It says, "A recently updated," and I was aware of this, "the

347

00:21:11.370 --> 00:21:14.970

National Fire Chief's guidance for BESS sites has reduced the distance between BESS

348

00:21:15.070 --> 00:21:15.350

units,

349

00:21:16.230 --> 00:21:20.110

resulting in an increase in density of the units." And each unit would, of course,

350

00:21:20.210 --> 00:21:21.250

stand on a concrete

351

00:21:22.310 --> 00:21:22.590  
pad,

352

00:21:24.490 --> 00:21:28.290  
which would increase the impermeable area and result in

353

00:21:28.330 --> 00:21:29.450  
larger surface

354

00:21:31.030 --> 00:21:34.950  
area of attenuation being required. Can you comment on that at all?

355

00:21:37.670 --> 00:21:39.210  
Liam Nevins on behalf of the applicant.

356

00:21:39.930 --> 00:21:43.610  
The parameters for the drainage scheme outlined in flood risk

357

00:21:43.690 --> 00:21:47.290  
assessment, which is AS053, assumed

358

00:21:47.370 --> 00:21:50.930  
100% impermeability for the particular areas for the

359

00:21:50.990 --> 00:21:54.390  
BESS and substation, and as such, assessed a worst-case

360

00:21:54.730 --> 00:21:57.890  
scenario. There is still space within the scheme to provide

361

00:21:57.900 --> 00:22:01.510  
excuse me, attenuation for that particular scenario.

362

00:22:01.590 --> 00:22:05.090  
And as such, there will be space during the detail design to

363

00:22:05.110 --> 00:22:08.770  
accommodate the potential increase in pads for BESS.

364

00:22:10.410 --> 00:22:13.730

Okay, Andrew Szarkowski for Norfolk County Council. Thank you for that response.

365

00:22:13.810 --> 00:22:16.270

I suspect that'll be one of the points to discuss at the meeting.

366

00:22:18.270 --> 00:22:21.810

Okay. Thank you. Mr. Hubbard.

367

00:22:24.190 --> 00:22:26.230

Thank you. Tim Hubbard, Castle Acre Parish Council.

368

00:22:27.150 --> 00:22:28.690

A question, sir, if

369

00:22:29.510 --> 00:22:33.420

you would allow me to ask in terms of sort of general interest more than anything

370

00:22:33.510 --> 00:22:33.750

else.

371

00:22:35.330 --> 00:22:38.510

I believe there will be operational water required

372

00:22:39.410 --> 00:22:43.320

for the operating site, particularly in terms of cooling the

373

00:22:43.390 --> 00:22:43.650

BESS

374

00:22:44.890 --> 00:22:45.470

site.

375

00:22:47.290 --> 00:22:51.250

Am I right in that assumption? And if so, what sort of quantities

376

00:22:51.290 --> 00:22:55.050

of water will be used, please? And where does the applicant

377

00:22:55.110 --> 00:22:57.870  
intend to get that water from? Thank you.

378  
00:22:59.410 --> 00:23:00.030  
Mr. Evans.

379  
00:23:01.170 --> 00:23:02.710  
Liam Nevins on behalf of the applicant.

380  
00:23:02.790 --> 00:23:06.670  
I can only assume the interested party means during the potential  
for a fire

381  
00:23:06.790 --> 00:23:10.630  
event. If the interested party could clarify that water

382  
00:23:10.710 --> 00:23:12.249  
use.

383  
00:23:12.890 --> 00:23:14.570  
As I said, it was a general question.

384  
00:23:15.090 --> 00:23:18.610  
I don't know, but is there

385  
00:23:18.670 --> 00:23:22.640  
operational water used on the site for cooling any parts of the

386  
00:23:22.710 --> 00:23:22.950  
BESS?

387  
00:23:24.450 --> 00:23:25.930  
Liam Nevins on behalf of the applicant.

388  
00:23:26.530 --> 00:23:28.970  
No, there is no cooling required for the BESS.

389  
00:23:29.690 --> 00:23:31.970  
So how does that cooling take place then?

390  
00:23:33.370 --> 00:23:34.870

Liam Nevins on behalf of the applicant.

391

00:23:35.370 --> 00:23:38.570

Cooling is usually by air and circulation.

392

00:23:38.730 --> 00:23:39.110

I think the

393

00:23:40.590 --> 00:23:44.550

only time that we require water on site for cooling is in the

394

00:23:44.590 --> 00:23:47.650

rare event of a battery fire where you would cool the adjacent containers.

395

00:23:52.910 --> 00:23:54.350

Any further comment, Mr. Hubbard?

396

00:23:54.850 --> 00:23:55.030

Yeah.

397

00:23:56.730 --> 00:24:00.200

Mr. Morgan at the back. Is there a microphone

398

00:24:01.030 --> 00:24:02.430

for you? Oh, you've got your own.

399

00:24:05.390 --> 00:24:06.310

They give it to me now.

400

00:24:06.610 --> 00:24:06.890

Okay.

401

00:24:08.670 --> 00:24:11.730

Yeah, I just wanted to say about the wastewater.

402

00:24:12.190 --> 00:24:15.570

During construction, there's supposed to be four

403

00:24:15.610 --> 00:24:18.450

Olympic-sized swimming pools of wastewater.

404

00:24:18.530 --> 00:24:19.890

How do you manage to deal with this?

405

00:24:23.750 --> 00:24:25.410

Liam Nevins on behalf of the applicant.

406

00:24:25.950 --> 00:24:29.830

Wastewater will be dealt with either via wheel washing facilities

407

00:24:30.070 --> 00:24:34.010

and treated and either discharged to ground or taken off site.

408

00:24:35.230 --> 00:24:39.050

Waste from portaloo-type facilities, again,

409

00:24:39.370 --> 00:24:40.490

will be taken off site

410

00:24:41.630 --> 00:24:42.910

as per standard practice.

411

00:24:45.700 --> 00:24:46.060

Thank you.

412

00:24:47.580 --> 00:24:47.860

Thank you.

413

00:24:48.960 --> 00:24:52.000

Any further questions, Dr. Mark Holmes?

414

00:24:52.820 --> 00:24:54.699

Sorry, thank you. One more question. Dr.

415

00:24:54.820 --> 00:24:57.140

Mark Holmes, Southacre local resident.

416

00:24:58.440 --> 00:25:02.120

During the construction phase, when there's large quantities of soil, particularly

417

00:25:02.160 --> 00:25:05.880

around, say, the substation site, and we did have a significant

418

00:25:05.920 --> 00:25:09.500

flooding event. Bearing in mind these are light, sandy soils that could

419

00:25:09.680 --> 00:25:11.160

easily be washed away

420

00:25:12.080 --> 00:25:15.700

or washed down towards the sensitive Nar Valley SSSI

421

00:25:16.260 --> 00:25:20.140

chalk stream, how are you going to avoid such events

422

00:25:20.220 --> 00:25:20.580

happening?

423

00:25:23.660 --> 00:25:23.900

Thank you.

424

00:25:24.270 --> 00:25:26.380

Liam Nevins on behalf of the applicant.

425

00:25:26.660 --> 00:25:30.310

There is an outline soil management plan submitted with the application,

426

00:25:30.640 --> 00:25:33.800

which outlines measures to deal with stockpiles and

427

00:25:34.220 --> 00:25:38.140

surplus soils to ensure that they are stable, which

428

00:25:38.180 --> 00:25:42.110

includes vegetating the surfaces and would prevent that washout that

429

00:25:42.140 --> 00:25:46.010

you describe propagating further downstream into the River Nar, which is

430

00:25:46.240 --> 00:25:46.690  
a chalk stream.

431

00:25:47.640 --> 00:25:49.259  
The soil management plan

432

00:25:50.240 --> 00:25:53.559  
number is APP193.

433

00:25:53.650 --> 00:25:54.180  
APP?

434

00:25:54.740 --> 00:25:55.380  
193.

435

00:25:55.580 --> 00:25:55.940  
Thank you.

436

00:25:58.680 --> 00:26:02.430  
Okay. If there are no further questions in the room then,

437

00:26:02.780 --> 00:26:05.420  
I'll just check online. If you could put your hand up if you have  
any further

438

00:26:05.460 --> 00:26:07.160  
questions on this agenda item.

439

00:26:09.080 --> 00:26:11.140  
Not seeing any hands online.

440

00:26:12.610 --> 00:26:15.460  
I have a further question in the room, Mr. Hubbard.

441

00:26:16.580 --> 00:26:19.500  
Yes. Thank you, sir. Tim Hubbard, Castle Acre Parish Council.

442

00:26:20.180 --> 00:26:23.700  
Just to come back on that point in terms of operational water.

443

00:26:24.260 --> 00:26:28.220

Yes, indeed. If there is water required for

444

00:26:28.420 --> 00:26:32.200

fire, is there going to be water stored on-site, please?

445

00:26:32.640 --> 00:26:35.380

Again, it's a general question, really. Thank you, sir.

446

00:26:35.500 --> 00:26:36.100

Mr. Nevins.

447

00:26:37.000 --> 00:26:38.660

Liam Nevins, on behalf of the applicant.

448

00:26:39.100 --> 00:26:43.060

Yes, there will be water stored on-site for provision for

449

00:26:43.120 --> 00:26:47.060

firefighting in two dedicated tanks, the sizing of which

450

00:26:47.540 --> 00:26:49.940

is outlined in the flood risk assessment, which is

451

00:26:50.000 --> 00:26:53.780

AS053, which follows the National Fire

452

00:26:53.859 --> 00:26:57.640

Chief's guidance of 228 cubic meters, allowing

453

00:26:57.760 --> 00:27:01.160

for 1,900 liters per minute to be applied

454

00:27:01.320 --> 00:27:04.900

to the adjacent unaffected battery containers.

455

00:27:07.280 --> 00:27:07.720

Thank you, sir.

456

00:27:08.100 --> 00:27:08.839

Okay. Thank you.

457

00:27:13.200 --> 00:27:16.800

Okay, so there are no further questions on this item then.

458

00:27:16.920 --> 00:27:20.590

So I'm going to move on to next steps, agenda item four.

459

00:27:21.460 --> 00:27:25.230

I'm just going to summarize the actions that I've

460

00:27:25.260 --> 00:27:28.660

noted during the meeting. Some of these are actions which

461

00:27:29.600 --> 00:27:33.480

would normally take place as part

462

00:27:33.540 --> 00:27:33.820

of the

463

00:27:35.320 --> 00:27:38.120

timetable and the actions that are needed for deadline one.

464

00:27:39.220 --> 00:27:42.920

The majority of the actions are for the applicant, and I'll provide a

465

00:27:43.020 --> 00:27:44.840

note after this meeting.

466

00:27:46.380 --> 00:27:48.020

First action was about

467

00:27:49.300 --> 00:27:52.880

food production on agenda item

468

00:27:52.960 --> 00:27:56.880

3.1. So there was action for the applicant to respond in

469

00:27:56.900 --> 00:27:58.580

writing about food production.

470

00:27:59.540 --> 00:28:03.290

Second item was also agenda item 3.1,

471

00:28:03.760 --> 00:28:07.280

responding to Norfolk County Council's

472

00:28:07.620 --> 00:28:10.000

questions, including fixed or tracker panels.

473

00:28:12.380 --> 00:28:15.860

Item three, that was also agenda item 3.1,

474

00:28:17.060 --> 00:28:20.480

summarize the position in writing regarding wind

475

00:28:20.560 --> 00:28:22.120

turbines as an alternative.

476

00:28:24.160 --> 00:28:25.840

Item 3.3,

477

00:28:26.680 --> 00:28:29.400

respond to Mr. Bennett's relevant rep.

478

00:28:31.900 --> 00:28:35.820

Another agenda item 3.3 was to review the list of

479

00:28:35.920 --> 00:28:38.900

cumulative projects during the exam process.

480

00:28:42.460 --> 00:28:43.260

Item six,

481

00:28:45.400 --> 00:28:48.140

under agenda item 3.3, this was to

482

00:28:49.260 --> 00:28:52.040

look at the road safety audit to see if that had considered

483

00:28:54.040 --> 00:28:56.240  
the risk of deer collisions.

484  
00:28:57.920 --> 00:29:01.140  
Seventh item was, again, agenda item

485  
00:29:01.339 --> 00:29:01.969  
3.3,

486  
00:29:03.160 --> 00:29:06.940  
respond to Breckland District Council's relevant rep regarding

487  
00:29:07.360 --> 00:29:09.100  
cumulative effects.

488  
00:29:11.600 --> 00:29:12.400  
Action number eight

489  
00:29:13.340 --> 00:29:15.720  
was to meet with the MOD

490  
00:29:16.760 --> 00:29:17.380  
DIO

491  
00:29:18.280 --> 00:29:20.700  
to discuss mitigation before deadline one.

492  
00:29:23.960 --> 00:29:27.940  
Item nine was agenda item 3.5, follow-up

493  
00:29:28.320 --> 00:29:31.400  
meeting with Breckland District Council to agree the viewpoints and

494  
00:29:31.440 --> 00:29:32.419  
visualizations.

495  
00:29:36.120 --> 00:29:39.920  
Item 10 was to meet with Breckland District Council

496  
00:29:39.980 --> 00:29:43.140  
regarding the landscape and visual assessment.

497

00:29:50.780 --> 00:29:54.500

Item 11 was Norfolk County

498

00:29:54.560 --> 00:29:57.840

Council to advise of the new contact for landscape and visual.

499

00:30:00.220 --> 00:30:04.200

Item 12 was to provide the offset for the keeper's

500

00:30:04.260 --> 00:30:06.120

cottage that we talked about earlier.

501

00:30:07.980 --> 00:30:08.760

13

502

00:30:10.640 --> 00:30:13.970

was the applicant to engage with the parish councils,

503

00:30:14.040 --> 00:30:16.800

including discussing the community benefit.

504

00:30:18.560 --> 00:30:22.300

And then 14, the last one, was Environment Agency to

505

00:30:22.360 --> 00:30:25.500

respond in writing with any comments on the questions

506

00:30:26.140 --> 00:30:29.920

discussed under this item. Are there any other

507

00:30:30.000 --> 00:30:33.920

actions that I may have missed?

508

00:30:34.000 --> 00:30:36.660

Alex Rizzin on behalf of the applicant. I don't think so, sir.

509

00:30:36.700 --> 00:30:40.680

I would just make a general point that we've made across the various agenda

510

00:30:40.720 --> 00:30:44.660

items today references to having discussions and meaningful engagement with

511

00:30:44.680 --> 00:30:46.680

all parties. That is a genuine offer.

512

00:30:46.730 --> 00:30:48.560

I'm not just saying it for the purpose of the hearing today.

513

00:30:49.140 --> 00:30:52.960

I'm happy to receive any requests for such meetings in addition to

514

00:30:53.020 --> 00:30:56.480

those listed below. I'm always happy to be contacted.

515

00:30:57.660 --> 00:31:01.320

Thank you. And just as a general action, all statements of common

516

00:31:01.360 --> 00:31:01.960

ground will be

517

00:31:03.560 --> 00:31:05.740

issued as well for deadline one.

518

00:31:06.660 --> 00:31:06.860

Yep.

519

00:31:08.300 --> 00:31:08.600

Thank you.

520

00:31:09.520 --> 00:31:13.240

So we'll move on to item five then, which is closing remarks.

521

00:31:14.040 --> 00:31:16.270

So if there are no other matters... Oh, Mr.

522

00:31:17.920 --> 00:31:18.620

Swierkowski.

523

00:31:18.940 --> 00:31:21.140  
Yeah, sorry, just one procedural question, sir.

524  
00:31:22.730 --> 00:31:22.730  
Yeah.

525  
00:31:22.760 --> 00:31:25.900  
Do you yet have an idea when you're going to issue the first set of questions?

526  
00:31:27.140 --> 00:31:28.300  
Well, early next week.

527  
00:31:28.620 --> 00:31:29.480  
All right. Yeah. Okay.

528  
00:31:29.720 --> 00:31:33.500  
They are written already. Just following this

529  
00:31:33.560 --> 00:31:36.340  
meeting, I'll need to make any revisions to them.

530  
00:31:36.460 --> 00:31:36.700  
So

531  
00:31:37.640 --> 00:31:38.600  
early next week.

532  
00:31:42.240 --> 00:31:45.980  
Okay. So if there are no other matters that anyone wishes to raise, I shall

533  
00:31:46.040 --> 00:31:47.300  
now close the hearing.

534  
00:31:49.080 --> 00:31:52.480  
Thank you all for your attendance and participation in this hearing.

535  
00:31:53.360 --> 00:31:54.220  
Time is now

536

00:31:55.080 --> 00:31:57.240  
4:30, and this hearing is closed.

537  
00:31:58.840 --> 00:31:58.970  
Thank you.

538  
00:31:58.970 --> 00:31:59.160  
Thank you.