



Planning Inspectorate
Arolygiaeth Gynllunio

Hearing Transcript

Project:	East Pye Solar
Hearing:	Recording of Issue Specific Hearing 1 (ISH1) – Part 3
Date:	17 September 2026

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FULL TRANSCRIPT (with timecode)

00:00:05:21 - 00:00:10:12

It's time to resume this issue specific hearing.

00:00:13:05 - 00:00:21:08

I hope everybody can hear me clearly. I hope that the live streaming and recording of this event has commenced.

00:00:23:22 - 00:00:37:16

Is it? Okay. I will endeavor to be close to the microphone. Thank you. And absolutely, please put your hands up if you can't hear anything. Has the live streaming and recording commenced? Yes. Thank you.

00:00:39:06 - 00:00:50:10

Welcome again to the second part of this issue specific hearing. I will briefly go through my introduction so we can get on to discussing the matters in hand.

00:00:52:00 - 00:01:05:23

My name is David Cliff. I've been appointed by the secretary of state to be the lead member of the panel, and I'm obviously also on the panel, as I think you already know, are my colleagues John McEvoy and Claire Taylor, and we constitute the examining authority for this application.

00:01:07:23 - 00:01:08:21

I won't go through all

00:01:08:23 - 00:01:29:27

the preliminaries I did yesterday, but I will go through some housekeeping matters for those people who weren't in attendance yesterday. Toilets are through the door on the left hand side. The fire escape is on my right hand side as signposted down the along the balcony down the the steps and into the carport park where there's the muster point.

00:01:32:26 - 00:01:39:10

There's no fire alarm tests planned today as far as I am aware.

00:01:44:14 - 00:02:15:04

We will finish today no later than four PM. We have got a lot to go through. I'll go throughout what is our intended plan. This morning, we will continue with item two, which is the scope of the proposed development. And we want to finish this sufficiently in time before lunchtime in order that we can start on item four, which is the applicant's approach on particular examination issues.

00:02:15:14 - 00:02:47:15

Not discussion of effects, but just some questions on the applicant's overall approach on those particular issues. Matters of effects will obviously plenty of time in examination to consider and read about and discuss those. That should give us sufficient time also to cover the quite high level matters that I want to cover in terms of the development consent order. Then the other matters, item six, I think can be done in probably quite short form. They're just probably short points that I would like like like to make and for the parties just to to to respond to if if absolutely necessary.

00:02:48:00 - 00:03:18:20

So with a good wind, I'm hoping we can get through by four PM today. As I say, we will not be continuing beyond four PM today. So as usual, please keep responses as succinct as possible. No need to repeat representations that have already been made. And obviously, as I said before, deadline one for written representations is an important deadline for everyone's written responses. If there's anything you hear about today and you don't get a chance to say anything about it today, provide that by deadline one, please.

00:03:18:22 - 00:03:19:07

Thank you.

00:03:21:02 - 00:03:52:24

Right. Before we get back to item two, are there any housekeeping matters anybody wants to raise? No? Good. Shall we continue then? So we got up to item. We had this we've done, obviously, the site selection alternatives yesterday. We've covered the item A and, for the most part, the discussions on the proposed National Grid substation. Obviously, there's going be some further clarification information of that provided so people can comment on that as the examination goes on. Just on the proposed National Grid substation,

00:03:54:14 - 00:04:15:14

obviously, there's been some I think there's been quite a few concerns raised about the level of detail of the parameters for the National Grid substation. Indeed, they're the matters of the proposed development. Before the National Grid substation, obviously, quite in-depth discussion yesterday about what might be happening with that, etcetera, etcetera, and National Grid's role in that.

00:04:19:17 - 00:04:39:22

There's obviously sort of quite a few in the development consent order and also in the scheme description is obviously the detail of what will be included in the National Grid substation works, which is work number four.

00:04:41:10 - 00:05:24:14

And it's a long list of the the matters that would be included in things like four feeder bays, one coupler bay, one section bay, reactive power units in the applicant's generation bay, and other things, relay rooms, etcetera. Notwithstanding the concerns raised about the level of design parameters, and I would encourage the council to discuss those with the local authorities if the local authorities think further detail is required of those. So an ongoing discussion, I think, might be useful outside of this room on those. But it might be helpful so people can have an idea of what the substation could look like or may look like if there really are some more illustrative or indicative details provided in the application.

00:05:25:01 - 00:05:56:17

I don't think there is. There is for some parts of the development and some helpful photographs of other examples of substations, but project substation. In terms of the National Grid substation, notwithstanding the points that I'm sure you're going to make, there are some unknowns because of the role of National Grid in this and the sort of uncertainties that we perhaps talked about yesterday. But it would be quite helpful to see a indicative or illustrative drawing or photograph or something to show how the the components that are described in work number four would actually manifest themselves on the ground. Obviously, it wouldn't be a certified document.

00:05:56:19 - 00:06:31:15

It would just be purely illustrative. You know, as an illustrative application for a planning application for housing development in outline where you'd have an illustrative plan just showing how it could how it could form. Is that something that could provide it just so everyone can understand? It's very difficult, I think, for people looking at the description of those to sort of try and envisage what it will look like. Obviously, there's existing substations close by to here, which I'm sure people are aware of. But in terms of the parameters that you're proposing or the applicant's proposing, I think that bit of further indicative material could be helpful.

00:06:32:18 - 00:06:35:27

So, yeah, it's on behalf of the applicant. Morning, sir. Yes. We can take that away.

00:06:36:16 - 00:06:49:05

Okay. Should we have that as the first action point for today? I have colleagues taking notes of action points, so I need to flag them as action points. Otherwise, they won't take them down. So I must remember to note that. Thank you.

00:06:52:28 - 00:07:14:09

And just one final small matter on this. The obviously, the parameters are the parameters that set out in the parameters document. In I think it's table four point one of app forty, that's the scheme description document. There's a list of the matters considered for each work

00:07:18:09 - 00:07:21:00

as assessed in the environmental statement.

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It's yes. It's scheme it's scheme parameters used for the environmental statement. Table four point one of app forty, which is the scheme description.

00:07:33:23 - 00:07:47:03

And sorry. Is it on the screen? Oh, there it is. Just go down if you could just go down, please, to the this is a small point. The main substation, National Grid substation that's on page ten,

00:07:49:10 - 00:08:15:00

there's on that, there is obviously the height of the relay and control rooms, the maximum the maximum dimensions of those. But there's in that table, there's not the parameter that appears in the parameters document, which I think is the height of the buzz bars. I suspect it's an oversight, but if that could be clarified either now or

00:08:25:18 - 00:08:42:00

So it's on behalf of the applicant. I believe it's in there. I'm just trying to find the reference. But I suppose the key point is if it's included in the design principles, parameters and commitment document, that's the parameter that's secured and therefore the scope is secured.

00:08:43:26 - 00:09:16:25

But in terms of being assessed in the environmental statement, take into account of the heights of the buzz bars, I'm not saying it's not because obviously there's line drawings as well, etcetera, etcetera. you'd But expect in that document that to be clearly pointed out that you've got the maximum height of the buzz bars at what is it? Thirteen meters? It might might be sixteen meters. I've not got it in front of me. But just it's just a small point just for that to be rectified because I'm sure it shouldn't be included in that table. Otherwise, people might say, has your environmental statement been assessed on the correct parameters if it's not included in that table? It's on behalf of

00:09:16:27 - 00:09:30:27

the applicants. Yes. It's the line above, as you can see highlighted on the screen. So it's just a formatting error. It's not being dropped down into the National Grid substation. That confirms fifteen meters to the top of the busbars as the maximum height. Right.

00:09:30:29 - 00:09:35:01

Where's oh, I see. Okay. Well, that can be rectified, can't it? Sure. Yeah. Thank you.

00:09:45:17 - 00:10:09:14

And obviously, there's quite a lot of representations being raised on parameters. I don't want to go back into those today because there's been quite a lot detail representations already provided in writing. But obviously, we'll be looking carefully at the applicant's response to those. And anything further you've got to say in response to the Open Floor Hearing one and two on how the parameters have been designed and then the rostral envelope would be quite helpful, I think, for the entire for the for the examination.

00:10:11:07 - 00:10:28:08

Okay. Can we move on? As I say, if there are any points on these matters, please make them at deadline one. But I think on that, we had a big discussion about Dashwood substation yesterday. So

given that we still got plenty of time in this examination for these things to be, you know, explored further. If we move on to item

00:10:33:08 - 00:10:39:00

c, this is the overhead transmission lines, which is work number five.

00:10:45:10 - 00:10:51:18

When I read the detail of these, when I looked at the development control sorry, the development consent order

00:10:52:28 - 00:10:55:27

schedule for these, it's not

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exactly clear as to sort of how this might manifest itself as well. I suspect there's unknowns with this because, obviously, it relates to the National Grid substation.

00:11:09:26 - 00:11:23:07

Would you be able to just do a short summary of what the what the proposals are for the overhead transmission line works just so everybody is clear? Because I'm not sure the way it's worded in the application documents is as clear as it perhaps could be.

00:11:24:23 - 00:12:00:05

Toby, it's on behalf of the applicant. Certainly, sir. I'll pass in a second to Mr. Douglas to walk through that in high level terms. If you so, just to clarify how the development consent order powers are split up. So as you identified, work number five is for the overhead lines. Work number 5A relates to the new overhead line, which Mr. Douglas will talk to. Work number 5B then sets out the works that are in connections with that and also the modifications to the existing overhead lines. Work number 5C then explains the works in relation to the modification of the existing overhead lines.

00:12:00:14 - 00:12:08:00

And then work number 5D deals with the removal elements of the overhead lines. And Mr. Douglas can talk to each of those in turn.

00:12:08:23 - 00:12:19:07

Okay. Fairly briefly, please. No need to repeat what's already in the application. Although, as I've said, what's already in the application, I think, could be a little bit clearer. So you might be able to elaborate and help us on that.

00:12:21:12 - 00:12:23:05

Morning, sir. Ian Douglas for the applicant.

00:12:24:29 - 00:12:33:25

I was just going to ask a colleague, is it worth putting the works plan on screen? And I can very briefly talk you through the Yes, those

00:12:34:00 - 00:12:34:26

Carry on talking while

00:12:34:28 - 00:12:36:19

it comes I'll keep going. If

00:12:36:21 - 00:12:38:29

that can go up in the background, then I'm sure that would be helpful.

00:12:39:17 - 00:13:01:05

So I mean, as Mr. Yates has stolen mostly the thunder there, the Works5a is the effectively the new works to alter the direction, shall we say, of the existing overhead line to divert it into the National Grid substation.

00:13:02:28 - 00:13:04:23

Within those works,

00:13:06:25 - 00:13:22:10

that would include works to the existing to the pylons that are within that works area. So there are a number of existing pylons and the intention or what the application makes provision for is for

00:13:23:26 - 00:13:33:11

new pylons to be provided, but three of the existing to be removed. So that's a net increase of one pylon.

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The parameter for the height of those pylons is in the DPPC, the APP213, sorry, design principles of

00:13:44:26 - 00:13:54:04

If I got a question on that, I'll ask you now as you're going along. That is sixty one meters, I think, maximum. Is that the same height as the existing pylons?

00:13:56:11 - 00:14:02:11

That is a good question. We can perhaps get the answer for you in break or in the next yeah.

00:14:05:12 - 00:14:10:10

We can get that answer for you in the in the team will have a look at that. We do have that number somewhere.

00:14:10:12 - 00:14:49:21

If that could be clarified because that that is obviously, I think, quite an important point in terms of landscape visual effects. And I think in light of that, I think it's it's just another area where actually some further illustrating material might be quite helpful. I I know these are design parameters, and I know that the final detailed design of these will be subject to submission to the local authority. I think I'm right in saying that. It wasn't at the site of the application. I think we've got to that point where it is now, but it will come on to that. But I think it will be helpful to have something just to sort of show

where the existing ones are and just show an indication of what might you must have some idea of what might be happening to these.

00:14:49:24 - 00:15:07:08

So some further illustrating material would be helpful. But if, obviously, if the heights are higher than the existing ones, then there's obviously some visual effects to consider. Not considering those here today, but that will be something we'll be considering later on. But this sort of information, I think, is important to be clear on now.

00:15:07:20 - 00:15:35:03

Maybe it's on behalf of the applicant, certainly. So we'll look to provide some additional clarity on that. In the meantime, I don't have the precise figure of the existing overhead line heights, but it will be an increase as a result of the scheme proposals. But that has been assessed and the effects of that are reported in the environmental statement. Now you said earlier, we're not exploring the effects here. But if you want, we have got a landscape specialist that could talk to that, but it would be an increase, and that has been assessed.

00:15:35:05 - 00:15:59:29

I don't want to get into the effects today. I just want to get into an understanding of the scheme so people can you know, have a realistic sort of, like, you know, clear view of what the effects might be. But, obviously, heights more than existing, and, obviously, that's something that people need to sort of think about. We need to think about. And I think some illustrated material to show how that might manifest itself would be quite helpful for what is another significant part of the element.

00:16:00:16 - 00:16:10:21

Maybe it's on behalf of the applicant. Absolutely, sir. And I've been told it's fifty three meters existing. So it's circa ten meter or nine meter increase, but we can take that away in terms of further indicative detail.

00:16:10:28 - 00:16:14:25

Okay. That's helpful. Thank you. Okay.

00:16:18:01 - 00:16:25:02

Any brief points before we move on to the next item? I think that's as far as I want to go on overhead transmission lines. No?

00:16:27:15 - 00:16:36:04

Right. So you already have that. Thank you. Thank you. Okay. So let's move on then to and that's an that's an action point.

00:16:39:06 - 00:16:45:15

If we move then on to item d, which is the project project substations,

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and this relates both to

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four hundred kV and the hundred and thirty two kV substations.

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Just bear with me.

00:17:28:03 - 00:17:28:25

There's

00:17:30:11 - 00:17:36:17

I think I'm right in saying there's up to up to three four hundred

00:17:38:13 - 00:17:44:01

sorry, four thousand four hundred kV substations. And is it up to three thirty two kV substations?

00:17:47:08 - 00:17:54:04

Ian Douglas from the applicant. It's up to three four hundred kV substations within the scheme.

00:18:00:21 - 00:18:05:01

And sorry. I'm just I've lost my thread there in terms of the number of one three twos.

00:18:05:03 - 00:18:09:03

I was playing for time, must admit, because I couldn't find my relevant questions. I have now found them. So

00:18:16:22 - 00:18:21:02

It's up to three for for both. Up to three Probably, I'm not as right. Yeah. Okay.

00:18:25:02 - 00:18:34:27

What's the particular reason why this scheme requires that number of substations

00:18:36:12 - 00:18:40:17

compared to others? Because I've seen other schemes where there is a lesser number of substations.

00:18:42:03 - 00:18:50:03

So is there a particular what what drives that maximum parameter, I suppose, of having up to three of of each in this in this case?

00:18:55:24 - 00:18:57:17

Simon get it for the applicant.

00:18:59:26 - 00:19:13:11

Scheme design seeks to capture solar energy and transmit it to the point of connection in as efficient a way as is possible, given all inputs into that very general statement.

00:19:15:04 - 00:19:16:03

But the

00:19:18:15 - 00:19:54:27

if one looks at where those substations are located and the parcels in which they're located on the site location plan. You can see that the substations gather electricity from the subsites and the sites and transport or transmit that electricity and sort of down the line, if you like, down the river to the point of connection. So the number of one hundred thirty two and four hundred kV substations is a factor of the geographical spread of

00:19:56:10 - 00:19:58:27

Thank you. Let me continue, please.

00:19:58:29 - 00:20:40:01

It's a factor of the geographical spread of the scheme and the way of transmitting that electricity by gathering it up and transmitting it along the cable route corridors to the points of connection. You'll note, sir, that the four hundred kV substations are proposed in Site five and the best sites in Site one. That is where most electricity will have already been gathered. And it's for that reason that a higher voltage transmission is or up to a higher voltage transmission is proposed on that part of the scheme.

00:20:41:00 - 00:21:07:29

Okay. Thank you. So the schemes which are, I suppose, there's a mixture of solar schemes now, aren't there? Some are more dispersed this like proposal, the ones are more condensed around the grid connection. But the schemes that are more condensed around the grid connection, less dispersed, they would result in probably a would they result in a lesser requirement for that number of substations? I think it's probably that's probably the case from what you said, I think, is what I suspected, but it just wasn't clear from the actual documents that

00:21:08:20 - 00:21:39:20

Simon, get it from the applicant. It is very much a scheme by scheme design factor depending on the number of individual sites, but also the location of those sites around the points of connection. Is the power all generally flowing as in this scheme from northeast to southwest? Or are the sites or substites all the way around? And all the cardinal points around the points of connection, those will all impact the electrical design of the scheme of a scheme.

00:21:41:01 - 00:21:42:14

Okay. Thank you.

00:21:44:04 - 00:22:15:10

That's helpful. The the national just noting. The National Grid substation is proposed as air insulated. I think that's actually one of the it's in the DCO, actually, isn't it? Whereas the four hundred kV substations are either air insulated using air insulated switchgear or gas insulated switchgear. I'm not clear what the one three two substations are. They're obviously smaller. Anyway, I'm sure you won't you you will answer that.

00:22:16:06 - 00:22:32:05

Just so everybody is aware, because not everybody might be aware of the difference between air insulated and gas insulated, what would the likely differences be in terms of appearance? The sort of second question is, why is this still a matter that's flexible

00:22:34:12 - 00:22:48:01

and can't be determined as part of the actual application details, bearing in mind that there are actually they manifest themselves in different ways, don't they? Which I'm sure you will just briefly explain just so everybody is aware of those differences.

00:22:49:10 - 00:22:59:06

So some get it for the applicant. We don't have images of gas insulated and air insulated that we can provide right now to compare, but we could take that away.

00:22:59:08 - 00:23:16:02

You've got a gas insulated one in the project description, but not an air insulated one. Exactly. Which is one of my follow-up questions as to if it's flexible, you're showing one, please show the other as well, If that could be taken away as an action point, it can, But aren't okay, you're showing the that's the air insulated one, is it?

00:23:16:04 - 00:23:56:25

That's right. And so being air insulated, more of the componentry is open to the air. A gas insulated substation has less of the componentry open to the air and more of it's covered. It needs to be because it is instated with a different material. So it's more of an enclosed substation. Flexibility has been included for both the one hundred thirty two project substations and the Project four hundred kV substations to allow for the possibility of either AIS, that's air insulated substation or GIS technology.

00:23:58:20 - 00:24:20:10

They have been assessing the yachts talking to assessments and effects at the moment. But those that flexibility has been appropriately assessed within the environmental statement. And it will be a detailed at the point of detailed design that the final choice will be taken on those substation technologies.

00:24:21:25 - 00:24:51:29

the National Grid substation is being proposed to be air insulated, what obviously, a decision is being made on that despite the sort of some uncertainties about that with National Grid that we've discussed. Why can't a decision be made on the project substations in terms of air or gas insulation? I don't understand what the difference is between these and the National Grid, particularly in the light of the fact that there's obviously agreements still need to be reached with National Grid on final detail, or they need to certainly come to those decisions.

00:24:55:03 - 00:24:59:15

So as Simon get it for the applicants, I've been told that we have

00:25:01:14 - 00:25:17:16

designed or brought forward a design of the National Grid substation, which is consistent with National Grid's design requirements or technical specification in which AIS is a part of that substation design.

00:25:19:02 - 00:25:52:21

The applicant has will be responsible for the procurement and the selection and the installation substations of of the project substations, both at one hundred thirty two and at four hundred kV, and therefore, retained or proposes to retain the flexibility until the detailed design stage to determine which of those technologies is most appropriate to bring forward. And indeed, this would be the most beneficial to bring forward.

00:25:52:23 - 00:26:00:14

That could include, for example, procurement time lines, availability of equipment, etcetera, etcetera.

00:26:02:05 - 00:26:21:12

Okay. And I think you touched upon this. Generally, Air Insulated have wider footprint but less buildings. Gas insulated are more, I say, buildings structures, buildings, enclosures. Gas insulated is likely to be lesser footprint but more structures. Is that fair?

00:26:21:14 - 00:26:23:00

That sounds correct, sir.

00:26:23:02 - 00:26:38:07

And obviously, the project parameters are based upon the actual so the actual space needed for the air insulated substations, that would probably that presumably dictates the actual space that's in the works plans for those.

00:26:42:18 - 00:26:44:23

Sorry, I'm not sure what the question was there.

00:26:44:25 - 00:26:55:10

In the works plans for these substations, I presume that, that extent of the substation footprint or compound area is based upon the air insulated more so than the gas insulated.

00:26:55:23 - 00:26:57:15

So we go to the applicant, correct.

00:26:58:19 - 00:27:10:05

And if you were to decide upon the applicant was to decide upon gas insulated substations, am I right in saying that the area that's not required would be provided for landscaping, I'm assuming, would it?

00:27:18:01 - 00:27:23:07

Sorry. I'm told that it can be provided for landscaping purposes. So

00:27:26:01 - 00:28:10:13

Okay. We'll we'll come back to these substations. I'm sure and I'll I'll come back to doctor Barry in a second. But my last not quite my last point. Obviously, the design layout of these substations is an important matter. Obviously, we've got your design commitments and design what are they called? Design principles, parameters, commitments. I would urge, we're at very early stage of examination, that the applicant continues discussions with the two local authorities on how the design principles, guidelines, etcetera, can be tightened as much as possible so that

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when the local planning authority comes to actually having to

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consider these proposals in detail, There are some

00:28:24:03 - 00:29:01:20

as firm as possible and clear guidelines on things like design, appearance, layout, etcetera, in order to ensure that we would have the confidence or the Secretary of State eventually would have the confidence that the landscape visual effects, for starters, they're not the only effects, are minimized. Because I'm reading the design guidelines, etcetera, that they call the design guidelines design principles. I think they could be a little bit more perhaps focused in some areas. I don't want to get more into that. I don't think it really is a matter for local authorities if they wish to pick up on it because you guys are very familiar with dealing with these these these matters.

00:29:02:05 - 00:29:16:12

But I think further work could be done between the parties to get those guidelines in a much better shape. So there's more certainty as to what the substations would, a, look like, but, a, how effects would be minimized.

00:29:18:00 - 00:29:24:05

That'd it's on behalf of the applicant. Absolutely. So we'll continue those discussions and update it throughout examination as appropriate.

00:29:24:07 - 00:29:32:14

Is that okay for the local authorities to engage in obviously, you're quite familiar with dealing with the substations, etcetera. So this is not your first.

00:29:36:07 - 00:29:40:02

You don't need to comment if you don't want to, but if that's if that's something that you're happy with as well.

00:29:40:05 - 00:30:12:21

Hi, Curtis. This Ivan Lofford, district council. Jess will be happy to engage. There was one point we're just picking up is requirement five at the moment, as it stands, only only secures one, two, three. You're aware. And, obviously, the applicant has confirmed their agreement to include works four. But we you your your comment earlier on was about potentially anything in regards to the pylons, which is works five.

00:30:13:15 - 00:30:36:12

Again, that's not secured by a requirement. So I think consideration may need to be given to how that fits in and is secured if indeed it's something that the local planning authority needs to agree. There is obviously statutory undertake powers Yes. Which the National Grid will have, which enables them to do certain types of works without our agreement.

00:30:36:14 - 00:30:52:17

Yeah. No. That's a that's a fair point to that. It was in my list of DCO questions for later, but thanks for bringing that up. Now could you could you clarify that? Because I think in your documents, in response to random representations, it seems to imply the DCO has already been changed, but the latest copy of the DCO hasn't got the extra design,

00:30:54:13 - 00:31:03:29

what's the wording? Approval processes in. What's the current position on what requirement number? Which requirement is it again? Is it

00:31:04:01 - 00:31:06:04

three? Five, sir.

00:31:06:06 - 00:31:08:11

What's the current position? And what requirement five will include?

00:31:09:01 - 00:31:41:26

Toby, it's on behalf of the applicants. Yes, so as confirmed in the relevant reps, it will be updated or has been updated in the background. But the next revision of the DCO will be submitted at deadline one. The reason for that was so that we could capture any consequential amendments that may arise from discussions this afternoon. To clarify the updates that we made for requirement M5, As mentioned yesterday, requirement five, subparagraph one, will be updated to include work number four.

00:31:41:28 - 00:32:09:18

So that means details of the layout scale, ground levels, etcetera, of the new substation will then be caught by that requirement. And then we'll also be updating requirement five to include a new subparagraph, which ensures that both work numbers five and six must also be carried out in accordance with the design principles, parameters and commitments document. And obviously, we've taken the point that there's an action there to consider whether we can update the detail in that secured document.

00:32:09:20 - 00:32:24:12

Okay. So work five being the overhead And line, work six It's cabling. The cabling. And is the where does the best fall within this? Is best already that's already in, isn't it?

00:32:24:14 - 00:32:26:07

Best is work numbers two, sir,

00:32:26:09 - 00:32:57:17

and that's already included in the requirement. Okay. The detail on that yes, I hear what you say, and that sounds helpful. Obviously, the detail of that, I think, will be subject to further representations as necessary in them. I strongly imagine when we have the latest issue specific hearings in, when are they, December, that we'll have a quite detailed session on the draft development consent order, at which point, we'll pick up on the things which have not been agreed so far. So just a hint that, that will be happening later on.

00:32:57:19 - 00:32:59:19

Doctor. Berry, sorry, you wanted to make a point, too.

00:32:59:21 - 00:33:30:14

Thank you. Yes. I wanted to ask about the air insulated and gas insulated options for the substations. So you've said the applicant has said that there's a comparison of these in terms of environmental effects in the environmental statement, but I haven't seen that anywhere, particularly a species specific assessment. Because obviously, Norfolk Wildlife Trust identifies this area as nature dense and at particular risk of harm from this project.

00:33:30:16 - 00:33:56:06

And it is recognized by the applicant that it's a nationally important landscape for bats with maternity colony co sustenance zones overlapping across the entire scheme. So the design of these substations is of extreme importance to protect that ecology. So I really think it's important that there is a proper analysis, a species specific analysis of the implications of either choice.

00:33:57:20 - 00:34:01:06

Thank you. Mr. Yates, if you'd like to respond to that, please.

00:34:02:02 - 00:34:40:01

Toby Yates, on behalf of the applicant, the staff, the ecologist here with us today, the Chapter eight of the environmental statement covers ecology and biodiversity. That's APP-forty four, and that assesses all elements of ecology as scoped into the environmental statement. And you'll see throughout that, there is references to the National Grid substation. For example, paragraph 8.1.1 refers to the National Grid substation. Key point for Chapter A and all other chapters, whichever parameter is considered a reasonable worst case will have been applied for that assessment.

00:34:40:03 - 00:35:01:16

So from a landscape and visual perspective, the one with the larger footprint, whether it's AIS or GIS, has formed the basis of that assessment. If there's any other differences between AIS and GIS, which we've taken an action away to provide, whichever is the reasonable worst case assessment is what has been included as part of that assessment, and then the effects have been concluded accordingly.

00:35:02:25 - 00:35:35:22

Yes. That could be quite helpful in terms of just making clear because, obviously, it's based on the worst case scenario, the maximum design parameters. But in terms of if there is obviously an optionality as there is in this case or something that's it could be quite significantly different, it would be useful to get an understanding behind how the two options were considered whilst completely

accepting the point that the environmental statement presumably will set out the predictive effects from the maximum design parameters, I. E, the worst case scenario. That could be explored.

00:35:35:24 - 00:35:41:13

Obviously, you'll get to read that and then you'll be able to provide your comments later on in the examination on that as well.

00:35:41:15 - 00:35:48:04

I just want to say that the worst case for different species may be different, and I don't think that's adequately reflected.

00:35:48:18 - 00:36:09:14

Well, I think it would need yes, it would obviously need to be looked at almost on a sort of it depends on the matter in hand, doesn't it, ecology or noise or landscaping? Probably getting to an area where I was envisioning these sorts of things to be considered a bit later in the examination, but I completely understand the point. It's very useful that you've highlighted that now. Thank you. Mrs. Mullet?

00:36:09:26 - 00:36:41:26

Thank you. I'd just like to ask a question. Why is it necessary? I know it's a very diverse scheme and it's across many acres. Why is it necessary to have two big substations in one site? And also against the best site, which is literally half five hundred yards away, there's another substation. So within Great Malton, you have got three huge substations. Just wondered why the parameters of the scheme mean that they have to be put together so tightly in one area.

00:36:42:03 - 00:36:43:26

Thank you. K.

00:36:45:13 - 00:36:57:15

So for you, Mr. Gillett, just to briefly respond. If it's in a document that can be clearly referred to, then just refer to that, please. Obviously, Mr. Gillett, you can have a look at that. But just briefly, I'd like to just explain that, please.

00:36:57:25 - 00:37:23:14

Shows me. So if I Simon get it for the applicants. So just very briefly, the applicant's proposals include a four hundred kV substation in site five, which will collect electricity generated to the northeast, so from site three upwards, along with the cable corridor site one at four hundred kilovolts.

00:37:25:00 - 00:37:58:29

Another substation at site one will receive electricity. The project substation will receive the electricity that has been transmitted along that cable route corridor. And the other project substation by the BES allows for additional electricity flow control and monitoring. I'll come back on a reference for you, sir, which explains the siting of the Bess. And in fact, I think we'll probably address it in one of your later points on the siting of the Bess close to the points of connection.

00:38:02:12 - 00:38:33:29

Mr. Miller, I would say as well that we are well aware of the obviously, representations about lots of areas of the scheme. I don't want to particularly pick out any particular areas of the scheme because I'll probably be criticized for not talking about other parts that are close to people's homes, etcetera. But we're aware, think, the point that you're making about the cluster of infrastructure in that location. Obviously, that's going to be something which I think will come out in further discussions as we go on through the examination as well. And obviously, make clear your representations in writing on that point at deadline one, as I'm sure you will be doing. Okay.

00:38:34:11 - 00:38:34:26

Thank you.

00:38:38:25 - 00:38:42:27

There's a hand up. This is Reid. Sorry, I was looking beyond you.

00:38:43:04 - 00:38:54:15

Alison Reid, Chair of Tivotshall Parish Council. The best site and the four hundred kV substation are actually in Tivotshall, although we're exactly on the boundary with Great Malton, but we seem to

00:38:54:17 - 00:38:55:21

have lost our name in this

00:38:55:23 - 00:39:26:17

process. What I would like to know on behalf of the residents who'll be looking directly at this, and we have emailed Eastpie, but they haven't responded, is where exactly the project substation is going to be. And you've already asked, chair, for illustrative. Is it not possible for the applicant to actually give the two options as a as an illustrative for the residents so that they can respond to consultations and to deadline one? Because, currently, we do not know how close it is to their properties.

00:39:26:24 - 00:39:35:11

The project substation is not identified except that it's between station mode and the best site. That is all we know. Thank you.

00:39:36:29 - 00:40:08:07

Okay. Thank you. Just one thing I would say is that material that comes in from the applicant at deadline one as a result of discussions that we're having this week, including matters of illustrative details, you can respond at deadline two. I think it's the point that Lockheed's pie raised in the procedural comments is that, obviously, the six deadlines, I think, in the examination or six proposed deadlines. And the way the process would normally work is that if anything is submitted in one deadline, then you're able to comment on that at the next deadline.

00:40:08:09 - 00:40:25:10

So is that sort of there is sort of iterative process that goes on. So whilst your written representation, whether there's captured comments on these things, obviously, which will come in at deadline one, you will get an opportunity later on in the examination. Just a general point. But Mr. Yates, would you like to come back briefly to the overall point?

00:40:26:09 - 00:40:40:20

Toby, it's on behalf of the applicant. It's all noted, sir. We'll either signpost in our written summary where that information is already available in in the suite of application documents. And to the extent it can be supplemented with further indicative detail, we'll provide that.

00:40:40:22 - 00:41:14:21

And even for missus Reeves' benefit, obviously, there's you've got a big team here today. If during one of the the break, you wanted just to be have someone just to sort of talk you through the relevant document just to explain, then that could be I don't mind that at all. One of the benefits of a in person hearing is that there can be, you know, some some liaison. So if you're happy to, then I'm very happy for a representative applicant just to sort of talk you through what is happening in that particular local area. Obviously, I don't want everybody to jump on the applicant to do that. Otherwise, they'll be probably distracted, but I think that could be the best way to answer your question, actually, if that's alright, mister Hait.

00:41:14:23 - 00:41:24:01

Okay. Just before we move on, we do need to move on because we have got lots to go through. So I know that might be frustrating for people who want to make lots of points. Sorry.

00:41:25:07 - 00:41:26:28

I just wanted to ask, we're in the

00:41:27:03 - 00:41:28:04

Your name again, please. Sorry.

00:41:30:03 - 00:41:48:06

Victoria Chan on behalf of Monthorn, Pritchard and Pass Council. I just wanted to ask whereabouts in the documents are the alternative sites discussed for the project four hundred kilovolt substation in site 5A that's appeared there? Because I couldn't find any just comparative

00:41:50:23 - 00:41:53:29

justifications as to why it was there. Okay.

00:41:55:15 - 00:41:57:12

You. Mr. Yates, would you like to respond?

00:41:58:17 - 00:42:19:27

There'll be Yates on behalf of the applicants. I'm conscious not to sort of bat around all the different documents here because I think it will be split across various ones. So you've got AS-nine, which has viewpoint locations and visualizations for the substations, for example. And then you've also got, as discussed yesterday, the general approach.

00:42:22:12 - 00:42:24:03

Sorry, was just my colleague

00:42:24:05 - 00:42:25:16

about something, but

00:42:25:18 - 00:42:49:04

Of course. So I was just explaining, there's some documents I've just given the reference for visualizations and locations of substations, that's at Figure seven point seven. But then there's also more analysis around identifying sites and alternatives, which was also mentioned in Chapter five, Reasonable Alternatives and Design Evolution, which is APP-forty one, as we discussed yesterday. Okay.

00:42:49:24 - 00:43:23:07

Thank you. Yes, Eisengnion from North County Council. I just wanted to I'm conscious that DCO is later on the agenda, but I just wanted to pick up on something we have to consider about requirement five. I understood him to say that requirement four would be added to requirement sorry, work number four would be added to work numbers one, two and three for in accordance with the parameters and approval by the LPA. But I understood works five and six to be subject to the requirements but not subject to LPA approval.

00:43:23:09 - 00:43:24:08

Is that correct?

00:43:26:23 - 00:43:29:05

You. David,

00:43:29:07 - 00:44:02:02

it's on behalf of the applicants, and that is correct, albeit the design principles, parameters and commitments document is being updated and that detail will be available during the examination. So any detail that's in that document, the delivery of work numbers five and six must accord with the principles in that document, But it wouldn't be appropriate to submit details by reference to the list in the DCO because it doesn't necessarily apply in terms of layout and scale, etcetera, because for cabling, for example, that's not the nature of those parameters.

00:44:02:04 - 00:44:06:08

But we can have a conversation offline in advance of deadline one to to consider the

00:44:06:15 - 00:44:41:06

helpful. It's a good point that's been raised. I think that would be helpful. I think I might have some queries about that now, but I don't really what I don't want to do is to jump in and ask lots of questions where matters are still evolving between the applicants of the local authority matters like this. What ideally, from our perspective, if these discussions about the context of the DCO can take place soon, hopefully, between the parties, then whether a matter of disagreement, those are then submitted to us. And those are the sorts of things that I would like to then discuss the development consent order hearing.

00:44:41:08 - 00:45:10:23

What I don't want is these sessions to be coming drafting or negotiation sessions. I think what I really want to discuss in the hearings that we've got coming up is the matters that are in disagreement

between the parties. So I think there needs to be some evolution of discussions. I was going to talk about this later on, but I'll say it now as it's come up. There needs to be an evolution of discussions and it's an iterative process so that when we deal with the matters, they just matter whether it's you've had your discussions, but there's just disagreement, and then we can then we can examine those as need as need be.

00:45:15:17 - 00:45:18:09

Mrs. Chan, let me make it very quick because we must move on, I'm afraid.

00:45:18:11 - 00:45:40:24

I'm very sorry if Itura Chan from Montherpey, Passage Council. I just want to say that the actual alternative selection or alternative sites for Site 5A substation point of curveballs isn't included in the design documents that the applicant has stated. There is nowhere in the documents that state there's any other alternative vocations wherever considered for that project substation.

00:45:41:01 - 00:45:41:20

Okay. Is

00:45:41:22 - 00:45:43:04

that is that concert EN.

00:45:43:06 - 00:45:47:08

Thank you. Is that something that could be clarified, mister Yates? I don't you don't need to do it now, I don't think.

00:45:47:10 - 00:45:48:05

We'll pick that up. Yeah.

00:45:48:07 - 00:45:50:24

Yeah. Could that be an action point, please?

00:45:59:24 - 00:46:11:20

Okay. And the two final points small quite small points I want to make in relation to the substations at this point are

00:46:13:21 - 00:46:44:00

I was talking about the design guidance and the parameters, etcetera. In terms of where it talks about maximum height of the project substations above ground level, and this applies to all the proposed project substations. In fact, it applies to any physical development. It'd be useful to get clarification on but I don't think it says above ground level. I think the heights might just say maximum height of three meters. think I that's quite ambiguous in terms of three meters above what current ground level, finished ground level.

00:46:44:15 - 00:47:24:03

It's a usual point, I think, that comes up. It needs to be addressed. And the the other point linked to that is that if any of the sites where infrastructure is proposed are sloping as might be might be some

some sloping sites. Others will know more than me at the moment on that. How those would be treated, I e, would there be cut and fill? Would there be a raised platform? So I think that needs to be considered as well because, obviously, that can make a very people who are looking at the scheme on on, for example, walking or footpaths next to the scheme, the height really for them is what's what's the height? So that's the maximum height above OAD in a way, isn't it, is the most important thing.

00:47:24:05 - 00:47:30:08

But it's ambiguous, I think, the way that the parameters are termed at the moment because it doesn't make clear what that height refers to.

00:47:32:06 - 00:47:44:11

Don't need to comment on that. If you could just take that away as a point to integrate into the documents and discussions perhaps with the local authorities as well. That probably should be an action point as well. Sorry. Okay.

00:47:47:22 - 00:48:00:11

Can we just move that one to item e? And this is matters relation relating to generation capacity, the PV arrays, individual panels, and over planting.

00:48:11:20 - 00:48:43:02

Obviously, the grid capacity agreement is for five hundred megawatts. I think it explains in the planning statement, point six three, don't need to put it up on the screen, but it talks about the fact that the actual amount of electricity generated will depend on final design layout and technology adopted. And then goes on to say, for the purposes of the ES, energy generation during the first year is estimated to be approximately six hundred and sixty seven thousand megawatts hours per year.

00:48:43:04 - 00:48:47:11

That's my approximation of that figure. And there'll be a two percent

00:48:50:05 - 00:49:07:09

reduction for the first year followed by zero point four five percent for every subsequent year, presumably based on the fact that panels, when they go in, are highly efficient and they lose their efficiency to a degree as go on.

00:49:09:12 - 00:49:14:18

We'll come on to talk about overplanting in a few moments that I'm sure Mr. Gillett probably will want to talk about.

00:49:18:02 - 00:49:48:09

In terms of the panels being proposed, there are two panel types being proposed. There's the four point five meter high single access tracker panels, and there's the three point five meter high or I say three point five meter. These are maximum parameters. These are the maximum heights. Three point five meter fixed panels. In terms of the layout of the scheme and in terms of how the environmental assessment has been assessed and the master plan and the works plans have been have been drawn up.

00:49:50:01 - 00:50:16:07

Is are those based upon a particular panel type? I. E, is it a case that the I'm I'm I'm guessing, but presumably, the four point five meter panels are gonna be more efficient than three point five meter high fixed panels because they're bigger and what they do. But I might be wrong. I don't know. What is the is the site layout based upon? Is it is it on the single access sorry. The single access tracker panels or the fixed panels?

00:50:18:24 - 00:50:32:26

So, Simon, get it for the applicants. The applicants included flexibility in the scheme to deliver either single access tracker Yeah. Or fixed south facing panels. Would it be helpful just to spend two minutes explaining what those layouts mean and what they

00:50:33:01 - 00:50:36:00

Yes. Say look by all means. Yeah. Yeah. Two minutes, but that will be helpful. Yes.

00:50:36:02 - 00:51:08:17

Thank you. So a fixed south facing panel is a row of panels, which the row runs from east to west. The panels face south, and they don't move. The maximum parameter assessed is a height of three point five meters for the top edge of that panel. A single axis tracker configuration is a row of panels that runs from north to south where the panels tilt to face the sun.

00:51:08:19 - 00:51:29:22

So they face to the east in the morning and they face to the west in the evening. The parameter there of four point five meters reflects the maximum height of the leading edge of the panel when it's at its greatest tilt. So one could say that through much of the day, it's a lot lower than four point five meters high.

00:51:32:04 - 00:52:08:10

There are advantages to using single axis trackers. And there are also there are other advantages to using fixed self facing technology. Single access trackers will use more land space. So the megawatts per acre is lower for single access trackers than is for fixed self facing. However, the profile of generation and the efficiency, the amount of electricity generated by that panel, because it's more directly facing the sun for a longer period of time is higher.

00:52:08:17 - 00:52:31:07

So there's a trade off between those two aspects. And there are also aspects that need to be considered at the detailed design stage around the specific micro sighting, if you like, of the panel rows within the development areas. And for that reason, the flexibility is sought to deliver either, and that would be taken at the detailed design stage.

00:52:33:19 - 00:52:34:23

Would the

00:52:36:09 - 00:52:52:19

single access tracker panels be more spaced out than the fixed panels? Because they're higher, so need more space for the sun to shine on them, putting it very generally. Simon, get it

00:52:52:21 - 00:53:15:14

for the applicant. So the single access trackers use more space on a per megawatt basis, but generates more electricity. So just to be clear, one thing that is not changing here is the effect of the red line boundary on the perimeters of the site. It's a question of how at the detailed design stage the optimum annual generation can be

00:53:18:06 - 00:53:22:06

generated, generation generated, yes, electricity generated from the sites.

00:53:22:08 - 00:53:41:24

So just so I'm clear, in terms of the works areas for the PV arrays, those so they're maximum works areas, aren't they? All the PV arrays have to be within them. They can't go outside of them. But as they are in the works plans proposed, that's based upon which type of panel?

00:53:45:10 - 00:54:09:00

So I'm getting it for the applicants. It's on either. Right. So again, similar to my colleague the answer that my colleague, Mr. Yates, gave around effects and assessment of the both have been considered. And in terms of the environmental assessment, the the bounding effects of either of those choices have been taken into the assessment.

00:54:09:02 - 00:54:26:20

So one doesn't take up more land than the other, are you saying? If the whole site was basically used say, you used, for whatever reason, all that the whole site was using fixed panels and the the land needed for that, would that be more or less or the same as if the entire development used single access tracker panels?

00:54:27:18 - 00:54:53:13

So the land is the bounding factor. Yes. It's a question of how much can be fixed. I think if I was to say if I was to explain that the the indicative installed capacity of a fixed south facing scheme would likely be higher than the installed capacity of a single access tracker scheme on that same area of land. That might help. So you could get less

00:54:54:28 - 00:55:10:27

numbers of panels in a single access tracker configuration into that land parcel than you could have fixed south facing. So, yes, but the but the the boundary of the parcels isn't isn't what changes. It's

00:55:10:29 - 00:55:45:29

the No. But I do understand the boundaries doesn't doesn't change. But then the the actual when the detailed design comes in, when the applicants decided which panels to use at that time, and I I know the arguments about panels are sorry, panels are becoming more efficient over time. So what's talked about now might change in a year or two's time. I I understand I understand that. But, obviously, when it comes to actually doing that final design, it might be that actually the full extent of the works areas might not be required depending upon the type of panel used. And presumably, depending on the fact that a panel in two years' time might become a lot more efficient than a panel now.

00:55:46:01 - 00:55:48:11

So actually, the land take could be less. Is that

00:55:49:24 - 00:56:20:20

Is that fair? So Simon get it for the applicant. I think I understand what you're guessing at. The micro citing part of the detailed design stage will seek to optimize the land that has been secured and assuming consent is given has been assessed as acceptable. And therefore, the applicant will work to optimize the layout of those of the panels within that constraint.

00:56:21:26 - 00:56:41:15

If there are parts of the scheme or parts of a site which, for example, a single access tracker is a long row. Those rows come in kind of modular, if you like. And so if there's a part that isn't used, that part is not likely to be a significant part

00:56:43:02 - 00:56:48:23

of a parcel, which could be taken from the scheme and removed for other use or returned for other use.

00:56:49:26 - 00:57:02:05

Okay. Thank you. And just building on that, in the project scheme description, it's called the scheme, isn't it in your ES? Paragraph four point three

00:57:04:00 - 00:57:06:00

point fourteen

00:57:12:18 - 00:57:13:20

says that

00:57:16:14 - 00:57:39:15

talking about the two options of panels. And on the section on fixed south facing PV arrays, paragraph four three fourteen, says fixed south facing arrays may be utilized at an individual field level where practical and or environmental constraints prevent the use of tracking solar PV

00:57:41:15 - 00:57:44:04

tables, panels presumably.

00:57:47:27 - 00:58:03:18

Is there any indication on now where that might be the case? I mean, that's quite a sort of interesting statement that actually implies to say that, for example, where actually, don't know what it means. Does it mean that in there might be some fields where four point five meters are deemed to be too high high for whatever reason?

00:58:05:11 - 00:58:27:24

And so in particular areas of the sites, there might be the tracker sorry, the fixed panel used rather than the tracker panel. Just explain really explain that paragraph a bit more, please, as what is meant and what are the implications of that in terms of the final design of the project, taking account obviously of the environmental constraints that exist?

00:58:28:27 - 00:58:48:09

Certainly. I'm good at for the applicants. So there are two key aspects where single act sorry, where tracking solar panel tables may not be appropriate, and that may be in flood zones. And the applicant may determine that it's not not appropriate to put this in it. Why? Because there is there are moving parts.

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And the second may be parts

00:58:53:03 - 00:58:53:18

of

00:58:53:20 - 00:59:03:01

the field where there is particularly acute gradient. And the detail of that is the micro sighting all

00:59:05:20 - 00:59:11:22

generally undertaken within the detailed design process. So it would be subject to that detailed design,

00:59:13:12 - 00:59:19:23

detailed assessments of the flood risk, the land gradients, potentially

00:59:21:23 - 00:59:39:18

piles and underground factors. And then they'll all be taken out at that time. But I think the applicant's position is that the indicative layouts now in the indicative design is something that the will applicant seek to improve on through the process within the constraints set out as part of the DCA.

00:59:40:05 - 00:59:53:13

And if, for example, bear in mind what you said, but also bear in mind that the actual what's terminology for the panel rating? You know what I mean? Don't you the actual

00:59:55:18 - 01:00:00:28

So just the megawatts per panel? Right. Okay. What's per panel? Watts per panel.

01:00:01:00 - 01:00:34:16

I don't know what the actual I'll I'll I'll continue to use panel panel rating. Obviously, you don't know what panels you'll be using yet, but, obviously, the technology presumably is fast moving and the panels are becoming more efficient. It could be that in two years' time based on your construction program, if consent was granted that, I said before, panel efficiency could be or panel output could be significantly greater. So the amount of land that's required is actually notably less than what is actually in the works plans at the moment.

01:00:34:24 - 01:00:36:09

Is that a fair point?

01:00:37:01 - 01:00:44:14

So Simon get it for the applicants. Respectfully, But if I may if I can explain why.

01:00:44:26 - 01:00:45:12

So

01:00:46:28 - 01:00:51:20

you're

01:00:51:22 - 01:01:26:01

correct to say that panels have a current rating, a current capacity, which is each individual panel will generate to a certain amount of peak capacity. So if you add all of those panels multiplied by their individual capacity across the scheme, you'll end up with a total installed capacity. You'll also the effects of that scheme will have been assessed or have been assessed within the ES and running running proper and assuming consensus given would therefore be acceptable.

01:01:26:03 - 01:01:52:16

Now if if the panel the individual panel increased without any physical effects just through technology, it increased by ten percent, say, then the overall installed capacity of the scheme would also increase by ten percent. Each panel will be ten percent more powerful. There are x panels multiplied all that. The installed capacity scheme would be ten percent higher.

01:01:56:14 - 01:02:36:01

We'll talk about over planting later or maybe over planting is appropriate to bring in now, sir. The applicant does propose overplanting for this scheme. But the level of overplanting which is proposed at this scheme is not at the kind of sensible operational techno commercial limits of over planting. And what that means is that if panel capacity was to increase by ten percent, but no physical effects and therefore no environmental effects, And therefore, the installed capacity of the scheme was to increase by ten percent.

01:02:36:08 - 01:02:55:28

That would deliver more benefits to government's objective to deliver a secure, reliable, low carbon and affordable electricity system without any additional environmental effects. And so it's not the case that the scheme should be reduced in capacity.

01:03:05:17 - 01:03:07:07

David question comes from

01:03:12:13 - 01:03:43:09

Okay. Would it be possible to provide details of what panel rating the current the proposals assessed in the ES are based upon? And also just get an indication of how that relates to other recent solar schemes either approved. I know this has been done before in other projects, but other either approved or projects that are in the development control pipeline. Well, not our control, development consent pipeline. I'll get that phrase right today.

01:03:43:24 - 01:04:20:25

That would be quite useful. Just as a comparison, I I think I understand what you say. But, obviously, we also heard quite a lot from residents and read quite a lot from residents about proximity, for example, of panels from footpaths, panels from houses. And we have read what has been done so far in terms of separation distances and removal of parts of fields, etcetera. So that has been read and understood. But where there are still particular concerns, for example, about proximity of panels to a well used local footpath, for example, then actually, is there any actual room for maneuver? Because, of course, it's energy is obviously very important.

01:04:20:27 - 01:04:56:12

That's pretty much a given, isn't it, in terms of what the NPS says renewable energy in general terms, notwithstanding some of the arguments that, obviously, we have heard. But also, there are strong concerns in terms of environmental and community impacts from local residents. And there might be instances where actually we've got to do more detailed site visits, but there might be instances where actually panels could be removed not removed, further away from particular viewpoints or footpaths. So it's a balanced thing, isn't it? I suppose you've got to come to that in terms of your application.

01:04:56:14 - 01:05:10:09

But it's interesting what you have said. So thank you. That is obviously, we'll we'll consider further any further questions in relation to that. Do you want to come on to do you want to say any more about over planting?

01:05:10:25 - 01:05:14:21

So sorry. Sorry. Shouldn't interrupt. I just had my hand up. It's

01:05:14:23 - 01:05:16:06

Richie Oh, I'm sorry. That's correct. Yes, please.

01:05:17:10 - 01:05:56:14

It was just Richie Parikh for South Norfolk Council. So I thought just to interrupt there, sorry to do that, but it was a question on the single access tracker panels. So perhaps best to deal with now. We're aware, obviously, that the maximum height is four point five meters and that that maximum height will only be experienced at such intervals during the day. But we just wanted to know if there's any clarity on that interval length and see how long each day approximately would the full height be visible. Obviously, that has implications in terms of when we come on to assessing effects, etcetera, the local impact report bearing in mind, for example, hedgerows are going to be maintained to three meters.

01:05:56:16 - 01:05:59:01

So I just want to understand the interplay between that. Thank you.

01:06:00:20 - 01:06:03:02

Thank you. Mr. Yates, would you

01:06:03:04 - 01:06:30:15

like to respond or Mr. Gillett? So Simon Gillett for the applicants. So the panels are likely to be at their maximum tilt for approximately one hour in the morning, one hour in the evening. But the four

point five meter maximum height has been assessed through the whole day in the environmental statement, not just the morning or the evening. So a worst case a reasonable worst case position has been assessed

01:06:30:17 - 01:06:37:18

in the ESR. Right. And what's the minimum that it would what's the minimum that it would go down to based upon the maximum parameters? Did you

01:06:37:20 - 01:06:44:19

see what I mean? So some get it for the applicants at midday when the panel is flat, it will be at two point five meters.

01:06:44:21 - 01:06:47:25

So when it's flat, we'd go to two point five. Okay.

01:06:49:08 - 01:06:54:22

Just to say so, happy to take away the action on panel ratings comparisons. Yes.

01:06:54:24 - 01:06:57:28

Thank you. Yes. That could be an action point on panel rating comparison.

01:06:59:25 - 01:07:11:25

And also, the level linked to that, the level of or proportional ratio of overplanting in relation to other schemes. And just linked to that as well,

01:07:13:14 - 01:07:47:03

the MPSEN three paragraph 2.10.9 gives this indication, doesn't it, that states that a solar farm currently requires between one point six and two point two five hectares of for each megawatt output, noting this will vary and may change over time as technology continues to evolve, which is what we've been talking about. Think in your planning statements no, it's not in the planning statement. It's in the statement of need. No need to put it on the screen, but it's paragraph six point seven point one.

01:07:47:08 - 01:08:07:28

It gives a figure, I think, but it's in acres. So is there a figure in hectares? Because I think statement of need seems to indicate that it's actually a lower than normal figure. I think I'm right in saying from my reading. But as it's in acres, I can't relate it to this figure in the NPS on hectares.

01:08:09:16 - 01:08:11:17

So it's two point four seven.

01:08:11:29 - 01:08:12:28

Oh, it's five. Yeah.

01:08:13:00 - 01:08:14:28

Okay. Two eight to a hectare.

01:08:15:00 - 01:08:17:22

So it's two point four seven. Sorry.

01:08:17:24 - 01:08:19:29

That's the ratio of acres to hectares.

01:08:20:11 - 01:08:23:29

Oh, right. Okay. Sorry. I thought that was going to be the figure in hectares. What's the figure in hectares?

01:08:26:02 - 01:08:27:27

I will have can I can I come back to

01:08:27:29 - 01:08:30:02

you rather than do the math, please? And

01:08:31:03 - 01:08:44:18

also, just for clarification on this, because I'm not quite sure if there's been established may well be established precedent in this on this matter now in sector of state decisions. If there is, I'm sure you'll tell me. But

01:08:46:03 - 01:08:56:11

in terms of how that figure is calculated, what does it include and what does it not include? Does it include environmental mitigation areas, etcetera, etcetera? Does it include

01:08:58:17 - 01:09:31:19

substations, BES? Could you Yes. So let me get it for the applicant. I can take that. So there is a precedent which we've used, which is the precedent that was used or upset in the Mallard Pass DCA, which I think been has set as being the I think it's the first examination where this was discussed in detail. So that's EN one zero one two seven. And the Secretary of State acknowledged

01:09:34:01 - 01:09:43:25

in his decision letter that the applicant's methodology for calculating and the acres per megawatt because in the NPS, it's round the other way, isn't it? Acres divided by megawatts.

01:09:43:27 - 01:09:51:22

I'm obviously aware of that scheme, but things haven't moved on then in terms of future subsequent decision making in terms of this. They

01:09:51:24 - 01:10:17:11

have, sir, in the track through from Malopas East Yorkshire Solar Farm, that's EN ten thousand one hundred forty three Springwell Solar Farm, which is EN ten thousand one hundred forty nine Beacon Fenn Energy Park, which is EN ten thousand one and fifty one. Further, a technical guide, which is submitted. And we can put all this in

01:10:17:18 - 01:10:20:26

I think this goes in the notes on over this planting at

01:10:20:28 - 01:10:47:24

that point, that would be helpful. We can certainly do that, But essentially, in answer to your question, mitigation land is not included within that calculation. And the calculation shows that scheme is within the old acres per megawatt, which were lower than the current acres per megawatt guidelines are set out in that

01:10:47:26 - 01:10:59:26

paragraph the end of of What is the reason, just to high level, why that is the case for this scheme? Why what makes this scheme different from other schemes for the figure to

01:10:59:28 - 01:11:00:13

be

01:11:02:03 - 01:11:05:11

so much lower? So Simon get it for the applicant.

01:11:07:06 - 01:11:13:16

The detail will come in that technical note, I don't think the scheme is significantly lower. I think

01:11:17:22 - 01:11:34:25

the fact that the twenty twenty five the currently designated national policy statements have a higher range is perhaps clouding the fact that the scheme is comparable

01:11:38:06 - 01:11:52:22

broadly to the acres per megawatt set out with other schemes, which were compared against a lower range and therefore were within that range. This scheme is compared against a higher range, but the the number is the same, but it's below that higher range.

01:11:52:24 - 01:12:21:22

Okay. I think that probably needs more clarification in your note along with things like how the obviously, this scheme being dispersed has got the cable route cable connecting route, cable corridor areas, obviously, is the best as well. Whether or the best is included, please address. But I think just to sort of give us a sort of more clarity on where that figure comes from, how it's being calculated, how it relates to other schemes, etcetera.

01:12:21:24 - 01:12:53:08

So will in some part of the applicant. We'll provide that detail in written submissions. I suppose, point just to pick up here is the fact that that it is a lower number shows that the applicant has got a more efficient scheme. So it has greater land efficiency. So it takes less land per megawatt, which comes to the point you're making earlier around trying to make most efficient use of land, which is a benefit of this scheme. But we'll provide the figure breakdown in writing. I understand. Okay. No, thank you. And before we go on to the

01:12:55:13 - 01:12:58:17

BES, anybody wants to make any points, Doctor. Berry?

01:13:00:04 - 01:13:39:08

Thank you. I had a couple of questions that I wanted to ask. So firstly, in terms of the choice of locations for where either the fixed or the tracker panels will go, and you say that, that will be on environmental grounds. I mean, you already have an environmental statement and you understand what the constraints are in each landscape, supposedly. So surely, you're at a point now where you should be able to identify where the tracker panels will go and where the fixed panels will go because the different characteristics of them and the completely different orientations will have materially different effects in those places.

01:13:39:10 - 01:13:58:10

And in some sensitive places, particularly around homes or bat habitat, for example, the tracker panels would be horizontal at night, creating a lake effect, which is obviously detrimental to bats. You should probably be able to tell where the locations are,

01:14:00:23 - 01:14:29:17

where these should be. So I'm not I don't really understand why that's not possible to do now so that we can really understand how all of these things that you've assessed like glint and glare or ecological effects, how they've been measured in specific locations if we don't actually know which technology they're being measured against? So that was one of my questions. The second question was really about design parameters around these panels. So

01:14:31:12 - 01:15:03:21

in your design parameters document, there doesn't seem to be a measurement for minimum spacing between panels. And going to the examiner's point about increasing generating capacity, although the application says throughout that you are applying for DCO for a five hundred megawatt solar and colocated battery energy storage scheme. The actual DCO only specifies that it will be minimum one hundred megawatts solar scheme.

01:15:03:23 - 01:15:17:10

So potentially in the future, you could be generating significantly more energy than five hundred megawatts. And as the technology improves,

01:15:19:08 - 01:16:03:28

will it mean that, in fact, we will have less control over the layout of these areas because you'll be putting new technology closer together in order to maximize the generating potential because you don't have any spacing requirements in your design parameters. And then the final point I just wanted to ask about was the distances from homes. So in your design process document, you have a fifty meter minimum distance from solar PV to homes, whereas in the equivalent document for The Doves, which is obviously one of your own projects, and you say that you like to have consistent

01:16:05:19 - 01:16:18:16

approaches across your projects, it's two fifty meters. And equally at Botley West, it was expected to be two fifty meters. So we're not really sure why it says fifty meters in your design

01:16:20:02 - 01:16:49:15

parameters. So we would like some clarification for that. And in your indicative design, which we were discussing yesterday, obviously, of your the actual land parcels within the red line boundaries of those, in the indicative design, it shows areas which are sort of reserved for mitigation or is offset from homes and other areas which are specifically for panels. But you said that, that is only indicative, that isn't actually

01:16:53:03 - 01:17:11:25

secured in the DCO. So how can we be sure that in the future, those offsets that you're showing now between houses and the panels won't be reduced when the technology changes. So those are my various questions. Thank you.

01:17:11:27 - 01:17:36:09

Okay. Thank you, Mrs. Barry Doctor. Barry, rather there are quite a few points there to raise. If you'd like to just come back in brief, it may be that the applicant is not going to have time today to respond in detail to those points, but I'm sure a record has been made of them. Is there anything in headline you'd like to say, Mr. Yates? And then I think best to follow-up in detail in writing, which then obviously you can respond to.

01:17:37:12 - 01:18:14:08

Toby, it's on behalf of the applicant. Yes, I'll take each in turn. So firstly, I believe the query is around the design flexibility. And the point there is that it's not just a question around the panels only and the type of panels only. It's a combination of various scheme components and the works plan set out that there are overlapping elements of the scheme that may fit within that area. And there's also further surveys that need to be carried out to identify where the most suitable part within that area is for the final location of those components of the scheme so that it can all be pieced together.

01:18:15:07 - 01:18:46:09

And again, I'd just emphasize that in granting the consent in the form that it's drafted, doesn't then give absolute discretion for the applicant to go and decide how to piece it all together without any further control. The way the consent order is drafted is to effectively be an outline planning permission because pursuant to the requirements, including requirement five, the applicant will submit the final details of the works, including the layout and scale of the panels amongst other things for the approval of the relevant planning authority.

01:18:46:12 - 01:18:54:03

So it's not an absolute discretion, but it allows that flexibility as the design process evolves up to and including the detailed design stage.

01:18:54:05 - 01:19:25:26

Can I just jump in on that point? In terms of what Doctor. Barry said about the choice of panel in particular locations and building upon what I was asking before, is it potentially that's something that could be incorporated into the more into the design guidelines to give everybody more of a surety on

when different panels might be used in which circumstances and also give the local authority a guide when it's approving final details so that it's not just an unknown as it sort of take what's being said.

01:19:25:28 - 01:19:58:19

But actually, in terms of the design guidance, I'm not sure there's an awful lot in it's in terms of, you know, helping the local authorities and helping residents understand the factors that will be taken into account when the applicant proposes those full details, and then the local authority have to approve those details. At the very least, I think that could be enhanced as a game, as I said before, that the guidance could be enhanced to be a little bit more specific while still retaining some flexibility that, of course, is accepted in the NPS. But I think that could be added to your discussions in that respect.

01:19:58:28 - 01:20:02:21

Sorry, just wanted to say that at that point before you went on to the other points.

01:20:03:03 - 01:20:36:06

Toby, it's on behalf of the applicant. That's noted, sir. Second point, I believe, is in relation to the design parameters and the spacing between the panels. So it's just to confirm that the design principles, parameters and commitments document, which is APP-two thirteen, Table four point one of that document refers to work number one, which is referenced to the solar PV, and that includes in relation to the single access tracker panels, a minimum separation distance between solar modules of two point five meters.

01:20:36:08 - 01:21:14:21

So that explains the minimum separation between those panel types if single access tracker is used. And then again, the same separation distance of two point five meters is the same minimum fixed panel that type of solar array was used as well. So that is already secured in that document. I think also under this design parameters point that was made, there was a question around efficiency and maximum capacity. And again, we can supplement this in writing, but it's a well established principle not to include a cap on capacity in a draft development consent order.

01:21:15:05 - 01:21:51:13

The point there is that having secured maximum parameters and assessed a scheme against those maximum parameters in granting consent effectively deems that the scope of that infrastructure as a worst case scenario that may be delivered is considered suitable to generate, in this case, a connection of five hundred megawatts. But again, it comes back to the point of efficiency that if in the scenario further capacity became available at the substation, for example, then there's no reason to limit the ability to generate additional renewable energy from the same parameters and same environmental effects is effectively the short answer.

01:21:53:04 - 01:22:28:12

Point three was in relation to the spacing of panels from homes. A couple of points here. Firstly, there's an inherent limit of the works plans to the extent to which work number one goes to well, the limits of work number one are shown on the works plans is the widest extent as it were or the closest to the edge of the red line boundary that those solar panels could go. So the minimum distance between them and the residential properties is inherently secured because there is no consent to deliver the solar array beyond that work number one.

01:22:29:01 - 01:23:04:18

There's then also buffer distances, which are secured in the design principle parameters and commitments document. And you'll see in there that it mentions curtilage of residential properties being a minimum of fifty meters as was rightly identified, but a case by case basis for residential properties. And that's a key point that applies by reference to the other precedent that was referred to. It's essential that schemes address the positioning of solar panels on a landscape led design basis and is driven by

01:23:06:08 - 01:23:39:29

the specifics of the locality, the residential dwellings, the nature of the site, but existing mitigation that's in place, the ability to plant additional advanced planting, for example, other schemes may have no landscape effects from being fifty meters away from a particular property, whereas another on scheme, there might be a property that has an unconstricted view and then therefore the buffer distance is suitable from a landscape perspective to be further away. So it's not the case to that a uniform buffer is applicable for all schemes.

01:23:40:01 - 01:23:42:23

It's addressed on a scheme by scheme and property by property basis.

01:23:43:12 - 01:23:59:09

Okay. Thank you. We have got further questions on residential visual amenity, which we've got for later in examination, perhaps maybe with our written questions next week. So if we could move on, if that's okay, Doctor. Barry, think you might have wanted to come back. But I think if you can come back at

01:24:01:02 - 01:24:02:05

this county council wants

01:24:02:07 - 01:24:07:28

to Yes. Eisenhower from North County Council. I think it would be helpful to know where the property by property

01:24:09:15 - 01:24:13:03

distances are secured, if possible? Sorry?

01:24:13:05 - 01:24:16:14

Okay. Briefly, I think that can be answered briefly.

01:24:17:00 - 01:24:25:00

So it's on behalf of the applicants. Yes, we can give some flavor. Think the case by case basis in the secured document, we can give some additional text to explain how that would be applied.

01:24:26:14 - 01:24:57:26

And again, that's the sort of point which in your discussions between the parties, which I hope are going to be ongoing, that, that could be explored as well because, obviously, those are important matters.

I want to break it to eleven thirty, and I want to give my colleague a chance to ask her questions as well on some other matters. And I also want to give my other colleague a chance to go on to asking some questions about these specific issues. I think in terms of best, I'm just looking through the questions. I can we can make those in writing next week, actually.

01:24:58:08 - 01:25:32:29

So I don't propose that I ask any questions on best at this point. I'm gonna reserve those in writing. Is there anything that anybody would like to there's been lots of points on the battery energy storage system in the open floor hearing on relevant representations. Obviously, it's going to be an ongoing part of our examination. Before we break, is there anything anybody would particularly like to raise on the battery energy storage system that's not been raised already in the open floor hearings? I know there's lots of concern about the battery energy storage, and I certainly don't want to get into the

01:25:34:22 - 01:25:40:10

if you like, any sort of safety implications, etcetera, of that today. That's for another time.

01:25:42:26 - 01:25:57:21

Regarding sorry, Sandra Mullet of BEP's Group. We're just concerned about the gate connection for the BES. It's only a gate two, a gate one, which means that there is no capacity or there's no need for it to actually be part of

01:25:57:23 - 01:26:29:26

the scheme. That was one of my questions. That's one of my questions. We will ask that question in writing next week, which will go out with the rule six letter, which will be around about the rule eight letter, which will be around about the middle of the next week. That will be in writing, but I think I've got the same I think it's probably a similar point. I was going to ask about that. But also, I know that the applicant has responded, I think, to a comment already made in relation to that in your response to relevant representations. I know that's a very long response, so it's a lot to have to sort of digest.

01:26:29:28 - 01:26:33:19

So but there is something in there. I think it might be in response to

01:26:35:12 - 01:27:00:17

the Blockies Pi Solar, but I'm guessing perhaps that could be clarified after the after the break, mister Yates, as to which part of the response. Because there's a lot of documentation that came in as a result of the fact that there were lots of relevant reps. There's a lot for everybody to have to read through. So if we could just hold that point, please, at the moment. But if you could clarify the reference to that, if it is indeed in your response to relevant representations. But I'm sure it is because I have read something. Okay.

01:27:00:19 - 01:27:01:08

That's fine.

01:27:01:10 - 01:27:01:25

Okay.

01:27:08:09 - 01:27:22:16

Yes. Yes. Do so. Do so. Yeah. Mister McEvoy has just got a question about item four. This is a housekeeping question about item four on the agenda, I'll which ask Mr. McElroy to do now before we break for morning coffee, etcetera.

01:27:23:02 - 01:27:42:05

Thank you, Mr. Yates. Think you mentioned, hope I'm correct, that in terms of the composition of the hearing team today, you may not have your experts or specialist authors present on aviation and mental health. Can you just confirm, please, in terms of your hearings team, which specialists do you have present today? You.

01:27:43:26 - 01:28:09:26

Toby, it's on behalf of the applicant. So for agenda item 4A on aviation safety, I'm happy to do a high level summary of the approach that's been taken so far, if that would assist. And we've had notes provided for that. And I'm also joined by the expert that can talk through the glint and glare aspect of that, but we don't have the expert available for the wider aviation safety matters.

01:28:11:12 - 01:28:46:01

We've also got, for agenda item 4B, we do have someone here that can talk to cumulative effects. For item 4C on flood risk and drainage, we do have someone available online that can talk through the approach to that. And then for gender item four d, you're correct. We don't have an expert available for health and well-being from a sort of more technical perspective. But again, we do have someone available that can do a high level summary of the approach to health and well-being in broader terms, that would be useful.

01:28:46:15 - 01:28:53:12

And then finally, for 4E, the transport and access, we do have an expert available with us today to talk to that.

01:28:54:01 - 01:28:55:17

Thank you. It's very helpful.

01:28:55:19 - 01:29:14:04

Thank you. Just one point to add on that. I think we'll move the cumulative effects item to the last item in that list. It's probably is that the list is alphabetical, but it probably makes some sense to deal with the cumulative effects after the other things have been asked. Was there any other changes to the order that Mr. McDonough, did you

01:29:14:23 - 01:29:28:15

Mr. Gates, yes, I think it's essentially the intended running order, if we may, because of the makeup of the specialist group you have available today, We intend to discuss aviation matters first, followed by mental health,

01:29:30:08 - 01:29:37:26

then flood and risk assessment, and then transport and access, and finally cumulative effects. Thank you.

01:29:43:10 - 01:29:52:26

Okay. Thank you, everybody. I think that is a good time to adjourn for midmorning break. We will return at eleven forty five. Thank you.