



Planning Inspectorate  
Arolygiaeth Gynllunio

## Hearing Transcript

|                 |                                                   |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Project:</b> | East Pye Solar                                    |
| <b>Hearing:</b> | Recording of Open Floor Hearing 2 (OFH2) – Part 1 |
| <b>Date:</b>    | 16 September 2026                                 |

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

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

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

## **Simon Says**

Transcript Export

<https://www.simonsaysai.com>

### **EPS\_16SEP\_OFH2\_PT1 V2 with redactions**

Created on: 2026-09-17 16:37:37

Project Length: 01:27:15

Account Holder: [REDACTED]

File Name: EPS\_16SEP\_OFH2\_PT1-PINS MP3.mp3

File Length: 01:27:15

### **FULL TRANSCRIPT (with timecode)**

00:00:03:23 - 00:00:17:25

Now ten AM and time for this hearing to begin. I'd like to welcome you all to the second open floor hearing for the East Pike Solar Project. Before we proceed, can I confirm that everyone can hear me clearly both in the room and online?

00:00:25:03 - 00:00:26:12

You can hear me online?

00:00:26:14 - 00:00:26:29

I could have

00:00:27:01 - 00:00:27:18

had Yes.

00:00:28:09 - 00:01:02:18

You. For those joining remotely via Microsoft Teams, if at any point during the hearing you experience technical difficulties, please contact case team using the Teams chat function. Raise your electronic hand if possible or contact the case manager using the details provided in the joining instructions. Before continuing, can I confirm with the case team that the live streaming and recording of this event has commenced? Thank you. I will now introduce the panel. My name is Claire Taylor. I am a member of the panel to examine this application, and I will be chairing today's meeting.

00:01:02:28 - 00:01:05:17

Can I ask my colleagues to introduce themselves?

00:01:06:28 - 00:01:10:25

Good morning. My name is David Cliff, and I am the lead member of the panel.

00:01:12:13 - 00:01:17:00

Good morning. My name is John McEvoy. I'm a chartered civil engineer, and I'm a member of the panel.

00:01:18:08 - 00:01:50:22

Thank you. Together, we constitute the examining authority for this application. Supporting us today is the planning inspectorate case team led by the case manager, Robert Cook, together with other administration and technical support staff. We also have other planning inspectors who are joining us today as observers. I'll now deal with a few housekeeping matters. Firstly, can everyone in the room turn off their mobile phones and any other devices or switch them to silent? For those in the room, please use the microphones provided when speaking.

00:01:50:24 - 00:01:54:19

Please wait until invited we

00:01:56:14 - 00:01:56:29

and

00:02:01:20 - 00:02:02:07

note

00:02:06:18 - 00:02:27:14

There are toilets located on this floor. If you exit the room, the same way you came in, and they are on the left before the stairs, and there are further toilets downstairs. We are not expecting a fire drill today. So if the fire alarm sounds, please exit through the door doors onto the balcony, down the stairs, and proceed to the assembly point in the car park.

00:02:30:01 - 00:03:02:08

The purpose of the open floor hearing is to write interested and other parties entitled persons with an opportunity to make oral submissions directly to the examining authority on matters relevant to examination of the application. Oral submissions are an important part of the examination process, and the examining authority will consider all relevant oral submissions in the same way that we consider written submissions. Today's hearing is being digitally recorded and live streamed. The recording forms part of the public examination record.

00:03:02:28 - 00:03:40:26

Recordings may be published and made available through the project web page on the National Infrastructure Planning website. This is a public hearing, and those attending should do so on the understanding that comments made during the proceedings may enter the public domain. Participants should be careful not to disclose personal, confidential or commercially sensitive information unless it is necessary to do so. The planning inspectorate processes personal information in accordance with applicable data protection legislation, and personal data will be processed, retained and managed in accordance with the planning inspectorate's published privacy notice.

00:03:42:21 - 00:04:16:01

I will now explain the speaking arrangements for today. When invited to speak, please introduce yourself and confirm whether you are speaking on your own behalf or on behalf of another person or

organization. A reminder that representatives speaking on behalf of organizations have been allocated five minutes. Individual speakers have been allocated three minutes. To assist with time management, there is a countdown timer in the room, and it is displayed to speakers. As the allotted time approaches its end, the timer will provide a visual warning to you.

00:04:16:22 - 00:04:48:22

Please focus on those principal matters you wish the examining authority to consider. We would also ask speakers to avoid repeating, where possible, what previous speakers have already said and instead perhaps indicate that you agree with a point raised by a previous speaker and who they were. Members of the examining authority may ask questions following a submission if clarification is required. I do ask that everyone attending conducts themselves in a courteous and respectful manner throughout the proceedings and allows others to speak without interruption.

00:04:49:21 - 00:05:06:04

The examining authority will offer the applicants the opportunity to respond following all the submissions. And following the response from the applicants, the meeting will close. Finally, can I ask whether there are any members of the press present or anyone intending to make their own recording of the hearing?

00:05:08:28 - 00:05:09:14

Thank you.

00:05:12:19 - 00:05:45:10

So I'll now move on to the next item on the agenda, which is all submissions from interested parties. I will invite speakers to make their representation in the order they appear in Annex A of the published agenda, along with some additional speakers who have notified us that they wish to speak. If you're here in person, I will invite you in groups to sit at the front table to make your representation. Please do remain at the table until everyone in the group has spoken. After that, you may return to your seat. If you do not wish to be filmed, there is seating to the side, and we can provide a roving microphone to you.

00:05:46:01 - 00:06:16:05

For those joining us online, I will invite you to turn your camera and microphone on at the appropriate time. However, if you do not wish to be filmed, you may leave your camera off. So with that in mind, can I ask the first group to come up? I have councilor Carl Catchpole. I have Michael Haslam or Elsie Stoker from Saxingham, Nethergate Parish Council. I have Victoria Chandler from Morningthorpe and Fritham Parish Council.

00:06:16:26 - 00:06:28:00

Jim Webb Weber from Shotsam Parish Council. Councilor George Boyd from Norfolk County Council. And we will also hear from Ian Mitchell from the Ramblers virtually.

00:06:46:23 - 00:06:52:01

Thank you. If I could now ask councilor Carl Katchpole to make a representation, please.

00:06:52:24 - 00:07:28:19

Thank you, Chair. My name is Karl Catchpole. I represent the Long Stratton Division of South Norfolk for the County Council. In my role at County Council, I also am Chair of the Infrastructure and Development Select Committee. And have obviously have a vested interest in this because I also grew up in the village of New Enflotman, which is in the middle of some of this work. So thank you. I'm proud to I'm here today on behalf of the residents of Longstratten Division and of South Norfolk more widely to oppose the solar the East Pye solar development in the strongest possible terms.

00:07:29:17 - 00:08:09:12

This is not a small planning matter. This is over two thousand seven hundred acres of our county, productive farmland, open countryside and precious wildlife habitat, proposed to be turned into an industrial energy site for the next sixty years, two generations at that sink in. Land that feeds this country gone for the length of two generations at a time when food security is spoken of in Westminster as a national priority. We have been asked to sacrifice thousands of acres of food sorry, good food productive farmland, Not because there's nowhere else to put this infrastructure, but because farmland is cheap, flat, and easy to acquire.

00:08:10:16 - 00:08:43:22

It's not just the farmland. It's the character of where we live. South Nook is a beautiful area. It's where I was born and grew up. It is quiet. It is green. It is ours. This scheme would scar that landscape permanently. Solar panels, substations, industrial infrastructure, stretching across land that our children and grandchildren should inherit as countryside, not as a power station. Once this is built, it does not come back for sixty years. That is not a temporary inconvenience. That is a generational decision being made without our full consent.

00:08:44:16 - 00:09:14:29

We're also deeply concerned for our wildlife, including the white clawed crawfish, a native legally protected species already in serious decline across the country because of its habitat loss and invasive competitors. We cannot, in good conscience, allow this development to proceed without cast iron evidence based guarantees that our most vulnerable species will be protected. Not vague assurances buried in the environmental statement, but real independent verified survey evidence and a genuine enforceable mitigation plan. And let's be honest about something else.

00:09:15:01 - 00:09:57:02

South North has already done its bit. Lloyd's growth, along with other solar schemes, across our county. We have already contributed to this country's renewable energy targets. And now on top of that, we face new pylons proposed from Norris Tilbury. How much more is this county expected to carry? And how much of it is being assessed together as a whole rather than scheme by scheme in isolation so that nobody has to answer for the cumulative toll on our land and our communities? At what point does your fair share become more than your fair share? This is happening at breakneck speed, infrastructure on steroids with barely enough time for communities to catch their breath, let alone properly scrutinize once again before the next one lands on our doorstep.

00:09:58:22 - 00:10:37:22

Let me be clear, we are not against solar power. We are not against battery storage. We understand the need for clean, secure energy, but there is a right way to do this and a wrong way. The right way is rooftops, commercial buildings, warehouses, car parks, brownfield sites. The wrong way is bulldozing

productive farmland because it is cheaper and easier for shareholders, many of them based overseas. Who will never set foot in South North, who will never walk this land, who will never see or care what they have taken from the people who live here? This reminds me and many of us of HS2, a project pushed through at enormous cost and disruption that most people came to believe was never proportionate to its benefit.

00:10:38:04 - 00:11:09:25

We cannot let East Pye Soda become this region's HS2, a decision made far away imposed on a community that's never truly listened to. There are better paths forward. My party, Reform UK, believes in British built alternatives, small modular nuclear reactors, like those being developed by Rolls Royce right here in this country, delivering clean, reliable baseload power without sacrificing thousands of acres of our countryside. That is a serious credible alternative, and it deserves serious credible consideration before we accept permanent loss of this land.

00:11:10:26 - 00:11:41:12

To Mr. Cliff, our planning inspector, I implore you to approach this examination with real vigor. Sorry. To demand better evidence, to test the applicant's claims properly, and to give the concerns of this community the full weight they deserve. And to the minister, missus Mjata Fenambulla, I extend a genuine invitation, come to South Norfolk, walk this land, talk to the farmers, the families, the parish councils who will live with this decision for sixty years. See what you will be signing away before you decide it's fate.

00:11:41:29 - 00:12:15:22

We are not against progress, we are against destruction dressed up as progress, imposed on people who are never given a real choice. On behalf of the people of Longstratten division and South Norfolk, I urge this application to be refused, at the very least, sent back to rigorous honest scrutiny it has not yet received. I was going to say thank you at that stage, but I just want to offer you some paperwork. Mehta Fenenbulla, MP, was up in less than two weeks ago in sorry, in Newcastle, looking at SMRs manufactured by Rolls Royce with the help of Siemens.

00:12:16:06 - 00:12:31:19

And she's aware of this on she's now aware of this particular product that could solve our energy crisis to a large extent and without the sacrifice of land. And I think that should be very much looked into. And I've got some information to pass to you, Mr. Cliff, if you'd like to take it. Thank you.

00:12:31:29 - 00:12:50:08

If you want to thank you for your comments. If you want to submit them alongside your written representations for deadline one, we can take it then. Thank you very much. Okay. I will now move on to Michael Haslam from Saxony and Nethergate. And you have five minutes. If you could turn on your microphone. Thank you.

00:12:50:26 - 00:13:29:06

Good morning, and thank you for the opportunity of speaking here today. My name is Michael Haslam, and I am a member of the Saxon Neathergate Parish Council, and I'm speaking on their behalf to raise their main concerns today. The totality of our objections is contained in our relevant representations and in our forthcoming written representations that will be submitted before the sixth

of October. Saxony and Negate Parish Council strongly objects to this proposal that will, if approved, industrialize a large part of our parish, that we are supportive of the need for the country to move towards green energy, but in a sensible and planned way.

00:13:29:20 - 00:14:14:02

Our main concerns are set out in the following. The way in which the consultation has been conducted and the methods used have caused considerable distress and anxiety among some of our residents rather than enabling them to engage with the proposal in a meaningful and accessible way. The consultation process should facilitate informed participation, not create additional barriers for those least able to navigate a highly technical process. The unnecessarily complex and voluminous documents and the absence of any hard copies that could be viewed by the many of our elderly residents who do not have access to computers has led to them being frozen out of the process.

00:14:14:18 - 00:14:45:21

For a scheme of this size, a responsible developer should do more than the statutory minimum to engage with the local population. The applicant solicitor said yesterday that the complex and layered application plans that are so difficult to download and read were needed for accuracy. This sits uncomfortably with the absence of any realistic details for the many of components of the scheme and the and the generalizations in so much of the draft DCO.

00:14:46:18 - 00:15:21:00

We are pleased that the developer solicitor made it clear yesterday that the applicant was not now seeking to acquire any land from our war memorial and the frontage of the old rectory along Churchill because of the serious harm this would have caused to both the conservation area and the curtilages of the listed buildings. For the avoidance of doubt, I wish to make it clear that the footpath alongside our war memorial is not part of the public highway. We object to the AIL route and to the use of narrow village roads as routes for delivery vehicles.

00:15:21:12 - 00:15:54:04

We are concerned that such use will damage the many pipes under the road, the culvert wall alongside the street and those listed buildings that are close to the roads and have no foundations. We object to the impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of the Saxon Neathergate and Saxon Green conservation areas and the proximity of the panels to existing houses on the green. We are concerned that the proposals will increase flooding along the street and some frontage houses that were flooded in the December twenty twenty floods.

00:15:54:27 - 00:16:33:29

The applicant's response on Page one four one to our relevant representations is factually incorrect. Sites seven d and seven f are within the watercourse catchment that a specialist engineer prepared in two thousand and twelve in connection with the flood risk assessment in respect to the properties near the junction of the street with Cargate Lane and Shotsam Lane. I'm attaching to this note an extract from the FRA that shows the extent of the watercourse catchment as an appendix to this application, and I will append it to you, madam, with our forthcoming written representations.

00:16:35:20 - 00:17:09:27

We object to the loss of BMV agricultural lands at a time when the impacts of climate change are causing huge reductions in crop yields and food shortages are expected while El Nino arrives later this autumn. We are concerned that the applicants have submitted this application without first having properly consulted with and incorporated into their proposals the formal views of natural gas transmission. This really is quite extraordinary given the obvious risk from electricity meeting gas.

00:17:10:02 - 00:17:16:28

I'm reminded of the James Bond film. We respectfully ask that you recommend the DCO be refused. Thank you, ma'am.

00:17:19:07 - 00:17:24:01

Thank you very much for your comments. And, yes, if you could submit the FRA information, it'd be very helpful.

00:17:25:17 - 00:17:33:10

Next, we move on to Victoria Chandler from Morningthorpe and Fruton Parish Council. You have five minutes as well. Thank you.

00:17:34:12 - 00:18:10:13

My name is council Victoria Chandler, vice chair for Mooringshall, Prufetton Parish Council. We represent two small historic rural communities. Site five would introduce a thirty meter high four hundred kilovolt substation, four point five meter high tracking panels, transformers, construction compound, fencing, lighting, and CCTV into countryside in and around Pritta and Moynthal. The crucial is question is why here? Site five contains many of the very constraints the outcome said should be avoided. Sensitive landscape, national important heritage, high quality agricultural land, ecology, nearby homes.

00:18:10:20 - 00:18:46:14

Yet the applicant has not demonstrated what site five is the least harmful location. We're also concerned that people living closest to site five do not appear to properly be assessed. The applicant's own methodology sets assessment distances of three hundred meters for construction noise, hundred for vibration, fifty for highway construction traffic noise, and five hundred from the order limit for operational noise. The tower view identifies seven residential properties emitted from the construction noise assessment, four from vibration, six from highway noise, and approximately seventy residential properties lying within five hundred meters of site five for operational noise have been emitted.

00:18:47:07 - 00:19:19:09

If the straight receptors in the applicant's own assessment criteria had not been properly assessed, there must be serious doubt as to whether the reported impacts on those living closest to site five are reliable. We have also concerns about inconsistencies within the proposal. For example, Glinton Glare mitigation along the b one five two seven requires screening locations where permanent access points a twenty three and a twenty four, and their visibility displays are proposed. There are also concerns that those plays have been based on shorter AILs, the specialist transport company states are required.

00:19:19:26 - 00:19:52:26

We ask the examining authority to ensure that these important matters are reconciled. The applicant's own assessment identifies significant adverse visual effects. For instance, these are not occasional views from selective viewpoints. They are everyday landscape experienced from homes, lanes, public rights away. The historical environment has been equally important. Prittent conservation area, grade one Saint listed Catherine's Church, grade one listed John Saint John the Baptist Church, within a landscape that forms part of their settings. This significance does not stop at the line on a map.

00:19:53:08 - 00:20:24:07

Site five in its communities date back to doomsday book. Historic field patterns, lanes, hedgerows, mature trees, and archaeological survey to that survived today. The open farmland forms the setting of Frutin conservation area and the grade one listed church at St. Catharines. The applicant relies on setbacks, planting, and screening, but screening is not the same as preserving settings. A hedge may obscure some instruct infrastructure in time. It cannot preserve open countryside once that countryside is fundamentally be changed.

00:20:25:09 - 00:20:57:28

Site five also occupies the northern foreground when approaching Fritin, and the transition from open countryside into the historic village remains remarkably intact. But our community will not experience site five in isolation. Cable corridors pass through and around the parish. Site four b, access to the site sevens via the crons, the construction traffic on the b one five two seven adds to the local burden. A particular concern is access point a twenty four opposite Jack in the Box, a nurse who cares for babies and very young children who use outdoor spaces for play.

00:20:58:05 - 00:21:29:06

This is simply not about traffic drop off and collection times, but prolonged construction activity beside children throughout the day. The applicant describes the overall construction program for around twenty four months. For instance, One activity may be finished as another begins elsewhere. People will then experience successive periods of HTV movements, excavation, trenching, piling, noise, dust, or vibration. Management plans may reduce those impacts, but they do not remove them. Public rights of way are used as part of everyday community life. The applicant confirmed temporary closures and number of these.

00:21:29:11 - 00:22:01:24

When we'd opened, those routes will be experienced differently. Residents have also raised concerns about bats, including Barbastale, red listed species of conservation concern, habitat fragmentation, water courses, the chalk aquifer, drainage, private water supplies, private sewage systems, and flooding. We will ask the examination process remains generally accessible to residents who do not use the Internet. Most importantly, residents who experience traffic, noise, dust vibration, change, disruption to footpath, loss of transfer tranquility together and not separately technical issues.

00:22:02:18 - 00:22:30:24

Our community experiences one landscape, one road network, and one historic environment. Taken together, the burden on these two very small communities is substantial and, in our view, disproportionate. We ask that a full weight is given to the admitted residential receptors, the unresolved inconsistencies, and the enduring change into this historic rural landscape. For those

reasons, we submit to the applicant who has not demonstrated the harm arising from sulfide. It is unavoidable or justified. Thank you.

00:22:32:26 - 00:22:43:20

Thank you. And I think it'd be helpful if in your written submission deadline one, if you could provide details of the receptors, it would be very helpful. Thank you.

00:22:43:22 - 00:22:48:18

We we plan to put a substantial written response. Okay. Thank you. We

00:22:50:14 - 00:22:54:28

move on to Jim Weber from Shotsam Parish Council.

00:22:56:09 - 00:23:26:21

Thank you. My name is Jim Weber, and I speak on behalf of Shotsam Parish Council. My chair, Heather Jackson, will be speaking later this morning. I'm also a Councillor at South Norfolk and the County Council. The Parish Council is not against solar power and recognizes the role that solar can play in making energy needs to the country. The PC does object this patchwork proposal and the harms it would cause to individuals, communities and the environment across such a broad swathe of South Norfolk with so many beautiful spaces and conservation areas.

00:23:26:26 - 00:23:30:14

And I think we agree with practically every comment made yesterday afternoon and this morning.

00:23:32:08 - 00:23:50:21

When the applicant first announced the scheme, the village was shocked to see the sites 8A and 8B as part of the scheme. We considered the area completely inappropriate for solar and inconsistent with other schemes approved for Norfolk. We have fewer concerns about 7i, which is also in the parish.

00:23:52:18 - 00:24:24:13

Since the council first raised and noted obvious errors in the applicant's early work, Attempts have been made to mitigate the impact of the scheme on the community and the landscape. Yet the simple fact remains that mitigation alone cannot correct poor site selection. As a member of South Norfolk's Planning Committee, I've reviewed applications for other local schemes. I find it very difficult to believe that this area would ever be approved for a stand alone scheme, and it's difficult to understand why adding it to an NSIP should suddenly make it acceptable.

00:24:26:16 - 00:24:55:04

The site selection assessment report raises more questions than it answers. The complexity of the layout and the poor or nonexistent cross referencing made it virtually unreadable. The level of errors and inconsistencies within the document were deeply disturbing. Based on the assessment criteria the applicant claims to have used, we believe that 8A and 8B should not have passed East Pine's initial screening as topology, flood risk and accessibility.

00:24:56:29 - 00:25:04:10

Furthermore, the analysis of possible sites centered on Great Malton POC doesn't seem to identify 8A and 8B as suitable sites.

00:25:07:10 - 00:25:43:14

Site assessment document itself seems to confirm this, and the applicant recognizes that sites closer to the Great Malton point of contact should be preferred. Yet amazingly, in paragraph 5.1.30, we read that the applicant didn't bother approaching landowners in the area. So this is indeed a very poorly designed scheme. South Norfolk has produced a supplementary planning document on the susceptibility of the landscape to new energy infrastructure. It was designed to steer developers away from the most sensitive areas of landscape, like Site A and 8B.

00:25:44:05 - 00:25:48:03

I do question if this has been read or if it was read in early enough stage in the project.

00:25:50:20 - 00:26:21:04

The applicant has consistently misrepresented the level of flood risk in the area. Market Lane is prone to significant flush flooding, and the flood risk extends to properties in the center of the village. We fully support the flood risk report privately commissioned by Jewel Guy and linked to her relevant representation. It identifies continuing concerns and errors. As many others have said, the applicant appears to wish local roads for HGVs and AILs in complete conflict with County Council advice.

00:26:21:24 - 00:26:52:04

It's entirely inappropriate. Between 8A and 8B runs a TAS, a narrow ditch for much of the year. The applicant is proposing to use a very short stretch of market lane and narrow metal unclassified road running between fields rather than construct a crossing within the red line boundary. The proposed route runs over a culvert, which is unlikely to withstand heavy loads, and the culvert becomes a seasonal forward prone to flooding. There's also a drop from the field to the road level.

00:26:52:16 - 00:27:29:20

There'll be significant damage to Virgil's banks, trees and hedges, but also a high level of noise and disruption for Market Lane Farm and other road users, Market Lane Farm's any meters away. I note the original scoping document showed most access this is for the EIO scoping showed most access coming off roads A and B roads. While that outline needed more work, I think it's clear that this is a feasible option. In relation to sites 8A and 8B, we asked inspectors to consider if the relatively small contributions made to Soloc from these sites are sufficient to offset the multiple harms it would lead to.

00:27:30:26 - 00:27:41:16

And if necessary, please consider what additional mitigation measures would be required if needed? And can you give full weight to the concerns raised by NCC highways?

00:27:43:06 - 00:27:57:00

We would like to check the additional visits proposed for our parish. And we hope that if we do request further houses and properties visited, that request will be accepted. Finally, I just want to

00:27:57:02 - 00:27:57:17

talk about a lack

00:27:57:19 - 00:28:25:29

of trust between residents and the applicants. I think this is caused by the poor quality of information by East Pie, the lack of transparency, even to application stage and a failure to provide the detailed information that planners and residents expect. It doesn't all go well for the future. And I do encourage the inspectorate to ensure that any DCO is as robust as possible to limit wiggle room in future because if you give it to them, they will use it. Thank you. Sorry for overrunning. Thank you very much.

00:28:31:18 - 00:28:37:16

Okay. And then lastly, we will oh, no, sorry, Councillor George Boyd, before we go online.

00:28:38:05 - 00:29:16:02

Thank you very much. Good morning. My name is George Boyd. I'm the County Councillor for the Wavy Valley Division in Norfolk. As such, my main interest here is to represent the residents of Woodton and the surrounding hamlets in my division, which will be the most affected by this proposal and where you will struggle to find any support for it. And I, too, am here to object to it in the strongest possible terms. As well as being a county councillor, I have lived in Norfolk almost my entire life and, as a keen walker, have used many of the footpaths in the area encompassed by the scheme, where the natural landscape will be decimated for generations to come.

00:29:16:24 - 00:29:49:01

I have a few points which I would love to raise, which will no doubt be discussed later and have been discussed probably yesterday as well, but are nonetheless important to be estimated due to the severity of their potential consequences. It is important to note that the project should not be taken in isolation with other solar projects proposed in other areas of the county. Therefore, it is essential that the cumulative effect of all these projects is assessed. It would be completely inappropriate to view this in isolation.

00:29:49:18 - 00:30:23:18

The first issue today is during the construction phase, the excess traffic will cause noise congestion and will speed up the wearing of our road surfaces and some weak bridges as well, which are in the area, costing Norfolk County Council and also therefore for taxpayer. Then after construction has been completed, there will be the perpetual issue of a change in the physical characteristics of the area. Some residents will see the solar panels from their homes and all will see them when walking in the area, creating a permanent intrusion into people's lives.

00:30:23:28 - 00:30:58:25

And on the subject of walking, footpaths and roads run through and adjacent to the site. The visual effect this site will have on the landscape will undoubtedly deter visiting walkers, cyclists, bird watchers. The result of the inevitable reduction in visitors will be a loss of revenue for local businesses, which often heavily rely on tourism. Many local pubs and other businesses in the hospitality sector locally already struggled to turn a profit. Even a slight decrease in the number of customers is likely to have a detrimental impact.

00:30:59:08 - 00:31:23:19

So not only will residents find themselves surrounded by a desert of solar panels, but the businesses which are vital for people to meet and socialize like pubs will continue to disappear. The very real crisis of isolation and loneliness in the UK will be exacerbated at a local level with the ensuring knock on effects on mental health.

00:31:25:08 - 00:31:34:22

Then there are the major environmental issues to consider. Site ten, which affects, residents in my division, is partially situated

00:31:37:06 - 00:32:29:28

in a chalk stream catchment area. Reputable sources vary in terms of how rare these ecosystems are, but it seems like a safe estimate to say around two fifty of these ecosystems globally, and around eighty five percent of them are located in England. There is a concern that over multiple years, toxic elements within the solar panels could leach into the soil and then groundwater, potentially contaminating the chalk streams. Studies of solar farms, which have already been taken place or solar farms, I should say, which have been in place for a decade or more have been undertaken around the world, such as at SUNY, in the United States and Upper Silesia in Poland, and have found abnormally high levels elements such as indium, antimony and cadmium.

00:32:30:02 - 00:33:01:14

All these elements naturally are found in soil but can build up over time to dangerous levels. So it seems strange to situate a solar site above such a biologically sensitive habitat in Norfolk. It will be uncharted territory. As such, a vigorous assessment needs to be carried out to determine the long term effects of placing these panels and mass above groundwater, which feeds into local chalk streams. Residents do not want their countryside ecosystems to be used as an experiment.

00:33:01:21 - 00:33:02:12

Thank you.

00:33:03:26 - 00:33:13:16

Thank you very much. You also mentioned some studies in your representation. If you could make those clear when you submit your written submission, would very helpful.

00:33:15:18 - 00:33:26:00

And we now move to Ian Mitchell from the Lam the Ramblers who will be joining us virtually. If you want to turn your camera on and your microphone.

00:33:26:24 - 00:33:27:13

Right.

00:33:27:15 - 00:33:30:12

And you now have five minutes. Thank you very much.

00:33:32:27 - 00:33:45:12

I am Ian Mitchell, and I represent the Rambars Norfolk area. I happen to live in Norwich, but have walked many of the public paths in the area covered by the this application.

00:33:47:11 - 00:34:12:18

Of the people who have spoken already, some have identified themselves as horse riders, but many of the others will have walked the public paths and quite frequently. There are sometimes village walking groups, which are social walks. I belong to one of the Rambus groups, which, consisting mainly of retired people, tends to do walks of six miles or less on a weekly basis.

00:34:14:09 - 00:34:33:14

Being centered in Norwich, we go to various areas around the city. We come to walk in South Norfolk every few weeks, usually parking at at Village Hall. From there, two groups of twenty to thirty people go out on longer and a shorter circuit.

00:34:35:05 - 00:34:38:03

We are often led by members who live in the vicinity.

00:34:39:28 - 00:34:52:27

There are various reasons for walking either alone or together, social, physical health, mental health, enjoying the views, enjoying being in nature.

00:34:55:03 - 00:35:08:21

There are already solar farms in Norfolk, but they're mostly only a few fields and can be soon passed by. However, in this application, the view of solar panels will go on for field after field.

00:35:11:02 - 00:35:23:19

It is to restore a green view that we propose hedge planting that will provide an effective screen within seven years. To be effective, it needs to be two meters high for walkers.

00:35:25:04 - 00:35:30:10

For horse riders, a hedge would probably have to be three meters high for effective screening.

00:35:32:01 - 00:35:55:14

The usual attempts at hedging seem to consist of putting cuttings in the ground surrounded by a plastic tube and leaving it to chance what comes up. I provided photographs in my submission of the ninth of June. I suggested that there should be well developed young trees on one meter stems about two meters apart.

00:35:57:21 - 00:36:03:09

In between, there can be some of the short cuttings to fill in the lower part as they grow.

00:36:05:02 - 00:36:36:01

In my ninth of June submission, there was a table of lengths of screening heads required by the public paths, both on one side of a panel field and going between panels. It amounted to about four meter kilometers of new hedge. If the inspector minded to approve this application in part or as a whole, we request that positioning is imposed of effective head screening within seven years.

00:36:37:29 - 00:36:38:14

Thank you.

00:36:42:10 - 00:36:54:15

Thank you very much. And yes, noted in your relevant representation, the photos and the commentary around hedges. Yes, there's just one question for you, from my colleague.

00:36:55:23 - 00:37:39:05

Mister Mitchell, thank you for that submission. It could be quite helpful. You referred to various walks of six miles and less in the area of the application site just so we can have an understanding or get an understanding of what are the typical walking routes in the local area of the site. If you're able to, could you provide for deadline one details of what our typical I presume people do on the whole circular walks, but maybe not only just circular walks, but what some of the typical well used routes might be within and around the scheme? Just to help us to understand when people go for walks in the area, what routes do they take?

00:37:40:15 - 00:37:46:13

I'll I'll try to do that. Yes. I'll try to combine compile some routes and maps to show you.

00:37:46:15 - 00:37:49:07

If you're able to, that would be that would be helpful. Thank you.

00:37:49:09 - 00:37:50:06

Righto. Thank you.

00:37:54:11 - 00:38:08:27

Okay. Thank you very much from the first group of speakers. You can return to your seats. And I just want to check before moving on. Do we have Philippa Palmer in the room or online?

00:38:11:28 - 00:38:29:29

Okay. The next group, if you could come to the table, I have Howard Bailey, Matt Johnson, Ian Neve, Sarah Shipley, Jason Crawley, Hilary Batty, Rebecca Mayhew, and John Fry.

00:39:08:01 - 00:39:14:28

Okay. I think I'm missing a couple of people, but we will work that out as we proceed.

00:39:16:16 - 00:39:27:17

So first, if I have Howard Bailey before me do I have Howard Bailey? Nope. Or online? Just to check.

00:39:29:03 - 00:39:45:27

Okay. We will then move on to Matt Johnson, if I have a Matt Johnson. Okay. There's maybe our two. And next, if I have Ian Neve. Yes. Great. You have three minutes.

00:39:45:29 - 00:39:46:16

Thank you.

00:39:46:18 - 00:40:15:23

Thank you. Basically, yesterday, most of the things that I was going to raise have already been covered. However, I'd just like to add a point regarding the flood risk assessment in Saxing and Nethergate. Forgive me, my name is Ian Lee from Saxing and Nethergate. The concerns that I've actually got is if we look at Churchill and we look at Wash Lane, there's a confluence of two streams and water coming together near the war memorial.

00:40:17:19 - 00:40:47:24

Where the proposed panels, structural steel, concrete and all the associated works are looking to be placed on the elevated land at the south of the village, we certainly got to be getting quite an increase in the hard surface water area runoff. At the end of the day, this has actually got increased for more surface water runoff and increased flow rates to these streams.

00:40:48:09 - 00:40:50:26

That was just the point I need to add. Thank you.

00:40:54:04 - 00:40:55:08

Thank you very much.

00:41:00:13 - 00:41:05:22

Next, if I can move on to Sarah Shipley.

00:41:07:15 - 00:41:39:24

Thank you, chair. Good morning. My name is Sarah Shipley, and I'm speaking today on behalf of my family and our family farm in Woodton. My family have farmed here for many generations. We strongly oppose the East Pye solar proposal because of the impact it will have on our farm and our home, the wildlife and the countryside. One of our greatest frustrations has been the complete lack of consultation over the proposed cable route. We were repeatedly told that the applicant would work with us to identify the most suitable route.

00:41:40:12 - 00:42:13:26

Yet despite our detailed knowledge of the land and the sensitive environmental areas, this has just not happened. Instead, it feels as though the route has been selected to suit the applicant's requirements rather than the needs of those who own and farm the land. I'm particularly concerned about the impact on our drainage systems and soil. We have invested significant time and money improving our fields. And once damaged, there is no guarantee they can ever be fully restored. The proposed cable route will bisect two hundred acres of our five hundred acre holding.

00:42:13:28 - 00:42:48:01

I could go into great detail here, but to clarify, this will create challenges to everyday operations. In addition, the proposals include cable joint pay bays and connection points within our fields, and they may appear relatively small on a plan, but in practice, they will create permanent obstacles to modern farming operations. I'm also very concerned about the impact on wildlife. Our farm includes Beckett's Wood, classified as a county wildlife site, and farm buildings on our land where barn owls have nested for twenty years.

00:42:48:18 - 00:43:27:21

The proposed cable route passes extremely close within meters to both the woodland and the barns. Beyond our farm, I'm concerned about the impact on roads, footpaths and bridleways, as others have said, and these will become dominated by traffic disruption and industrial infrastructure that they were never designed to accommodate. The scheme will remove over one thousand hectares of productive, best and most versatile BMV land. Government policy set out in the newly published national planning policy framework recognizes the importance of protecting this land and directing development towards poor quality land.

00:43:28:15 - 00:44:00:17

East Pye, as many have said, cannot be viewed in isolation. Norfolk has already been asked to accommodate multiple solar farms and associated infrastructure. And whilst each scheme is assessed separately, the communities affected experience them cumulatively. These cumulative impacts extend to the aggregated loss of BMV land, the impacts on the character of landscapes as well as on the environment generally. More fundamentally, there remains no comprehensive national spatial strategy setting out where large scale solar development should be located.

00:44:01:03 - 00:44:27:19

And in the absence of such a framework, proposals are being brought forward through a largely developer led process, leaving individual communities to bear the impact one application at a time. Proposals are considered in isolation without the cumulative impacts as set as out earlier being fully considered. The government has recognized this gap and has commissioned the first strategic spatial energy plan, acknowledging the need for strategic approach. Interrupt.

00:44:29:11 - 00:44:29:26

Great.

00:44:29:28 - 00:44:49:10

Thank you. So I question whether it's appropriate for major projects such as this to continue to be determined through a piecemeal developer led process before the outcomes of that work have been fully considered and incorporated into planning policy. And for all of these reasons stated, we respectfully object to the East Pyre solar development. Thank you.

00:44:50:18 - 00:44:51:29

Thank you very much.

00:44:55:24 - 00:44:58:06

I'll now move on to Jason Crawley.

00:45:01:12 - 00:45:02:06

Thank you.

00:45:03:10 - 00:45:39:10

My name is Jason Crawley, I live in Shotsdam, All Saints. I wish to draw attention to the requirement for good design for energy infrastructure and why Site eight in our village is unsuitable for solar development. National Policy Statement EN3 emphasizes solar proposal should demonstrate good

design, particularly in respect of landscape and visual amenity. Shotsham Action Group and Shotsham Parish Council have consistently disagreed with the applicant's assessment for Site eight.

00:45:40:14 - 00:45:50:21

Site eight should never be included in the proposed scheme. If a proper solar feasibility study had been commissioned, Site eight wouldn't have been included.

00:45:52:19 - 00:45:59:25

Similarly, if they had adhered to their own island green power design principles, site eight would have

00:45:59:27 - 00:46:00:12

been

00:46:00:14 - 00:46:39:25

excluded. Removal of part of site eight reflects the admission that their design was flawed. A similar situation occurred with partial removal of Site nine in Brook. Despite these corrections, the applicant continues to attempt to justify retaining Sites eight and nine. In short, the reasons why site eight should be removed from the scheme are: confirm valued landscape, river valley location, topography of the site, Mitigation would never be possible due to the topography.

00:46:40:21 - 00:47:14:27

Increased flooding on Market Lane due to increased surface water runoff. Rare and protected barber cell bat maternity colony in the nearby Shotsam Littlewood, SSSI. This can be confirmed by Norfolk Barbercell Study Group. Proximity of dwellings, particularly Golden Eye Barn on Baxter's Lane, which overlooks the full extent of 8A across the valley to the west and overlooks 8B to the north, less than two hundred meters away.

00:47:15:11 - 00:47:31:16

The applicant has not mentioned this property. The RVVA, Residential Visual Immunity Assessment, is presently proposed by the applicant at a distance not exceeding one hundred meters. The RVAA distance should be reviewed.

00:47:33:05 - 00:48:07:11

Road access to site eight is proposed via single carriageway, single track country lanes less than three meters wide. These lanes are in very poor condition and not suitable for SUV traffic. Public footpaths by sites 8A and 8B. Shopland is a very popular village for walkers from surrounding villages, including Norwich. Shorkshire Maxim Group, who registered a booth on Churchill in Shorkshire, offering walkers the opportunity to sign a slip objecting to the panels seen from the footpaths.

00:48:07:13 - 00:48:13:27

So the panels will completely change the character of the landscape. To date, over six hundred slips have been signed.

00:48:14:26 - 00:48:25:08

If I can ask you to draw your comments to a close. Just before you do, if you do have more written, then you can include it in the written statement.

00:48:25:10 - 00:48:26:23

I've got one paragraph. Great.

00:48:26:25 - 00:48:28:11

A short paragraph.

00:48:28:28 - 00:48:45:25

Reverting to National Policy Statement EN three and EN one, evidently the applicant hasn't followed these policies nor their own design principles. Accordingly, the proposal is significantly flawed and non compliant. It should not proceed. Thank you.

00:48:47:11 - 00:48:48:10

You very much.

00:48:50:05 - 00:48:55:07

And now if I can move on to Hillary Batty. I hope I said that correctly.

00:48:55:21 - 00:48:59:11

I'm a local resident and a retired solicitor.

00:49:00:23 - 00:49:08:18

Oh. If you just pull it closer to you. Okay. Slightly closer. Close.

00:49:09:07 - 00:49:48:12

Wow. Yep. I strongly object to this project. My reasons being two thousand seven hundred acres of mainly grade two described as very good quality agricultural land. We need to retain our land in times of global uncertainty. Significant infrastructure and disruption caused with battery energy storage system, substations, grid connection, cable route corridor corridor, plus ancillary work such as security fencing, impact on residents because of compulsory purchase of land held for many, many years.

00:49:49:02 - 00:50:26:17

The height at fifteen feet is a serious concern. You could say it's three times my height, but I won't stand up, But it's considerable. I'm not impressed with the ultimate ownership, East Pai Solar by Macquarie Asset Management, who paid seventy nine point eight million dollars to cover federal fraud charges, I believe sustained in the US. They are Australian. What is the reality after thirty years? I know sixty years was mentioned either or of lifespan removal replacement by who, question mark.

00:50:27:06 - 00:50:55:13

It is inappropriate to call it a farm, Oxford English definition of which is an area of land and the buildings on it used for growing crops and or keeping animals, whereas a factory as an is an industrial facility like this proposal. It is not democracy to override local opinion. I know I very much hope the planning inspectorate will not do so in connection with their decision about this project.

00:50:57:25 - 00:50:59:18

Thank you very much for your comments.

00:51:02:19 - 00:51:08:18

I will now invite Rebecca Mayhew, and you have three minutes. Thank you.

00:51:09:10 - 00:51:52:12

Rebecca Mayhew, one thousand meters of proposed cable corridor nine. We are not just a farm, if there is even any such a thing. We run a busy farm shop, restaurant, butchery, farm park and vineyard with twelve fifty on-site customers every week. We're not arable either despite the incorrect land classification within the application. Yes, we have told the land agents as have others. There are environmental and ecological risks to eighty seven species of birds, over forty varieties of plants in our species rich pasture, including three types of orchid over thirty species of butterflies and moths three species of newts, including great crested newts five species of dung beetle and more insects than I can possibly name.

00:51:52:24 - 00:52:23:09

We have multiple species of bats roosting on the farm, and we even have badgers, not that East Pie have bothered to look. The risk of soil ecology and scent general site biodiversity should be obvious. I could go on, but I shouldn't have to. EPS had undertaken adequate ecological surveys. The planning inspector would already know all of this. They haven't undertaken these surveys deliberately despite being asked repeatedly to take this scheme and our farm seriously. Financial risks to our business. Jobs are at risk.

00:52:23:11 - 00:52:59:00

We have thirty six full time and ten part time employees. The cable corridor is the view from our restaurant. It's less than two hundred meters away. The risk to our income during the build has been downplayed by the land agents. Apparently, I should mitigate all of these risks. But how precisely? I suggested an alternative route, but I was ignored. I can't replace our view. The farm park experiences and the farm walk will be ruined during the build and for some considerable time afterwards. The land used for these would be wholly consumed during construction. Annual events, such as Open Farm Sunday, which attract over three thousand visitors, would have to be canceled.

00:53:00:02 - 00:53:33:11

Practical considerations. Work to the proposed one kilometer corridor would cut us off from our grazing platform. We graze all year round with dairy and beef cattle, sheep and rare breed working horses. If we sign the option agreement, that's a joke, apparently, don't have an option, this will mothball our farm for five years. And we have time limited grants for tree planting that we won't be able to use, and we'd be left in stasis. Other farmers who have had similar cables forced through their land report soil temperatures permanently four degrees higher all year round above the cables.

00:53:33:16 - 00:54:03:19

This is unnatural. What are the unintended consequences of this scheme? And does anyone care? Including our online business, we feed over fifteen hundred families from our farm every week, and this scheme will severely hinder us from producing and selling food. Animal welfare. Grazing animals are very sensitive and will not react well to the significant disturbance during construction. The ripple

effect of having to graze adjacent the corridor during the build will be very detrimental. The agents have told us we should just keep our animals inside.

00:54:03:27 - 00:54:36:03

This is not an option for their health and welfare and is yet another example of how poorly we are being treated to even suggest it. The ripple effect of this scheme will last well beyond the build time. I've nearly finished. Farmers get used to things having done to them. We shouldn't have to. I would mention the detriment to our mental health, but would anyone care? The use of compulsory powers is overreach, pure and simple. We do not consent to the violation of our farm and our rights. We do not and can never support this scheme.

00:54:36:10 - 00:54:37:04

Thank you.

00:54:38:27 - 00:54:50:24

Thank you. I just have a question for if we could just refrain from the clapping. I just wanted to clarify. You said at the beginning, Cable Route Corridor nine. Is that correct? Okay.

00:54:54:27 - 00:55:01:14

And lastly in this group, I have John You have three minutes. Thank you.

00:55:01:16 - 00:55:37:09

I'm John Fry. Firstly, I'd like to thank the planning inspector for visiting Churchill. It's much appreciated. The route passes through the conservation area of Saxiom, the gates where there are forty three listed buildings over three quarters of them directly on the route. In Churchill, are eleven listings, three of which are grade two star, the Tudor Old Hall, the thousand year old church with the oldest stained glass in Norfolk, and our house, the former rectory. The rectory is an early work of sir John Sohn, his second oldest surviving house.

00:55:37:21 - 00:56:10:10

He drew the design and supervised the construction himself. We do our best to keep the house in good order as do many others in the village. Our house is at the narrowest point on the entire route where the road is less than four point four meters wide, bounded on one side by the granary and on the other by our two star listed retaining wall and hedge. The Sewn Museum and Keeper of the Sewn Archive has objected and confirmed the importance of the wall. Not only is the road narrow, but vehicles have to turn sharply by the war memorial.

00:56:10:29 - 00:56:50:09

Several residents have been threatened with compulsory purchase of their land in order to facilitate the route, including the much loved and recently renovated war memorial, the Old Hall and Our House. But on Page one hundred thirty eight of a recent response from East Pie dated fourth of September, the applicant states that no part of the curtilage of the War Memorial or the old rectory fall within the order limits. However, the transport plan still requires plot three-one, partially belonging to our house, and three-two, the footpath alongside the war memorial, which are assumed to be highways authority land.

00:56:50:19 - 00:57:26:06

This is simply not the case. No vehicle overhang is possible on our side of the road, but the applicants assumes an overhang of around four hundred millimeters. Similarly, the reply to flooding questions on Pages one hundred forty to one hundred forty two relate to the street in Hempnal, not the street in Saxiom Nethergate and are therefore erroneous. This eloquently demonstrates the poor quality of the surveying work done by the applicant. The first picture in the conservation area document is of our ancient U hedge above the retaining wall.

00:57:26:10 - 00:57:52:16

The hedge is full of wildlife. I have seen newts, toads and snakes near the hedge. Many mature trees line the route and will require reduction, damaging them forever. In summary, the environmental damage to trees, wildlife and heritage buildings is enormous. We'd like to request an issue specific hearing on the access route's impact on Saxony and Leathergate, and in particular, on Churchill. Thank you.

00:57:54:02 - 00:58:05:06

Thank you very much. We will be touching on some transport elements this afternoon in Issue Specific Hearing one tomorrow. Apologies, tomorrow.

00:58:05:23 - 00:58:09:16

Is that going to be tomorrow or today? The traffic is tomorrow.

00:58:09:18 - 00:58:11:02

Tomorrow. So thank you.

00:58:12:03 - 00:58:38:28

That's everyone from this group. So thank you very much, and you can return to your seats. In the next group, can I ask to come forward, Elaine Gray, Rodney Aldis, Heather Jackson, Andrew Gibson, Steven Bamba, Sally Walker, Tony Hall, and Susan Baines? And I think it's Sandra Mullet on behalf of Andrew Gibson.

00:59:07:21 - 00:59:20:24

Okay. As the with the group before, we've got some people missing. So I will go through the names, and we will work from there. Firstly, I have Elaine Gray. Is Elaine Gray here? No. Online.

00:59:23:21 - 00:59:33:26

No. So next, I have Rodney Thank you. You have three minutes. If you turn your microphone on. Right. Yes. Thank you.

00:59:35:23 - 01:00:23:25

Right. My name is Rodney Aldis. I didn't realize until yesterday lunchtime that I had a speaking slot. But as I have, I'll take the opportunity to say something about the management of solar farms for biodiversity. Now I've heard some very powerful arguments today against this scheme. But if it is approved, how the solar farms are managed can have large effects on biodiversity. And I'd like to illustrate with a summary of a PTO study. That's British Trust for Anthology. They carried out a study

in Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire last year, I think, where they studied or they had pairs of solar farms, paired them with arable land close by, and solar farms were put into two groups.

01:00:23:27 - 01:00:59:06

There's one group where they were mowing regularly or grazing with sheep, and the other group was where they were letting the wildflowers flower and seed, and they had small trees and well developed hedges. And the results basically were these, that the arable land had an average of twelve bird species. The mowed solar farms were not much better, about average of thirteen species. But the other solar farms had actually thirty six species of birds. And two species in particular which benefited were corn buntings and linens.

01:00:59:16 - 01:01:24:12

So some solar farms can be more biodiverse than arable land, which is probably because of pesticides and fertilizer use. But I'm not saying that is the situation in this case here. There seems to be some very powerful arguments why this particular scheme will be very detrimental to biodiversity. Thank you.

01:01:25:06 - 01:01:26:29

Thank you very much for your comments.

01:01:30:07 - 01:01:34:12

I'll now come to Heather Jackson. Thank you.

01:01:41:23 - 01:02:20:08

Okay. My name is shall I start? My name is Heather Jackson. As well as an individual representation, I am the chairman of Shotsam Parish Council. So I'm going to sort of straddle both aspects. After the meeting yesterday, when we heard you asking somebody about whether as a parish council they'd been notified by East Pie before the process started or at the beginning of the process, Spy spoke to our clerk last night to see if he could remember, and we have no memory of East Pie ever actually coming to us with any form of request for consultation.

01:02:20:23 - 01:02:30:04

I'm I stand to be corrected on that, and I'll apologize if they did, But we have no memory of it, and we're not the only ones, I think.

01:02:33:03 - 01:03:07:24

Shotsam is a conservation village of around two hundred and forty homes, many of which are listed, including two standing medieval churches and two ruling churches. The countryside around the village is integral to the conservation area as it's unique even in South Norfolk due to its undulating landscape. This steps down to the back of the valley bottom, and that back then flows through to the triple s I common, which joins the river Tass that goes through the center of the village.

01:03:09:04 - 01:03:30:09

The importance of all these green spaces, I think, been green and beautiful areas has been said by so many people already, I won't go into that. Since receiving the leaflets that came through our door, which many of us thought were selling solar panels and put in the bin,

01:03:32:12 - 01:04:13:20

right across the area, lives have been changed. This is over a two year period now. It was inevitable that with so many villages involved, that thousands of lives would be in fact affected in life changing ways. Even those of us who have tried to identify and support people cannot possibly have identified everybody who has been affected. We know we come across people who just don't realize what's happening. My home isn't directly affected by the wholesale spoiling of South Norfolk, but it is deeply affecting for everybody who cares about the county.

01:04:15:12 - 01:04:41:06

As a council, we want to add our support to the input that you've had from previous speakers with reference to the ability of people to truly understand the application and the process. It's overwhelming. I mean, even those of us who've been in action groups and tried to do things, it's not been possible. Finally, would like to say that

01:04:42:26 - 01:05:04:22

our biggest concern in this, and lots of us feel the same, is that even if you a group as of in as a an organization agreed that this is a poor application and that you would refuse it, our concern has always been that this will get handed on and then just rejected out of

01:05:07:11 - 01:05:11:09

has be would be supported out of hand by the department.

01:05:13:14 - 01:05:45:28

And I would like to add this as a result of a freedom of information request, there is evidence that the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero went to Macquarie offices for a private meeting to discuss grid connection for this project before its inception. Bepp's concern is that this If you can make this your last Yes. No. No. That this actually gives the appearance of bias, and that affects us all.

01:05:48:19 - 01:05:50:17

Thank you very much. Comments noted.

01:05:54:17 - 01:06:01:07

I will now move on to Andrew Gibson. Oh, yes. Thank

01:06:01:09 - 01:06:35:23

you. I'm Sandra Mullet. I'm speaking on behalf of Andrew. Unfortunately, he had a leak in his house this morning, so they came running to me and said, could you please deliver my speech? So I'm speaking on behalf of Andrew Gibson of the village of Great Malton. So Andrew says, I am the wildlife warden for the local parish. My house is approximately forty five meters from Narrow Gateway. This is a restricted byway and leads between fields to intersect one hundred lane. This area is designated part of Site one. Approaching from High Green to the left of Narrow Gateway, East Pye planned to install tracking solar panels.

01:06:36:04 - 01:07:22:29

And on the other side, it is proposed to site a massive five hundred kw national grid substation. Because of their proximity, I walk these paths frequently and then on to Frithway and Broadgate Lane. During the periods of prolonged dry weather and drought like we have just experienced, I provide drinking water in various places for the wildlife almost every day, often accompanied by my wife. We observed the natural events taking place. The deer bound off, then stopped to watch us with suspicion, the hares boxing and thumping their hind feet, a family of foxes, cubs readying to make their way in life, fleeting glimpses of small mammals scurrying about, grass snakes, great crested newts looking for a meal, and even occasionally at early dusk, a badger.

01:07:23:01 - 01:07:41:02

It is abundant in insect life too. All manner of flying and crawling bugs, bees and butterflies. At night, if you stand still, you'll be buzzed by bats and hear the owls call. During these treks, I have made over two thousand recordings of bird songs from this location, numbering

01:07:41:04 - 01:07:41:19

a hundred

01:07:41:21 - 01:08:15:00

and thirty different varieties, twenty four of which are on the red list, meaning they are at serious risk. When we discovered that our local area was to become one of the largest solar projects in the country, the news was devastating. We settled here to be part of a rural community, to be surrounded by the natural environment, to be turned to be away from the complexities and harshness of urban living. Now the needs of those heavily populated places demand that we have to sacrifice our chosen lifestyle to provide energy for theirs.

01:08:15:19 - 01:08:49:06

Regardless of any proposed mitigation, East Pye's construction devastation will drive away anything that can get away. Much cannot much that cannot will simply perish. My gatory patterns for visiting birds will be completely disorientated and breeding habits obliterated. After years of this, little will return. The constant of high tension cable, the wear of tracking motors and vibrating from the generators and transformers will ensure an alien hostile environment, a hideous place for people to walk through.

01:08:49:16 - 01:09:15:28

Solar panels have a very detrimental effect on birds and bats. Everything here will change. None of it for the better. We should not be the last generation which truly appreciates our wonderful Norfolk countryside, nor does it have to be this way. This project is a misplaced abomination sold to the public as sustainable green energy, but at the sacrifice of our national our natural environment. You could just draw

01:09:16:00 - 01:09:16:22

it to a close.

01:09:17:21 - 01:09:19:04

One two lines.

01:09:19:09 - 01:09:19:28

Thank you.

01:09:20:00 - 01:09:26:10

I respectfully ask that the examining authority recommend East Pies applications rejected for all our sakes.

01:09:26:22 - 01:09:41:19

Thank you very much. And just a comment if you can feedback. You mentioned the walks from Great Malton. If mister Gibson could include those with his written submission details of those walks, that'd really helpful. Thank you.

01:09:44:12 - 01:09:49:13

Next, I have Stephen Bamba. Thank you.

01:09:51:13 - 01:10:25:03

My name is Stephen Bamba of Fritin. I am directly affected by this proposal by East Pie, and I've lived in my present house since nineteen ninety two. I have a very strong claim to knowing the area intimately, and I got to know almost all the patients in my practice area, which covered well over one hundred square miles, including Fritten and Hempnal, the villages nearest my home and those most closely affected by the proposal. It's no surprise that most local residents share my objections, and some, of course, have additional objections.

01:10:26:15 - 01:11:04:20

My house and the grade one listed St. Catharines Church opposite are in an area designated by South Norfolk Council as a conservation area. My property is grade two listed and directly opposite and less than fifty meters from the proposed solar arrays on the other side of the road, similarly for the church. In December twenty nineteen, the council published a document called Fritin Character Appraisal and Management Guidelines. It stresses the importance of historical, scientific, architectural, agricultural, natural and visual aspects of the immediate area.

01:11:05:12 - 01:11:36:01

All these things will be permanently and irretrievably destroyed by the industrialization of the area. The proposed arrays at four point three meters are much higher than standard ones and will contribute greatly to the upset visually for us. A thirteen meter battery tall storage system is proposed in a position and clear line of sight from my house. Light pollution from security features, glaring glint from the sun, electrical and construction noise pollution would be intolerable.

01:11:37:03 - 01:12:07:29

All properties have already suffered a reduction in value directly from the mere proposal to build a solar farm, and that value would drop further still with the presence of one. I fear for my welfare and local people if the solar farm goes ahead. I chose to live in South Norfolk precisely because of its rural nature with its seasonally changing character and views, tranquility, and sense of natural rhythm. It is unacceptable to destroy it.

01:12:08:09 - 01:12:40:12

I have many specific objections, but principally, the loss of high quality agricultural land would never be reversed. Even with political will and the removal of the infrastructure in decades' time, the natural constitution of productive soil will be lost for good. Domestic food security is even more important than ever because of widespread geopolitical trouble. The government's many documents on this make this clear. Flora and fauna has been covered by the people. There's a huge amount. And finally, from my own point, traffic.

01:12:40:17 - 01:13:11:13

My village and my house is on the C201 from Norwich to Starston at forty miles an hour, the only traffic on that time. In summary, for these reasons and many more, the East Pipe solar proposal is detrimental to the well-being of all those who live here. It damages the natural environment of soil, fauna and flora. The solar factory is practically irreversible. The very name solar farm is misleading and deliberately suggest an entity in harmony with the countryside.

01:13:12:11 - 01:13:37:15

It's a it's an industrial factory. The last sentence, to put solar factory in a place with similar visual, historic, natural, and peaceful qualities, such as hamster teeth or Regent's Park, would never be considered or countenanced. There's a strong feeling that local opinion is being willfully ignored as it's merely rural folk who object. This aggravates the matter further. I oppose it. Thank you.

01:13:38:12 - 01:13:39:06

Thank you very much.

01:13:41:03 - 01:13:42:26

Just one question for my colleague.

01:13:43:13 - 01:13:54:26

Mr. Bamber, thank you. Just one question from me. You mentioned the conservation area, I think, appraisal and management guidelines. It'd be quite helpful to us if which conservation area is it? Remind me.

01:13:54:29 - 01:13:57:02

Frickin' conservation. Frickin' conservation area. Yeah.

01:13:57:04 - 01:13:58:29

I can supply it online if you wish.

01:13:59:01 - 01:13:59:16

Yeah. If you

01:13:59:18 - 01:14:02:15

could and it'd be quite helpful when you refer to documents like that. If you could sort of

01:14:04:05 - 01:14:13:29

make clear which paragraphs or parts of pages, if they're not in the paragraphs you're actually referring to, that it would reach. That would be helpful to us as well as just providing the document. Thank you.

01:14:17:29 - 01:14:20:28

Thank you. If we can now move to Sally Walker.

01:14:22:19 - 01:14:25:08

My name is doctor Jonathan Newman.

01:14:25:10 - 01:14:29:06

I'm just If you just pause for a moment. Just

01:14:31:06 - 01:14:33:11

All devices to silence, please.

01:14:33:27 - 01:14:35:15

Okay. If you want to start again.

01:14:35:21 - 01:14:42:29

Thank you. That always happens when I start to speak, so apologies for that. My name is doctor Jonathan Newman. I'm chair of Brook Parish Council.

01:14:45:16 - 01:15:20:11

My name is doctor Jonathan Newman, chair of Brook Parish Council. I've been asked to read this personal impact statement on behalf of one of the residents of Brook, missus Sally Walker. Mister and missus Walker live within twenty meters of the boundary of site nine. Missus Walker felt unable to speak at this hearing, but her thoughts and feelings are representative of so many others in the nineteen parishes affected by this proposal. These are thoughts I never had the intention to share. Trash. That's how I would describe the impact of the for industrial sized solar at the bottom of our garden.

01:15:20:21 - 01:15:50:28

My life crashed. When the image of your surroundings is altered, you realize just how much of your life is invested in those surroundings. There is security in the objects and projections of happiness that surround these things. Your home, the memories attached to that home, once compromised, threaten everything you believe to be true of your life. We have been in this house for thirty years. I didn't like the house, but my husband said, don't worry. I will turn it into a home you will love.

01:15:52:04 - 01:16:00:10

He did just that. We have created a house that we love and filled it with thirty years of memories.

01:16:02:20 - 01:16:04:10

Our dog is buried here.

01:16:06:20 - 01:16:11:04

We have had wildlife experiences that touch your soul and make you believe in better things.

01:16:12:21 - 01:16:23:23

To each other, we call our house the sanctuary, the place to come back to, to feel safe and secure. We celebrated our wedding here. It seems to me everything above is no more.

01:16:28:08 - 01:16:38:24

When that bubble bursts, that place is altered and becomes unrecognizable in your mind. Your past and the memories of that place are shattered. The image of your future is altered beyond all recognition.

01:16:40:19 - 01:17:19:03

The uncertainty and financial implications are crushing. The value of our house is intrinsically linked to our future. It gives us choices or we thought it did. We have become hostages in our own home, unable to even to sell it to escape. It's so shocking to the heart and mind that it's unbearable. The strain that humankind's excessive consumption is putting on our planet is disastrous for the environment. We all need to consume less, ask us to give up something to protect the planet, but that something should not be the countryside. The charity Bite Back have shown that the ten largest food manufacturers have a combined carbon emissions significantly exceeded the emissions of the UK as a whole.

01:17:22:00 - 01:17:50:10

The thought of living with the threat of this project for several years is intolerable. Lives would be ruined for the profits of foreign investment companies. Sharing this feels like an assault on my privacy. However, I felt it was necessary to show the degree of stress, worry, and helplessness, hopelessness, and I no doubt meant I and no doubt many others feel. I crave the quieting of my mind, but fear that it will not come anytime soon. I walk through our garden, look at the surrounding fields that are under threat by solar, and I weep every day.

01:17:53:12 - 01:18:05:02

These are not my words, but certainly my sentiments. I missed you quietly today, so quietly that no one noticed. I missed you so quietly today, but I felt it so loudly.

01:18:07:12 - 01:18:19:24

Don't allow this to happen. There are better ways. This reading is praised from my original personal impact statement submitted and has been submitted to the inspectorate. And that was written on the fifth of February twenty twenty five.

01:18:21:09 - 01:18:26:15

Missus Walker has been suffering those thoughts for the last eighteen months. Thank you.

01:18:27:02 - 01:18:30:03

Thank you. A very personal statement.

01:18:32:01 - 01:18:34:13

If we can now move on to Tony Hall.

01:18:40:03 - 01:19:00:28

Morning. My name is Tony Hall, and I live in Great Malton. Our property extends the boundary of the proposed national grid substation on the north side. I think it's known as site one. Our land, although extensive, is not agricultural land.

01:19:02:15 - 01:19:16:08

It is used regularly by family and friends who enjoy horses, pet sheep, archery, fishing lake, and Scandinavian style barbecue hut. There is also a large apiary with over four hundred thousand bees.

01:19:18:01 - 01:19:22:16

The effects of the substation on our family cannot be underestimated.

01:19:24:06 - 01:19:29:17

With regards to the fishing lake, you can clearly see this if you look on Ordnance Survey maps.

01:19:31:24 - 01:19:40:25

There is a fishing stage on that lake, which is only twelve meters from the boundary of the substation.

01:19:43:05 - 01:19:45:17

I'm particularly concerned by the following.

01:19:47:23 - 01:19:55:26

The electromagnetic exposure by emissions from the site, people might know this as EMF,

01:19:57:21 - 01:20:03:01

exposure to low frequency radiation, non ionizing,

01:20:04:19 - 01:20:05:06

skyline

01:20:05:08 - 01:20:06:00

view,

01:20:09:21 - 01:20:12:17

low frequency from the transformers.

01:20:14:11 - 01:20:27:12

The wind the wind direction is predominantly from the south in this area, which means sound pollution will travel right into the village day and night.

01:20:29:29 - 01:20:32:18

I'm also concerned about the light pollution,

01:20:36:06 - 01:20:47:16

concerned about the risk of electrical explosion and fire from this site. I'm not talking about lithium battery site. I'm talking about the main substation site.

01:20:49:06 - 01:20:53:28

Escape of toxic materials and ozone depleting gases in fault conditions,

01:20:56:05 - 01:20:57:25

water contamination.

01:21:00:07 - 01:21:07:13

And I also have to ask if the hall up rules for this type of project have been considered.

01:21:09:14 - 01:21:13:21

From a layman's point of view, I don't think they have.

01:21:15:21 - 01:21:27:12

I've been unable to find a definitive site plan for the National Grid site, I've found it very difficult to navigate the plans and maps associated with this project.

01:21:29:00 - 01:21:36:15

In conclusion, the proposed site for the National Grid substation is in the wrong place.

01:21:38:13 - 01:21:54:07

I asked the planning inspectorate to visit my property in person to understand how close this substation would be to our property and land and to address the concerns raised. Thank you.

01:21:57:20 - 01:22:05:08

Thank you. In terms of a site inspection, have you submitted that thus far?

01:22:06:20 - 01:22:07:17

I will.

01:22:07:22 - 01:22:16:16

Okay. If you could do that and perhaps the applicant could make a note of that in terms of the site inspection.

01:22:22:07 - 01:22:31:28

And I understand Susan Baines is not here from this group. So that's everyone from this group. Do you?

01:22:32:22 - 01:22:52:00

I just wanted to say that you after you were talking to the Ramblers representative, you were asking about circular walks. I brought you a gift of the shots and bucklers of twenty four circular walk. I don't know if you accept evidence. It's not digital, but this is a gift for you if you

01:22:52:05 - 01:23:04:18

Thank you. If you could find a way of submitting it for deadline one, even if it means scanning the pages of it, obviously, I can't accept anything sort of like today. It has to come in through the formal examination

01:23:04:25 - 01:23:05:10

Okay.

01:23:05:12 - 01:23:23:23

The deadline routes. If you have a word with the case team and I'm sure that I'm sure there's a way of getting into the examination. That's the key. Enjoy it. Thank you. No. That it will be useful. As I said, we are thankful details of local walk. So I think the information in it will be useful to us, but it'll have to be submitted, unfortunately, through the actual That's what I formal route.

01:23:24:05 - 01:23:24:20

So it might

01:23:24:22 - 01:23:26:29

need some scanning. Yeah. Thank you.

01:23:48:22 - 01:24:08:04

Okay. We're going to take a short break now for fifteen minutes. So if we could come back and start. Oh, sorry. I'll take those one hand up in the room before we leave. Is there a roving microphone or you're very welcome to hang on.

01:24:18:20 - 01:24:33:10

Thank you for listening to me. I've listened all day yesterday and this morning, and nobody has mentioned yet the fact of the numbers of people that are not here.

01:24:35:03 - 01:25:05:06

They are going to live for the next sixty years, hopefully. Every week, seven of them come to our house at the end of Market Lane in Shotsam, and they go out for walks along Market Lane and around the fields, which you are discussing eight a and eight b. They love the area.

01:25:05:23 - 01:25:43:02

They are knowledgeable about the natural environment. They know the crops in the fields. They know the plants in the hedges. They know the trees. They understand what happens through the year, and they do not want to see their landscape spoilt. They do not want to have the lanes they walk on, run on, and play on being used by HGV vehicles and AILs, whatever they are.

01:25:43:19 - 01:26:27:04

They don't want any of it. They want to see solar panels put where they belong on industrial roof spaces, on car parks, supermarkets like they have in France. They want to see them on agricultural buildings and on old new houses. We are all in favor of solar panels. We have solar panels on our roof. But my grandchildren do not want to live with what this company from Australia is proposing where all their Chinese investors are going to make a profit from our suffering.

01:26:27:13 - 01:26:28:26

Thank you for listening me.

01:26:28:28 - 01:26:30:12

To join. Yeah.

01:26:30:14 - 01:26:33:09

Thank you. If we could, Brookvane. Thank you.

01:26:33:21 - 01:26:35:02

Alright. Thank you.

01:26:35:04 - 01:26:41:16

Could I could I just ask the lady if she could tell us her name? If you could pass the mic.

01:26:42:20 - 01:26:47:29

Anne. Anne Ginsdale, and I live in Shotsam. Thank you.

01:26:48:01 - 01:27:01:02

Thank you very much. Okay. We will now take a break for fifteen minutes. So if we could return at slightly over eleven forty five. Thank you very much. This meeting is now adjourned.