



Planning Inspectorate
Arolygiaeth Gynllunio

Hearing Transcript

Project:	East Pye Solar
Hearing:	Recording of Open Floor Hearing 1 (OFH1) – Part 1
Date:	15 September 2026

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00:00:06:00 - 00:00:17:27

Thank you very much. Now before we begin, can I confirm that the case team with the case team that I can be heard clearly and that the live streaming and recording of this event has commenced?

00:00:26:04 - 00:00:27:27

Ready for a case team response.

00:00:33:10 - 00:01:03:10

Still no response. Okay. Thank you. Thanks very much. Thank you indeed. It's now two PM, and the time for this formal open floor hearing to begin on Tuesday, the fifteenth of September two thousand and twenty six. I would like to welcome you all to this open floor hearing for the proposed East Pie Solar project. My name is John McEvoy, and I'll be chairing today's hearing. I'm an examining inspector and a chartered civil engineer.

00:01:04:00 - 00:01:13:23

I've been appointed by the secretary of state to be a member of the panel to examine this application. I'm now going to ask my other panel members to introduce themselves.

00:01:15:27 - 00:01:21:01

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

00:01:24:16 - 00:01:28:06

Good afternoon. My name is Claire Taylor, and I'm a member of this panel.

00:01:30:02 - 00:01:52:07

Thank you. Together, we constitute the examining authority appointed by the Secretary of State to examine this application. Supporting us today is the planning inspectorate case team led by our case manager, Robert Cook, together with our administrative and technical support staff. I would also like to welcome the planning inspectorate observers who are present today.

00:01:53:28 - 00:02:06:20

As this is a blended hearing, participants are attending both in person and remotely. We will look to ensure that all participants have a fair opportunity to participate regardless of how you're attending.

00:02:08:09 - 00:02:51:27

The purpose of the hearing is to provide interested parties and other entitled persons with an opportunity to make oral submissions directly to the examining authority on matters relevant to the examination of this application. Oral submissions are an important part of the examination process and will be considered alongside all written representations and other evidence before the examining authority. I will now cover a few housekeeping matters. For participants joining remotely via Microsoft Teams, if you experience any technical difficulties during the hearing, please contact the case team in the usual manner either via the chat function or raising the electronic hand raising facility.

00:02:53:20 - 00:03:35:00

Can we all please ensure that our mobile phones and other devices are switched to silent mode? Thank you. For those speaking, please use the microphone provided and speak clearly so that all participants, including those attending remotely, can hear what is being said. Only one person should speak at a time. For remote participants, please keep your microphone muted when not speaking. In the event of an emergency requiring evacuation, please follow the instructions of their new staff and the case team, and we understand there are no fire drills this afternoon.

00:03:36:11 - 00:03:48:15

The assembly point is located outside the building in the main car park. Toilets are located on this floor immediately left on exiting this room and on the ground floor.

00:03:51:00 - 00:04:23:14

Fifteen minute comfort breaks will be taken during this hearing at the appropriate time. Today's hearing is being live streamed and recorded. The recording will form part of the examination record and may be published on the project web page. This is a public hearing and comments made during the proceedings may enter the public domain. Those speaking should take care not to disclose personal, confidential or commercially sensitive information unless it is necessary to do so.

00:04:24:18 - 00:04:55:02

I will now explain the speaking arrangements. When I invite you to speak, please introduce yourself and confirm whether you are speaking on your own behalf or on behalf of another person or organization or constituency. To assist with time management, a countdown timer will be displayed. Those speaking on behalf of organizations or constituencies or others will be allocated five minutes. Individual speakers will be allocated three minutes.

00:04:55:26 - 00:05:09:29

As the allotted speaking time approaches its end, the timer will provide a visual warning. I will ask speakers to conclude the remarks promptly when the time expires so that everyone who wishes to speak has an opportunity to do so.

00:05:11:16 - 00:05:34:17

To those speaking to us this afternoon, can I ask please that you focus on the principal matters you wish the examining authority to consider? We may ask questions following an oral submission. I will also ask yourself to conduct yourselves in a courteous and respectful manner throughout the hearing and to allow others to speak without interruption. Thank you.

00:05:40:16 - 00:05:46:06

Finally, I'll skip to any members of the press present or those who wish to make a recording of the hearing.

00:05:48:11 - 00:05:53:29

I don't see any hands raised in the floor or online. Thank you.

00:05:55:19 - 00:06:26:05

That concludes the introductory remarks. We will now move to the next item of business. I will call eight people up to the table at a time and then invite each speaker to make their own representation. Can I ask that you please stay at the table until everyone at the table has spoken, at which point you are free to return to your seat? For those joining us to speak online, I will invite you in turn to turn on your camera and microphone at the appropriate time.

00:06:27:08 - 00:06:31:23

So I will now name the first eight speakers to come to the table.

00:06:33:11 - 00:06:53:17

Beginning with Adrian Ramsay, Member of Parliament, Councilor Kabir Kare, Daniel Elmer, Sandra Mullet, David Hook, Alison Reid, Kathy Thompson, Carol Bailey. Can you please come forward?

00:07:16:17 - 00:07:24:15

Thank you, indeed. Mr. Ramsay, you are first to speak. You have five minutes. They commence now. Thank you.

00:07:25:19 - 00:07:56:16

Thank you very much. I'm Adrian Ramsay. I'm the MP for Waveney Valley, and I'm speaking on behalf of my constituents, and thank you for the opportunity to speak today. I've been a supporter of renewable energy for decades, and it's imperative that we reach net zero as soon as possible. And we need to do so with the support and confidence of local communities and with the minimum disruption to the countryside which we're trying to protect. Much of the East Pyscheme is outside of my constituency, but sites one and two near Great Malton are in Wavenay Valley.

00:07:56:18 - 00:08:27:13

And aside from general points, this is where I'll focus my comments. I've spoken to and corresponded with a large number of residents and understand their concerns. Local communities have spent a lot of time and effort looking into this application, and it's important that their work is acknowledged and taken seriously. Residents are the experts when it comes to their communities. My first concern is over process, whether the planning has inspector allowed enough time and space for this hearing. I understand there are people who've asked to speak today and who've asked to be present today who've not been able to do so.

00:08:27:15 - 00:08:58:02

And I'm disappointed if this is a case because the planning inspectorate needs to show that all perspectives and evidence have been considered and balanced in its decision, and this is something I sought clarification on last week. My first substantive comment is on land use. With the breakdown of our climate, it's crucial that as a country, we improve our food security, energy security, and restore nature. Land use policy must shape how we do all these things. We need to produce more of our own food, and for this reason, high grade agricultural land needs to be protected.

00:08:58:21 - 00:09:34:20

A large proportion of the land in in this application is grades two and three a. And so I asked the planning inspector to thoroughly analyze the type of land that this application covers and whether it's in the national interest for the development to go ahead in the area proposed. In addition, we know that Ireland's green power is owned by Macquarie, an Australian asset management company. I'm aware that compulsory purchase orders have been and can be issued for large solar farms, and my constituents are concerned about large amounts of farmland in South Norfolk being permanently bought up by foreign investors with no interest in the community or sustainable farming.

00:09:34:22 - 00:10:13:06

I asked the planning inspector to evaluate this risk. Heritage is important to the people of small villages in South Norfolk, and Great Moulton was recorded in the Domesday Book. And walking along hundred lane, it's easy to see the cultural significance. It's important to retain this landscape for future generations, and I would not want to see the lane cut across by heavy vehicles. Slightly larger than hundred lane, single tracks such as Lodge Road in Tivvilleschel St Margaret are not suitable for HGVs that would come with the development as proposed. As well as the solar panels, Great Malton area is earmarked for Bess and substations, although the substation sites have not yet all been decided.

00:10:13:11 - 00:10:45:26

I'd ask the inspector to assess whether sites in these locations and accessed by narrow lanes are suitable locations for a best. These roads could easily be blocked, and following the wildfires we've experienced this year, it may not be possible for the fire service to reach the site in an emergency. I'd also like to make a point about water and keeping the aquifer clean and full. A number of people in the area take their drinking water from wells, and it's important that this remains of a high quality. And finally, I need to mention the safety of gliders taking off from Tibetan airfield.

00:10:45:28 - 00:11:16:04

Two concerns have been raised. Firstly, the removal of the emergency landing areas in the event of engine failure after takeoff issues. And secondly, the glint and glare from the panels close to the airfield, which could limit the ability of the pilot to see other aircraft in the vicinity, which would clearly raise significant safety issues. I'd ask the planning inspectorate to properly assess this. There are many other speakers to come from within my constituency and elsewhere who have studied this application in detail and will set out further detailed points.

00:11:16:06 - 00:11:22:27

I'd ask that you consider their evidence carefully, and I myself will submit further comments in writing. Thank you.

00:11:24:29 - 00:11:56:00

Mr Ramsay, thank you very much indeed. I'd just like to address the concern you expressed concerning people not being able to participate. I can assure you that the case team and the examining authority have worked quite hard this morning to ensure that those who wish to speak this afternoon can do so. And if not today, then tomorrow afternoon. But your complaints are noted. So thank you for that. Just a question and concern of the gliders. You said there were concerns regarding takeoff. Yes. Could you present further information by deadline one regarding that specific point, please? Yes, of course.

00:11:56:02 - 00:11:58:00

I've got information from Tibbon and Mayfield, which

00:11:58:02 - 00:11:59:16

I can share. Thank you so much.

00:12:03:18 - 00:12:14:07

Mr. Ramsay, thank you indeed. Next to speak is Councillor Kabir Kare on behalf of Norfolk County Council. Councillor Kare, your five minutes starts now. Thank you.

00:12:15:14 - 00:12:58:06

Thank you. Good afternoon. And, yes, I'm Kabir Cair, cabinet member for business skills and agriculture at Norfolk County Council. I'm speaking today on behalf of the County Council in our roles as highway authority and lead local flood authority, which falls within my department, and as a democratically elected authority representing communities across Norfolk. The county council's position is clear. We object to the East Pi solar proposal because of serious concerns about the loss of high quality agricultural land and the cumulative impacts of major infrastructure across this part of Norfolk in particular and a number of unresolved issues affecting local communities, our and environment statutory services.

00:12:58:28 - 00:13:31:00

At the same time, our objection should not be mistaken for an unwillingness to engage constructively. We will continue working with this applicant throughout the examination process to seek improvements and secure the strongest possible mitigation where impacts cannot be avoided. At the heart of our concerns is the sheer scale and duration of this proposal. East Py Solar would occupy around two thousand seven hundred acres of agricultural land from great mould into seeding, and the project is expected to operate for sixty years.

00:13:31:14 - 00:14:07:02

We hear the term temporary used frequently in relation to solar development. However, a sixty year operational period is not temporary in the way that local residents or farming businesses understand that term. It represents several generations of a farming family. It represents the majority of a person's lifetime. It represents a fundamental and long lasting change to the landscape and character of this area. A particular important issue is the loss of high quality agricultural land. The applicant's own figures identify sixty eight percent of the site as best and most versatile agricultural land.

00:14:07:04 - 00:14:46:11

The County Council believes the implications of removing such a significant area of productive farmland from agricultural use deserves substantial weight. This is not simply a local issue. It relates to food production, agricultural resilience and the long term viability of farming businesses that contribute greatly to Norfolk's economy and identity. Our concerns are amplified when the scheme is viewed in its wider context. East Pie is not an isolated development. Alongside proposals such as the Drovers and high grove and other solar projects across Norfolk, more than thirteen thousand acres of agricultural land are potentially affected.

00:14:46:16 - 00:15:23:04

At the same time, communities in South Norfolk are already experiencing the effects other of nationally significant infrastructure projects, such as the Hornsea Project three, Gridworks and the Norwich Tullibri Transmission Project, both in the South Norfolk area. This issue is not simply the existence of individual developments. It's the concentration, overlap and interaction of impacts. Communities experience these projects cumulatively, not as separate chapters in different planning applications. The examination must therefore give genuine and rigorous consideration to the cumulative effects on residents and businesses.

00:15:23:16 - 00:15:58:18

There are also specific local consequences that illustrate our wider concerns. At Great Malden, the chosen National Grid substation location would bring a substantial new substation and up to four pylons closer to the village. County Council previously supported the more southerly option because it would have consolidated infrastructure further away from the residents and reduced the spread of visual and construction impacts. As highway authority, we remain unable to support the current construction traffic strategy for sites seven and ten because significant highway constraints and mitigation requirements remain unresolved.

00:15:58:27 - 00:16:29:10

Construction traffic must use roads capable of accommodating it safely and wherever possible should rely on internal haul routes and cable corridors rather than creating avoidable impacts on rural communities. As lead local flood authority, we also remain concerned that the application does not yet demonstrate through clear and consistent evidence that surface water can be managed without increasing flood risk, either on-site or elsewhere. This is a fundamental requirement that must be resolved before any consent is considered.

00:16:29:12 - 00:17:09:08

Finally, we are concerned about the longer term effects on landscape character, public rights of way and community well-being. Local people value these places not only for how they look, but for how they contribute to their quality of life. In closing, Norfolk County Council asks the examining authority to ensure that the cumulative case for this development is examined rigorously and that any mitigation or compensation measures are clear, enforceable and effective. The transition to renewable energy is important, but that transition should not require host communities, productive farmland and local infrastructure to bear avoidable or poorly mitigated harm.

00:17:09:10 - 00:17:17:03

If this project is ultimately to be consented, the applicant must be held to a high standard. Impact should be avoided wherever possible. Thank you.

00:17:17:21 - 00:17:46:04

Thank you so much indeed. I have two questions, if I may. You gave commentary to the construction traffic management strategy for Sites seven and ten. Can you tell me please whether the highway authority is still in active dialogue with the applicant concerning those two sites? Yes. Very good. And on a similar vein, as the lead local flood authority, are your officers again in dialogue with the active dialogue with the applicant concerning those issues?

00:17:46:06 - 00:17:46:21

Yes.

00:17:47:05 - 00:17:48:21

That's okay. Thank you.

00:17:52:02 - 00:17:56:04

Many thanks. Thank you. Next, Daniel Elmer.

00:17:56:14 - 00:18:29:26

Thank you very much. I'm Daniel Elmer. I'm speaking on behalf of South Norfolk District Council as the leader. And thank you for the opportunity to speak today. I won't reiterate the points about high grade agricultural land, but I do echo them, and I think the points are well made. I would like to be clear that I support the transition to renewable energy, and I recognize the importance that solar generation will play in helping our country achieve its carbon reduction targets. We need to tackle climate change, strengthen energy security, and develop sustainable sources of power for future generations.

00:18:30:27 - 00:19:04:09

But this doesn't mean supporting every proposal in every location regardless of its impact. South Norfolk has already made a significant contribution to nationally important energy infrastructure. Within our district, multiple solar and battery storage schemes have already been approved or proposed of very significant scale. We're also, as has already been referenced, accommodating major projects, including Hornsey Free offshore wind farm, the converter station at Norwich Main, Equinor's offshore wind farm extensions, and the proposed Norwich to Tilbury electricity transmission project.

00:19:05:08 - 00:19:41:24

The scale of this infrastructure is substantial and has already transformed parts of our rural landscape. South Norfolk Council has demonstrated through its planning decisions they understands and supports the national need for renewable energy, but that support must be balanced against our responsibility to protect landscapes, heritage, ecology, local economies, and communities. Indeed, I would encourage members of the examining authority, if time permits, to visit the areas around Dunstan Hall and Norwich, Maine, where existing and proposed infrastructure provides a clear illustration of the cumulative pressures already being experienced.

00:19:43:15 - 00:20:23:11

Having reviewed the evidence, I remain strongly opposed to the East Pie solar project. My concern is not the renewable energy itself or solar farms in principle, but the scale, location, and cumulative impact of this proposal. When considered alongside existing and consented schemes, I believe East Pie would result in significant and lasting harm that outweighs its benefits. One of my principal concerns is heritage. The villages and countryside affected by this proposal contain historic buildings and landscapes whose significance derives not only from the structures themselves, but also from their relationship with the surrounding countryside.

00:20:23:29 - 00:20:58:08

The introduction of extensive solar arrays, substations, battery storage, fencing, and associated infrastructure would fundamentally alter those historic settings. Listed buildings such as molten farmhouse and hillside house would lose much of the agricultural landscape that contributes so strongly to their character and significance. Even some mitigation measures raise concerns. While woodland planting may help screen development, it could also introduce features that are inconsistent with the historic character of the landscape, which brings me to landscape character.

00:20:58:20 - 00:21:21:22

The Tasse tributary farmlands and Great Malton Plateau farmlands are valued rural landscapes that contribute significantly to the identity of South Norfolk. This proposal would introduce industrial scale infrastructure into those areas on an unprecedented scale. All of the all of the infrastructure already listed would permanently alter the appearance of those landscape settings.

00:21:23:11 - 00:21:57:06

I remain concerned about the impacts on ancient trees, hedgerows, and other important landscape features, and I do not believe sufficient certainty has been provided regarding their long term protection. In particular, I object to the proposed closed board boarded fencing, which is wholly out of character with the rural environment. Ecology is another important area. Whilst I reckon I welcome the principle of biodiversity net gain, I am not convinced there is sufficient certainty about how biodiversity benefits will be delivered, monitored, and maintained throughout the life of this project.

00:21:57:21 - 00:22:31:04

Concerns remain regarding protected species, including the nationally important Barbastel bat population and white clawed crayfish, alongside broader impacts on habitat networks and irreplaceable ecological assets. Stronger safeguards and robust long term monitoring arrangements are required. The impact on local residents is most important. These are quiet rural settlements with naturally low background noise levels, yet there remains insufficient reassurance regarding the impacts of battery storage facilities and other operational equipment.

00:22:32:01 - 00:22:59:04

We've already touched on the economic implications, so I won't repeat it. But importantly, this proposal can't be viewed in isolation. When considered alongside all the other infrastructure we are already playing host to, the cumulative impact of this renders it incredibly harmful to South Norfolk. This is not about a debate about whether renewable energy is necessary. It is, but this particular scheme would not work for South Norfolk.

00:23:00:04 - 00:23:15:12

I'm very grateful. Thank you for concluding at five minutes. One question for me. You gave recommendation that the examining authority should visit two locations. Could you please send a note by deadline one, if possible, just to confirm those locations, please? I believe one was Dunston Hall.

00:23:16:03 - 00:23:17:23

Yes. I will do.

00:23:18:20 - 00:23:30:15

Mister Emmett, thank you indeed. Next to speak is Sandra Mullet on behalf of Block East Pie Solar. Miss Mullet, you have five minutes starting now. Thank you.

00:23:31:01 - 00:24:08:29

Good afternoon. My name is Sandra Mullet. I'm part of the Block East Pie Steering Group, but I actually reside in Great Morton. BEPPS doesn't oppose renewable energy in principle, but we object to East Pi Solar in its entirety due to the significant harm it poses to our landscape, heritage, ecology and communities. In its T4 zero four plus impact assessment of April twenty five, Ofgem demonstrated that East Anglia had already more than met its new thirty one thirty five combined transmission and distribution of regional solar targets with projects already in construction or in planning.

00:24:09:11 - 00:24:24:03

The applicant's statement of need confirms East Pye Solar is not required to meet any identified regional shortfalls. Rep submits that the harm East Pye Solar would cause is not justified by any need at this scale, this form, in this location.

00:24:25:19 - 00:24:58:26

On a personal note, I would say to everyone involved in developing this project, for those of us living with East PySola, it is not simply a collection of theoretical components on maps. It represents a substantial substantial degradation of our landscape, villages, and rural environment in which we live. We are not receptors. We are people whose lives you have upended. There is a genuine sense of grief and fear in our communities. You have made us feel powerless, but we are not, and we should not be dismissed as such. I wish to speak today particularly about Great Malton.

00:24:59:06 - 00:25:46:20

I submit that the selection of Great Malton as East Pies sorry. East Pye Solar's grid hub is not environmentally justified and is not the right place for this major concentration of grid substation and best infrastructure. East Pye Solar states that this is a temporary and reversible development That may apply to solar panels if after sixty years they are removed and the land and landscape are completely restored, which is questionable. However, the National Grid substation is different. We asked the applicant and National Grid to confirm whether the proposed National Grid substation in Great Malton has a decommissioning date, or will it be permanent? The same question applies to the permanent maintenance access across one hundred lane RB19 and proposed changes to other historic lanes.

00:25:47:00 - 00:26:24:25

If there is no secured end date and the infrastructure is expected to remain beyond year sixty, we will suggest that the landscape and environmental effects should be considered for this examination as permanent rather than simply forming parts of a temporary solar scheme. Why was Great Malton chosen as the grid hub? When East Py Solar had already assembled the land but were told that Norwich, Maine was unavailable for connection, they looked at three other locations to build a new national grid substation on the existing transmission line. We also the examining authority to consider why the individual constraints meant these other locations were rejected were then considered acceptable for site one at Great Malton.

00:26:25:02 - 00:27:12:11

Was the priority, as stated by East Pye's own documentation, simply the availability of a willing landowner and proximity to the existing transmission line? Equally, why, when there are multiple projects on the tech register waiting to connect a new National Grid substation, North Anglin Ode on the proposed new transmission line, why does East Pie require National Grid to buy us to build a substation simply for its own project on the old transmission line? Grade two agricultural land. Why was the best and most versatile grade two agro land selected for permanent transmission infrastructure against government and SSEP advice, which says it should be avoided? We therefore ask whether sufficient weight was given into the permanent loss of grade two BMV land at Great Malton and whether landowner led priorities were given undue weight.

00:27:13:02 - 00:27:44:07

Groundwater supplies. We are concerned by the limitations of East Price water assessments, so we commissioned an independent report by Hannah Fraser Consulting Limited, which will be submitted with our written representations. Site one is on the principal aquifer and the catchment of the river wave near Chalkstream and surrounded private by private water supplies. Before consent re is granted, we submit water supplies must be properly tested, not left to assumptions, future designs, or post consent assessment. We ask that SiteOne and the best are considered together.

00:27:44:10 - 00:28:20:20

This major electrical infrastructure area includes every element of this project, including construction traffic, normal loads, public rights of way, etcetera. East Pie have dispersed all their assessments throughout substantial the number of documents submitted to the examining authority. We are concerned that the combined effects at site one have not been sufficiently brought together and understood for Great Molten. For the people who live here, these effects cannot be separated into individual environmental statements or technical components. They will be experienced every day altogether in one place. We respectfully request that the examining authority recommends that development consent for East Puddsupai Solar is refused.

00:28:20:29 - 00:28:32:15

This design or this project is not well designed, currently is barely designed at all, and it does not seek to fit respectfully within our landscape or to enhance it as a well designed NSIP should. Thank you.

00:28:33:09 - 00:29:06:27

Many thanks again for concluding at five minutes. I have two questions, two issues, if I may. You gave a good deal of commentary to site selection and in particular the Great Malton site. Everyone's information, tomorrow's issue specific hearing will be addressing site selection and indeed the

selection of the Great Malton site, point one. Point two, you mentioned, I believe, a report being prepared by Hannah Fraser yet to be submitted. Can you indicate when that will be likely submitted? Deadline one perhaps or beyond the sixth of October?

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No, by of October, will be submitted with our next representation.

00:29:10:28 - 00:29:12:04

By the sixth. Thank you.

00:29:12:06 - 00:29:14:06

But we could submit it earlier if you like.

00:29:14:08 - 00:29:18:01

That's quite okay. Thank you, indeed. Thank you. Miss Molot, many, many thanks.

00:29:20:12 - 00:29:24:24

Next to speak is David Hook, Hempnal Parish Council. Mr.

00:29:24:26 - 00:29:25:16

Hook, you

00:29:25:18 - 00:29:27:14

have five minutes. They start now. Thank you.

00:29:27:16 - 00:29:36:08

Thank you. I'm Chairman of Hempnal Parish Council and also got a twin hat on this because I'm a trustee of CPRE Norfolk.

00:29:37:23 - 00:29:48:15

Dunstan is a very appropriate place to hold these meetings because this is at the northern end of a corridor of development stretching down the Tas Valley and surrounding

00:29:54:05 - 00:29:56:02

the And

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significant share

00:30:00:10 - 00:30:22:18

four percent increase in the the overall land use of strategy of land will be covered by solar projects certainly do not apply here. Hempnal is particularly badly affected. We are surrounded we would be surrounded by solar fields, Site seven to the northwest to northeast, Site three to the south, Site five to the west, Site ten to the east.

00:30:24:23 - 00:30:57:06

Fifteen kilometers of countryside stretching from Tibbets Hall and Great Malton in the southwest northeastwards up to Brooking Seating, Almost one hundred fields, almost three thousand acres would be industrialized. Twenty three parishes would have solar infrastructure either within their boundaries or alongside their boundaries. The scheme is massive, dispersed, and strung together by cable route corridors, which are equally disruptive. I want now to talk about the impact on people because this is really distressing.

00:30:57:19 - 00:31:20:13

In our village, many people, scores of people, have received letters saying your land may be required for the project and pointing out the compulsory purchase powers. This is causing real concern. It's affecting people's well-being and in some cases people's health. And I know this is replicated throughout the scheme areas, not just in Hempnall.

00:31:22:28 - 00:31:47:09

We've held two large public meetings in the village attended by two hundred plus people, each one. At the first meeting, one person spoke in favor of the scheme. Everybody else opposed. And at the second meeting, no one spoke in favor of the scheme. I'm in contact with with hundreds of local people. I've only ever heard one other person say that they want this to happen in this area.

00:31:51:17 - 00:32:21:26

We support completely the objective of obtaining net zero by two thousand and fifty. The CPRE has done research carried out by UCL Energy Institute, shows that which one hundred and seventeen gigawatts of solar power can be derived from roofs and artificial surfaces by two thousand fifty fifty, which is more than the eighty five gigawatts that the Committee for Climate Change recommends for net zero.

00:32:21:28 - 00:32:56:07

So it can be done a better way. And I've been green since nineteen sixty seven. I'm positively committed to renewable energy. But one green objective should not be achieved at the by sacrificing another objective. I love this countryside. This countryside is beautiful. This countryside is a precious national asset. It's loved by the locals. It's loved by visitors. Tourism is a big thing in Norfolk. Pounds three billion tourism contributes to the Norfolk economy, bigger than agriculture.

00:32:57:05 - 00:33:18:26

This scheme would change our area in conjunction with all the other renewable schemes in the pipeline in a way that it would make it very unattractive for visitors. I urge you to consider all these things in your determination of this or in your recommendation, I should say, not your determination.

00:33:21:21 - 00:33:49:18

I would just like to sort of give a couple of examples of how local people have been impacted. An elderly lady in the village received a letter from the solicitors acting for the developers and was really, really distressed by the paragraph which said, your property may be required, and we do have compulsory purchase powers. As a parish council, we wrote to the solicitor saying,

00:33:51:24 - 00:33:58:28

can you confirm if this is the case? And they wrote back with a very mealy mouthed reply.

00:34:01:05 - 00:34:24:25

When we say it may be required, at present, we mean it's not required. But they didn't give us a firm ensure assurance that it wouldn't be required at some time in the future. This caused great distress for this elderly lady, she's not alone. We've got many, many, many other residents who've suffered this pressure. Please think of people. Put people first. Thank you very much.

00:34:25:09 - 00:34:36:14

Mr. Hoch, many thanks. That's Dan to finish it. Five minutes. I have two questions, if I may. You gave commentary to twenty three parishes. I wonder, could you send a list of those parishes, by deadline one?

00:34:36:19 - 00:34:39:06

Yes. I can name them now if you want, but That's okay.

00:34:40:07 - 00:34:41:18

Deadline one is fine. Thank you.

00:34:41:20 - 00:34:43:18

No, that will be an all written representation. My

00:34:44:04 - 00:34:53:22

second question is you gave mention to two large public meetings. I presume they were minuted. And if so, could you please submit a copy of those minutes by deadline one, please?

00:34:53:24 - 00:34:55:10

Absolutely, certainly, yeah.

00:34:55:12 - 00:35:05:25

Mr. Hook, many thanks. Thank you. Next to speak is Alison Reid. Alison, thank you. You have five minutes starting now.

00:35:06:11 - 00:35:46:11

Alison Reid, chair of Tivotshall Parish Council. Tivotshall is served north and south by the a one forty, east west by the b one one three four Station Road. We have only three two way nonpaved roads in our village. The rest are narrow, single track lanes. People are truly in the countryside along with the wildlife and natural environment. Ninety five percent of homes face or front open fields. Our village is of openness, views and peace and quiet. It is unsuitable for the construction and siting of solar arrays, cabling, best and four hundred kV project substation and all the lighting, fencing, noise, road changes and increased traffic.

00:35:47:04 - 00:36:19:11

Consultations were inadequate. No direct interaction with the parish council. Digital exclusion of many residents. Of those who received letters, access to the details or to respond was via links. Record responding via an iPhone proved totally impractical. The targeted consultation for station

road, a red line highlighting the section of road with the words widening and removal of necessary vegetation. Homes and farms will be impacted. No information on how. Later letters included the words compulsory purchase.

00:36:19:16 - 00:36:53:26

Still no detail. Is that a whole field, or is it all your garden? The current width and bends on the station road slowed traffic, especially the HGVs. Greater width and no tight bends, faster vehicles. The road bisects our village and many of our public rights of way. We cross it to access quiet lanes and the further public rights of way of Great Walton and Wakton. Our safety will be jeopardized forever. Project substation initially included a one hundred thirty two kV. It was missing from the next documents, and then it reappeared as four hundred kV in the DCO.

00:36:54:06 - 00:37:27:24

We have no information on its plot size or its height. We've emailed the applicant asking the distance from the homes, but there's been no reply. Paul wrote, Rodge Road is similar. The latest information is a partial use, single width lane with ninety degree bends. If widened, the vegetation includes numerous two hundred, two hundred and fifty year old oak trees. They consume c o two. How many saplings are gonna be required to mitigate that loss? The land sites are interlocking. Lodge roads should be ruled out except maybe for essential cross intersections.

00:37:28:11 - 00:38:14:01

A major concern is the fire risk of the BEST and project substation sites. Can East Pie identify exactly how the promised two fire and rescue service access points will operate and amend the draft DCO. It is not presently possible to determine whether the fire safety arrangement has been fully translated into the submitted access of plans and enforceable DCO requirements. Who's affected in our village, our rural economy, loss of BMV land for panels and disruptions of the cable corridors, the best and the substation, hospitality, Budica Way, Rebellion Way, byways, footpaths, all these bring visitors, relatives, and residents to the natural environment, hobbyists, photography, cycling, horse riding, and horse driving, walkers.

00:38:14:08 - 00:38:41:25

The parish gives access to clean air, dark skies, the natural environment. It supports human health. During COVID, the government stressed the level of importance of outdoor access. We do not accept the act applicant's statement that impacts are negligible in terms of transport. During construction, this project will affect all a one forty commuters. In our village, we are the Ipswich distant Norwich and Ipswich. The applicant states the rush hour is nine eight till nine. That's totally incorrect.

00:38:43:20 - 00:39:15:15

Our speed awareness machine in the village records over two hundred movements a day. Any holdups on the busy main road result in rat runs, and narrow roads cannot accommodate more traffic. Our village primary school, there's no footpaths for most of the homes, so the children walk in the road. Secondary approvals, will their safety waiting, alighting and leaving buses be protected? Some people have lived in our village for ninety years. Incomers have been there have come to seek tranquil rural environment and a community. We value everything, our trees, our heritage.

00:39:15:24 - 00:39:47:15

All the factors of our area are at serious risk if this project is approved. We will walk the narrow roads for personal and pet exercise, to visit friends and neighbors, to continue being a community of social interaction. We accept there is a climate change emergency. We support the need to reduce fossil fuels. The parish council believes this project, if approved, would have a huge negative impact on our rural economy and natural environment and our residents. Tivitall parish council is opposing the total East Buy solar schemes.

00:39:47:17 - 00:39:48:02

Thank you.

00:39:49:26 - 00:40:00:15

Yes, Swede. Thank you, indeed. I have two points of clarification, if I may. Number one, I may have misheard, but I think you seem to say the parish council have not been consulted by the applicant. Did I mishear that?

00:40:00:26 - 00:40:02:11

No. You didn't mishear that.

00:40:02:13 - 00:40:13:03

Okay. I wonder if perhaps the parish council could put something in writing by deadline one to confirm that point, please? And number two, speed awareness. Is that community led or police led? We

00:40:13:13 - 00:40:22:18

have a speed awareness machine, which is the property of the parish council. We have two, in fact, in our village. And they record the number of vehicles that go through and the speed at which they're traveling.

00:40:22:20 - 00:40:26:23

K. Is is that data shared with the county council's highways department or the police, for example?

00:40:26:25 - 00:40:29:12

It's shared with the police, certainly, and it's made public.

00:40:33:04 - 00:40:38:10

Next to speak, we have Kathy Thompson.

00:40:41:28 - 00:40:45:06

Thank you. Miss Thompson, you have five minutes starting now. Thank you.

00:40:46:00 - 00:41:23:26

Okay. Thank you. My name is Kathy Thomson, and I'm speaking today on behalf of Topcroft Parish Council. Let me be clear. Topcroft Parish Council does not oppose renewable energy. We understand the necessity of national climate targets. However, good planning requires balance, and the East Pi Solar Scheme shatters that balance. Iron Green Power's proposal is not a green energy solution that

will benefit us at all. It is an industrial scale imposition that will permanently disfigure our countryside, destroy productive agricultural land, and compromise our rural infrastructure.

00:41:25:06 - 00:41:47:16

For Topcroft, us, and our surrounding parishes, this project shifts our reality from living in peaceful, food producing, rural communities to being trapped inside a sprawling two thousand seven hundred acre industrial energy zone. The cumulative effect with other projects will annihilate the character of Norfolk.

00:41:49:12 - 00:41:58:18

The developer seems to treat this landscape as empty space, completely ignoring the fact it is a working, thriving, rural community

00:42:00:23 - 00:42:31:26

economy. South North relies heavily on tourism, countryside recreation, and local businesses, many of which support visitors. Inclosing in closing our footpaths in country lanes in literally miles of security fencing and industrial solar arrays is an appalling thought. It will adversely affect businesses such as pubs, farm shops, holiday lets, and local shops, etcetera, that families rely on for their livelihoods. Fencing will also affect movement of animals through the countryside.

00:42:32:25 - 00:43:07:29

There will be other environmental harms. Most critically, the project sits directly within the core foraging and maternity zones of Barbastell bats, a critically rare and strictly protected species on the UK red list. These bats are active around Springwood, local ancient woodland, an area that many locals visit for well-being and recreation. The extensive removal of nearby trees and hedgerows combined with the introduction of artificial lighting and solar arrays will disrupt their flight lines and their normal behaviors.

00:43:08:19 - 00:43:42:02

It would make a nonsense of the legal protection if this massive infrastructure project goes ahead. This ecological risk sits alongside the permanent loss of thousands of acres of productive high grade agricultural farmland during a time of national food insecurity. For local communities, including Topcroft, the immediate human impacts are just as severe. We have deep worries regarding the scale of the proposed battery energy storage systems. The huge lithium battery containers bring high risks of thermal runaway with wide ranging devastation.

00:43:42:21 - 00:44:15:05

Our narrow lanes and local emergency services are ill equipped to handle such problems. Also, the years of heavy construction traffic will decimate our fragile road network. Adding to the physical impacts, Topcroft Parish Council wishes to strongly voice an objection to the procedural injustice of the entire process. This system is structurally loaded against ordinary people. The developer has generated thousands of pages of highly technical dense and sometimes misleading documentation.

00:44:15:22 - 00:44:46:11

No individual resident, parish counsellor, or local business owner has the time or resources to read through this mountain of paperwork to extract the truth. This makes the process difficult or impossible

to follow. It means local residents and businesses remain in ignorance of the facts, turning what should be a fair democratic consultation into a David and Goliath struggle resulting in local voices being unheard or ignored. We are, however, grateful to Block East Pie Solar for their hard work.

00:44:46:13 - 00:44:48:25

We'd be unaware of what is happening without them.

00:44:50:17 - 00:45:22:13

National policy wants renewable targets to be met, but there are other ways by using brownfield sites and rooftops. We ask the the examining authorities to see the reality of the devastating impact of this project. On behalf of Topgolf Parish Council, we urge you to protect our heritage, our environment, food security, and our local democracy, and firmly recommend the refusal of this consent order. Thank you. But while I have the floor, I would like to add that I did wish to speak on my own behalf as well.

00:45:22:15 - 00:45:31:09

I wasn't allocated a slot. I understand I'm now allowed to, but I'm not prepared. So I don't know how I go about doing this.

00:45:33:09 - 00:45:40:08

This whole process has caused a lot of distress to myself, my family and friends who love to visit Norfolk. Thank you.

00:45:40:10 - 00:46:06:05

Ms. Thompson, you very much indeed. I wonder if you could perhaps speak with my colleagues on the case team to discuss the speaking arrangements. If you intend to speak or not, please speak to my colleagues in the case team. They'll be happy to help you. Okay. I have a question, if I may. You gave commentary to the emergency services. Have Top Croft Parish Council been in contact with those services? wondered I whether the parish council have been in dialogue with the emergency services.

00:46:06:09 - 00:46:24:15

We haven't directly, but I have been to the the meeting the other day with sorry. About East Pye Solar and the the one of the fire regulators were there. And so

00:46:27:07 - 00:46:27:26

yeah. Sorry.

00:46:28:02 - 00:46:28:19

Okay.

00:46:28:21 - 00:46:29:06

Don't know what else

00:46:29:08 - 00:46:43:04

to Ms. Thompson, that's okay. I understand. Thank you very much indeed. Thank you. Thank you. The final speaker among the group of eight is Carol Bailey from Great Malton Parish Council. Miss Bailey, you have five minutes starting now. Thank you.

00:46:43:06 - 00:47:28:03

Good afternoon. I'm the chair of Great Malton Parish Council who has great concerns about land parcel one and particularly sub site one b. Our concerns are straightforward. We believe the need for the scheme does not justify the location. We fully support the national need for renewable energy. However, national need is not the same thing as the need for this infrastructure development in this particular location. The applicant needs to demonstrate why sub site one b, a five hundred megawatt scheme, is necessary when the area already contains significant competing and prioritized renewable energy proposals such as the four hundred thousand volt proposed Norwich to Ipswich pylon corridor, which appears to have not been chosen as a connection point.

00:47:28:22 - 00:47:59:01

Most importantly, the assessment of alternative needs to demonstrate that less harmful locations have genuinely been considered and ruled out under why. Land availability must not be used as a substitute for a proper assessment of environmental and community impacts. Land parcel one is a cumulative impact hotspot. This is, in our view, one of the most important issues. Land parcel one cannot reasonably be considered individual infrastructure by individual infrastructure.

00:47:59:13 - 00:48:36:24

This is where major electrical infrastructure, substations, four hundred thousand volt overhead lines, cables, construction traffic, transformer deliveries, lighting, drainage, noise, and battery related infrastructure come together. These all affect the same community and the same receptors around Great Malton. Residents experience these impacts all at once, not as separate chapters in an environmental statement. We ask the examining authority to look at the acute accumulative real world effect on Great Morton rather than relying solely on a separate piecemeal assessment.

00:48:37:16 - 00:49:18:29

Too much is being left for later. Another major concern is the extent to which the applicant relies upon future detailed design and later mitigation. We repeatedly see provisions described in terms such as where practicable, where appropriate, or to be determined at a detailed design. They include matters affecting fire safety, drainage, contaminated fire water, ecology, construction access and noise, and archaeology, along with the detrimental and unmeasurable effects on people's health from constant background, low frequency from transformers and the noise associated with corona discharge cooling fans and oil pumps.

00:49:19:11 - 00:49:54:20

Finally, there is a significant loss of rural and visual amenity. The question is, therefore, how can the examining authority be satisfied today that the impacts are acceptable if major safeguards are still yet to be determined. If mitigation is essential to make the development acceptable, it should be clearly defined and enforceable. Water ecology and agricultural land, scarce groundwater on the Great Morton Plateau, and private water supplies could potentially be affected by piling, drainage, pollution pathways, transformers, and contaminated firewater.

00:49:55:10 - 00:50:25:22

The ecological position also deserves particular scrutiny. The evidence concerning Barbastell bats, a rare and threatened species, on their habitat connectivity, lighting and disturbance is important

because these are a species can be which particularly sensitive to changes in their environment. The proposal will result in the permanent loss of grade two best and most versatile agricultural land essential to UK food security, including at least six point one hectares for the National Grid substation alone.

00:50:26:09 - 00:50:57:13

That is a permanent and irreversible industrialization of the countryside, not temporary or reversible solar infrastructure. Finally, I ask the examining authority to consider whether the proposed infrastructure is genuinely safe and deliverable. This is not just a solar farm. The proposal involves extra high voltage transformers, substations, and battery infrastructure. There are specific concerns around thermal runaway, toxic releases, contaminated fire water, and possible evacuation of people and livestock.

00:50:57:25 - 00:51:28:02

There are also many unanswered questions concerning abnormal load movements essential to the development and whether the highway network and emergency arrangement can safely accommodate these. These must not be construction management details to be resolved later. In conclusion, I am not asking the examining authority to disregard the national importance of renewable energy. I am asking for it to apply the same level of scrutiny to where this structure is placed, how it impacts combined, and whether it can actually be delivered safely.

00:51:28:09 - 00:51:46:10

The questions remain, have the alternatives been properly tested? Have the cumulative effects on Great Morton and its residents been properly assessed? Can the environmental and safety risks be controlled with certainty? Great Morton Parish Council unanimously opposes this application. Thank you.

00:51:46:21 - 00:52:02:23

Ms. Bailey, thank you very much indeed for finishing at five minutes. Thank you for your comprehensive submission. I have no questions, but note the points that you make very clearly. But to my colleagues, we have no questions. Thank you. To the eight speakers, thank you very much for your contributions. Can you please take your seats?

00:52:15:14 - 00:52:37:25

Thank you. I'll just stress very, very briefly the importance of non interruption. I know it's intuitive perhaps to clap and to show your appreciation, but I urge you please for the forthcoming speakers, please. Your most powerful response is to respect the formality of the proceedings. Thank you very much indeed. The next eight speakers, I'll name them as follows. Ross Jolliffe,

00:52:41:13 - 00:52:42:26

Robert Hazel,

00:52:44:14 - 00:52:51:20

Helen Pye, Jane Garak, Suzanne Clark,

00:52:53:05 - 00:52:54:14

Nigel Stringer,

00:52:56:03 - 00:52:57:21

and Mark Williams.

00:53:01:26 - 00:53:05:21

And I understand we will have Anne Bartby attending virtually.

00:53:08:06 - 00:53:11:17

Base team, can you confirm if Anne Bartby will be attending virtually? Thank you.

00:53:28:20 - 00:53:45:02

Thank you indeed. Thank you to the speakers for coming forward. The first speaker will be Ross Jolliffe. Mr. Jolliffe, I understand you're speaking on behalf of South Norfolk Tree Warden Association. You will have five minutes and they start now. Thank you.

00:53:45:26 - 00:54:15:29

Good afternoon. Government policy means that the applicant must ensure that applications are ready to be examined before an application is made. The Planning Act two thousand and eight process is designed to be front loaded. An application should not enter the statutory system if they're not ready to be consented. It also requires that the examination stage should not be used to address deficiencies in the application. It specifically protects trees and woodlands.

00:54:16:15 - 00:54:50:01

The South Norfolk Tree Warden network is concerned that the East Py application is not front loaded in this context. Without a structured process to require a resolution on a fixed timetable, the examination reaches deadline one potentially with an ultimate examining authority's recommendation substantially not ready. We cannot ascertain the true impacts on the arboricultural environment or planned mitigations from the documents to date.

00:54:50:18 - 00:55:21:28

The applicant's iterative process for considering impacts appears uncertain at best. In one of many examples, I can't even ascertain a basic count of trees that are potentially affected because the environmental statement documents appear to differ. The examining officer has already recognized such shortcomings elsewhere. In particular, the applicant has been directed to provide an update on crayfish before the examination process commences and has refused.

00:55:22:19 - 00:55:55:17

But back to trees, hedgerows and woodlands, these deserve a similar update. In the applicant's response to our representation, the applicant has committed to undertaking further pre construction survey and arboricultural method statements in advance of the construction works, and they refer us to outline or incomplete environmental documents. Their response to our challenge actually confirms the shortage of information, indeed, that the application is far from front loaded.

00:55:57:00 - 00:56:28:01

It is hard to know how to address this conundrum, and so I referred to the statutory authorities' representation from Natural England. They advised that additional information regarding working around ancient woodlands and ancient and veteran trees is added to the application. That is quite subtle, but I think I understand their concise direction. It includes commitment to standing advice produced by Natural England and the Forestry Commission that is very much more substantial and wide ranging than the applicant's commitments.

00:56:29:16 - 00:57:11:15

In their environmental statement, the application applicant refers to compromise by the Rochdale envelope. I understand that this case law process resolves the tension between environmental assessment law and the developer's ability to comply flexibly. The compromise is that a scheme can be consented with some design flexibility provided that: a) the flexibility sits within clearly defined parameters and that b) the environmental statement assesses the worst realistic case within those parameters, so that the assessed impact is never less severe than the actual impact of the project.

00:57:13:09 - 00:57:51:03

We do not agree with the applicant that the environmental assessment at this stage is reasonably sufficient or that a worst case has been presented and assessed. The applicant proposes to cover the greater part of one thousand and two hectares of South Norfolk with solar panels and other industrial structure and fence it all in. There'll be around two years of build followed by to up sixty years of operation and maintenance and then decommissioning works. This is a colossal disruption of the natural environment, the ultimate impacts of which have only just begun to be indicated.

00:57:53:00 - 00:58:30:09

We're not alone in our trepidation about process. The government's recent response to the consultation on reform to the statutory consultee system says, In far too many instances, statutory consultee engagement with planning applications is not proactive or proportionate, and advice and information provided is not timely or commensurate with what is necessary to make development acceptable in planning terms. In turn, local planning authorities and developers too frequently provide inadequate or poor quality information or make blanket and inappropriate referrals to statutory consultees.

00:58:31:03 - 00:58:58:29

Critical national priority for solar weakens planning authority for East Pi by placing it under the nationally significant infrastructure project process. It does not affect though habitats regulations, the Water Framework Directive or the Wildlife and Countryside Act. Compliance with these is not optional. We request that the examination proceeds only on the basis fleet ecological update is made available.

00:58:59:01 - 00:59:18:26

I'm sorry to interrupt. I do apologize. You have reached the five minutes. My question for you, sir, is the statement of common ground. Just inquiring whether there is a draft statement of common ground between you could serve your organization and the applicant. At what stage, if any, is the document at?

00:59:19:20 - 00:59:23:17

No, nothing to do with that at all. Thank you.

00:59:28:28 - 00:59:32:14

Next to speak, in person, Robert Hazel.

00:59:36:01 - 00:59:43:19

Thank you. Mr Hazel, I believe you're speaking on your own behalf. You will have three minutes. Those three minutes start now. Thank you.

00:59:44:20 - 01:00:18:12

Good afternoon. I'm speaking about proposed Church Hill AIL route and site seven access arrangements. My central point is simple. East Pye has not demonstrated that Church Hill is a safe, workable, or acceptable AIL route. Reference. In exam eight point six, Norfolk County Council says the transport strategy for sites seven to ten do not adequately address highway constraints or mitigation and therefore cannot be supported. East Pye East Pye admits that the locations of access roads have not yet been confirmed.

01:00:18:24 - 01:00:54:05

It did not provide the requested receptor numbers within ten, forty five, fifty, and one hundred meters. Instead, it relied on a thirty meter assumption. On Churchill, historic buildings directly above the highway for a project already at examination, not knowing where access will be while relying on assumptions that do not reflect the physical reality is a fundamental deficiency. In Exam eight point seven NH-eleven and twelve, National Highway says that AIL routes had not yet been determined and recommends establishing a workable strategy in principle before a decision is made.

01:00:54:26 - 01:01:35:03

East Pie instead defers detail to a future construction traffic management plan. A CTMP is a management document. It is not a substitute for demonstrating that the route actually works. Exam eight point ten, CUL twelve, East Pike confirms that traffic vibration effects on heritage assets were scoped out. My grade two listed home directly abuts Churchill, yet proposed excavation or widening beside it has received no property specific structural or vibration assessment. Exam eight point eight, BEPS three sixteen confirms that vegetation or street furniture may be removed and oversale or overrun works required, yet the extent remains undefined.

01:01:35:23 - 01:02:07:29

So potential works beside listed buildings, vibration effects scoped out and the works themselves still undefined. Churchill lies within a conservation area. The Planning Act nineteen ninety cites that settings in conservation areas should be protected. E n one requires great weight to heritage heritage conservation. Those protections clearly apply to most of Churchill itself. The footway beside the war memorial is the only pedestrian route to the school for most of the village. Its loss would force pedestrians, children directly onto the carriageway.

01:02:08:06 - 01:02:43:20

Part of East Star East Pies plans include the removal of this footway. And then there is f m o five. In exam eight point seven NGT o three, National Gas Transmission confirms that this is essential high pressure national transmission system infrastructure. NGT remained an objector because protective provisions had not been agreed. The response from East Pie citing future engagement. This is not an

engineering solution. My request is simple. Require a defined route, binding controls, vibration evidence, and protection of the school footway along with NGT provisions.

01:02:43:29 - 01:03:06:04

If East Pie cannot clearly demonstrate Churchill is acceptable before consent is granted, Churchill should be removed from the AIL route. I ask these matters are fully examined at the issue specific hearing and request an accompanying site inspection of Churchill, including those listed assets Footwear and FM 'five. These relationships cannot be appreciated from razzle dazzle documents. They need to be seen in person.

01:03:06:06 - 01:03:27:07

Hazel, thank you very much indeed. Thank you. Two points perhaps just to raise. This Thursday at the issue specific hearing, the examining authority will be questioning the applicant on abnormal load movements. I just wonder by deadline one, you gave mention to your grade two listed property whether you're willing to put it in a document which might indicate where that property is

01:03:28:00 - 01:03:28:15

a brief

01:03:28:17 - 01:03:29:09

location. Thank you,

01:03:29:11 - 01:03:30:05

you, sir.

01:03:30:23 - 01:03:32:15

Mister Hazel, thank you indeed for

01:03:32:18 - 01:03:33:03

Thank you.

01:03:33:05 - 01:03:44:23

Submission. Thank you. Hand this off. Next to speak will be Helen Pai. Helen? Miss Pai, thank you. Miss Pai, you have three minutes starting now. Thank you.

01:03:45:15 - 01:04:15:24

The ridiculously proposed AIL route would permanently alter and widen the whole street in order to allow passage of the very large thirty axle AIL vehicles. Like residents of the other thirty three listed properties on the route, I'm horrified and stressed. It is planned not only to widen the street, removing historic street furniture, ancient hedges, and eighteenth century wall, but to encroach significantly on the listed war memorial in its green, increasing pedestrian danger.

01:04:16:19 - 01:04:50:11

This is the very center of a listed conservation village, one of the best preserved and most well known in Norfolk. This damage could never be undone. It would be gone forever, and for the foreseeable future of construction, it would render our homes unsalable. We would be trapped. It is not the right

choice of route into the farm and choices there are. The original route we were given through Lawn Lane at the Hall Road is just one. There are several that could avoid any housing issues.

01:04:51:02 - 01:05:27:17

There is a known flooding issue in Saxlingham. We all work physically to mitigate it by digging out ditches, and the council had just invested in three leaky dams. The dip outside my house can completely fill in three quarters of an hour of heavy rain, flooding houses further down the street. We are genuinely frightened of the very heavy vehicles damaging the drains we have beside and under the street, thus increasing the flood risk. Why take these risks when better options exist? Please maybe have an issue specific hearing on this.

01:05:28:21 - 01:05:51:25

As a member of the Parochial Church Council, I argue there are similar risks to the thirteenth century stained glass we have in the church. This is the oldest stained glass in Norfolk. Why risk damaging these by such vehicles passing when there are options? You may argue, although I wouldn't agree, that solar panels could be undone, but destroying Saxlingham could not be.

01:05:53:13 - 01:06:21:05

Miss Pye, thank you indeed. Just two two points of clarification. You spoke of evidence of flooding or perhaps you mentioned flooding. I wonder if you could provide a note to the examination by deadline one just to indicate how often or describe the the extent of the flooding that you were referring to. Thank you. And, again, I'm just would appreciate that's an indication, a sketch, if you will, by deadline one of the location of your property. Indeed. And lead the church. You mentioned a church as well?

01:06:21:07 - 01:06:24:09

Yes. Saint Mary's Church, that same on Churchill.

01:06:24:11 - 01:06:26:12

Thank you. Miss Pye, thank you.

01:06:26:21 - 01:06:27:18

Thank you very much.

01:06:34:05 - 01:06:41:21

Will be Jane Garak. Jane, miss Garak, thank you. Miss Garak, you will have three minutes. Thank you very much.

01:06:43:11 - 01:07:14:00

I live at Spring Hill, Norwich Road, Saxing and Nethergate. I have a number of concerns over the East Pye solar development. Firstly, to necessitate the AILs through our village, East Pye intend to widen the road by filling in the dikes. Dikes are there for a reason, to prevent flooding during heavy rain. The AILs will also pass over two waterways, one a dike and another a riverbed, where the road effectively becomes two thin bridges.

01:07:14:26 - 01:07:45:14

The sheer weight of these vehicles will collapse the road at these points. The center of the village already becomes flooded even with well maintained dikes. Secondly, we live in a beautiful conservation village with grade one and grade two listed buildings, predominantly in the center of the village. Some of these properties are having to undergo compulsory changes to to facilitate the AILs passing through, which will include going over the riverbed.

01:07:45:28 - 01:07:53:14

We specifically came to live here because we love the peaceful rural character. Once ruined, our heritage will be lost forever.

01:07:55:02 - 01:08:30:22

Thirdly, our house is on a hill. The sheer weight and vibrations from these AILs threatened to destabilize our property and reduce its value. We have already had two angling water burst pipes as a result of heavy traffic and an oil tanker that went into a manhole outside our drive. Clearly, the road outside our house cannot withstand heavy weights, let alone AILs. Our patch of road is no different to anyone else's. I have photographic evidence of the burst pipes if you wish to see them.

01:08:31:26 - 01:09:01:07

East Pye is going to be a mass gray area of gray industrialization, and our beautiful green, mostly agricultural land, together with wildlife, will be lost forever. This is going to have a dire effect on people's mental well-being. City centers are developing green sites for people's well-being. We who have green sites are going to industrialize it. I, for one, do not want to go for a walk on a solar farm.

01:09:05:05 - 01:09:28:11

It's correct. Many thanks for your submission. That's two points again, clarification. They relate to flooding and the location of your property. You mentioned flooding, you mentioned burst water pipes and you discussed you having photo evidence. I wonder if you could perhaps pass a note of all that, those specific points before deadline one, please, including the photographs. Yes. When's deadline one? It's the sixth of October.

01:09:28:13 - 01:09:29:03

Thank you.

01:09:29:15 - 01:09:49:12

And second point again, perhaps if you're willing to do so, just a bit of sketch showing the location of your property. Certainly. Is that okay? It's correct. Thank you indeed. Many thanks. Next to speak, we have Suzanne Clark. Miss Clark, thank you very much indeed. You'll have three minutes starting now. Thank you.

01:09:49:29 - 01:10:26:27

And CRC three to access the individual sites. All route crossing facilities should be used to cross Lodge Road and Frith Way. However, EPS has added a link from the CRC two down to Lodge Road, thus enabling another access to the b one one three four. Norfolk County Council states that all access should be made from an a or b road. I support this view and request this access to Lodge Road is removed from the DCO due to its unsuitability as a c road.

01:10:27:14 - 01:11:01:19

Secondly, Prangle Lane adjacent to two a is a bridal path. EPS claim a large hedge is part of an already inadequate margin, but this is not inside their boundary, but actually on our property. The panels are almost fifteen foot high, move throughout the day, and make noises Without a substantial margin of vegetation of about thirty meters, the bridle pass will become unsafe for horse riders. To the east of two a, EPS has put a more substantial margin because of a listed building.

01:11:02:03 - 01:11:28:23

However, the building has a garden center entrance in the a one forty, separating from the solar. The margin to the west that I refer to is insubstantial, yet it posed a real danger to users of the bridal way. The British Horse Society has not assessed these larger moving panels, and I believe that this application has been put in before seeking appropriate advice, and this needs addressing.

01:11:30:12 - 01:12:02:29

Further points are there is no decommissioning pond. The water supply vital to the running and safety of the project has been refused by Anglian Water. The National Grid, who has to build the substation, has not decided where they're going to build it yet. The process to get to this juncture has been torturous for anyone who, like myself, is not digitally savvy. This application is not available in paper form unless you have seven hundred and fifty pounds. The library only has a computer to use.

01:12:03:01 - 01:12:30:20

This alienates a substantial amount of residents. This cannot be acceptable or right. However, against these odds, I hope you can see that this enormous informed response shows how much we care for our countryside, wildlife, and homes here in South Norfolk, and there are much better ways of achieving clean energy. Thank you for listening and for all you the work you intend to do and also confirming you are acting completely independently.

01:12:31:02 - 01:12:57:10

Miss Clark, many thanks. Thank you for your submission. Perhaps two points of clarification. You gave mention to perhaps vulnerable road users and a bridal way. Sort of whether you could perhaps submit by deadline one, if you're willing, a note or a plan to indicate the bridle way that you're referring to. You've also gave mention to the British Horse Riding Society. Do have correspondence? Have you been in correspondence with the Horse Riding Society? Okay. I just looked at what

01:12:57:12 - 01:13:06:19

their recommendations were, and they weren't for this sort of panel. This is new, this sort of panel, and I don't I haven't yet assessed it.

01:13:06:21 - 01:13:08:09

Okay. That's helpful. Thank you.

01:13:12:02 - 01:13:20:00

The next person to speak is Mr. Nigel Stringer. Mr. Stringer, thank you. Mr. Stringer, you will have three minutes starting now. Thank you.

01:13:20:02 - 01:13:43:25

Thank you. My name is Nigel Stringer. If it is polluted, we lose our water supply. We have no other water. I'm concerned about the wildlife. I have eleven acres of ancient woodland. I have resident bats, nesting owls, newts, deer, and much more. I'm very concerned at what will happen to the wildlife in my garden.

01:13:45:13 - 01:14:16:14

The noise pollution is a great concern to me. The visual blight, I think we can all imagine. We know what they're going to look like. The noise pollution is something that we don't yet know. We haven't yet heard it, but we're going to. We're going to hear the noise from the construction traffic, which will be ongoing for years. There will be further noise, permanent noise, day and night from the battery installations and from the substations.

01:14:17:29 - 01:14:35:26

The ongoing traffic will not stop when the building is completed. There is going to be maintenance. There is going to be washing of panels. Anglian Water have apparently refused permission to East Pai to use their water for washing of panels.

01:14:37:23 - 01:14:57:04

Other installations, similar solar farms, have had to tanker in water for regular washing. I don't know how many tankers it will take to regularly wash two thousand seven hundred acres of panels, but I think we'll have to get used to the site of them.

01:14:58:29 - 01:15:23:24

My last and obvious comment is the devaluation of property. My children were hoping to inherit something from my house. I'm not sure they're going to inherit very much if this plan goes ahead. And I think I could say that applies to everybody that lives in the area. We are all going to lose money. We are going to pay for this, and that is unjust. Thank you.

01:15:23:26 - 01:15:41:21

Mr Stringer, thank you very much. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thanks. Mr Stringer, you spoke about a private if I got a private water supply. Is that a water course? Is that a drill or a borehole perhaps? What's the form of the supply, please, if you're willing to share that with us?

01:15:44:29 - 01:15:49:26

I can send you details if you wish by your deadline of deadline one.

01:15:50:01 - 01:15:50:27

That would be helpful.

01:15:50:29 - 01:15:54:10

To spring fed well. And I'm sure I'm not the only one in the area.

01:15:54:12 - 01:15:55:16

Okay. That's very helpful. Thank you.

01:15:55:18 - 01:15:58:13

I'll send you a sample if you like. It's very, very nice of you.

01:15:58:27 - 01:16:09:03

You're very kind. Thank you, indeed. Thank you. Next to speak is Mr. Mark Williams. Mr. Williams, thank you. You have three minutes. Many thanks.

01:16:09:11 - 01:16:40:04

Good afternoon. My name is Mark Williams, and I am a Hempton resident. I challenge the fundamental justification of the East Paisola project. The applicant, Paisola, has presented this scheme using inflated laboratory based metrics designed to make the sacrifice of two thousand seven hundred and eighteen acres of South Norfolk countryside seem like a necessary bargain. It is not. We are told this is a five hundred megawatt project that will power one hundred and fifteen thousand homes.

01:16:40:11 - 01:17:18:20

This is a misrepresentation of real world physics and Norfolk's climate. According to official data from the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, the actual annual capacity factor for solar energy in the UK hovers around just eleven percent. This means that for the vast majority of the year, this massive asset will not be delivering five hundred megawatts. Its true continuous average output will be a meager fifty five megawatts. Worse still, the headline claim that it powers one hundred and fifteen thousand homes completely ignores the reality of UK energy demand.

01:17:19:04 - 01:17:49:25

Our grid faces its heavier strain during dark, freezing winter evenings when solar generation drops to zero. Conversely, East Pie will produce a massive glut of electricity during peak summer days when demand is lowest, leading to grid saturation and costly curtailments where panels are simply turned off. To mitigate this, the developer points to the battery energy storage system at Great Molten, but batteries do not generate power.

01:17:49:27 - 01:18:22:03

They merely store it at a penalty due to standard round trip efficiency losses. Fifteen to twenty percent of the energy generated by these panels will be lost entirely as heat during the charging cycle. When you strip away the marketing, the actual public benefit of this project is severely reduced. It is this diminished benefit that we must weigh against the devastating irreversible downsides to our community. We are being asked sanction to the wholesale industrialization of our rural landscape.

01:18:22:17 - 01:18:37:11

The beautiful rolling environments around Hempton and our surrounding villages will be replaced by a sea of glass, steel, security fencing and substations. Centuries of history and natural tranquility will be shattered.

01:18:39:04 - 01:19:15:07

Furthermore, the project directly ruins numerous countryside walks and public rights of way that form the backbone of our community's physical and mental well-being. Walking through open, breathing fields is a defining characteristic of South Norfolk life. Forcing residents to walk down narrow corridors hemmed in by high security fencing and CCTV cameras is an insult to our heritage. An

eleven percent efficient seasonal power source does not justify the permanent destruction of our environment, our community well-being and our countryside.

01:19:15:19 - 01:19:22:24

I urge the inspectorate to look past the laboratory hype, see the reality of the numbers and reject this application.

01:19:22:26 - 01:19:34:04

Thank you. Mr. Williams, thank you very much indeed. Thank you. The beginning of your submission, gave mention to official data. I wonder, could you possibly submit that if possible by deadline, if you're willing to do that?

01:19:34:09 - 01:19:47:05

Yeah. I mean, I've got solar panels on my house. Lots of people have. And I've had them for the best part of ten years. So I could tell you they don't do what it says on the tin. Okay. And they do electricity in the winter very much. So please figure those things

01:19:47:07 - 01:20:00:21

back up. If that data is available and can be submitted, I'd be very grateful. Okay. Thank you indeed. Our final speaker in this group of eight, I believe, is Anne Bartby. And I wonder if miss Bartby is available online to speak?

01:20:01:21 - 01:20:03:14

Thank you, sir. Yes. I am.

01:20:03:16 - 01:20:06:17

Miss Bartby, thank you. You have three minutes starting now. Thank you.

01:20:06:22 - 01:20:40:15

Thank you. At Tibbham, the applicant only addressed glint and glare saying that there was no problem, but they carried out no appraisal. And they ignored the nature of the activity, particularly gliding, and the cumulative impact, including glint and glare from the the proposed site at Station Road and the cumulative impacts on safety with the Norwich to to Tilbury pylon route. In any case, other issues have not also been addressed.

01:20:41:00 - 01:21:12:11

In particular, a pilot that has an engine failure on takeoff, which has huge safety risks. And there's also now research which shows that more birds are attracted by solar installations. In addition, they have not addressed the wider value of Tibetan and planning policy support for general aviation. And in particular, there is no justification been put forward for site one at the end of runway zero eight two six.

01:21:13:15 - 01:21:31:15

This morning that I I agreed that aviation should be a principal issue, but this must include cumulative impacts with other approved solar projects and the Norwich to to Tilbury pylon route as well as full justification for the chosen sites? Thank you.

01:21:32:26 - 01:21:50:18

Yes. Indeed. Perhaps again, two points to raise. Number one, you gave mention to research and recent research regarding birds being attracted. I wonder if you could please give reference to that research as part of a deadline one submission. Is that okay?

01:21:50:20 - 01:21:51:24

Yes, certainly.

01:21:51:26 - 01:22:01:23

Thank you. And secondly, information I'm sure you're aware of, we do intend to raise aviation safety at our issue specific hearing this coming Thursday.

01:22:02:24 - 01:22:03:23

Thank you.

01:22:04:08 - 01:22:10:08

Thank you very much indeed. To the eight speakers, thank you indeed for your contributions. We are grateful. Thank you.

01:22:16:10 - 01:22:22:17

At this stage, it may be a good time for a comfort break. We're going to break for fifteen minutes. Thank you very much indeed.