4 Planning Inspectorate
Arolygiaeth Gynllunio

Hearing Transcript

Project:	Whitestone Solar Farm
Hearing:	Issue Specific Hearing 2 (ISH2) - Part 4
Date:	12 November 2026

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FULL TRANSCRIPT (with timecode)

00:00:03:18 - 00:00:13:18
Welcome back, everyone. The time's quarter past four and time to resume the hearing. So if we continue with the parish councils on this topic, we've got Mr. Northcote.

00:00:16:00 - 00:00:48:00
You, Madam. Antony Northcote for the three joint parishes. First of all, just like to say that we would support the position of the two councils, Rotherham and Doncaster, in what they've said, and I'll try not to repeat too much of it in the interest of brevity. In terms of need, obviously, need is not a matter that's before you. That's a matter that's in national policy. I'm not going to get stray into areas that we're not supposed to. I would just make two brief points on that sort of wider topic, though.

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NPS EN1 does talk about a multipronged approach towards the provision of new energy infrastructure. So it's not all eggs in one basket. And I would just make the point, a second point, which is if there is such a critical need for solar proposals, why are so many of the schemes that have been permitted now more than a year, eighteen months ago, actually, nothing has happened to deliver any of them.

00:01:19:07 - 00:01:51:25
In terms of consideration of alternatives, you've had an explanation about that given. We would say there's not really been a proper assessment of alternative technologies. You perhaps will have noticed there's a bit of a throwaway statement in the applicant's documents that wind turbines would have a greater associated environmental impact, but there's no cogent or substantive evidence to underpin that. That's just a complete throwaway statement.

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We've got no analysis as to why

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the Doncaster and Rotherham, the environmental environmental statement does make it of clear that they were considering a range of five hundred to seven fifty megawatts. Yes, I acknowledge, as the applicant said, that's at a minimum. But ever since then, we've got this fixed view position that seven fifty is the be all and end all. And that's a position that's been adopted in other schemes elsewhere. But that doesn't mean that that should override absolutely everything else.

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I'd like to talk about the the the broad search criteria.

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The the two councils brought it up about the twelve kilometer area of search. Again, we don't actually have any evidence to underpin that. There's no national policy that says what an area of search should or shouldn't be. There's no guidance. There's no advice. I think it is important for you to understand that their list that they put forward is a bit selective and is... It supports their position. But if we look at other recent schemes, which are just being permitted, Great North Road, almost comparable, eight hundred megawatts rather than seven hundred and fifty.

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But it had a fifteen kilometer search area as a start point. And in fact, parts of that scheme go beyond that fifteen kilometer of of search. And if you've seen any of the schemes permitted in Lincolnshire, there's there's a whole cluster in Lincolnshire. The vast majority of them have got an area of search and cable routes, are far longer than that because they're in the county of Lincolnshire, and their grid connections are in the neighboring county of power station size, not across the river, River Trent.

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You know, they're miles and miles away. So I'm not persuaded that this fixation on twelve kilometer area of search has any sort of rationale. It just suited them, in my view, on the basis of the land that they have available to them.

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As part of that search, they just completely discount the urban area close to the point of connection.

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But there may be areas within the urban area that might be available.

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There's been no consideration in a sort of robust sense of whether there are brownfield opportunities either as an individual land use or as part of mixed land use. The applicant says, well, there are other proposals for some of this brownfield land, but that doesn't mean there can't be a mixed use. You know, new factories, if that's what's going there, they can have solar panels on the roof, still part of your scheme. Solar panels don't have to go on greenfield land to be part of of this overall solar farm.

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It's just been dismissed completely. And as such, all of the land that's been proposed in this scheme is within the Greenbelt. We will return probably in our written representation that we'll now write to the issue of Greenbelt and Botley West decision. But I would make the point that only two thirds of Botley West was in

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the Greenbelt, whereas this scheme is entirely in the Greenbelt.

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In terms of viability, if there's an argument that either a bigger search area or longer cable routes are unviable, we don't have any viability evidence to underpin that. You can't make viability statements if you don't provide viability evidence.

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In paragraph four point six point eleven half

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an appropriate distance from densely populated residential communities. With respect, why are densely populated residential communities any different to villages or to individual properties? There's no explanation as to why they are different. But obviously, in the applicant's view, they are more important than villages, but we would radically disagree. If there should be an appropriate distance from residential communities, then that should be applicable whether that's one house or a city.

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Again, it just seems to be a rationale to justify the sites that they've already deemed to want.

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As Doncaster and Rotherham have set out, the mitigation hierarchy is fundamental to the site selection process.

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I think that's been fairly adequately talked about, so I won't go into that in detail in the interest of brevity. I would just make the point that when you look at some of those site selection criteria,

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again, in the same environmental statement chapter in paragraph four point six point nineteen, it talks about they've looked to avoid archaeological designations. But as we've set out in detail in our relevant representation, there can be archaeological potential that actually isn't known till you go and look at something. So we're not quite certain what they mean about archaeological designations. They've list scheduled monuments separately, but as as we've set out in our relevant representation, madam, which is r r two six two five, we don't think they've taken that into account.

00:08:20:17 - 00:08:50:27
On the design evolution, there's been quite a lot of change, and I'm not going to go through it in detail. I would say, in my experience, this is the third solar NSIP proposal that I've been at. In every case, there appears to have been deliberate stance in the first place to have areas which are fundamentally unacceptable that so we can have an element of you said we did changes being made.

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And with respect, particularly the areas in our area of interest, the areas that are put in the first place that have now been removed were plainly, fundamentally unacceptable to start with. So trying to say that now makes the scheme okay isn't a sort of legitimate argument.

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We do have a fair degree of inconsistency with the cable corridor width. On all the schemes I've been familiar with, we tend to have a sort of fixed cable corridor width, whether it might be forty meters wide, sixty meters wide. Here, we have a cable corridor that seems to go in and out as it suits. And I'm not quite certain what the rationale for some of that is.

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And when we get to some, what we might call constraints, for example, where cable corridor L is going to cross the Chesterfield canal and the railway line,

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it widens out. So we now have a situation in part of that cable corridor, the Chesterfield Canal and the railway are abutting. And in other parts of that corridor, they're quite wide apart. And the way things may actually then take place through horizontal directional drilling, if that's what's going to happen, that could be very different within that cable corridor, different solutions.

00:10:24:07 - 00:10:57:25
Just on the... Another point on the the the cable corridor. Yesterday, we talked about the flood risk in parcel one hyphen two g of Whitestone two, just to the west of North Anston. I would just make the point that the cable corridor crossing of the A57 is proposed to go into the eastern end of that land parcel, which is precisely the part of the land parcel we identified to be at risk of flooding and said was therefore unacceptable for the sequential test.

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have First twenty,

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The point I would make, which I'm sure you're very familiar with as an ex army authority, the irradiance maps, in general terms, it gets worse the further north in the country that you go. So the irradiance in South Yorkshire is not as good as it is in a broad line that runs roughly from the River Severn across the Wash. It gets better as you go south. There are some bits of the country on the coast where radiance increases, but in general terms, very much the further south you go, the better it becomes.

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On the issue of cumulative effects, madam, we did set out this in in reasonable detail in our relevant representation. So in the interest of time, I'm not going to say anything more on that. Thank you.

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Thank you, Mr. Northcote. And if we go to Mr. Knight. Yes,

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Philip Knight on behalf of Conyersburg Parks Parish Council.

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We recognize the need for renewable energy, which includes, obviously, many technologies and solutions. We'd be grateful if the applicant could please explain how much electricity would actually be delivered, not just its maximum connection capacity at seven fifty megawatts, and we would seek to understand the benefits attributable to Whitestone One and how these are identified and weighted against its heritage, landscape, agricultural and community impacts. We've sought on many occasions to get from the applicants some breakdown by milestone one, two and three.

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It's never been provided as several times. That would help us to understand how the weighted considerations that the applicant has referred to would be considered by each site and can be weighed up and understood a lot better. We also understand that the applicant, Jonathan Thompson, CEO, indicated it would be an eleven percent overall yield of electricity across the seven fifty megawatts at a public meeting attended in Weston by Parish Councils.

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So can we have some more detail and clarity on that? Because again, we believe that, that should be way looked at in terms of how we're weighing up the benefits in terms of the need.

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The national need should be not obscured not obscure the question question of whether this location and the scale of this development are justified. We believe the national need does not justify Whitestone One. Its impacts are significant and its impacts are vast in that we believe the applicant could have chosen couldn't have chosen a worse location due to the adverse impacts on what we have been deemed as an area of special landscape value by City of Doncaster Council. It's greenbelt land.

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It's prime agricultural land. And it also has a very significant historical value. We'd also like to understand the carbon footprint on the solar panel production, including shipping and the life span of the panels and how often these would be need to be replaced and again, the carbon impact of that. We'd also note that Whitestone one is the furthest from the Greek connection at Brinsworth Long Lane. So there are the points I would make on the need in relation to alternatives.

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Our question is whether the applicant has adequately justified choosing this particular land. APP056 describes the original twelve kilometer search area from Brinsworth and the subsequent move of the

grid connection to the nearby Long Lane substation. We acknowledge that the applicant says it's considered brownfield sites, commercial rooftops and industrial areas, including brownfield sites individually and in combination. Our concern is whether the criteria used has been fairly tested as fairly tested opportunities to reduce the green belt and agricultural land required.

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The site selection in AS015, Appendix one, Paragraphs 4.5-ten to 4.5-eighteen describes rejecting those options in relation to the scaled proposal available and competing uses. These can the applicant show evidence supporting those conclusions where smaller combinations examined as a means of replacing part of Whitestone one even if they could not accommodate the whole project? Was a lower capacity option or configuration excluding the most sensitive parts of Whitestone one assessed? If not, why not? And please also explain how Whitestone one compared with other options against the heritage, archaeological, landscape and green belt criteria and how relevant local planning policies influence the selection.

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We've also referred to avoiding densely populated areas. Whitestone one sits alongside Connysborough, which has got fifteen circa fifteen thousand, sixteen thousand residents, so I'd rather describe that as not a densely populated area. APP fifty six, paragraphs four point six one five to four point six one six describes the role of willing landowners in establishing the order limits. We recognize that availability matters, but availability alone does not demonstrate environmental suitability.

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And that's some of the points that I think colleagues from SanTech on behalf of Roetham and Doncaster have also illustrated, and I would concur with all of those points that they made. Did Whitestone one's constraints generally shape the of choice land or were they mainly addressed through mitigation after that choice had been made? Our relevant representation asked that the benefits attributable specifically to Whitestone One are identified and weighted against its particular harms. For our community, the essential question is why here? And as this desire to maximize the availability grid been properly balanced against the opportunity to reduce harm, we ask that these matters are thoroughly examined and that any protections relied upon are clearly enforceable and maintained.

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Thank you.

00:17:32:09 - 00:17:37:00
Thank you, mister Knight. And then turning to Nicola Henderson. Thank you.

00:17:37:25 - 00:18:15:22
Nicola Henderson, Anston Parish Council. So the applicant has just stated that regrettably, a solar farm needs to be on greenbelt land as it had to be within the arbitrary twelve kilometres of the substation. This land also happens to be highly producing farmland. In the case of the solar proposed at the A57 in Anston, that land is grade two and 3a greenbelt farmland on a flood risk area with severe traffic issues in a conservation area and with over nine thousand residents.

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So I would suggest that the conclusion should have been that a solar farm of this scale was not appropriate at Anston or in the whole of Whitestone where similar issues apply.

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Moving on to the comparison of technologies,

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They state that an equivalent wind farm would need over one hundred and fifty turbines. Now I'm not an expert on this so all I've been able to do is Google and look at some numbers. So they said that a typical megawatt for a two hundred meter tip height is four point five megawatts. So I'm assuming all they've done is divided seven fifty by four point five to arrive at more than one hundred and fifty turbines. It would appear that turbines are typically six to six point six megawatts for onshore turbines.

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So

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I would say we'd use a six point two megawatts.

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So that comes out at one hundred and twenty turbines to get seven hundred and fifty megawatts, not over one hundred and fifty. But in this case, we're not really comparing apples with apples. So as some of my colleagues have already stated about solar efficiency. From what I can see, the UK ranks bottom globally for solar capacity. As everybody knows, we don't really get a lot of sun. It doesn't shine much in winter, days are short, and, of course, there's nothing at night.

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So from the figures I've found, the UK national average for solar capacity looks to be around eleven percent. But here in South Yorkshire, it's even lower, maybe around ten percent.

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So that means for seven hundred and fifty megawatts solar farm, on average over the year, it's producing around seventy five megawatts of electricity.

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We go back to wind. We appear to rank quite highly in the sort of upper echelon of wind capacity being quite a windy country

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and even more so offshore. And it would look like typical onshore wind capacity is around twenty six to twenty eight percent and offshore wind forty to forty three percent. And the offshore wind turbines are generally rated at around fourteen megawatts. So if you were to do a comparison of what you

would need to produce the same amount of annual average power, for an onshore wind farm, you'd need two hundred and seventy eight megawatts and forty five turbines.

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And then offshore would be a hundred and eighty three megawatt peak capacity with just thirteen turbines. And obviously because it's generating for more of the time, the output would also be more balanced and less peaky. So as I say, I'm not an expert, but that's just what I've found when I've looked at the different ratings and different figures. So it just appears that there hasn't perhaps been a very thorough evaluation of wind and other technologies.

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So looking at the applicant's company, Green Nation,

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on their website, it says they manage two hundred megawatts of solar farms across seventy five solar farms. That's only an average of two point seven megawatts per farm, but with two two of them are listed at five megawatts and ten point seven megawatts. And then it also lists that they manage over seven hundred rooftop installations.

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So based on the solar efficiency, the fact that we need so much land

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and that the applicant is proposing to take predominantly prime farmland together with all the issues that have been highlighted over the last three days, I would say, suggest that the benefit gained from this project is outweighed by the harm. But together with the applicant's experience, it would seem more appropriate that an alternative rooftop solar be investigated and proposed, perhaps in combination with other locations such as car parks, railway sidings, etc. As you see in other countries.

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I'd also like to just add a few more concerns. I'm not sure if it really fits in with this area or not, just to give some context. So I'm a chartered chemical engineer. I've worked in the water industry for over thirty five years, the majority of that time for an EPC contractor. During that time, I've led bids for contracts worth hundreds of millions of pounds, both in the UK and overseas, under different contract models, so design build, DBFO, PPPs and PFIs.

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In those industries,

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in order to even qualify to bid for the projects, you need to meet very tight criteria, which includes demonstrating prior relevant experience and also financial security. And I think in any other industry,

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any other type of power plant, and any other type of infrastructure project of this scale,

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the applicant wouldn't even have the opportunity to do this. And it's quite worrying that such a large significant scheme could be granted to a company with no experience of the issues associated with this project and also not knowing where the funding is coming from as I couldn't find anything. I may have missed it.

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Furthermore, the whole information provided in the proposal to me just seems very vague. Without detail, I don't understand how it can have been priced properly and how do we know it's even financially viable.

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If the intention is to sell on the DCO,

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I guess whoever you sell it to will want to do their own due diligence before they take on

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the

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risk. And, therefore, if it if it is sold on, we will have no idea who the ultimate owner is gonna be and the source of financing. It's potentially unknown.

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And, again, like I say, it might not even be viable. As mister Northcote says, many of these are still sat there after a year, eighteen months with nothing happening. And I just find it incredible that we can be in this position where anyone can come forward and put in an application for a DCO with no relevant experience or financial strength for something that is so nationally significant. Thank you.

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Thank you. And then turning to Liam Herbert. Thank you.

00:25:24:07 - 00:26:03:10
Liam Herbert, Chair of Hooten Roberts and Fursby Parish. I have short remarks specifically on cumulative effects, but we acknowledge and support the comments Stantec colleagues made earlier on site selection on land and would echo and suggest that land that sits within the Hooten Robbers Parish was included with the deliberate intent to remove it at a consultation stage, particularly land around the Fursby Hamlet where the original scheme came right up to the boundaries of the residences and subsequently stepped back from there.

00:26:04:04 - 00:26:35:23
As we mentioned earlier, our interest is particularly on APP one hundred fifty four and other other sites, particularly the one that the applicant seems to be confused about whether or not it's included in their listing, which is r b two zero two six slash zero six one five, the ILOS New Energy Limited

application, which sits entirely within the Hooten Roberts Parish and is on land between the Hootenwood and Firsby Lane.

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The... We we recognized that this wasn't included in our listing yesterday when we were monitoring the ecology discussions as obviously that will have a significant impact across that piece there. The land the the applicant for ILOs, the application is currently lodged with Northern Border Council awaiting determination. And that application is contingent on access to the site down Fursby Lane. And you've heard previously from Mr.

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Holsworth, who lives on that junction there at Fursby Lane. So we would have concerns as a parish on cumulative impacts across the parish as a whole. And specifically, again, the impact that this will have on our residents in Fursby, particularly who will be impacted and overlooked by this element of development, which again takes in land that's abuttered land within the applicant's original proposals, which would have put solar down the entire side of Fursby Lane.

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We will be making further representations at the various decision points on this. And we have particular references to green belt determinations that impact our price specifically. But at this time, we have no other comments to add.

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Thank you, Mr Herbert. So before we move away from the parish councils, and again, noting that you haven't got your plan with us, was there anything on that you wanted to come back on at this point?

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Mr. Sneddon would like to

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make one comment. Mr. Sneddon, for the applicant. Sir, you mentioned about the delay to existing issues that have been granted in the last eighteen months. I'd just like to sort of state a little bit about that there has been a delay. So a couple of years ago, NISO, the National Energy Operating System Operator, came on board and asked all projects that were not yet connected and built to reapply for their grid connections under the connection reform process.

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This effectively put in an eighteen month delay on their receipt of their grid connection again and when they would be connected. And obviously, without knowing when your grid connection is going to be available, you don't start building your piece of infrastructure. So they have now received these grid applications. Almost all projects are connecting in Gate two Phase one have. And I know a number of those projects are now progressing towards detailed design for installation in the coming years.

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Thank you. And Mr. Hampson?

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Alex Hampson, on behalf of the applicant, just to cover off some of the cumulative points where I can today.

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But total clarity, the ILOs Firsbee farm, as mentioned, so the farm will be included in our updated cumulative assessment. I'd make reference also to

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the representation for three parishes. You rightly pointed out there always is unknown archaeology across areas. So I I direct the examining authority to APP zero four nine, which is the outline written scheme of investigation, covers measures and protocols for both preconstruction and during construction discoveries. Blood risk at the A57, both in the crossing and panels was also mentioned.

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So again, to direct readers to APP137, the flood risk assessment, there is a section on construction, both construction flood risk elements and also flood risk from the presence of panel legs in that location.

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And finally, a helpful comment in relation to, I paraphrase, the carbon the whole life cycle carbon impact assessment, again, directing the examining authority to APP063, the climate change chapter, where a presentation of that assessment can be found.

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And briefly, Mr. Gillett?

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Madam, I just wanted to sorry, Simon Gillett for the applicant. I just wanted to bring your attention to Chapter nine of the statement of need, which talks particularly at

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Figure nine point one and nine point two, wind and solar will work together as part of the future grid. So I note the comments that are made around different load factors, etcetera, etcetera. Ultimately, the national policy statement EN1, paragraph three point three point two three confirms that government's analysis shows that a secure, reliable, affordable net zero consistent system in two thousand and fifty is likely to be composed predominantly of wind and solar and

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NPS EN three. And Section two point seven sorry, two point one zero, in particular, two point one zero one and two point one zero two confirms that solar is at the heart of the Clean Power mission.

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Thank you. On the other points, we will come back in writing or planning related ones where we will demonstrate that our need and the site selection process need case and site selection process are compliant with national policy. Thank you.

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Thank you very much. So we'll move on to interested parties now. And we've got Greg Reynolds. Thank you.

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Thanks very much. I'd like to to raise one particular matter, and that's the fact that what I've been asking for is how many brownfield sites were actually looked at. I've asked this question directly. I've emailed it. All I got sent back, and eventually was this letter, which still doesn't tell me. Can I just ask the panel there how many brownfield sites were actually actually properly looked at, properly evaluated? Yeah? We're on the brownfield.

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Yeah? And they were looked at with exactly the same impartiality. Can we be assured of that? That the preferred option, which is not a present... Sorry, not a consultation. We've been given a presentation on one option. You ask why it's only on one option because that would have been a meaningful consultation if we could have all had that discussion at the start rather than Whitestown's making it and only presenting something that's purely on the green belt.

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Why... Well, can I just ask the question now? I asked the question, how many brownfield sites did you look at? And they wouldn't tell me. They would only say several. Now several could mean two or more, couldn't it? But they apparently couldn't find out where they were. I even just asked for the OS grid map... Grid map reference, and I go and look at them for myself. I was told that that wasn't available.

00:34:26:00 - 00:35:11:29
But on the letter they sent me, they sent me that map, which is absolutely worse than useless. It's too tiny. It's it's it's worse than useless. And it just kinda sums up the kind of quality of information they are they are providing to serious questions because I doubt that they're bothered about really... About rather... The area they're in because it doesn't affect them. But they seem to keep... Treat people disingenuously with their answers, which are partial, yep, are not entirely accurate, economic with the actuality, and that's a feature of all their communications.

00:35:12:01 - 00:35:42:00
I'll just bring this in. This was what I... When I was asked... The other thing I I asked for was the information electronically. This was what I was sent. It's worse than useless. It's a flash flash memory thing... Memory stick, and it's got that much formatting on in it Adobe Acrobat and God knows what. All the images are kept on one sort of thing. Even the expert in Brotherborough Council IT section couldn't get it to work. So I...

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I'm very, very dubious, but can I just get an? A straightforward answer now? How many brownfield sites did you look at out of the thirty one or thirty two sites you actually considered?

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Thank you, Mr. Reynolds. I want the answer. No, I'm just going to ask them for Is

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that something you need to No, look

00:36:07:12 - 00:36:27:07
I can give you the answer now, Madam. Angus Walker for the applicant. As referred to earlier, the consideration of brownfield sites in the site selection assessment, Table two lists thirty seven individual sites that were looked at. And then a further approximately twenty

00:36:29:01 - 00:36:32:07
industrial areas were also looked at.

00:36:39:16 - 00:36:41:01
Mr. Reynolds, if you want to continue.

00:36:43:09 - 00:36:49:28
Can I just ask a qualification on that? How many sites did you look at? Twenty? How many?

00:36:50:22 - 00:36:58:15
Thirty seven individual sites that are listed in the planning statement. Two, four, six, eight.

00:37:05:03 - 00:37:07:29
Twenty nine in industrial areas as

00:37:08:01 - 00:37:12:04
well. Is that the brownfield site?

00:37:12:27 - 00:37:15:13
That was for brown brownfield sites for the So

00:37:15:15 - 00:37:18:29
you looked at you looked at twenty eight sites, and none of them were suitable.

00:37:20:17 - 00:37:24:03
Thirty seven individual sites and twenty eight industrial areas.

00:37:24:05 - 00:37:27:08
Twenty eight brownfield sites, and none were suitable?

00:37:27:10 - 00:37:33:17

No. Thirty seven brownfield sites and a further twenty eight industrial areas generally.

00:37:33:19 - 00:37:36:21
All right. And none of those were suitable? No.

00:37:38:19 - 00:37:50:21
Where are the reasons, findings, and rationale behind that decision making process? That should have been part of this consultation. That's my main question. Why have you left it to make the decision and then pretend it's a consultation?

00:37:56:20 - 00:38:05:17
I think I've exhausted this to and fro for the moment and would like to hear some more submissions from Councillor Reynolds and others.

00:38:06:02 - 00:38:13:28
Thank you. Mister Reynolds, we've got a note of that. That might be something that the planning witness can come back on. Do you have any further points to make? I do.

00:38:14:00 - 00:38:53:14
I'll rush through them quickly because obviously, it's a it's a very busy meeting. I'll I'll just like to to make the point again. I wanna be absolutely clear. This was never never ever a consultation process. It's only ever been a presentation of what whites... Of what site Whitestone selected and then presented in their presentation. It's never been a proper consultation at all and shouldn't be called that. The other thing is they communications with white stones are very hit and miss, sometimes grudging or metaphorically door slammed in face.

00:38:54:11 - 00:39:28:13
Nobody actually... And this is the important part. Nobody actually understands what this is all about. We've got documents here all in part, and nobody actually understands what it would look like. And they promised they would provide an accurate scale model, which would have been ideal because it would have shown contours. It was on the extent then. We wouldn't have to interpret things on an electric diagram and all the rest of it. They could have looked at it. And what the plan was originally was to put that in the town hall and Rotherham library and ask for full comments and all the rest of it.

00:39:28:15 - 00:40:16:03
Do you want it? Don't you want it? Is it good? Is it bad for the area? The model, which would have... A pictures a picture paints a thousand words. A three d model paints a thousand pictures. But it never materialized. In the whole grand scheme of this, I can't understand why that would be a prohibitive cost, especially when they were charging seven hundred and fifty quid for the toll... Full document if you wanted all the facts. And that's what they said. You could... Oh, you're welcome to buy it. Who's gonna spend seven hundred and fifty pounds on a document that they should be made available in the public domain? The other thing is the other thing is is that where is the clear clarity and transparency on all this? There's documents which have just been...

00:40:16:05 - 00:40:45:08

Oh, well, we we we... We're on that, but that'll come in for... And it's been like that. We've sort of we've sort of we've sort of blindfoldly blindly walk down this path, which leads to planning consent. And it just seems to me that at every stage, they develop... Sorry, demonstrate any level of incompetence, which belies this this this sort of roles, really. Coming to the last thing now.

00:40:48:07 - 00:41:19:14
Fundamentally, it's it's down to this, isn't it? What have the people said to them? Do they want it? Yes or no? You've seen the vast majority that was here the other day on Tuesday, and have you heard one people speak in favor of this thing? But that all seemed to be conveniently ignored by the people in the... Sat over there. And they bat away questions without any answers and totally, totally just ignore what they don't want to hear. Thanks very much.

00:41:20:24 - 00:41:26:12
Thank you, mister Reynolds. Next on the list, I've got Jeanette Graham. Thank you.

00:41:32:11 - 00:41:35:26
Thank you. Jeanette Cran, Clifton resident.

00:41:38:01 - 00:41:45:05
I'd like to speak about the relationships with existing and planned developments regarding cumulative effects.

00:41:47:00 - 00:42:24:12
We've read in Whitestone's documents how they've once again given the lightest of touches and managed once again to omit any real substance or damning detail regarding other existing and planned developments that clash with their nominated routes of the six thirty A630 and to some extent, the B6093 and others. I'll highlight just one example due to time constraints. I mentioned the Near Cliff quarry development on this A630 coming out of Connysboro earlier this morning.

00:42:25:16 - 00:42:57:03
I've checked the Doncaster planning documents, application o seven stroke double o two six one stroke m I n a. After much deliberation and time, the committee subsequently resolved eventually to grant permission subject to rigid conditions. As we've heard from mister Knight earlier, the application seeks planning permission for the reclamation of Nearcliff Quarry.

00:42:57:05 - 00:43:31:02
The scheme involves the removal of approximately eight hundred and twenty eight thousand tons of limestone waste from the quarry floor and benches and the excavation of approximately two hundred thousand of tons virgin limestone from the quarry face to create stable bench profiles. We know that. Approximately three thousand tons of material will be removed per week over an estimated eight year period with progressive restoration taking place throughout. Quarry waste and limestone will be removed from the site by h...

00:43:31:23 - 00:43:54:15

HGV via the existing access onto Sheffield Road, Doncaster Road. It changes its name throughout, but that's the a six three o. May I draw your attention to the restrictions that were imposed upon this development which clashes with the Whitestone.

00:43:56:13 - 00:44:34:11
The Near Cliff Quarry planning permission includes a restriction that HGV's traffic must be routed eastwards towards the a one m. It is specifically stated that there is to be no westbound HGV routing through Connorsburgh or the ACMA five zone. The highway conditions also limit quarry HGVs to forty two way movements per day, twenty inbound and twenty outbound and two hundred two way movements per week.

00:44:35:06 - 00:45:14:05
The report also includes an air quality mitigation plan as a planning condition. The pre committee documentation identifies this as a condition to be submitted and approved. The permission specifically recognizes ACMA five as an air quality constraint. ACMA five, as we know, is the area around the Low Road a six three o junction in Connysborough. Doncaster council say this is one of its designated air quality management areas with monitoring of both n o two and p m ten.

00:45:15:04 - 00:45:51:04
So, essentially, the quarry can persuade... Can purse... Proceed, but its HGV traffic must not be allowed to travel through the part of Connysborough covered by ACMA five, which is the very part of the road that Whitestone want to truck sixty nine HGVs by two way journeys through. So ACMA five has not been ignored in the decision. In fact, the report expressly links the HGV routing arrangement to protecting it.

00:45:52:03 - 00:46:50:20
The permission does not promise that air quality in ACMA five will improve. It is primarily a mitigation measure designed to prevent the quarry traffic from adding to the existing problem, which, of course, the Whitestone HGVs would precisely do. Summary. So if we compare Nickliff Quarry, who have been restricted to only forty two way HGV journeys per day and have not been permitted to come through Connysborough Aqua five Zone at all, then using the same judgment, why should Whitestone be allowed to bring sixty nine two way HG journeys per day for the full length of the ACMA zone all through Connorsburgh? I would suggest that this president alone set by the quarry and their transport plan sets the bar for what is and is not acceptable in the Whitestone one case.

00:46:51:00 - 00:47:33:11
And in following the same principles, Whitestone HGV should not be allowed to come through the ACMA five zone through Connysborough on the a six three o as it will destroy all the money, work, and effort that Doncaster Council have put in to try and reduce the excessive levels of emission in this vulnerable stretch of residential road and have huge adverse impact on the residents' health and well-being, which is already noted by Whitestone too as being Whitestone as well, rather, as below the health of other areas.

00:47:34:29 - 00:48:12:25
Then there are the overlap and clashes with other large construction projects, all involving the same routes that Whitestone are proposing to use, to which they have also given the lightest of touches to

try and demise and dismiss their importance. I won't go into details of those, but it will be fully in writing, such as Kingsbrook, New Housing Estate, two two six homes on the a six thirty near Whitestone One's only site entrance, Poppy Fields, New Housing Estate, three hundred and twenty homes on a thirty six acre plot on the b six zero nine three at Ravenfield, which is one of your nominated routes.

00:48:13:04 - 00:48:28:15
For what? Who knows? Then there is the Ilos Solo solar farm at Hooten Roberts, the Fursby Lane solar farm. There's a lot going on here. I won't go into detail of those, but I will put it in in writing in in detail.

00:48:30:11 - 00:49:04:16
Be assured, we will be providing a lot more evidence, local evidence, experiential evidence over the coming weeks on the fragility of their baselines. The devil, as we all know, is in the detail. So may I strongly request that the examination team look most assiduously into the detail or lack of it and look behind the gloss, dust, and feathers? Thank you.

00:49:07:24 - 00:49:44:03
Thank you. Thank you, madam. Can I just add to this statement? It it does concern near Clave Quarry as as I live near near there. Is that alright? Thank you. The quarry entrance is quite narrow at the moment, so it must be widened, which is what, Duncasie Council agreed to. It... The junction is smack bang opposite another road, which leads to a housing development on on the left hand side and further into Connysborough and further estates...

00:49:44:06 - 00:50:17:00
Housing estates. Opening the quarry will now... It needs an enlarged entrance, which now opposite this junction. This entrance will be quite wide, several yards extra, and it brings it right next to a pedestrian crossing and traffic lights. And this crossing is frequently used by pedestrians who will walk yards up to the crossing to cross the road. That is a major factor.

00:50:17:12 - 00:50:51:21
But as the lorries... As it was pointed out at the inquiry for Nearcliff Quarry, when the lorries leave, as stated, they could only go up to the a one. Now when the big heavy lorry comes up the up the road, there is a traffic light system to stop the lorries. So make sure that the road is clear, then they're allowed to go onto the main road. But a big heavy lorry laden with limestone, a long lorry, it needs space, and it needs length to swing around onto the road.

00:50:52:03 - 00:51:22:07
And this is expected in some cases, they will cross the middle of the road. So they will go into the follow oncoming lane, which is quite a danger. They understand this. The lorry drivers have to be warned. Now if we've got white stone traffic coming down from the a one and they see another lorry on the opposite side facing them, you know, it... An accident waiting to happen, and I think that must be considered.

00:51:23:00 - 00:51:25:00
Thank you. Thank you.

00:51:25:02 - 00:51:28:14
Thank you. William Collins? Thank you.

00:51:29:00 - 00:52:00:06
Thank you. My name's William Collins, a resident on Cunninghamshire Parks and a retired farmer. I'd just like to read what I've got in front of me at the moment. It was a a news article this week. We've heard all about how desperately we need wind and solar. It's the end and all and let... At the all and end of future life. High pressure, dense fog, and stagnant winds across the UK and Northern Europe triggered severe renewable energy shortfalls this week.

00:52:00:18 - 00:52:31:26
To keep the grid balanced, the national energy system operator issued an emergency supply alert and paid gas power stations up to one thousand five hundred pounds per megawatt hour. Maybe there are problems with renewables. Now I would just like to reiterate that the people on my left on this table from the parish councils and Doncaster have put a lot of points forward that I was thinking of. But I've made one or two notes throughout the day.

00:52:32:05 - 00:53:02:09
As I said, I live on Cunninghamshire Parks, Whitestone one. I have solar on my house. My solar panels point south within one or two degrees. Mister Steaden, I understand, made a comment around three fifteen about how good this weather is for solar and how we need these solar panels. My panels, at that time, on my app, were producing thirty percent of the capacity.

00:53:03:03 - 00:53:40:20
I've had solar panels now for nearly a year. So... And and having an app, it's lovely to play on it every day. But it has demonstrated just how unreliable solar power is. I'm not going to go against the government. There's no chance. They said we need solar power. Solar power in the right place has a place in energy. But what I have found is that even in midsummer, a bit of cloud between the sun and the panels, it drastically reduces production.

00:53:42:11 - 00:53:44:23
In midsummer, twenty first of July,

00:53:46:08 - 00:54:21:19
the sun rises in the northeast and sets in the northwest. And until the sun gets round onto the panels instead of shining on the back of them, production is very low. We tell them it will work in daylight. It need doesn't sun. They will work. If it were working for me, I'd fire them at that time. They don't do a lot. It's... Then it... An education to see how they need the sun and the angle of the sun. And what's happening now is, yes, it's a sunny day, but the sun's low in the sky, and that reduces power immediately.

00:54:22:25 - 00:55:02:29
I'm not going to get into an argument about climate change and what causes it. I would just say that medieval warming period from nine fifty to twelve fifty, there was no industrial revolution then, and that was followed by a mini ice age. Roman warming period, two hundred to four hundred.

Coincidence, that's when they occupied Cunishba Parks and built the villa and did, and then. And while we're on about the Roman, period and the Romans, while we've been here today, I've had another email from an archaeologist that I sent some photos to Global Aerial Photos this summer with the drought.

00:55:03:09 - 00:55:33:16
It's confirmed there's another find in those photos of a building of some sort that will need investigation, and I forwarded that onto SYIS, South Yorkshire Archaeological Services. They will use it next time they are talking to the applicant. That's another one that's turned up. That's three now from the photographs, and that was mister Paul Buckland that spoke to us earlier on. I'm a bit all over the place because I was making notes as we went on.

00:55:35:04 - 00:56:09:25
Yeah. I I I had things. We we were told that industrial buildings weren't suitable. And I just had a look. I'm not good at at computers. It came up, said AI, when it... So I'm not telling you this is AI generated. Apparently, there's one billion one point five billion square feet of unused industrial roof space across the UK. Research by Dick Cushman and Wakefield have written down, scribbled, ninety percent to ninety five percent of industrial roof space is not used.

00:56:10:02 - 00:56:17:03
It has the energy to capacity to produce sixty, I'm assuming it's gigawatts, GW, GW, sorry.

00:56:19:00 - 00:56:49:17
Many commercial rooftop solar installations do not need standard full planning permission, so the job would be a lot easier. As a as a farmer, a retired farmer, I find great conflict between covering thousands of acres of solar across the UK on good farmland when we only produce fifty five percent of the food we eat. I don't know why, but government policy is now paying farmers not to produce food.

00:56:50:29 - 00:57:22:15
Why? Staff of life, air, water, and food. I had this argument with mister Thompson at the very first meeting. He told me energy was more important than food. I told him, I don't want to open the fridge and see the light. I want to see food. I did offer. It didn't take me up. I'd sit in a house with no energy for a month. Woody sit in his house for a month with no food. It didn't take me up on the offer. I know this is government policy.

00:57:22:17 - 00:57:55:17
I know it's going off track for today. It's the chance I've got just to say something from that side. I do appreciate you listening to me, and thank you very much for giving me the time. Oh, could I just make one more? I've noticed I've been here every day. Now I've tried to comment on every aspect of what we've gone through, and I do appreciate the time you've given me. But I haven't had a row of experts behind me passing me post it notes or sent them... Texting me even. I haven't played musical chairs fetching other experts in.

00:57:55:19 - 00:58:26:00

I hope you see what we as the public are trying to do. We're trying to do what these people have produced. They can't even find their way through the planning document at times, but these people sat behind them, taps on the shoulder, post it notes. We're just ordinary people fighting Goliath. And as I say, they've no regard. Doncaster, I've got all the protections on Whitestone one. They just want to bulldoze through them. It's money. I'm sorry.

00:58:26:02 - 00:58:31:12
It's money. It's the word nobody wants to mention, but it's money. Thank you very much for your time.

00:58:31:29 - 00:58:36:21
Thank you, Mr. Collins. If we turn now to Nicholas Eastwood, please.

00:58:42:27 - 00:59:13:01
Thank you. I've cut it down by about sixty percent. So there might be bits missing. It might not make sense, and it's very tiring, this whole procedure. So I don't know Members of community are expected to do it. Well, how could you just go to sleep now? Anyway, here we go. I'll stop boring everyone. Thank you for listening. I'm speaking on behalf of Fursby Residence Association. We obviously recognize the national need for renewable energy, of course, we do.

00:59:13:03 - 00:59:54:01
And we understand solar is quick, cheap, and there's money to be made for investors, and the quicker, the better for the applicants. However, it has to be able to be balanced against harm. Our concern is whether Whitestone Mont was ever an appropriate location for development on this scale given its historical landscape, geology, topography, residential surroundings and environmental constraints. At a very early Whitestone consultation event, residents came away with the impression that some of the applicants, the representative from sec Newgate, didn't fully appreciate the historical significance of Conyersburg Parks.

00:59:54:03 - 01:00:19:23
They've just drawn a red line around a bit of land. We knew it included the Roman villa, the medieval deer park associated with cross Castle, the historic lodges and farmsteads and wider archaeology landscape. I'm not suggesting that this is an... That this impression proves the applicant had undertaken no heritage research. I'm sure they did. I am asking whether the full historic geological

01:00:21:21 - 01:00:55:09
and environmental significance of Whitestone one was properly understood and given sufficient weight when the site was originally selected by him. What began as residents researching their surroundings has become a considerable undertaking. This has been assisted by a number of local groups and the individuals who already understood the area because it's been there for years. We have now produced a ninety page evidence led historical landscape assessment of a zone examining Connysboro Parks and its relationship between its heritage assets.

01:00:55:26 - 01:01:26:05
As a commune set, we've pursued formal heritage recognition for six separate matters within the order limit and on the edge of the order limit, including Connysborough Lodge, Fursby Bridge, Hilltop

Farm, the Victorian water tunnels and air shafts, Connysborough Cemetery Chapel and the wider Connysborough Parks landscape. These have progressed to different stages of assessment and recognition. We're not professional historians. We're made up of a few residents with Nokia 3310s and a library card.

01:01:27:08 - 01:02:16:27
What started as an attempt to understand the development around our homes has become something of an intense hobby and race against time. But this research has opened a window into more than two thousand years of human history. We have evidence of successive layers of history across the landscape that they're gonna take away. Prehistoric and Roman enclosures, the nationally scheduled Roman villa, early medieval settlements, Connysbrook Castle, Saint Peter's Church, Medieval Deer Park, field systems, first base medieval pottery industry, historic lodges, agricultural buildings, mineral extraction, bell pits, Victorian water infrastructure and the later railway, corridor bridges and engineering structures.

01:02:17:06 - 01:02:19:21
That's only summary. It's ridiculous.

01:02:21:21 - 01:02:55:05
These are all individually these are all not individually designated and we recognize that their levels of significance differ. But their historical, geographic geographical and visual relationships are what make this landscape worthy of serious examination by yourselves. The reason these layers of history and roots still to be understood together today is because the landscape is open for everybody to see and everybody to enjoy. It's free and it's just amazing to see as our green lungs clears us heads.

01:02:56:15 - 01:03:32:20
Our research has taken as much further back more than two thousand years. The physical landscape itself contains evidence of geological history spanning hundreds of millions of years. Ravenfield Rock at Firsbet on the edge of the order limit is a carboniferous sandstone formation dating from approximately three hundred and ten million years ago. Nearby Houghton Cliff on the west of the development exposes the much younger Permian magnesium limestone landscape formed approximately two sixty million years ago.

01:03:33:18 - 01:04:10:17
That represents around fifty million years of geological history between those two rock reformations within the wider landscape that they are planning to take away. Poughton Cliff, for example, is recognized as a regionally important site R8, while specialist researchers identified Ravenfield Firsbee Rock as a geological feature warranting further investigation. These underlying formations have shaped the hills, valleys, soils, drainage, historic roots, and the way people have used this landscape for centuries.

01:04:11:02 - 01:04:42:24
The geological history helps explain the human history we're referring to. The Roman villa alone demonstrates the archaeological importance of this area. Historic England scheduled it in July twenty five after they came in identifying its rarity in Yorkshire and the survival of substantial buried

archaeology remains logical remains. We have also identified heritage relationships involving the grid tool listed buildings at Fursby Old Farm and Threshing Barn within Fursby.

01:04:45:09 - 01:04:52:25
Seem to be straying into sort of the heritage aspects and historical and we're on cumulative and need and site selection here.

01:04:53:22 - 01:04:54:08
I'll finish off.

01:04:54:10 - 01:04:57:24
Best place for the heritage session that we'll have in the future.

01:04:59:10 - 01:05:00:23
yes, But sorry to interrupt.

01:05:01:01 - 01:05:02:16
It was just very helpful. I'm glad

01:05:02:18 - 01:05:06:02
that gave any heritage experts here to respond.

01:05:07:03 - 01:05:39:22
I'll finish with this. Thank you. The landscape around Connysborough Parks has survived successive changes over centuries. We have documented evidence of formations more than three hundred and fifty million years old. The significance of this place lies in the survival of these layers in history and the landscape which connects them. But as I understand it stand it, ma'am, your role, you must determine whether this particular development is justified in this particular location that they have selected.

01:05:40:13 - 01:05:42:16
In a nutshell, mister Thompson,

01:05:45:16 - 01:06:06:23
mister Walker, and the Whitestone team, the community are against it. All our MPs have spoken out in support of the community. Our mayor of South Yorkshire made his representations clear. Our councils have spoken against it. You really could not have picked a worse location. Thank you.

01:06:08:02 - 01:06:12:16
Thank you, mister Thank you. And Angela Eastwood, please.

01:06:18:11 - 01:06:51:26
Hello, Angela Eastwood. I'm speaking as a resident of Thursby. Good afternoon. Thursday, I'd just like to say no one is arguing about the importance of renewable energy. We're simply telling you that your locations are wrong. I'd like to pick you up on a point you've made, and I think maybe desktop surveys or speculation may have unfortunately provided you with the wrong information. Sheffield

Airport is located next to Sheffield Parkway. It's four to five miles. That's four... Stroke, five miles, six to eight kilometers away from the connection point.

01:06:52:01 - 01:07:30:17
That's much closer than Connorsburgh Parks. According to my information, site selection for White Stone was made in November twenty twenty three to January twenty twenty four. Can the applicant confirm whether Liberty Steel was one of the thirty one potential sites identified during November twenty twenty three to the January twenty twenty four site selection exercise? If it was, was Liberty Steel actually approached and on what date? If it wasn't approached, why was it excluded? And can the applicant provide the evidence that redevelopment was already a consideration at the time? Because I'm a little confused.

01:07:30:27 - 01:08:01:28
Liberty Steel stopped steel production in July twenty twenty four after site selection, but I'll check that, and I'll submit that information formally through writing to the planning inspectorate. And I apologize to Whitestone two and three, but I can only speak about Conyersburg Parks. So I want to ask one simple question. Why on earth has Conyersburg Parks been chosen for a development of this scale? This is greenbelt land, not graybelt or a brownfield site. It's open countryside.

01:08:02:00 - 01:08:37:08
It's part of our heritage, and it's a landscape that generations have enjoyed. It's linked to the schedule one monument, Connorsburgh Castle, that brings tourism and economy to our area, and it's miles away from your connection point, which incidentally isn't built yet. It also makes other communities affected by your site selection through the cable corridor. It's one of the very few places locally where horse riders can safely ride off road if we lose this land where we're supposed to go, onto roads that are already busy and dangerous.

01:08:38:07 - 01:08:55:20
The topography is undulating. Your plans will make your proposed grotesque structures overlook houses, and they will be seen for miles. Last summer, we were receiving emergency alerts on our mobile phones warning us about wildfires, warning us not to have

01:08:55:22 - 01:08:56:07
a

01:08:56:09 - 01:09:29:05
barbecue. Last year, even the smell of a fire was enough for me to contact mister Collins' wife to try and find out if a wildfire was indeed on its way to my hamlet. So how can we ignore risk of a fire at a site like this? With such limited access, how quickly could emergency services actually reach the fire? There's just one access point for a development of this size. There's no roads within the site. The pressure on the a six thirty, the risk of congestion, and the possibility of delay...

01:09:29:07 - 01:10:03:15
Delaying an ambulance or a fire engine should concern every one of us. What happens to that person who's waiting for that help? We need to look away what this development takes away, not just what it generates. The green book recognizes that social costs and impacts on communities matter. Our green

belt, our heritage, our countryside and our quality of our life have value too, and no community payment can replace them. I also want to say something directly to the developer and its potential investors.

01:10:03:24 - 01:10:37:06
You really couldn't have picked a worse pay... Place. The way this proposal has been presented has destroyed trust in the communities around the development. The choice of viewpoints seemingly leaving Connorsburgh Castle out of the picture does little to reassure us that the chewing part of this historic landscape is being recognized. And please don't underestimate the strength of opposition. Across the entire Whitestone development, every labor MP resent... Representing the affected communities, the councils, every parish council is opposed.

01:10:37:16 - 01:11:09:00
That's not a small number of people raising concerns. It's a clear message. Ordinary people have given their own time... Of their own time, research these plans, and challenge the developer because they care about this place. This isn't just land on a map. It's our homes, our history, our countryside, and our community. I support solar energy, but support... Supporting renewable energy does not mean accepting it anywhere at any cost. The right technology still has to be in the right place.

01:11:10:04 - 01:11:40:25
Under section one zero four seven of the Planning Act two thousand eight, the secretary of state can can conclude that the adverse impacts outweigh the benefits, and I believe that is exactly what should happen here. We're only at the start of this examination, but I hope one thing is already clear. This is not a community that will simply sit back and accept what is being proposed. We will continue to speak up, challenge the evidence, and make sure the true impact on our homes, our green belt, and our heritage is heard.

01:11:41:26 - 01:12:12:13
And I sincerely hope that by the end of this examination, the examinee... The examining authority and, ultimately, the secretary of state will recognize the benefits of Whitestone do not outweigh the harm it will cause. And I guess, mister Thompson, I'm confirming to you that following on from your suggestion at the Rudolph Center at the first nonstatutory consultation, which now seems a lot of sleepless nights away, I almost certainly won't grow to love your solar palm. Thank you.

01:12:14:13 - 01:12:19:19
Thank you, missus Eastwood. And then finally, we've got Brett Beckett online, please.

01:12:21:07 - 01:12:37:14
Hi. It's... Actually, it's Abigail Cohn. I still need to speak. And then I think Holly Beckett will speak afterwards. So as previously mentioned, I bring both professional questions...

01:12:37:16 - 01:12:44:05
Sorry. Can I just clarify? Sorry to interrupt. Can I clarify? You're speaking on behalf of Holly Beckett as we understand it?

01:12:44:10 - 01:12:50:22

I was speaking on behalf of Holly Beckett. Yes. And it's Abigail Co.

01:12:51:04 - 01:12:51:28
Okay. Thank you.

01:12:54:06 - 01:13:33:00
Okay. Thank you, madam. So as previously mentioned, I bring both professional experience and an academic background in environmental studies to present this environmental heritage and practical land use concerns surrounding the need, site selection, alternatives, and culmative effects of the proposed Whitestone solar farm. I have organized this submission around six specific areas of concern covering environmental impacts on potential local bird species, wildlife, alongside sites evidence and direct questions for the applicant.

01:13:33:14 - 01:14:04:04
So my first point is site selection and layout justification. Whilst I recognize the national need for low carbon electricity, that need does not automatically establish that this particular location and layout are appropriate. From an environmental planning perspective, a large scale energy infrastructure will still be rigorously cited and sensitively designed to avoid unnecessary harm to establish rural landscapes and ecosystems.

01:14:05:07 - 01:14:35:26
So I've got a couple of questions here for the applicant that I'd like addressing. Question one would be, what specific site selection criteria led the applicant to prefer this agricultural landscape over less environmentally sensitive locations? Question two, what alternative layouts were considered to increase separation from homes, historic assets and sensitive habitats? Question three?

01:14:36:13 - 01:14:51:01
Sorry, Coles. I'm terribly sorry to interrupt again. We can't hear you at all very well. We're really struggling to get the points that you're making. I think there's an issue with the connection. Is it possible that perhaps these points could be made in writing?

01:14:51:20 - 01:14:52:12
Because I

01:14:52:14 - 01:14:58:00
can It's cutting out all the time. It's really, really unclear. I don't know whether you can hear us very well.

01:14:59:00 - 01:15:01:27
Yeah. I can hear you. Can you hear me now?

01:15:02:09 - 01:15:08:14
No. Not very well. It keeps dropping out. It's it's sort of muffled, then it's quiet and then muffled. We're really struggling.

01:15:12:09 - 01:15:13:24

We just want to...

01:15:19:03 - 01:15:21:19
Hi there. Holly Becka here. Can you hear me okay?

01:15:21:27 - 01:15:23:22
I can hear you a bit better.

01:15:24:09 - 01:15:36:07
Right. Okay. I'm... Don't understand what problem the is. I've been using this headset all day at work. It's worked absolutely fine, but I do apologize. Obviously, Abi has got some points to make. It's just... I'll just start to put the microphone a little bit closer to her mouth and speak

01:15:36:09 - 01:15:44:15
a little bit sorry sorry to interrupt again. It's ever so muffled. I'm not sure... I'm not quite sure what the issue is. Do we still need

01:15:44:17 - 01:15:45:13
to hear them?

01:15:50:10 - 01:15:53:25
They may be too close to the microphone. Something...

01:15:54:00 - 01:15:55:16
Which closer microphone is that?

01:15:59:03 - 01:16:00:05
Hello?

01:16:01:20 - 01:16:02:24
Is that any better?

01:16:02:26 - 01:16:04:17
Oh, that's better at the moment.

01:16:04:19 - 01:16:08:14
Right. I think it's because it's bouncing off the speakers, Abi. Just cover the microphone.

01:16:16:12 - 01:16:17:09
Is that better?

01:16:17:11 - 01:16:17:26
Can you

01:16:17:28 - 01:16:18:13

hear me now?

01:16:19:11 - 01:16:21:14
Yes. That's a bit better. Thank you.

01:16:21:21 - 01:17:02:29
Okay. So the the questions for the applicant. What specific site selection criteria led the applicant to prefer this agricultural landscape over less environmentally sensitive locations? Question two, what alternative layouts were considered to increase separation from homes, historic assets, and sensitive habitats? Question three, where is the justification for rejecting those alternatives recorded? And question four, how has the applicant balanced the expected electricity benefit against the permanent or long term change to surrounding landscape?

01:17:04:28 - 01:17:06:13
My second point

01:17:06:16 - 01:17:48:09
is local biodiversity and UK red listed bird species. So looking at the ecological baseline, the site sits within vital rural adjacent corridor to sensitive habitats, including the Anston Stones site of special scientific interest and the Anston Brook Valley. For wildlife records from Sheffield Robberham Wildlife Trust and others confirmed the presence of numerous UK red listed bird species facing the highest level of conservation risk under the of birds Conservation Concern assessment.

01:17:49:00 - 01:17:55:27
Specifically, local hedgerows, scrub and woodland edges support breeding residents such as the Green Sorry,

01:17:55:29 - 01:18:05:21
Sorry, Carls. I'm going have to interrupt you again. We still can't hear you very well. We're really struggling here. Is it possible that you could submit your questions in writing? Because it seems to be a connection issue.

01:18:06:29 - 01:18:09:28
Yep. Hi

01:18:12:20 - 01:18:17:10
there. I'm I'm Holly Beckett. Is the connection okay for me? We can't hear you

01:18:17:12 - 01:18:18:25
very well either, I'm afraid.

01:18:19:14 - 01:18:20:18
Just two seconds.

01:18:22:23 - 01:18:24:20
Is the connection okay for me?

01:18:28:11 - 01:18:30:06
Just please bear with me one second.

01:18:36:27 - 01:18:39:01
Well, not working when you don't have the headphone off.

01:18:59:27 - 01:19:00:23
Hello?

01:19:02:14 - 01:19:05:02
Hello? Hello?

01:19:07:16 - 01:19:09:04
Still quite quiet.

01:19:09:21 - 01:19:11:09
Hi. Can you hear me okay?

01:19:12:25 - 01:19:14:08
At the moment, it's quite quiet.

01:19:16:11 - 01:19:54:24
Hi. My name is Holly Beckett. I'm speaking on behalf of Brett Beckett. I want to note that he was missed out on three point two. He did put his hands up on the teams, but that wasn't recognized. So I have his notes here, and going I'm to read them out. Unfortunately, I am gonna start from points three point two as these are important notes that he spent hours doing, and they need to be recognized. I'd just like to point out that Brett is a qualified pilot. He's also highly qualified qualified in finance, and he spent many years at university studying sustainable infrastructure such as solar panels, air source heat pumps, and other sustainability projects.

01:19:54:26 - 01:20:31:26
So he's very highly qualified to make these comments. We've spent hours out of our own time drawing all of the current solar farms alongside Whitestone together onto a map to work out the culmination effect in the area adjacent or in the immediate vicinity of the entire Whitestone project. That covers... Or or at the date we did that, twenty solar farms adjacent or in the immediate vicinity of Whitestone, covering over six thousand acres of South Yorkshire's land.

01:20:32:15 - 01:20:45:08
That is not an exhaustive list. We may have missed some. They were only the solar farms that are currently in planning application or in build. They do not cover existing solar farms because I couldn't find that information out.

01:20:46:26 - 01:21:03:19

Adjacent to Whitestone would be Piper Lane, Burcroft Energy Park, and Common Road Solar Farms. They would meet the Whitestone border. They are all within the North Anston slash Bulleye area in Whitestone two.

01:21:06:16 - 01:21:18:21
This culmative impact and the amount of acreage that these over solar farms alongside white... Alongside Whitestone in our area would take away a huge proportion of our food producing land.

01:21:20:12 - 01:21:24:15
That is not something that one community alone should have to stand.

01:21:26:20 - 01:22:00:02
Whitestone proposed to take, alongside a housing development, one hundred and eighty five of acres the green belt that sits between Tobwick and Northampton village. That will connect the townships of Tobwick and Northampton, and it covers forty one percent of that green belt. Now as my friend Abigail was just saying, that area is home to red listed bird species alongside other animals. That is their hunting habitat, their nesting ground, their corridor.

01:22:03:04 - 01:22:10:05
That land is landlocked between the a fifty seven Toddwick Road and Penny Peace Lane at North Anstom.

01:22:12:12 - 01:22:13:26
Where will those animals go?

01:22:16:13 - 01:22:28:01
The a fifty seven traffic and the traffic surveys done by Whitestone do not take into account the traffic at the time Whitestone will start construction.

01:22:29:24 - 01:22:54:03
Down the a fifty seven, a short drive from Northampton, is a very, very large industrial warehouse that is currently sat empty and open for rental. One of those warehouses alone covers five hundred square foot. There's three of them. And there is also an additional application in for the MX Worksop area

01:22:55:25 - 01:23:20:26
that covers three hundred acres of industrial units. That's four point five square... Four point five million square foot of rooftop. Why was this not considered for solar panels? Those warehouses do not have solar panels on the roof that currently exist. Now the Internet research tells me that those warehouses that currently exist, of half a million square foot,

01:23:22:20 - 01:23:46:05
We'll put an additional one hundred and fifty three HDVs a day onto the a fifty seven up to the m one. That's on top of Whitestone, so their traffic survey that they have done now is not reflective of what the traffic will be like at the time Whitestone comes under construction. I believe Whitestone have stated that there'll be two hundred HGVs a day on that section of the a fifty seven,

01:23:47:24 - 01:23:59:09
add the hundred and fifty three from the two warehouses. God knows what's gonna happen from the additional warehouses when the three hundred acres is covered a little further down the a fifty seven.

01:24:02:26 - 01:24:04:05
Just bear with me.

01:24:07:08 - 01:24:48:16
Ullie Country Park and Kiverton Peak Top are both green flag awarded sites. This recognizes their high standards of care, maintenance, visitor experience. That visitor experience is recognized for the recreational environmental value of the sites, and that's relevant because Whitestone haven't taken a single viewpoint from either one of these green flag awarded sites. How can Whitestone say that covering the sites below, because these are elevated sites, with an array of solar panels will not affect the recreational value of these green flag awarded sites.

01:24:51:03 - 01:25:04:08
What consideration has been given to the effect on that, the tranquility of the site, the character, and the tourism that is brought to these sites because of their green flag award.

01:25:07:02 - 01:25:39:28
On alternative technologies, my husband, as I said, who spent many studying years sustainable energy, has identified that Rolls Royce is currently developing a modular reactor. One of these reactors will produce energy for twenty four seven, three hundred and sixty five days a year on less than ten acres of land, and will produce more energy, five times more energy, than what the whole of Whitestone will produce. That will be a far better technical solution.

01:25:40:01 - 01:25:50:12
It produces more power, and it'll have a tiny impact on the communities compared to that of the impact that Whitestone wants to put forward.

01:25:54:12 - 01:26:26:01
Now, as a closing point on the matter, I would just like to note the responses to my friend Abby when she was reading out some of the statements produced by myself on matters earlier, and obviously, the the responses from the applicant's side. I understand that the applicant is not able to give an in-depth response due to the fact that we have all clarified that they have not consulted with any equestrian expert despite them making assumptions about equestrian data. And they've completely managed to avoid...

01:26:26:03 - 01:26:26:18
Eliminate

01:26:27:29 - 01:27:04:02
a vulnerable road user, the most vulnerable road user, and a minority community that is, as Mark Corrigan said, contributing millions to the economy each year, just in the postcode areas affected by Whitestone. So I just want to say that those skirting around of answers have been noted. I understand that you can't answer them critically because the point remains, you have not consulted with any

equestrian experts for an entire community that will be displaced due to the Whitestone development. And that just shows why you should have done a proper consultation with the entire community.

01:27:04:04 - 01:27:39:23
As I said, I live up to the border of Whitestone too, and I have known about it for bordering a year, given how long it has been in there. And also, if Whitestone had taken on any of the constructive feedback that I had provided to them, along with map references, map numbers, historical data on three separate occasions, both via telephone and email, then maybe maybe they could have said that they had consulted with an equestrian expert and taken that into consideration throughout their designs instead of proposing things that are simply not suitable.

01:27:41:11 - 01:28:18:16
I'm just going to bring up one last point, which is what Abi was trying to get across on the Hardwick Hall farm, and obviously its heritage setting, but obviously its impact, and the fact that Whitestone have proposed, despite me pointing this out to them, to put solar array on top of a right of way, an historic right of way, leading to a grade two listed farm that proposes there is curtilage protection on this right of way. It is a road. It is an unadopted road. It is a cobbled Roman road, and the plans still show, despite me telling them, solar array on top of it and this area fenced off, stopping access.

01:28:19:02 - 01:28:26:01
This route is used daily by Hardwick Hall Farm residences and liveries based there.

01:28:29:00 - 01:28:47:18
That came up in our impact survey that Save Our Bridleways had also done as well. And obviously, they have proposed to put a best storage and substation directly next to this public right of way. So I would like an answer from the applicant, please, as to why they have ignored my constructive feedback

01:28:49:12 - 01:29:13:09
and why they have decided that it's okay to put solar array on top of a... On top of what is essentially Hardwick Lane leading to Long Lane, and why they think it's suitable to be put in substations next to grade two listed buildings and next to Curtilage protected rights. If I could get a response to that, that would be lovely given I have asked the question three times. Thank you very much.

01:29:15:11 - 01:29:24:17
Thank you very much, Mrs Beckett. Mr Walker, were there any of the points you've heard from interested parties that you wanted to come back on this afternoon?

01:29:25:09 - 01:29:40:16
Madam Angus Walker for the applicant. I think unless any of my fellow witnesses wish to say anything, Doctor. Thompson would like to say something. But otherwise, we will come back as per usual in our summary of case

01:29:40:18 - 01:30:09:26
at deadline one. Jonathan Thomson for the applicant. Just because there was a very specific question asked at the end that is easily answered. There is no plan to put a substation or BES by Hardwick Hall

Farm. I believe that Ms. Beckett was referring to an area of Whitestone to near Long Lane Long Road, where at an earlier stage, that was one of the candidate areas, and it was eliminated after consultation.

01:30:12:13 - 01:30:13:26
I just respond to

01:30:15:13 - 01:30:35:26
That substation still remains on the plan. I'm sorry. I disagree. It still remains on the plan. The plan's on my screen. It's there. It is within grade two... Within the farmyard. The grade two listed Harwick Hall Farm next to Harwick Lane. I literally go to this farm on a regular basis. It's in the haylage field that they produce the haylage from to feed the horses. Thank you very much.

01:30:38:20 - 01:31:10:16
Thank you. I've got a note of all that, and I can have a look at the plans as well. Thank you very much, missus Thompson and Ms Beckett. I've managed to sort of whittle down my questions as I've heard the discussions going on. I'm very pleased to know I've only got a couple of short questions that remain. And again, noting that you haven't got your planning witness here, if you wish to defer them to writing, that's absolutely fine. I just wanted to quickly ask, obviously, with the change of substations now moving from Brinsworth to Long Lane, I appreciate they're sort of quite close together.

01:31:10:23 - 01:31:19:02
But are there any implications for any of the conclusions within the ES or any additional assessments that are likely to be required as a result of that change?

01:31:21:00 - 01:31:25:01
Perhaps I can ask Mr. Hampson to answer that, if he can.

01:31:25:03 - 01:31:28:02
Yes, Alex Hansen. On behalf of the applicant, the

01:31:31:11 - 01:31:46:07
change that is described occurred before completion of the impact assessment. So the long lane substation that is now our point of connection is the point that is considered and assessed in the order limits and the impact assessment.

01:31:47:11 - 01:31:54:04
That's very helpful. And then I just wanted to I know we've sort of touched on irradiance already.

01:31:55:19 - 01:31:58:13
And I note that sort of in the planning statement,

01:32:00:01 - 01:32:18:17

it said that it's sufficiently high to support solar development, which was a key consideration. But if I've missed it, please signpost me. Is there any further sort of quantified assessment of irradiation levels or comparisons with alternative areas that's available on that matter?

01:32:20:29 - 01:32:22:22
Thank you, madam. Mr.

01:32:27:09 - 01:32:28:22
Gillett can assist.

01:32:30:08 - 01:32:45:06
Madam, signing Gillett for the applicant. APP forty one, Just searching for the figure seven point two has a graphical representation of solar irradiance across the U. K. And

01:32:47:25 - 01:32:59:23
respondent writing on where in that application document we talk about historically experienced solar output in UK's solar farms.

01:33:00:29 - 01:33:02:10
Thank you. That's helpful.

01:33:04:03 - 01:33:11:28
That was all the questions I had remaining. So I think that brings us to a close on agenda item three oh, sorry, Mr. Thompson. Sorry.

01:33:12:00 - 01:33:34:27
So Jonathan Thompson for the applicant. Just sorry, I should correct myself very quickly in what I said a minute ago that at Hardwick Hall, there is a secondary substation is planned for there, but the BES that was originally part of the consultation was removed after consultation. But Ms. Beckett is correct that there is still a secondary substation on

01:33:34:29 - 01:33:35:16
the plan.

01:33:36:27 - 01:33:37:28
You for the clarification.

01:33:38:00 - 01:33:39:21
Thank you for the clarity. Thank you very much.

01:33:39:23 - 01:33:48:20
I think that brings us to the close of Agenda Item three. So taking agenda item four, is there any other business before we close?

01:33:52:08 - 01:34:02:12

No. Turning to review of matters and actions arising, Did you want to run through the action points? I should also point out that the...

01:34:09:23 - 01:34:16:13
Could we supply them later in writing? I think there were just one or two at the last minute, so we just want to make sure we've

01:34:16:15 - 01:34:17:21
got Fine, the yes. best.

01:34:18:05 - 01:34:20:03
We did yesterday, which we've I've now

01:34:21:04 - 01:34:52:05
The list yesterday matched up with my points as well, so thank you for putting that together. But yes, to do that in writing is absolutely fine. So that brings us to the close of the hearing and concludes today's issue specific hearing and this week's hearings altogether. I'd like to say thank you to everyone who's participated, taking the time out to come and speak to us. It's been very helpful, and we're grateful for your input from all parties. So thank you for your time. It is now ten to six, and the hearing is closed.

01:34:52:07 - 01:34:53:27
Thank you very much, everyone. Have a good weekend.