



## Hearing Transcript

<b>Project:</b>	Norwich to Tilbury
<b>Hearing:</b>	Compulsory Acquisition Hearing 2 (CAH2) - Day 1 - Part 1
<b>Date:</b>	29 April 2026

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

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

FULL TRANSCRIPT (with timecode)

00:00:06:15 - 00:00:20:11

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. It is 10 a.m. and it's time for this hearing to begin. Before we go any further, can I just check that everybody can hear me clearly, and that the live stream and recording of this event has commenced.

00:00:23:28 - 00:00:25:05

Thank you very much.

00:00:26:26 - 00:00:50:08

I would like to welcome you all to this second compulsory acquisition hearing in relation to the application made by National Grid for an order to grant development consent for a Norwich to Tilbury project. My name is Kenneth Stone. I am a planning inspector and charter town planner, and I'm joined by my panel colleague, Matthew Sims, who I will ask to introduce himself.

00:00:50:23 - 00:00:55:26

Good morning everyone. My name is Matthew Sims and I'm a chartered civil engineer and also a planning inspector.

00:00:56:28 - 00:01:31:07

We are two members of the examining authority that have been appointed by the Secretary of State to examine this application. The other three panel members, Mrs. Hunt, who is the lead member of the panel. Mr. Hockley and Mr. Butler are in Colchester today at the issue specific hearing two. They will watch the recording of the proceedings of this hearing online at a later date. Our role is to examine the application and to report to the Secretary of State for Energy Security and net zero, with the recommendation as to whether or not the development consent Order should be made.

00:01:31:23 - 00:01:45:24

I can confirm that all members of the examining authority have made formal declarations of interest, and that there are no known conflicts of interest with regard to us examining the application. There is one exception, and Mr. Sims will comment on that now.

00:01:46:15 - 00:02:17:18

Thank you, Mr. Stone, for the purpose of this, a particular part of this examination being the objection from Essex Scout and Guide International Jamboree, which is relevant to this hearing and beyond, I have declared that I'm a Scout leader and a member of the Scouts. However, my scouting roles, past and present, are not within or in any way related to Essex, nor are they relevant to the matters relating to the International Jamboree. I have also no personal links, past or present, to scouting or leaders in Essex, nor the organization organizing team of the Jamboree.

00:02:17:26 - 00:02:29:10

Notwithstanding this, I will not be involved in the examination or recommendation in relation to the objection from the Scout Essex Scouting Guide, International Jamboree or the related land. Thank you.

00:02:31:04 - 00:03:07:24

Planning Inspectorate case team here today is represented by Louise Haraway as Kiss manager. And she's being supported here by Jessica Dunlop as a case officer. Remotely online we have Michelle Gregory, Amina Khan and Deborah Allen. Please don't hesitate to talk to a member of the case team. Should you need help at today's event or with the technology. It is the case team who you should contact regarding any queries with the application process. Today's hearing is being undertaken as a blended event, meaning some of you are present with us in the hearing.

00:03:07:27 - 00:03:23:20

The venue here today and some of you are joining us virtually using Microsoft Teams. We will make sure that however you have decided to attend, you will be given a fair opportunity to participate and you should be aware that the meeting is being recorded.

00:03:26:22 - 00:03:59:24

Before I go any further, I will now deal with a few housekeeping and preliminary matters. Can everyone please set all their devices and phones to silent? Uh, we have no indication that there is due to be a fair lawn test today. In the event of a fire, please leave all belongings behind and exit the building immediately via the main stairwell. The same route you would have normally used to leave. Please proceed outside to the green Area Fan zone in front of the marquee.

00:03:59:28 - 00:04:10:25

A member of our security and safeguarding teams will meet you and your staff there, and will carry out a final sweep of the building to ensure everyone has evacuated safely.

00:04:12:23 - 00:04:44:13

No requests have been made for any special measures or arrangements to enable participation in this hearing. If you do need some assistance, please speak to the case team. Online participants should make sure that their cameras are switched off and microphones muted unless you are speaking. If at any point during the hearing you cannot hear or wish to speak to the examining authority. Please could virtual attendees use the raised hand function on teams? There may be some delay before we can acknowledge this.

00:04:46:01 - 00:05:11:14

We intend to take a short break around 90 minutes into the hearing, and we will break for lunch around 1 p.m. and again have a mid-afternoon break about 90 minutes into the afternoon session. If any breaks are required before this, you should alert the case team and also if you need any extra support during the hearing. This should be directed to the case team who will who will alert the examining authority.

00:05:13:24 - 00:05:48:03

The event is being live streamed and recorded. Our letter of the 13th of January, which we will refer to as the rule six letter, explained that because we retain and publish the digital recordings, they form

a public record to which the General Data Protection Regulations apply. The Planning Inspectorate publishes and retains recordings for a period of five years from the Secretary of State's decision on the Development Consent Order. So if you participate in this meeting, it is important that you understand that you be recorded and that you consent to the retention and publication of the digital recording.

00:05:55:16 - 00:06:13:03

We will only ever ask for information to be placed on the public record. That is important and relevant to the Secretary State's decision to avoid the need to edit the digital recordings. What we would ask is that you do not refer to private or confidential information in your submissions today.

00:06:14:24 - 00:06:25:12

If you do feel the need to refer to something that is private or confidential. Could you please discuss this with the case team first to explore whether this could be submitted in writing and redacted.

00:06:27:09 - 00:06:59:18

As was explained at the preliminary meeting and our previous hearings, which you may have been present at. The majority of planning inspectors or members of Prospect Union and are currently participating in a period of industrial action short of strike. This essentially means that we are not working over and above our contracted hours. This has been accounted for in our timetabling of this week and for this reason, and also to allow participants to travel and for wellbeing reasons. Today's hearing will be closed on time and not continue beyond 5:00 pm.

00:07:00:02 - 00:07:36:15

Thank you for your understanding. We will go through the names of those affected persons who are participating today in a moment. However, here I would like to confirm arrangements for speaking which are the individual affected persons participants list to speak who are in the room. Please come up to the table when you when your name is called, and we will then ask you to begin for those affected persons online. When we call your name, please switch your camera on and then we will ask you to begin as set out in the agenda.

00:07:36:17 - 00:07:54:20

Affected persons will have approximately five minutes to make submissions, after which we will ask any questions that we have, if we have any, and give the applicant a rate of reply. We will then give the affected person an opportunity to make any final comments and give the applicant a final right of reply.

00:07:56:06 - 00:08:27:20

We would like to remind all participants in today's hearing to keep their responses as concise as possible, and to keep to the advertised agendas and not stray into other matters which the SEC has not sought to ask questions on. If any participant in the hearing is affecting the efficient running of the event or taking up too much time in their submission, they will be invited to submit their comments in writing at the next deadline. We would also like to remind everyone that written comments have no less weight than those made verbally.

00:08:29:13 - 00:08:36:17

Does anyone have any questions about the technology or general housekeeping or any matters I have just run through?

00:08:39:01 - 00:08:42:22

Yes, sir. So sorry. Can we get the roving mic?

00:08:47:22 - 00:09:07:21

Sorry. First time. Um. I'm sorry, Mr. Sims. I'm sorry if it's another name, but, uh, you mentioned about your interest in the scouts and you declared your interest in the Scouts. I am the landowner of the site for the Scouts. I'm speaking. I'm the three. So does that also have an implication? I don't know, because I will be talking about them at some point.

00:09:07:26 - 00:09:34:29

No. Thank you for the question. Um, I will still remain in the room whilst you speak. And that's why I made the declaration, because we knew that the matter was being raised in this session. All my declaration was to say that I will know I will not have any part in the consideration of that matter, um, through the rest of the examination into the recommendation report. So thank you. We knew you were here, which is why I made the declaration. I will just remain silent while you're speaking.

00:09:35:01 - 00:09:37:18

And I will lead on that section of it.

00:09:38:21 - 00:09:43:12

I'm not the scout representative. I'm talking as a different Yeah.

00:09:43:26 - 00:09:59:07

Yes. So sorry. I did say in my in my, in my piece that it would be the scouts and any related land matters. So I did make that clear about so so absolutely it applies in the same position for your for the land matters that you're talking about. Thank you.

00:10:01:21 - 00:10:10:08

Any other comments in the room? No. And I'm not seeing any hands raised. So I shall move along.

00:10:11:25 - 00:10:42:07

This hearing will follow the agenda published on the National Infrastructure Planning website on the 20th of April, examining Library Reference EV 2007. It would be helpful if you had a hard copy of this in front of you, as it won't be displayed on the screen. In terms of substantive matters, the agenda is focused on the individual objectives to compulsory acquisition and temporary possession, who have notified us of a wish to be heard at a hearing in relation to compulsory acquisition and temporary possession.

00:10:42:21 - 00:10:52:09

The agenda includes at annex A, a running order list of those affected persons who have notified us that they wish to make oral representations.

00:10:54:10 - 00:11:14:21

The list is split across the two days, Wednesday and Thursday. It is our intention to move through the list of participants in the order set out in the agenda, but there are some modifications as a result of changes that have occurred since the publication of the agenda, from additional persons or persons withdrawing their request to attend.

00:11:16:15 - 00:11:48:25

I would note that the agenda is for guidance only, and we may add other considerations or issues as we progress. We will conclude the hearing as soon as all relevant contributions have been made and all questions asked and responded to. But if the discussions cannot be concluded, then it may be necessary for us to prioritise matters and defer other matters to written questions. Likewise, if you cannot answer the question being asked or require time to get the information requested, then can you please indicate that you need to respond in writing?

00:11:51:26 - 00:12:00:25

When we take breaks. Those of you who are participating virtually will need to ensure your cameras and microphones are turned off during the break.

00:12:04:03 - 00:12:42:16

Moving to introductions, we would ask that each of the affected persons or their representatives, when they are called to participate, introduce themselves at that point. Please can you state your name and the title you wish to be addressed by, etc. and if appropriate, who you represent. However, firstly, I am now going to ask the applicant and its advisors to introduce themselves. Could you introduce yourself stating your name and any titled? And if I could hear from whoever or whomever will lead the submissions today and any others who may make regular contributions.

00:12:42:22 - 00:12:43:18

Applicant.

00:12:45:07 - 00:12:59:07

Good morning sir. My name is Heather. Sergeant. Sergeant. And I'm a mess. Um, counsel for the applicant. And I'll let my team members introduce themselves going along the table, if that's convenient.

00:13:03:06 - 00:13:15:19

Good morning sir. My name is Tom white. I'm a solicitor at the law firm Brian Cave Layton, Payson, and we're instructed to act on behalf of National Grid. I'm joined by my colleagues, Abigail Walton. There we go.

00:13:18:10 - 00:13:33:10

Good morning, sir. My name is Tom white. Solicitor at Bryan Cave Layton. Payson, we're instructed on behalf of the applicant. I'm joined in the room today by my colleagues, Abigail Walters and Alan Gutteridge, who may take my place at various points during the proceedings.

00:13:36:18 - 00:13:42:14

Good morning. Stephen Boughton, on behalf of the applicant, the Land Rights project manager for the project.

00:13:46:06 - 00:13:46:24

Good morning.

00:13:46:26 - 00:13:50:28

Nick Robinson Fisher, chairman, working in the lands team on behalf of National Grid.

00:13:53:10 - 00:13:59:28

Good morning. James going also from Fisher, chairman, acting on behalf of National Grid as the applicant.

00:14:03:08 - 00:14:10:04

Good morning. Josh Crawford, on behalf of the applicant covering routing and siting and the proposed development. Thank you.

00:14:13:03 - 00:14:21:16

So we have additional team members sitting behind us. It's probably easiest if they introduce themselves as and when they come to speak, if that's agreeable to you.

00:14:21:18 - 00:14:22:26

That sounds sensible. Yes.

00:14:22:28 - 00:14:23:26

Thank you very much.

00:14:29:16 - 00:14:30:21

Thank you very much.

00:14:33:06 - 00:14:41:27

In terms of those persons who are on the list to speak today, could I ask that the applicant display the list of participants for today?

00:14:50:05 - 00:15:29:25

Can everyone who is due to speak check that their name is on the list? I'll quickly read these out. There are a couple of changes for today from the published agenda. Um, where counsel have withdrawn their request to attend, and Richard Langton has made a late request to attend. And given the group's withdrawal, we have been able to accommodate this by giving him their slot. Secondly, Bloor Homes have moved their slot from today until tomorrow. So for today, we're anticipating hearing from Boxford, Suffolk Holdings, Culham Agri Limited, C.J.

00:15:30:08 - 00:15:45:28

Farming Limited. Essex Scouts and Guide International Jamboree, Daniel Bickford and Stephanie Bickford, Glyn Cullen, David Gillian and Donna Parish,

00:15:47:27 - 00:16:15:28

Louise Staples on behalf of NFU members Basildon BSF limited, Richard Long Limited, Tritton Farming Partnership Limited, East Anglia three limited John Stacey, Richard Langton, Eternal Godbold Farming Partnership, Nick Jones, Jeremy Fisher and Mr. and Mrs. Lang, Lanham.

00:16:18:12 - 00:16:23:06

Is there anyone else present here today who may wish to speak during the hearing?

00:16:27:08 - 00:16:32:11

Okay, I've got a couple of hands up there. Could I get the roving mag?

00:16:37:03 - 00:16:37:18

Hello?

00:16:37:21 - 00:16:39:18

Yes, my name is Paul Lanham.

00:16:39:29 - 00:16:41:03

Sorry. Paul.

00:16:41:08 - 00:16:43:14

Lanham. Lynn H. I'm.

00:16:46:02 - 00:16:48:12

From Dukes Farm at Dunton in Essex.

00:16:52:11 - 00:16:55:11

And did you submit a request to speak?

00:16:56:03 - 00:16:56:26

Yes.

00:16:57:11 - 00:17:02:23

And have you seen the agenda and the list of people? And did you notify us previously that you wish to speak?

00:17:02:25 - 00:17:04:23

No, I want to send the list just now.

00:17:05:15 - 00:17:08:00

It was published over a week and a half ago.

00:17:09:26 - 00:17:10:21

It doesn't have internet.

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

He's not tech savvy.

00:17:17:06 - 00:17:17:23

Okay.

00:17:22:18 - 00:17:45:14

Yeah. Can you speak to the case team? And we'll see if we can accommodate you at a later stage during the day. Obviously we'll run on with the the list of speakers in the the order that they're suggested today. But if you can speak to them then we can. During one of the breaks, have a chat with them and see what we can do. Thank you.

00:17:46:10 - 00:17:46:25

Okay.

00:17:49:10 - 00:17:51:11

There was another one in the room.

00:17:55:22 - 00:18:14:29

Thank you. My name is Simon Tracey. Tracey, planning director with Brett Aggregates Limited. I'm here in support of number 11 Tritton Farming Partnership. Yes. My name should be down. Um, but.

00:18:16:00 - 00:18:48:09

What we've identified in terms of the running order is who we will hear from. You are speaking alongside Charles Tritton in relation to Tritton forming partnership. That's 0.11. So at that point, if you come up to the table and Mr. Tritton can make his submissions and you make his submissions, I think we had an exchange of correspondence with the case team, and we indicated that you can speak along with Mr. Tritton. We're not giving you an additional time, but you can speak along with Mr.

00:18:48:11 - 00:18:49:00

Tritton.

00:18:49:06 - 00:18:49:27

Thank you.

00:18:50:00 - 00:18:50:25

Thank you.

00:18:55:12 - 00:18:59:25

Nobody else in the in the room. I've got a couple online before I come to you.

00:19:01:14 - 00:19:12:18

I've got a couple of hands online. I can only see initials. So if I come firstly to RLS, can you put your camera on? And.

00:19:13:14 - 00:19:32:21

Thank you, sir. It's Louise Staples from the NFU. I was just would like to make a request. Would it be possible for me to speak? Um, first after the break, please. It's just. I have to leave at 1:00 to go to London. And I think we. I might not get in with the position. I am on the agenda at the moment.

00:19:33:16 - 00:19:52:19

I'm sorry. We've got an order of matters that we need to get through, and other people will have made arrangements given that they had seen those things. So I would suggest that either you seek to try and be there. What time did you say that you needed to be away by.

00:19:52:22 - 00:19:56:19

Well, 1:00. And you've got me down at the moment at 1235.

00:19:57:23 - 00:20:14:03

Um, well, that really depends on how things are going. And you're only there for 15 minutes as a, as a maximum. So that should still be within the 1:00. So hopefully if things go to plan you should be done before your 1:00.

00:20:14:19 - 00:20:16:04

Okay. Thanks very much.

00:20:16:06 - 00:20:16:29

Thank you.

00:20:17:09 - 00:20:21:10

Could we just remove the agenda while people are speaking online please? Thank you.

00:20:27:00 - 00:20:33:10

And then the other party I have is J. K with their hands up.

00:20:37:01 - 00:20:57:15

Good morning sir. Um, I just wanted to check if Jen Kenny from samples you've got on the agenda. Just add, um, column agricultural limited. There are a number of other interested parties that I'm representing. I did refer that when I made my application. I'm just checking. That's okay.

00:21:00:26 - 00:21:05:06

So you are going to make representations on a number of parties, are you?

00:21:05:09 - 00:21:06:15

That's correct.

00:21:06:21 - 00:21:07:06

Right.

00:21:07:08 - 00:21:09:10

Okay. And who are they going to be?

00:21:10:07 - 00:21:13:27

Um, do you want me to give you them now, or do you want me to deal with the caseworker?

00:21:14:21 - 00:21:26:15

Um, well, you're second on the list, so. I mean, you will still have a slot, but your slot will be the 5 minutes or 15 minutes across that.

00:21:26:23 - 00:21:29:09

That's absolutely fine. That's all covered off that.

00:21:29:11 - 00:21:49:24

That's all covered off. Well, if you can deal with who you want to represent in that time period, then that's not an issue for us. And then you can make that clear in your submission. And also whenever you provide your summary, your written summary of your oral representations, you can confirm that in writing to us.

00:21:50:00 - 00:21:51:09

That's fine. Thank you.

00:21:51:13 - 00:21:52:18

Thank you very much.

00:21:59:06 - 00:22:00:23

Okay. Thank you very much.

00:22:03:16 - 00:22:22:12

I have a sergeant for the applicant, sir. It was just that when Mr. Paul Lanham spoke, it appeared he hadn't seen the agenda. And we did note there's a Mr. and Mrs. Lanham at the end of the agenda. So we wonder whether that's him or not, but I'm sure your case officers can work that out with him.

00:22:23:11 - 00:22:29:04

Mr. and Mrs. Lanham, I don't think that's the same person. They're in the audience. They're not the same.

00:22:29:06 - 00:22:31:29

Thank you. Well, we're grateful to understand who we're dealing with. Thank you very.

00:22:32:01 - 00:22:40:06

Much. No. That's okay. Maybe kiss team can once I've spoken to that in the break, you can sort that out as to who that may be.

00:22:45:27 - 00:22:50:03

Okay. That's all. Hands up. And everybody dealt with in the room.

00:22:51:26 - 00:22:53:05

If we move along.

00:22:58:02 - 00:23:33:15

Just to reiterate the point to all of our participants today, for the purposes of the recording, it will be enormously beneficial to us. If each time you speak throughout the hearing, you could state your name. And if you're representing someone who it is you represent. As I mentioned earlier, the event is being live streamed and recorded and will be available to view on the Norwich to Tilbury page of the inspectors website. Anyone watching on live stream, or as a later date, has the opportunity to make any comments about the matters covered today in writing for deadline, for which is Tuesday the 12th of May, 2026.

00:23:33:20 - 00:23:38:26

I'll now pass to Mr. Sims, who will take us through the purpose of the agenda.

00:23:39:12 - 00:24:15:04

Okay. Let me just briefly explain the purpose of this second compulsory acquisition hearing. The application for the proposed development includes a request for an order granting development consent to authorise compulsory acquisition of land or compulsory acquisition of an interest in or right over land, or the temporary possession of land. This hearing is to enable the examining authority to hear and examine the objections of individual affected persons. This hearing will help us consider the issues raised and whether relevant legal and policy tests applicable to compulsory acquisition and temporary possession proposals have been met.

00:24:15:24 - 00:24:47:09

The purpose of this hearing is to consider the matters on the agenda, which was published on the 20th of April. It is not appropriate to display documents that have not been previously submitted as part of the examination. If you propose to refer to a new document, that document will need to be submitted along with your written summary of your oral submissions so that it is formally entered into the examination, or other parties will have an opportunity to view and comment on it. If, during the course of the hearing we need to refer to a document, we will use the document reference in the pin's examination library.

00:24:48:05 - 00:25:21:08

The objective of the hearing today is to develop the examining authority's understanding of the issues. The expectation is that we, as the examiners authority, will lead on questions, but there is provision for direct questioning by effective parties should this be necessary. But it will be at our discretion. So all questions through us at the top table please. I would remind participants that applications for development consent orders are examined principally through written process. However, hearings can help to examine matters which will be helpful further to the examining authority.

00:25:22:11 - 00:26:05:12

This is a subject matter controlled agenda, which means that the matters for discussion today are those which have been identified on the agenda. Parties with an interest in land that is affected by the compulsory acquisition request are known as affected persons. These affected persons have been notified of this compulsory acquisition hearing. They have a right to be heard in relation to any

objection about the effects of the compulsory acquisition request on their interest in land. We've notified all of those parties affected by the application for the proposed compulsory acquisition powers and held a hearing on the first compulsory acquisition hearing, which provided an opportunity to comment on the applicant's overall approach.

00:26:05:27 - 00:26:41:29

This is now the opportunity today for those who have made or make a substantive objection to the use of the proposed compulsory acquisition powers, or requested to be heard to address us on individual cases. At the appropriate time, we will call each person who is registered to speak. At that time, I would ask you to introduce yourselves as to who you are and, if applicable, who you represent. We'll be examining the application for compulsory acquisition and rights in the context of the powers provided in the Planning Act 2008 eight. A link to that legislation is available in the main planning infrastructure website of the Planning Inspectorate.

00:26:42:01 - 00:27:20:26

But in brief, we will need to test and advise the Secretary of State on whether the land and rights that are sought are required to build and facilitate the proposed development. Whether there is a compelling case in the public interest for the land or rights to be acquired compulsorily, and what is sought is legitimate, necessary, reasonable and proportionate. We would also be mindful of the advice set out by the government in its 2013 Publication Planning Act 22,008 guidance related to procedures for the compulsory acquisition of land, which is also available from a link in the guidance section of the main National Infrastructure Planning website.

00:27:21:19 - 00:27:55:14

Our deliberations and decisions will also be guided by the relevant human rights legislation, including the European Convention on Human Rights, articles six and eight and the First Protocol of Article one. Ultimately, while considering whether to recommend or allow the application for compulsory acquisition powers respectively, both we and the Secretary of State will take great care to weigh any interference with human rights against the public interests associated with the benefits of the proposed development, and ensure that they interface. Any interface for interference is considered both necessary and proportionate.

00:27:56:08 - 00:28:42:16

It is for the applicant to demonstrate that all compulsory acquisition powers that it seeks are justified within this framework, that all reasonable alternatives to compulsory acquisition have been explored, and that there is a reasonable prospect of it having the funds available to implement any compulsory acquisition rights that may ultimately be granted by the Secretary of State in the time allowed within the Development Consent Order. While there is a clear and obvious link between our examination of the proposed development itself and our examination of the application for compulsory acquisition and temporary possession of rights, the two are tested in their own merits, according to the case and whatever our ultimate recommendation to the Secretary of State, it is possible that they could not grant development consent, but not some of the powers requested for the compulsory acquisition or temporary possession.

00:28:43:10 - 00:29:35:09

We should stress that we will form a view over the full course of the examination on each of the requests for compulsory acquisition powers, and whether or not there is a compelling case in the public interest, and not just on the submissions and evidence put for us today. For the purposes of this hearing, we are assuming that the representatives of the applicant are reasonably familiar with the legislative policy and guidance framework, and with the process that the examining authority and the Secretary of State's will go through. For those of you that are less used to compulsory acquisitions, we should explain that we may refer to a number of the principal documents from the application today being the Development Consent Order, Land Plans, Works plans, Explanatory Memorandum, Statement of Reasons and Appendices, Book of Reference, Crown Land Schedule tracker, special category, land tracker and schedule of affected persons objecting to the CAA and temporary rights.

00:29:36:24 - 00:30:07:10

In preparation for this hearing, we have looked at all relevant material including the Statement of reasons, explanatory manner, memorandum and various chapters of the Environmental Statement. All of these are available on the examination library on the project web page of the Planning Inspector, its national infrastructure website. The land plans identify all relevant parcels of land and include a label for each that cross-references the book of reference. The Book of Reference includes a comprehensive table that lists each parcel of land, the power source and everybody that has been identified with a legal interest in it.

00:30:07:12 - 00:30:52:25

It was the applicant's responsibility to undertake diligent inquiries into the existence of all affected persons in advance of making the development consent application. The Statement of Reasons sets out in detail why the applicant believes there is a compelling case in the public interest for it to be granted compulsory acquisition powers in the Draft Development Consent Order, and that these are necessary, proportionate and justified. Finally, may we remind you that the focus of today's hearing is explicitly on the individual's case of those affected persons who have registered a request to appear before us in relation to the applicant's proposed compulsory acquisition and temporary possession powers, and we will not be taking any submissions or evidence on any other aspects of the proposed development itself, including its merits or wider concerns.

00:30:53:17 - 00:31:28:03

There will be other opportunities to write or speak to the examining authority on these broader aspects later in the examination, and these are set out in the examination timetable. If you have other issues you wish you to raise, you can address those in written submissions at the relevant deadlines or in the other hearing sessions proposed in the examination timetable. Similarly, we cannot take evidence on the eligibility or on quantum of compensation that may be sought or awarded to any individual affected persons or the application of the compensation code, as it is strictly outside the scope of our Terms of reference.

00:31:28:23 - 00:32:13:01

I would also like to say a few words about the applicants change request submissions, which have been accepted by the examining authority as the consultation consultation in accordance with the Infrastructure Planning Compulsory Acquisition Regulations 2010 is currently ongoing. We will not be discussing the amendments to the application contained within the change request during this week's hearing. There is still an opportunity to make relevant representations in relation to the applicant's change request. The consultation period of which closes on Friday the 15th of May.

However, I would like to point out that any comments made in relevant representation must relate only to the applicant's proposed provision for the compulsory acquisition of additional land, as set out in the submitted documents on the 27th of March.

00:32:13:27 - 00:32:32:07

Any comments that are not about this will not be seen by the ASA. A further period of written representations will take place, and there will be an opportunity to make oral representations at subsequent hearings, which again will be related to the change request only, and this process will be confirmed after the closure of the relevant representation period.

00:32:34:00 - 00:33:04:27

So to complete this preliminary item about the purpose of the hearing today, may we request all affected persons who make oral representations today. Submit a follow up written summary of their oral representation after this hearing by deadline, for which is Tuesday, the 12th of May. Written submissions should be based on your representation today rather than new material, but they can include more detail and corroborative corroborative of supporting evidence. For those of you who haven't attended proceedings such as these, there is necessary formality and we would ask you to refrain from interruptions.

00:33:04:29 - 00:33:25:03

These are most unhelpful to us, potentially disruptive to those who are speaking, and could, in some circumstances lead to an award of costs against the persons responsible. Before I come to the substantive agenda and the individual representatives to representations. Is there anything of a more general procedural nature that anyone wishes to raise before we start?

00:33:28:12 - 00:33:36:00

Thank you. I will now pass over to Mr. Stone, who will start us off on the substantive part of our agenda. Thank you.

00:33:37:20 - 00:33:46:05

Thank you very much. We now move to item three and the individual cases of objectors to compulsory purchase or temporary possession.

00:33:47:22 - 00:34:29:18

We set out in our agenda how we wish to consider this. And I will set them out again. Just briefly, one, can you confirm the plots that you're interested in to provide an outline of the current scope of your objections? Three confirm whether CA and TP powers are objected to and why. What relief you are seeking, and whether there are any issues of hardship or requests of non-statutory relief. Also, if you could comment on whether relevant, whether Human Rights Act or the public sector equality duties are engaged will now turn to those people that were on the list that was displayed previously.

00:34:29:29 - 00:34:43:17

And the first participant I have is Boxford Suffolk Holdings Limited. So can the participants who wish to speak on that matter. I've got you done as virtual rather than in the room. Can you please turn your cameras on?

00:34:46:24 - 00:34:51:05

Oh, you're in the room. Well, if you just come up to the up to the front desk.

00:35:02:22 - 00:35:27:07

Thank you very much. If you press the red button or the button in the middle of the microphone, you should. It should liven up. And if you want, we're not running a clock, but we've given you an estimate of about five minutes. If it starts to run over it substantively, we will ask you to draw to a conclusion, but will not have a guillotine at five minutes. But if you can, start your submission. Thank you very much.

00:35:27:09 - 00:35:29:21

Chair. Members of the Examining authority.

00:35:30:00 - 00:35:31:12

My name is Mark Chandler.

00:35:31:21 - 00:35:33:28

I'm representing today Boxford.

00:35:34:00 - 00:35:34:15

Suffolk.

00:35:34:17 - 00:35:35:15

Holdings Limited.

00:35:35:17 - 00:35:43:24

Which includes Boxford, Suffolk Farms Limited and Peak Fruit Farms Limited. They're farming businesses that are affected by the.

00:35:43:26 - 00:35:44:19

Scheme.

00:35:44:29 - 00:36:23:27

And have land within the old limits of the Norwich to Tilbury DCO. This representation is made alongside a previous written representation. Dated the 16th of February 2026, and is a pre-agreed statement given on behalf of my client. Uh, so there's a couple of key headings here. So the first is compulsory acquisition. Um, extent and necessity. Our fundamental concern is that the powers and the land rights being sought go beyond what is reasonably required to construct, operate and maintain the scheme and apparatus.

00:36:24:03 - 00:37:04:24

Land has been included within the order limits, where the width of construction and safeguarding corridors appears to be excessive, given the intensive land use, and to allow for the diversion of third party electricity and water apparatus without sufficient detail for the examining authority to be satisfied that this land is genuinely required. Furthermore, it is considered that the justification for avoiding the land to the south. Being the safeguarding of mineral deposits has not been fully explored,

specifically relating to the economic impact of the scheme and the economic losses that would potentially be suffered by my client.

00:37:05:22 - 00:37:54:03

Construction impacts. So this is the loss of the blueberry plantation, which is the land directly affected. So in particular the whole road and construction methodology, the affected land supports an established blueberry plantation forming part of an intensive horticultural operation supplying major UK retailers. Blueberries are highly sensitive to soil compaction, drainage and pH levels, and once the soil is damaged, it cannot be readily remediated. The proposed hill road and prolonged heavy trafficking, in addition to the cable laying works, would in practical terms lead to the loss of the blueberry plantation within the affected area, some £26 million worth of loss over the over the lifetime of that plantation.

00:37:54:07 - 00:38:27:15

This is not a temporary impact. Blueberry crops take many years to establish and reach for productivity, and their loss would result in a long term reduction, output, disruption to contracted supply arrangements, and significant economic consequences for the wider farming and packing business. The suggested construction methodology is whether excavation and stone placement or ground stabilization using cement based materials pose serious risks to soil structure and long term fertility.

00:38:28:15 - 00:39:07:19

Neither has been shown to be compatible with the future horticultural use of the land. These impacts extend beyond crop loss alone. The blueberry crop is a vital part of certain supply contracts and underpins employment and packhorse throughput. Next reservoir and water quality. The reservoir immediately north of the construction area is not incidental. It is central to the viability of the entire farming and packing operation at Home Farm. It supplies irrigation water for soft fruits, stone fruits and glasshouse crops, all of which are grown for human consumption and supplied under long term supermarket contracts.

00:39:08:00 - 00:39:40:18

Any contamination of this reservoir, whether by sediment, chemicals, fuel or changes in groundwater behaviour would result in loss of usable irrigation water, potential contamination of crops and consequential losses across the wider business. The mitigation described to date, including within the Outline Code of Construction Practice and Soil Resource Plan, does not adequately address this risk. Generic measures such as funding and seeding are not sufficient in this location.

00:39:41:02 - 00:40:15:29

Furthermore, it remains unknown whether the underground cable works will affect groundwater flows and, by extension, the reservoir's long term water levels and reliability. Long term impacts on the irrigation and land use beyond construction. The scheme creates permanent operational constraints. Once the underground cable is installed, the ability to lay new irrigation pipes, adapt irrigation layouts, and install crop protection measures such as hail netting and respond to future climatic production pressures are limited.

00:40:17:27 - 00:40:34:27

These impacts are not easily quantifiable, but they are real. Similarly, overhead lines introduce expanded sterilization due to the health and safety constraints restricting crop protection systems such as hail, netting, and tunnel type structures that are essential for modern horticulture.

00:40:37:22 - 00:41:13:02

So, to conclude, our concerns are not theoretical. They're a very real threat to the group of companies, specifically blocks of Suffolk farms and peak fruit. We respectfully ask that the examining authority to give these matters careful weight and ensure that only land is strictly necessary, is acquired by the applicant. Bespoke protections are secured for the reservoir and irrigation infrastructure, and the applicant is required to provide site specific, enforceable mitigation before CPO powers are granted.

00:41:14:13 - 00:41:17:25

And that's the end of my pre-agreed statement. Thank you.

00:41:18:27 - 00:41:39:19

Thank you very much. Before I ask the applicant to respond to that, um, have you provided the applicant with any suggestions about site specific mitigation or bespoke protection factors that you would believe would be helpful for your business?

00:41:40:26 - 00:42:15:05

We have looked at mitigating circumstances, but the orientation of the blueberry plantation and its physical layout. It's difficult to mitigate those, those losses. And of course, we don't know it. In moving to the reservoir. It's very difficult to judge what impact might arise as part of the construction work. So with all due respect, I think that's for the applicant to suggest mitigation rather than us as a claim.

00:42:15:08 - 00:42:51:09

No, I was just wondering whether or not you had any preconceived suggestions that you may wish to give to the applicant to say, if you consider this, or if you did this, it would be helpful to us in the way that you run your business or the way that you operate, just whether or not there is anything that you had suggested or put in front of them for them to consider, rather than suggesting that it's your responsibility to provide for that mitigation. I fully appreciate and accept that the applicant is proposing certain actions, and it is for them to identify what mitigation may be there that they can do.

00:42:51:11 - 00:42:55:09

But I was just wondering whether or not you had added to that conversation.

00:42:57:04 - 00:43:16:00

We have suggested certain mitigation, but it's it's kind of dependent on the methodologies proposed by the applicant in terms of construction, etc., etc. and I don't think sufficient detail has been provided to date to allow us to comment on those and come up with specific mitigation practices.

00:43:16:26 - 00:43:17:19

And I just but.

00:43:17:21 - 00:43:40:09

In Susanna Randall, landowner, um, the actual blueberry construction is like a cage effect. So if one row goes, the whole lot goes. Um, so it isn't a question of sort of trying to put in small areas in different parts of the plantation. It is one huge plantation that is affected And we can't take bits of it away.

00:43:41:04 - 00:43:42:19

Thank you. That's very helpful.

00:43:45:11 - 00:43:49:27

Could I turn to the applicant? Have you got any matters that you would like to respond to there?

00:43:50:10 - 00:44:16:00

Have a sergeant for the applicant. Thank you sir. I will turn first to Mr. Boughton and ask him to respond on the statement that the extent of land take is excessive. Then to deal with the impact on the blueberry crop and then to deal with water quality issues. And then it may be, sir, that we hear from Mr. Crawford in terms of routing and siting, if there's any more detailed points he wishes to bring to your attention. Thank you.

00:44:20:01 - 00:44:51:14

Steven Boughton for the applicant. Yes. Thank you for the affected parties. Comments. Um, I think in terms of, um, we're very much aware of the possible implications on the type of crop that we'll be going through, obviously, in this specific area where we are entering the proposed substation area is where we have the overhead line and underground cable in the same location. So it has led to an increased area, obviously within the red line boundary required to deliver both of those elements of the project.

00:44:51:22 - 00:45:23:04

I think at this stage, we're looking to engage further with the impacted party to see how we can reduce that specific area, to reduce the area of the affected crops and possibly some other mitigation measures, which I believe possibly been discussed this morning. Some possible ideas we might have that we'll need to work through with the affected party to whether they work for the crop. Fully understanding the complexities of the the soil type. And it's been a long term crop that takes a long term to produce fruit.

00:45:23:07 - 00:45:43:06

I think hopefully over the coming weeks, we'll be able to kind of drill down into whether any of those mitigation measures will work, whether there's any form of replacement land that could be utilized to replant the crop crop, but I think we fully appreciate the impact on the crop at this stage.

00:45:55:23 - 00:46:33:10

Josh Crawford, on behalf of the applicant. Just in terms of the routing and siting, and obviously while we're crossing the affected parties land in this particular location, as my colleague mentioned, where it's the the entry or exit, depending which way you look at it, to the ECN connection node substation and the extended limits. There are, again, as I mentioned, to reflect the overhead line on underground cable. We have looked extensively at various different routing options. Options to the south would

include either over sale or underground cable routing through a designated scheduled monument, followed by to the south and the southwest.

00:46:33:12 - 00:47:13:08

The crossings of some county wildlife sites. Potential of the sale of commercial property. Our gardens, residential gardens and then the challenges of crossing Ardley Reservoir further to the south. They were all extensively assessed and can be found in the Design Development report at one, two, two. Um, additionally, um, well, we have made some changes throughout the process of the feedback from from landowners and other stakeholders in that the overhead line has been shifted slightly further south at TB 5 to 6, from where it was originally, to reduce the effect as much as possible of the overhead line on the on the plantation.

00:47:14:10 - 00:47:15:02

Um,

00:47:16:28 - 00:47:46:21

yeah, I think that probably that covers it. There is extensive detail in the in the design development reports on various responses to date. But if we're going to take an administrative matter, maybe at this point there's going to be a I can appreciate it's 4 or 5 years worth of routing and siting that's covered across the three design development reports. The corridor routing siting studies lots of specific feedbacks in the consultation report. So if we can follow up with the specific references in writing, we have got them conscious of the time today to focus on the actual points.

00:47:46:23 - 00:47:51:14

If we can know that, that would be helpful if you can put those in and when you respond.

00:47:51:17 - 00:47:52:07

Thank you.

00:47:53:13 - 00:48:25:18

Um, sir, I have a sergeant on behalf of the applicant. And then just briefly on water quality again, similarly to Mr. Crawford suggestion, I propose that I'll give you the detailed references in writing. But our response to that is that there are commitments within section six of the Outline Code of Construction Practice, and that will ensure that any sort of impacts in terms of water quality are avoided and that, um, sort of adverse impacts don't arise, essentially.

00:48:31:28 - 00:49:13:10

I just want to. Just as a general thing as we go through, we're kind of learn as we go through the 30 odd that we're told it might be useful to just automatically put up when you're talking about routing the plan to just show that so you can talk to just as a kind of a preparedness, so that you can come up so we can understand what you're I understand you want to go into more detail also on the land rights tracker that was submitted, last submitted. Just looking at where the negotiation, uh, tracker is, is engagement history is showing. Um, and again, I'd quite like a comment mostly on that engagement history, because at the moment it's showing that there's been an exchange of heads of terms, but not as you're showing when negotiations and discussions were last actually held, rather than just an offer to hold engagement.

00:49:13:12 - 00:49:24:14

So, um, I'd really quite like a comment every time on that engagement history, because at the moment I can't actually work out whether when there was engagement rather than just exchange of letters.

00:49:26:23 - 00:49:36:09

I have a sergeant for the applicant, and Mr. Nick Robinson can set me assist you on the engagement point. And we've noted that we'll come back to that for all of the next speakers.

00:49:36:18 - 00:49:37:14

Thank you for that.

00:49:38:06 - 00:49:39:11

Thank you. Nick Robinson.

00:49:39:13 - 00:49:40:08

Fisher, chairman for the.

00:49:40:10 - 00:49:42:14

Applicant. So do you confirm following.

00:49:42:16 - 00:50:05:01

Release of heads of terms both in 2025 and then similarly in 2026? We had an in-person meeting with the affected party on the 16th of February. We just got a number of points. A number of outstanding actions came from that, some of which have been boxed off to date, and we're currently working through the remainder and will be responding in due course. Following an in-person meeting we had this morning as well. Thank you. Thank you.

00:50:06:25 - 00:50:42:25

Thank you. I think it will be a running theme through most of the things, so we won't say it each time, but I suspect that the issue will be that a lot of the matters will be taken away and will be subject to further consideration and things of that nature. I would just say that we're almost halfway through the examination. We need to get a bit of a move on with things you've got lots of people to negotiate with. We need to get a conclusion to these matters sooner rather than later. So anything that you can do to expedite those ongoing discussions and those agreements and those discussions would be much appreciated.

00:50:42:27 - 00:51:06:04

And obviously, in terms of your written submissions back to us, in terms of these oral representations or further submissions at the appropriate deadlines. If you can confirm how those discussions and negotiations are going on with objectors, we do want to come back in another short while and still have no further movement on matters.

00:51:08:03 - 00:51:24:08

If it's not for the applicant, so that's entirely understood. My understanding is that the I think all of the relevant team from Fischer German are actually here today. So if anybody either present or listening

in thinks this is an opportune moment to speak to them, then of course there's not an additional opportunity for that to happen today.

00:51:24:10 - 00:51:54:20

I'll make that as a general comment, so I don't need to make it for each and every party and just do that. But I hear a sense of frustration from many of the affected persons about the nature of engagement. And I think that needs to be stepped up. And I think there needs to be certain engagement and certain resolution to matters, rather than just relying on heads of terms and things that have been submitted anyway. I think that takes us to.

00:51:56:15 - 00:52:04:01

Thank you very much. We could ask that we don't have a clapping or cheering or or cheering in the audience. So thank you very much.

00:52:04:03 - 00:52:10:19

Sorry. We just need to sort of move this along a little bit. So if I can just. Have you got any further comments that you wish to make.

00:52:10:21 - 00:52:24:12

Sir, could I just ask that those specific responses in terms of the alignment and the water quality safeguarding, are specific rather than more generic. Um, because we've seen very little detail so far.

00:52:25:03 - 00:52:30:04

No. Understood. Does the applicant of any final rate of reply.

00:52:32:27 - 00:52:34:27

Have a site for the applicant? No, sir. Thank you.

00:52:35:04 - 00:52:39:06

Thank you very much. Okay. Thank you very much. Thank you for your contribution.

00:52:42:07 - 00:52:43:18

If we can move to.

00:52:46:10 - 00:53:03:19

Gin, Kenny. Then we talked at the start about Calum. Agree. Limited. But you indicated that you had a number of persons that you wished to make, but you would accommodate it within your your submission. So if you can make your submissions, please. Thank you very much.

00:53:04:17 - 00:53:43:09

Thank you sir. Good morning. I'm Jane Kenny from Savills and I'm speaking on behalf of landowners Callum Abbey Limited to Callum Contracting, DM Grady Limited, Lord Sources. Board of finance. Rosemary Lee, the executor of the late Michael Lee and two agricultural growing limited. I will try to be concise and avoid duplication, particularly where common agricultural matters will be addressed in greater detail by the NFU as submission has been prepared in line with the questions set out in the agenda.

00:53:44:20 - 00:54:25:23

I would like to be clear the purpose of this submission is not to oppose the project. Our client's objectives are threefold. To ensure that the compulsory acquisition and temporary possession are used only as a last resort. To ensure that negotiations are genuinely progressed, genuinely progressed, and concluded by voluntary agreement wherever possible, and to ensure that landowners positions are properly protected while negotiations with the applicant and any third party utilities remain incomplete and uncertain.

00:54:26:27 - 00:54:58:14

Whilst recent engagement has been more encouraging. Outcomes are still not yet settled and therefore our clients representative representations currently remain live on 23rd April. Last week we met directly with National Grid. Those discussions were more constructive than we have previously experienced. A further meeting is scheduled for the 11th of May to continue negotiations. The progress is welcomed.

00:54:58:19 - 00:55:35:16

However, negotiations remain ongoing and incomplete. No binding agreements or concluded heads of terms are in place. The extent of land take permanent rights and construction impacts remain Unclear, and there is still inadequate understanding of how third party works interact on the same land, but especially and over time. In the light of this, landowners consider it necessary to continue making representations to safeguard their interests until there is certainty.

00:55:37:09 - 00:56:24:24

Applies concern related to scope, justification and coordination of the compulsory acquisition and temporary possession powers. By that we mean scope how much land is being taken and how all the permanent and temporary rights being imposed. Justification. Whether it has been properly demonstrated that those powers are genuinely necessary, proportionate and cannot reasonably be avoided through agreement and coordination Well, the combined impacts of National Grid's works and third party utility works have been properly planned, aligned and explained from the landowners perspective.

00:56:25:21 - 00:56:55:26

In practical terms, our client's objections relate to the scale of the permanent temporary land. What take pylon siting and overhead alignment. Associated construction infrastructure such as hall roads, compounds, access routes and working areas. The unexplained expansion of the Red line boundary and a lack of clear, sufficient and easily accessible detail.

00:56:56:25 - 00:57:07:26

Landowners find it very difficult to make informed decisions, as they do not currently have straightforward information showing how the works will affect them and their land.

00:57:10:00 - 00:57:44:00

Some of our clients are also affected by third party utility works associated with the wider project. We have also been recently contacted by UK, UK Power Networks agents in relation to the associated works. And again, we met last week on the 23rd of April. This is welcomed, although substantial

clarity is still required, particularly in relation to the relationship and mechanisms between the applicant and the utility provider group.

00:57:44:02 - 00:58:04:21

Necessity and construction mythology. Practical matters such as drainage, reinstatement, soil handling, aftercare and future access. Until these matters are resolved, landowners cannot properly assess or be fully informed to judge the overall impact on their businesses.

00:58:06:22 - 00:58:46:03

There are also clear and relevant issues of business and operational hardship. The subject line forms part of active and productive agricultural holdings. The combined effects of pylons, underground cables, temporary possession access routes, hallways, and long term restrictions will reduce productive land area, increase operational and management costs, disrupt drainage and cropping systems, increase biosecurity risks, and impose long term inefficiencies on established farming businesses.

00:58:47:03 - 00:58:57:13

These are impacts go well beyond temporary inconvenience and are directly relevant to whether the compulsory powers sought are proportionate.

00:58:59:04 - 00:59:22:23

In summary, our client's position is straightforward. While engagement has improved recently. Negotiations are not concluded. The extent of the land required has not been agreed or justified. The interaction between National grid works and third party works remain unclear, and the landowners

00:59:24:15 - 00:59:40:03

lack certainty over permanent easements, restrictions and future operational constraints. All reasonable steps, therefore, need to continue to be taken to secure land and rights by a voluntary agreement.

00:59:41:22 - 01:00:22:18

We respectfully request that the applicant maintains and escalates a proactive approach to negotiations, supported by clear and timely information and a commitment to agreed solutions, rather than a reliance on compulsory powers as a fallback. To conclude, our clients remain willing to engage Constructively. They do not oppose the project in principle, but they do. Oppose the current scope and justification of the compulsory powers affecting their land, and reiterate the compulsory acquisition must only ever be used as a last resort.

01:00:23:25 - 01:00:24:18

Thank you.

01:00:27:13 - 01:00:45:01

Thank you very much. Um, can you just make sure as well that your your written submission covers those matters and identifies the plots that you were referring to in relation to each of the parties. Thank you very much. Does the applicant wish to make any comment?

01:00:45:19 - 01:01:16:11

Thank you sir. Have a sergeant for the applicant. I'll ask, um, Mr. Gowing from Fischer German to summarize recent engagement and particularly in response to the, um, the speaker's remark, um, where he envisages this going in terms of engagement moving forward for you. And whilst that's happening. If I could ask that we put one of the relevant plans on the screen, just so that Mr. Crawford can then speak briefly about the justification for the routing, if that works.

01:01:16:13 - 01:01:17:06

Thank you.

01:01:19:28 - 01:01:51:01

Thank you. Thank you. James, going on behalf of the applicant. Just to confirm, the most recent meeting on engagement was with the agent last Thursday, the 23rd of April, to discuss the heads of terms and moving those forward alongside representatives from National Grid. Then more specific landholding and landowner specific meetings were held in March for Grady David and John. Brown and Callum agree, and then also for the Uru Writtle on the 15th of April.

01:01:55:23 - 01:01:56:16

Thank you.

01:01:59:05 - 01:01:59:27

Josh Crawford.

01:01:59:29 - 01:02:28:20

On behalf of the applicant. Just in terms of the routing inside thing. I noticed, obviously, that there was the agent that was covering various landowners, and there was no real specifics pulled out specifically in the text before then. So I was just a bit cautious about how I respond to that. I can be prepped assuming it was going to be regards RG 10 to 11. That's on the screen there. Based on some of the previous written responses, I can cover something on that. Or would you just prefer we respond in writing to the relevant reps?

01:02:30:07 - 01:02:39:07

I think if you can respond in writing and be specific about that section and in relation to their landholding.

01:02:39:18 - 01:02:40:03

Yeah.

01:02:40:26 - 01:03:00:13

Unless you've got anything specific about the third party. Oh, sorry. The, the statutory the other statutory undertakers land that was coming up quite often in terms of, um, you know, UK and other stats in terms of their routing and unknown, if there's anything you could cover on that that might be useful in the last few minutes of this slot.

01:03:01:05 - 01:03:45:23

Yep. Thank you. Yeah. So in terms of the third party utilities, a requirement for this scheme to enable us to develop a safe, operable overhead line in certain locations. We're crossing an existing UK power network, and BT Openreach would poll all the headline groups at different voltages in order to cross them and maintain that the safety requirements needed. We need to underground short sections of those existing assets. Um, that would be done by underground in the relevant spans affected, and then undergrounding a cable diversion where the general approach has been to try to maintain that alignment close to field boundaries, but keeping that route and as short as possible, reducing the impact where possible on the land holdings.

01:03:45:25 - 01:04:07:20

So that's why you will see these spurs kind of coming away from the old limits. Um, as was mentioned on the on the affected parties response there. UK Power Networks have commenced their further detailed design studies and engagement with landowners directly, as they'll be delivering those works on behalf of of the applicant for the DCO.

01:04:08:10 - 01:04:44:27

So just to confirm UK PM discussing their their diversions directly with the landowners, but on your behalf sort of on your behalf, just just in relation to how that's going to impact on, on the land required and you know, the, you know, I assume it's all still going to be within the order limits and there's no going to be no additional land. Um, but you're you're saying that the, um, UK is still developing their processes because the speaker was saying that, um, there seems to be still a lot of unknowns regarding those, those works.

01:04:45:02 - 01:05:20:26

I think there's a couple of points that I'll just touch on very briefly now, and it probably help for the rest of the day. I'll just get my, um, my note quickly. Sorry. Um, just in terms of the status of the design in line with products of a similar nature. With pre-application and for examination, we take the design to a relevant stage of Front-End engineering design known as Feed. That is, a very detailed design is being responsive to a lot of landowner feedback, stakeholder feedback and internal environmental engineering surveys assessments that has been developed extensively over the last 4 to 5 years.

01:05:21:21 - 01:05:55:27

We then get to the point. Traditionally, more sought consent once the consents granted that the applicant would hand over to a detailed design contractor who would then do the detailed design and build. At that time they did undertake further investigation, verification, detailed engagement with landowners on very specific site specific elements of the design to finalize that detailed design. So on behalf of this project, National Grid have actually pulled back, engaging the contractors further with the Great Grid Partnership already being engaged and in some many locations are already starting those.

01:05:55:29 - 01:06:22:26

Those further detailed conversations. So then it's just bear in mind and some of the detail that's being requested. It wouldn't be, I guess, common at this stage to have all of those finite details as per the detailed design. Hence why we apply for limited deviation, the Rochdale envelope, etc. etc.. So I

guess it's those further conversations that I'm referring to and I'll hand over to Mr. Bolton just to touch on the UK aspect. Stephen Bolton of the applicant.

01:06:23:14 - 01:06:25:23

So could you speak a bit clearer? Sorry.

01:06:25:28 - 01:06:29:26

Stephen Bolton, on behalf of the applicant. Yes. Just acknowledging your.

01:06:29:28 - 01:06:30:13

Comments.

01:06:30:15 - 01:06:31:00

It is.

01:06:31:02 - 01:06:31:17

Correct that.

01:06:31:19 - 01:06:32:04

UK.

01:06:32:06 - 01:06:58:00

No liaising directly with landowners the self regarding the diversion works. But we do note the that affected parties need clear information. How kind of both elements of the work kind of interact. So we are looking to step in terms of facilitating joint meetings between ourselves, UK, PM and affected parties just so we can be clear that all the elements of the work interact and the kind of timing of that as well.

01:06:58:09 - 01:06:58:28

Thank you.

01:07:02:02 - 01:07:12:14

Thank you very much. Can we just ask whether or not you have any other comments that you wish to make on the back of what you've heard there, Miss Kenney?

01:07:14:15 - 01:07:22:10

Um, no, that's all fine. And I look forward to working further with them. The actual permitted progress matters.

01:07:23:07 - 01:07:24:13

Thank you very much.

01:07:24:16 - 01:07:25:13

Thank you.

01:07:26:25 - 01:07:38:16

Uh, I don't think that you need a response to that as a final response. Right. Thank you. We shall then move on. If we can have the representatives for C, J, h Farming Limited.

01:07:53:00 - 01:08:02:12

Thank you. When you're ready, if you just press the button on the microphone. And if you can make your initial submissions to us, you have five minutes.

01:08:04:06 - 01:08:35:16

Good morning sir. My name is Mr. Christopher Philpott. Please refer to me as Chris. I'm here to represent myself and my own farming business. Thank you for the opportunity to speak. I've engaged with National Grid and Fisher German and my agent from the start back in April 2022. I friend's just joining the conversation now, and I can't see any benefit of engaging early. I've had nothing back since raising questions and pointing things out from the start of this project.

01:08:35:22 - 01:09:09:03

I have 750 meter high towers on my landholding to the west of Chelmsford, between pylons 154 and 161. I've cooperated with survey works and proposed intrusive surveys which are taking place in the near future. I've attended the public displays in Ingatestone, Writtle and Witham over the years, asking questions and giving my views. I've attended at least three meetings with Fisher German in Wellington, not not worried and not offices.

01:09:09:05 - 01:09:39:12

Most recently was the 26th of February this year. I have had 292 emails in correspondence with word and not and surveying companies on my responses, providing drainage maps, survey requests and my claim in 2024 for crop loss for a poor quality intrusive survey works undertaken by National Grid and its people. And what have I got back so far? Absolutely nothing.

01:09:40:14 - 01:10:13:21

I'd like to use this opportunity to raise a few key points I have for this project and all the hours of preparation, emails and meetings to date seem to have changed nothing. Clearly showing the complete lack of engagement from National Grid and Fischer German to date. I still believe there's been insufficient consideration given to alternative methods of transmission. And personally, at a practical level, I don't understand why this route is not being done out to sea.

01:10:14:01 - 01:10:45:06

I've discussed the option with a colleague of mine, discussing with me the many advantages and natural place for this line is to go out to sea, with the potential for a new national marine park, potentially up to a mile wide at the side of the cable route. This would be an amazing opportunity to protect the fragile ecosystem of the North Sea and save blighted country and save the blighted countryside of eastern counties. But no Ofgem, the politicians and national grid want to upset us all.

01:10:45:23 - 01:11:19:03

I'm led to believe that National Grid, a foreign owned private company who will financially benefit from the erecting and running of this line using powers given to them by the UK government. So we as British citizens suffer for the benefit of a foreign company. I might not feel so bad if the profits of

running this infrastructure were kept within the UK. I'm concerned the route chosen is the least financial cost in simple pound notes, but there are no value has been added for the human and environmental cost.

01:11:19:08 - 01:11:52:20

Or you might call it lifetime cost of what is proposed. I've got to look at these pylons from my house for the rest of my life, and probably my children's two. This will introduce an urban feel to our existing rural countryside. We can't move the farm. We're currently located in a wonderful landscape area which provides open views across the river valley. I can't understand why the pylons haven't been located east of Chelmsford, where the route would be shorter and more important.

01:11:52:22 - 01:12:29:26

There would be up to eight miles. Yes, eight miles less destruction of the green belt. Now, may I refer to my site specific points on my farm from the start? The plans provided to me have been very confusing and have very little explanation of the various layers within them. You cannot tell by looking at the plans I've received what use these requirements are for the various layers. All you get is a single red line boundary. There should have been more separate maps showing what each layer was for. I've repeatedly said that there seems to be a demand for too much land taken for delivery of the project.

01:12:29:29 - 01:13:00:22

I'm particularly concerned about the permanent easement National Grid are requesting, which covers the entire X number for each of my land parcels affected some of my X numbers, for example, with pylons 1592161 in it extend to over 1000 acres. Why should I have to waste my time and money consulting National Grid in the future if I want to do something over a mile away? Just because it's in the same same X number.

01:13:00:24 - 01:13:33:22

This is wrong. And why National Grid being so stubborn on this point? In the heads of terms. What's the point, I understand. Perhaps draw a line 60m either side of the pylon. But please don't take down the whole of my X number. I've discussed the access route for pylon 161 and 160 to 159 with Fisher German, and in their meeting, representatives that said the access route was not practical. They said it themselves and could see the sense of it being on the west of the hedge instead of ripping the hedge out.

01:13:33:26 - 01:14:00:17

But it indicates that what's on the map is what's happening. This is madness. Fischer. Germans said to me they would provide clarification on this point. After the meeting of the 26th of February. I've heard nothing. You'll hear this quite a lot as I speak. I'm concerned that pile on 161 is not located in the most practical position for future farming. I believe it should be in the corner of the field. Wouldn't that make sense? Parliament location generally has not been done by considering farming.

01:14:00:23 - 01:14:06:02

Although we did suggest that we wouldn't have a guillotine. Could you start to wrap up because you're five minutes?

01:14:06:18 - 01:14:07:17

I do apologize.

01:14:07:20 - 01:14:08:11

Bring bring it.

01:14:08:18 - 01:14:45:06

So yeah. Okay, so looking at the location of pile on 161 National Grid have considered the practical deliveries of delivering the pylon with the high pressure gas line, the existing bridleway and the pros access to one success. EFG said. They come back to me and they haven't EFG. We're also going to clarify what was meant by the bellman stacking. I've had silence off that. That's off the A1 60. The latest plans issued show a second haul road going deep into my property along the Essex across the Essex Young Farmers Showground racing meeting, Essex Fisher, chairman, said they are provided with written confirmation as and when they'd need this and it wasn't part of their permanent access rights.

01:14:45:08 - 01:15:15:15

Guess what? I've heard nothing back. I've requested there's no soil stabilization on my ground. I've experienced this before. Very expensive. It hasn't worked. Please, I request they don't use soil stabilization. Some of the fixed future rights of way are unfair to me, as it's sterilizing land that prevents any future land for development. For example, behind pilot near pylon 155, the route goes directly behind a house and should instead follow the route of the pylons. National grid, by law, have rights to access the land.

01:15:15:17 - 01:15:29:01

So why is the surplus public rights unnecessary? I'm worried about future crop losses that I'm concerned that I haven't thought about the fact we planned months ahead. We need to see a rulebook set down so farmers get due notice of what's happening. Selling a.

01:15:29:09 - 01:15:36:13

Crop. Mr. Philpott, I think you need to draw to a conclusion. Okay, you can submit. Yeah, I addressed it Yes. In writing.

01:15:36:15 - 01:16:11:06

And I'm also concerned about the Scouts and the guides, sir. Um, there have been very, very few negotiations. I know the next speaker is talking about them, and I think it's disgusting how little that's been going on. And the scouts are trying to organise a major event and they don't know what's going on. I have a caravan site nearby. Um, I've got I'm worried about soil sampling. I'm worried about site security. Um, yeah. The one thing's been mentioned before. So far, I've had no interaction with any third parties, with UK people and things like that, so they might be doing it, but they certainly haven't come to me.

01:16:11:08 - 01:16:27:27

The draft heads of terms have come. They've been they've been discussing with agents for months. Why can't they come to a sensible, common sense conclusion with all this? I'm sorry, but there are all

sorts of things that I keep going on, and I've heard nothing back from Fisher, German or anybody else. Thank you very much.

01:16:28:16 - 01:16:58:28

Thank you very much. We hear the passion and we hear the nature of the concerns in terms of the engagement that you have expressed. As I say, put your statement in writing as well, so that we can ask that the applicant can respond in detail to the the matters that you have raised in that. So if that's submitted for deadline for then at least we've got a written statement of all of your comments as well, so that you don't feel that you've not had a full opportunity.

01:16:59:05 - 01:17:18:19

Um, applicant, I'm conscious that this is a compulsory acquisition hearing and that matters should be focused towards compulsory acquisition issues which were outlined previously. But do you have any comments that you wish to make in relation to the comments that you just heard?

01:17:19:07 - 01:17:50:20

I have a sergeant for the applicant. Thank you sir. And I shan't respond to the sort of non site specific points because I know you've been ventilating them in other hearings and I would just like to give fisher chairman and Mr.. Going The opportunity to explain, and I hope this is helpful more broadly to you in terms of context, what the because I know all parties are concerned about the next steps for the engagement process. So, um, hopefully in response to this, speaker, this is an opportunity for Mr.. Going to just explain what the next steps are in terms of that engagement.

01:17:50:22 - 01:18:04:19

And then I think the other detail points, um, that the speaker raised will probably pick up in writing, given that there are a few of them. And I'd like to, you know, take the opportunity to consider properly what he wishes to set out in writing.

01:18:06:22 - 01:18:07:16

Thank you.

01:18:08:01 - 01:18:48:12

Thank you, James, going on behalf of the applicant, um, just dealing with the specific engagement on this, um, AP specifically, there was a meeting in on the 26th of January to discuss the heads of terms and practical matters, and the most recent meeting was with National Grid, present with the AP's agent on the 16th of April. And we'd be happy to reach out to set up further meetings to discuss more detailed matters, specifically in relation to the point around the grant, extent of grant land and the impact on title. Where there is positive progress in the ability to perhaps restrict that down so there is less an impact on the wider title, and that can be discussed in more detail, either with your agent or yourself.

01:18:49:13 - 01:19:22:06

On a more general point, in terms of engagement, just to put a bit more detail around what's been happening since Heads of Terms version two were issued for the purposes of Fitzgerald's management of the heads of terms, the route is sectioned up A through to H, and there has been a phased delivery

of heads of terms version two, that commenced on the 26th of March and ran through to the 9th of April. Since that time, we have managed to offer in excess of 465 meetings to affected parties.

01:19:22:12 - 01:19:52:18

We have held meetings with representatives on behalf of 236 of those impacted parties with in excess of 400 separate communications with directly. Directly affected parties and met in excess of 20 agents acting on behalf of those pills. Moving forward, we continue to push for engagement and reach out to offer meetings to affected parties and their agents, and engaging both the NFU and the CLA in conjunction with National Grid.

01:19:52:20 - 01:20:01:06

And I expect off the back of today, we can provide a more detailed summary note detailing that in a bit more colour. Thank you.

01:20:02:17 - 01:20:37:05

Thank you very much. I note the comments about engagement, but I think from a lot of the parties as well, that what we're hearing is that they wish to see resolution to matters, rather than just the nature of engagement and reaching out to have exchange of emails or other matters. It's about bringing things to a head and getting things concluded and reaching agreements on matters. And as I said previously, we are well into the examination and these matters need to be resolved as early as possible.

01:20:37:24 - 01:20:41:24

Um, did you have any further comments?

01:20:42:29 - 01:20:43:21

No, thank you, sir.

01:20:43:25 - 01:20:44:12

No.

01:20:44:17 - 01:20:47:27

Mister Filbert, did you have any sort of other comments that you wish to make?

01:20:47:29 - 01:21:00:12

Yeah. Can I? Can you just confirm? Obviously they said they're going to come back. Are they going to come either a national grid or fisherman going to come back to me at all, or are they coming back to you or what? I mean, I've got lots of unanswered questions here.

01:21:00:14 - 01:21:01:01

Yes.

01:21:01:05 - 01:21:09:07

Um, are they are they actually going to come back? Because no one has yet. So it's just in a forum like this. I'd like to know if, if either or one of them.

01:21:09:09 - 01:21:44:05

Or my expectation is that National Grid through Fisher German will come back to you, they will also come back to us in writing in response to your issues here. So when you submit your written submission, the deadline for them at deadline, they will provide a written submission, a written response to the comments in your submission so that we, as the examining authority, are aware of what's going on and what their side and what their response is. But I would expect that negotiations and discussions with all landowners and all pals are ongoing, and that that should continue.

01:21:44:07 - 01:21:46:22

So they should be contacting you. Yes.

01:21:48:09 - 01:21:51:28

I don't know if you want to make any further comment. Have a right of reply.

01:21:52:00 - 01:22:05:03

Have a thought of the applicant. Thank you sir. And just to say that of course Fisher German are here and they have heard specifically, I think the 2 or 3 points that you expressed as from your perspective being outstanding. So we will move those forward as quickly as we can.

01:22:05:11 - 01:22:06:05

Thank you.

01:22:07:29 - 01:22:09:02

Thank you, Mr. Philpott.

01:22:11:27 - 01:22:21:04

Okay. Thank you very much. We shall move to the next parties. And that is in relation to Essex Scout and Guide International Jamboree.

01:22:26:26 - 01:22:28:28

Hello, sir. It's, uh, Paul Walker.

01:22:29:00 - 01:22:39:07

Um, I'm a director of chartered surveyors, but I'm also a trustee of Essex Scouts and heavily involved in the organisation of the Essex Jamboree.

01:22:39:18 - 01:22:40:08

So I think.

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

Paul.

01:22:40:27 - 01:22:42:02

Paul Walker.

01:22:42:04 - 01:22:42:19

Yeah.

01:22:42:21 - 01:22:43:14

Thank you very much.

01:22:45:00 - 01:22:49:19

If you'd like to give us your initial submission. Thank you.

01:22:50:20 - 01:23:25:28

Um, so I think you've heard, um, perhaps from Mr. Philpott and also from Jane Kelly earlier, some of the ongoing, um, challenges and concerns that, that, that we have generally regarding, um, progress with the negotiations. I think it's fair to say that the jamboree is engaging with National Grid, and there are there is dialogue taking place. Um, the fact that that dialogue has resulted in heads of terms being received on Monday. Um, I may be grateful to the inspectorate for forcing that issue along the line.

01:23:26:09 - 01:23:58:25

Um, so I think my comment with regard to jamborees is there's a significant impact on the, uh, an unreasonable impact on the charitable activities of Essex Scouts and Guides. But as it stands, we do have positive engagement with National Grid. But until there is a clear and defined formal commitment to assist the Jamboree with relocating um, the trustees can only retain their or maintain their objection to the event.

01:23:59:03 - 01:24:12:09

Um, and things are moving along in parallel with these conversations and this and these hearings. So I don't actually have much more to add at the moment, because there's been progress since we made submissions to speak at this, uh, a few weeks ago.

01:24:13:18 - 01:24:32:19

Good. And is your expectation that those positive engagements will continue and that you are moving towards a resolution. You say you cannot withdraw any objection until such times as you have that resolution, but do you foresee that that resolution is in the near future?

01:24:33:13 - 01:25:08:09

I think it's difficult to be precise at this stage. We've received heads of terms Monday. They need to be reviewed, and obviously we need to consider that we are charity led. We have to report to trustees, um, the event is unviable and will be cancelled in the event that we are unable to relocate. So our negotiations with National Grid are critical, and we need to have a resolution that is workable and deliverable and satisfactory in all sort of charitable, um, positions.

01:25:08:11 - 01:25:24:24

So are we hopeful it will come together? Of course we are. We, you know, the conversations are taking place. The danger for the event is that if those fail. Um, we don't have anywhere else to go or anything else to do or any funds to relocate.

01:25:24:26 - 01:25:41:19

Do you have a dead a drop dead date, as it were, in that? Obviously, if you have a tremendous amount of organization, there is a position at what? At some point when you have to make a decision. Um, we would have liked to share.

01:25:41:21 - 01:26:20:00

With, like, what we would like to have made a decision before the end of 2025. Um, there's a significant volunteer team, um, that push this event forward. It's 10,000 people. You know, it's not insignificant. It's completely volunteer led. I suspect we need to you know, our view is that we need a decision, a clear decision imminently within the next, you know, month or so in order to then plan. Um, and obviously, you know, there's an impact on our volunteers in terms of then rearranging and relocating on a new site, which just needs to be put into place.

01:26:20:03 - 01:26:32:02

Okay, I was just seeking to try and get a bit of a handle and understanding on what the time pressure was around that, but thank you very much. That's very helpful. Applicant, have you got any comments that you wish to make?

01:26:33:23 - 01:27:03:03

Uh, Steven Barton, on behalf of the applicant. Yes. Thank you for Mr. Walker's comments. Just to agree. I do agree that progress has been made in the last few weeks, but we do fully understand the complexities of the event and the need to move quite quickly in terms of the planning that they have to do for their 2028 event. So I'm reasonably confident that we can reach that agreement. As Mr. Wilks states, the terms have been issued and hopefully we'll be able to catch up within the next week on those heads of terms and progress them.

01:27:03:05 - 01:27:14:05

And given the timescales that are being mentioned. Are you able to ensure the sufficient resource to make sure that you progress, that when you get the response from Yes.

01:27:14:07 - 01:27:16:27

No, we just got. Yeah. No, we can confirm that.

01:27:17:09 - 01:27:19:09

Good, good. Thank you very much.

01:27:22:29 - 01:27:25:26

Have you got any final comments that you wish to make? Mr..

01:27:26:19 - 01:27:28:03

Oh, not on that matter. No.

01:27:28:05 - 01:27:34:01

No. Okay. I think that draws us to a conclusion on that one, then. Thank you very much, Mr. Walker, and

01:27:35:21 - 01:28:06:00

enjoy your day. That takes us to what we had scheduled for a break time. Um, approximately on time. So that's all well and good. Um, we take a 20 minute comfort break. So it is just 1128 or 29. So shall we return for 1150? Thank you very much. The hearing is adjourned.