

## Hearing Transcript

<b>Project:</b>	Morgan and Morecambe Offshore Wind Farms Transmission Assets
<b>Hearing:</b>	Preliminary Meeting (PM) - Part 1
<b>Date:</b>	29 April 2025

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## **M&M\_29APR\_PRELIM\_PT1**

Project Length: 01:29:06

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File Length: 01:29:06

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

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

Okay. Can everybody take their seats, please? We're about to begin.

00:00:12:20 - 00:00:22:04

Good morning and welcome, everybody. It's now 10:00, and time for this meeting to begin. Uh, can I firstly just confirm that everybody in the room can hear me clearly?

00:00:24:15 - 00:00:32:10

Thank you. If at any point you can't just raise your hand. And can I also confirm with the case team that the live streaming and recording of this event has commenced?

00:00:34:00 - 00:00:41:05

And thank you. And can we have an indication that those joining online can hear me if somebody can put their hand up virtually, please.

00:00:44:12 - 00:01:13:20

Good. Thank you very much. I'd like to welcome you all to this preliminary meeting for the application made by Morgan Offshore Wind Limited and Morecambe Offshore Wind Farm Limited, for an order granting development consent for the proposed Morgan and Morecambe offshore wind farm transmission assets. My name is David Cliffe. I'm a chartered town planner and examining inspector at the Planning Inspectorate. Inspectorate. I've been appointed by the Secretary of State to be the lead member of the panel to examine this application.

00:01:16:03 - 00:01:50:07

Before asking my colleagues to introduce themselves. I'll quickly deal with a few housekeeping matters for those attending in person. Please can everyone please set all devices and phones to silent? The toilets are back into the four year where you came in this morning, and if you turn left, did you go out of the room, the toilets down the corridor? We've not been made of any aware of any fire alarm tests today. In fact, they're taking place, I think, on Monday. So we won't get those at any time during the week. So in the event of a fire alarm, please leave the room via any of the fire exits you can see around the room.

00:01:51:02 - 00:02:04:06

And for those attendees who have joined us, be at five teams today. Please keep your camera and microphone turned off unless you are speaking. Thank you. I'm now going to ask my colleagues on the panel to introduce themselves.

00:02:05:18 - 00:02:20:19

Good morning everyone. My name is Jonathan Gorst and I'm a lawyer and a member of the and an examining spectre. I'll be leading parts of the discussion later on in agenda item two about the examination process. Thank you.

00:02:22:07 - 00:02:37:01

Good morning. My name is Maria Rocha. I'm a chartered scientist and a chartered environmentalist, and I'm also an examining inspector. And I will be leading on the agenda item three later. Initial assessment of principal issues.

00:02:39:19 - 00:02:50:16

Good morning. My name is Richard Morgan. I'm a chartered civil engineer and examining inspector. I'll be leading the discussion later on. Agenda item for the draft examination timetable.

00:02:53:21 - 00:03:08:29

Thank you. Together we constitute the examining authority for this application. Our role is to examine the application and to report to the Secretary of State for Energy Security in net zero, with a recommendation as to whether or not a development consent order should be made.

00:03:11:07 - 00:03:41:25

I can confirm that all panel members have made a declaration of interest in accordance with the planning Inspectorate's Conflict of Interest policy. In this respect, Miss Rica has declared that a close family member has a minimal financial link to one of the applicants, but there is no influence or impropriety. Miss Asia has also declared that she previously worked for the Environment Agency, who are an interested party, in the application before joining the Planning Inspectorate. This did not involve work on nationally significant infrastructure projects.

00:03:42:17 - 00:04:10:03

I have also declared that several years ago, I previously worked in a different role with a member of one of the joint applicants teams was, I think, around about 9 or 10 years ago. For the avoidance of doubt, I will not be communicating with him about the project. In each case, the Planning Inspectorate does not consider that the interest is such to give rise to any reasonable concerns that our judgement or independence could be compromised. But because of openness, we wanted to declare those now.

00:04:11:29 - 00:04:38:01

I'd also like to introduce the members of the planning Inspectorate's case team who are supporting us today. You may already have spoken with them. We have Sharon Evans, who's the case manager for the project, sitting over on my left. Caroline Hopewell. Rebecca Luxton here in the venue, along with Ryan Seggerman and Tim Hall, who were dealing with the virtual side and the case team, will be here all today and all through the week to answer any questions you may have about today's event and the process in general.

00:04:40:00 - 00:05:22:04

Now moving on to the attendees introductions. What we're going to do this week is that we'll do introductions today for those people wishing to speak at this meeting. When we come on to the issue specific meeting tomorrow. We will not do that. We'll just get the people to introduce themselves for

the first time. They wish to speak because of the amount of time it would take to go through everybody tomorrow who wishes to speak. Um, so for today, could you please introduce yourselves, stating your name and who you represent along with the agenda item or items you wish to speak on? If you are not representing an organization, please confirm your name, summarize your interest in the application and confirm the agenda items upon which you wish to speak.

00:05:22:10 - 00:05:37:04

And please, could everybody also state whether how you wish to be addressed i.e. Mrs., miss, Mr., etc. if we could start with the applicants please. Uh, and who will be leading for the applicants?

00:05:37:14 - 00:06:00:24

Good morning. My name is Liz Dunn. I'm a partner at Burgess Salmon. Um, at this preliminary meeting, I'm representing both Morgan Offshore Wind Limited and Morecambe Offshore Wind Farm Windfarm Limited. There are other people at the table here. Shall I introduce everyone? It's not intended that they will speak. But just so you know, who's in the room effectively with us this morning. Would that be useful?

00:06:00:28 - 00:06:14:26

Will it just be the people at the table you want to introduce this morning? I think it'd be useful just so I can put names. Or we can put names to faces. As I say, tomorrow will do it differently. And people can introduce themselves on the first time they speak. So if you could briefly just do that just so we're aware of that.

00:06:14:28 - 00:06:48:27

So to my left is Oliver Johnson. He is the DCO coordinator from Atkins Rail. And he will be managing any documents to be projected at the meeting and for the hearings this week. So people do want documents to be shown from the examination library. They just need to give the reference number and Mr. Johnson will pull those up. To my right is Anthony McNamee. He's a senior associate at CMS, and he is instructed by Morecambe Offshore Wind Farm Limited. Uh, next to him is Ian Mackay, who is the Morecambe transmission consent manager.

00:06:49:12 - 00:06:57:19

And at the end is answer to who is the Morgan Transmission lead consent manager. Um,

00:06:59:04 - 00:07:20:22

later on in the agenda, I do have something that it would be helpful to explain, I think, to the panel and to the examination as a whole, about how the applicants are going to be represented. I won't do it now, but if we can do it as as an AOB agenda item, just in terms of the representation and trying to streamline the process as much as possible for applicant.

00:07:20:24 - 00:07:28:14

Okay, that is fine because we had some questions for you about that as well. If we can. So you today you are representing the joint.

00:07:28:19 - 00:07:30:14

I'm representing both parties.

00:07:31:02 - 00:07:40:01

Okay. Whatever. Let's let's discuss whatever you were going to say later on. We'll do that in any other business. Uh, because we had some questions we wanted to ask about that as well.

00:07:40:03 - 00:07:51:09

So, um, we had some comments on agenda item four on the examination timetable. Table and on item five and potentially item six.

00:07:52:08 - 00:07:54:24

Yes. We've noted that. Yes. Thank you. Thank you.

00:08:01:03 - 00:08:34:19

Okay. Can we now move on to the organizations and individuals who have expressed a wish to speak? Again, please introduce yourselves and tell us which agenda item you wish to speak on. I've got a list in front of me. Other than, we'll deal with the council's first. There's no particular sort of rhyme and reason to the order, so please don't be offended if you're later down the order in front of whoever else it might be. It's the order, largely, that people have registered with. Starting with the councils at Fylde Council.

00:08:34:26 - 00:08:38:29

If you'd like to introduce who will be making representations today.

00:08:40:18 - 00:08:41:03

Sir.

00:08:45:18 - 00:08:46:03

So.

00:08:50:13 - 00:08:53:07

Okay. So. So.

00:08:56:05 - 00:08:57:05

Uh, just. Just,

00:08:58:21 - 00:08:59:06

uh.

00:09:04:04 - 00:09:04:19

All right.

00:09:08:17 - 00:09:09:25

So I'll start again.

00:09:10:15 - 00:09:12:16

If you could start from the beginning again, please.

00:09:12:18 - 00:09:13:03

Yeah.

00:09:13:21 - 00:09:44:22

Uh, my name is Paul McKim. I'm the head of planning and building control for Fylde Council and a chartered town planner. Uh, my colleague John Cox is our DCO officer, and he's also a chartered term planner, uh, to advise the panel. Uh, we have authority and a council resolution to represent Fylde Council at these hearings, and I'm happy to share that resolution with you if you wish to see that. Uh, we intend to speak on agenda item three.

00:09:46:09 - 00:10:03:06

Okay. Thank you. If you want to submit the that resolution you refer to, please do so. But it won't be published until deadline one. Um, but that is fine for you to to do so. Uh, for any clarification that would bring.

00:10:05:17 - 00:10:18:00

Thank you. I've also got on my list a Councilor Thomas who I think wishes to speak today. Is Councilor Thomas in attendance

00:10:19:27 - 00:10:21:15

online or virtually?

00:10:27:29 - 00:10:28:17

It's up.

00:10:28:19 - 00:10:32:00

Perhaps Councilor Thomas Threlfall, just to clarify.

00:10:32:02 - 00:10:38:04

Ah, okay. My apologies. Yeah. The way it's been written on my notes, it's the other way around. So yes, it is.

00:10:41:00 - 00:10:44:06

Circuits are always due to speak this afternoon.

00:10:44:09 - 00:10:52:17

Oh, right. Are they open for hearing? Okay. It's just that I think it was probably ticked on one of the boxes on my list, so that's that's fine. Thank you for clarifying that. And we look forward to

00:10:54:03 - 00:10:58:29

hearing him this afternoon. On now to Blackpool Council please.

00:11:03:06 - 00:11:48:20

Good morning panel. Catherine Knight DWF representing Blackpool Council. To my left is the Robert Green the head of airport enterprise. Left again as Dawn Goodall, head of legal services, left again as Clare Parker. Cassidy Ashton I represent Blackpool Council in its capacity as unitary local authority administrative body with responsibilities towards its residents and local community. In these hearings as host in neighbouring authority and also the Council in its capacity as landowner, with various land holdings located within the Red line boundary, which includes Stargate, the Enterprise Zone and Blackpool Airport and associated infrastructure, and a shareholder of the airport companies.

00:11:49:08 - 00:11:58:22

Uh, we do not actually wish to speak today. We came along literally to listen and be available to answer questions for the panel. Should we be able to assist?

00:11:59:10 - 00:12:09:21

Okay. Thank you. I understand and it is useful to get you introduced at this point anyway. So thank you for that. You don't wish to speak at the PM.

00:12:13:16 - 00:12:22:12

If there is anything I will put my hand up. Thank you very much. Um, at this stage, looking at the agenda. No, there is nothing. Um, thank you very much.

00:12:22:25 - 00:12:29:08

Okay. Thank you. And now moving on to Lancashire County Council, please.

00:12:32:16 - 00:12:34:00

Yes. Hello, sir. Can you hear me?

00:12:35:06 - 00:12:36:17

Yes, we can hear you. Yes.

00:12:36:19 - 00:13:04:09

Okay. Yes. My name is Andrew Rakowski. I'm actually a consultant working for, uh, for, uh, Lancashire County Council. Um, I'm a chartered town planner. Um, and, um, I'm essentially I'm here to to to listen today on behalf of the county council. But it's possible we may wish to comment on in relation to item three, but it's really only if it's necessary. Not, not not to prolong proceedings unnecessarily.

00:13:05:25 - 00:13:14:19

Okay. Thank you. I understand and again, if you wish to speak on any of that item, uh, just raise your your virtual hand. Thank you.

00:13:16:13 - 00:13:24:09

Okay. Another virtual attendee. Next from the Marine Management Organisation. I understand,

00:13:26:26 - 00:13:28:00

there's miss Gunton.

00:13:33:24 - 00:13:34:27

No. Okay.

00:13:39:10 - 00:13:53:07

Okay. Now moving on to Mr. Walker, who I've got down as representing Newton with Clifton Parish Council, but I believe your position might have evolved. You could explain who you're representing. Please, Mr. Walker.

00:13:53:15 - 00:14:17:17

Good morning. My name is Angus Walker. I am a partner at Broadfield Law, and I am instructed by Newton with Clifton Parish Council. Right. However, for the sake of efficiency, I have been asked to also represent today and possibly the next couple of days, Freckleton Parish Council and Newton Residents Association. So I have a collection of three tubular rings here.

00:14:20:24 - 00:14:24:27

Okay, so Freckleton Parish Council, the Newton Residents Association.

00:14:25:01 - 00:14:29:18

Yes, as well give you their numbers and their representation references if you want.

00:14:30:04 - 00:14:39:16

That's that's okay. I think we can we can find those easily. And just just for our clarification, when you make representations, your representations will be on behalf of those three organizations.

00:14:39:18 - 00:14:40:04

Correct?

00:14:40:21 - 00:14:43:01

I understand, thank you. I.

00:14:43:12 - 00:14:46:25

I do have some points to make on item three, four and five.

00:14:49:12 - 00:14:52:27

Okay. Thank you. Yeah. Those correspond with my notes. So thank you.

00:14:55:03 - 00:15:02:29

Okay. Moving on down my list. I've got a mr. Barlow

00:15:04:16 - 00:15:08:16

who's down on my list. Is attending in person today. Mr. Barlow.

00:15:10:24 - 00:15:11:13

Okay.



00:15:17:24 - 00:15:30:04

Is Sheila Hall in attendance today? I have a note that she's joining late, so that might explain why she's not in attendance at the moment. Uh, when she comes in, we'll give her the opportunity to introduce herself.

00:15:33:11 - 00:15:35:24

Mr.. Dennis. Mr.. Paul. Dennis.

00:15:40:03 - 00:15:40:22

Okay.

00:15:42:28 - 00:15:53:27

I'm aware that some of these people will be speaking this afternoon at the open floor here. And I know that the way the registration thing works, sometimes boxes are filled in for both. Even though people only want to speak at one. Uh.

00:15:55:15 - 00:16:05:02

Now moving on. Uh, BA systems. And who is speaking on their behalf today?

00:16:08:18 - 00:16:12:17

Good morning, you and Paul Forshaw. Um, planning, uh.

00:16:12:19 - 00:16:32:04

Chartered planning consultants and DLP planning. Uh, representing BA systems. Uh, in relation to their operations at Waterloo Aerodrome. Um, I'm supported here today by, um, Sam Grange from Eversheds. Um, we wanted to, uh, um comments on items three, four and five.

00:16:32:24 - 00:16:35:06

Three, four and five. Okay.

00:16:36:14 - 00:16:44:01

Although some of our comments may fall into another item, we'll we'll raise our hand if it's an appropriate time to raise it elsewhere.

00:16:44:03 - 00:16:48:19

That's fine. I understand, that's fine. Okay. Thank you, Mr. Forshaw.

00:16:50:13 - 00:17:05:19

Now, next I've got on my list. I've got speakers from Blackpool Airport Properties Limited, Operations Limited. But I understand that's already been covered. And, uh, the representations. Miss Knight's representation representations Blackpool Council. All.

00:17:09:07 - 00:17:09:25

Right.

00:17:11:20 - 00:17:13:02

I will introduce, um.

00:17:16:19 - 00:17:36:29

Uh good morning panel. Uh, my name is Alan Cassidy. I'm a chartered town planner at Catherine Ashton. I'm representing today Blackpool Airport Operations Limited and Blackpool Airport Properties Limited. And don't expect to speak on this morning's agenda, but reserve the right to if appropriate.

00:17:37:26 - 00:17:48:09

Okay. Thank you. And again, just for clarification, any representation you do make will be on behalf of both the Airport Properties Limited and Operations Limited.

00:17:48:12 - 00:17:54:12

That is correct. Unless for whatever reason there is a difference. But no, it is most likely to be both.

00:17:54:23 - 00:17:56:17

Okay. Thank you. I understand.

00:18:00:01 - 00:18:13:23

If I could just remind people when you're not speaking, if you can turn off your microphone, please. I've just been sent a message so I can keep mine. Or we can keep ours on, or one of us can. But if anybody else can turn off their microphones when not speaking. Thank you.

00:18:17:05 - 00:18:27:07

And I also have down Mr. Paul and Mr. Peters virtually representing Blackpool Airport Properties Limited and Operations Limited. But is it the case, Mr. Cassidy, that you'll be the one speaking today.

00:18:27:21 - 00:18:28:29

For this morning, sir? Yes.

00:18:29:01 - 00:18:30:06

Right. Thank you.

00:18:33:05 - 00:18:38:08

Okay. I now have a mr. Sharkey on my list.

00:18:40:13 - 00:18:42:26

Or Mr. Sharkey, your next on my list, so I.

00:18:45:27 - 00:18:47:02

Thank you. Good morning.

00:18:48:11 - 00:18:59:09

Hello. Yeah. Uh, speaking this afternoon on one of the items, which is landscape and visual amenity, particularly with reference to the substations, please.

00:18:59:11 - 00:19:02:05

Right. So you want to speak? You're speaking this afternoon at the open floor hearing.

00:19:02:13 - 00:19:03:27

But afternoon? Yes. Not the morning.

00:19:04:12 - 00:19:06:01

Okay. That's fine. Thank you.

00:19:12:14 - 00:19:14:19

Okay. Mr. Richard Ellis.

00:19:18:27 - 00:19:21:03

Right. Open the floor. Okay. Thank you.

00:19:23:24 - 00:19:28:17

Right. So I've also got a Wendy Ellis. So. Okay. Thank you.

00:19:30:12 - 00:19:35:15

And Paul Ellis as well I assume is on my list. So that's been covered by your comment. Thank you.

00:19:37:28 - 00:19:40:18

Okay, Mr. Kirkham.

00:19:47:18 - 00:19:50:28

Oh, this afternoon as well, but not this morning okay.

00:19:53:15 - 00:19:55:17

Right. Thank you.

00:19:57:19 - 00:20:01:18

And virtually a representative from Spirit Energy.

00:20:11:05 - 00:20:16:19

The Miss Ryan Ma I think is on my list. No. Okay.

00:20:21:22 - 00:20:25:26

And next, Mr. Kahn's, please, Mr. Ralph Kahn's.

00:20:30:28 - 00:20:31:14

Nope.

00:20:34:00 - 00:20:37:23

Right. Okay. I know it's our listeners have to do as well, but thank you for clarifying that.

00:20:41:24 - 00:20:42:22

Miss Harper.

00:20:46:17 - 00:20:53:14

Virtually. We got a hand. No, no. Okay.

00:20:56:02 - 00:21:06:16

And then a representative of. I think it's helical tech limited. There's a mr. Morris or a mr. nel. Virtually.

00:21:10:00 - 00:21:11:15

Uh, is that you, Mr. Nel?

00:21:12:23 - 00:21:33:05

Uh, yes it is. Um. Helical technology have, uh, premises Businesses on Hillock Lane in Warton. Um, so we will both be listening today in both sessions. Um, however, we do reserve the right to, uh, ask any questions or make comments should the need arise.

00:21:33:26 - 00:21:34:12

Okay.

00:21:34:16 - 00:21:37:06

Thank you, Mr. Personnel. Thank you.

00:21:40:00 - 00:21:45:18

And also virtually Mr. Dagg from Sabic UK Petrochemicals Limited.

00:21:49:16 - 00:21:51:03

So, um, I'm.

00:21:52:05 - 00:21:52:20

I'm.

00:21:52:22 - 00:21:53:07

Steven Dagg.

00:21:53:09 - 00:21:54:04

From Womble.

00:21:54:06 - 00:21:55:28

Bond Dickinson UK limited.

00:21:56:16 - 00:22:07:14

I'm representing Sabic UK Petrochemicals Limited and Sabic petrochemicals B.V.. I'm not intending to speak this morning sir, but if that changes, I will raise my hand.

00:22:07:18 - 00:22:08:03

Thank you.

00:22:08:05 - 00:22:10:27

Okay. Thank you. Let's understand. Understood. Thank you.

00:22:15:28 - 00:22:26:06

Okay. Okay. And a mr. Tajani. I might have pronounced the surname incorrectly. Apologies if I have. Is Mr. Tajani with us today? No.

00:22:30:15 - 00:22:35:26

And again, apologies if I mispronounced the name, but a tractor Brown.

00:22:38:09 - 00:22:42:00

Good morning everyone. It's a tractor. Everyone. Can you hear me?

00:22:42:13 - 00:22:45:07

I can hear you. Yes we can. Yes. Loud and clear. Thank you.

00:22:45:24 - 00:23:21:17

Thank you very much, Mr. Cliff. Uh, we very much appreciate, uh, being here this morning. Um, I am here for Antarctica, the National Trust of Ireland. I work on an initiative for environmental law. Ireland. Um, we are reserving all of our rights and our engaging this morning without prejudice. Given the concerns that we have outlined in relation to procedural matters arising from the manner of the conduct of the transboundary consultation with the Irish public. Um, and, um, we would like to raise, uh, the concerns we have.

00:23:21:19 - 00:23:51:21

For the record, in this preliminary hearing, we believe they may have material implications for the timetable and therefore particularly item four, but may need to be considered as preliminary matters under item two. Um, and we may have some questions in relation to matters under item three. But we're very happy to be here primarily in listening mode and intervene otherwise as necessary by raising our hand. But those procedural matters are very concerning and do not just concern us, but the wider Irish public.

00:23:52:03 - 00:24:08:17

And I would like that. Um, Mr. Byrne is here from, um, Clive Glass, and that I give my authority to him to speak on our behalf. And when he speaks, he will equivalently pass that authority to me just in the interests of efficiency and expediency in our time today.

00:24:10:00 - 00:24:16:18

Okay. So it's items two, three and four For that you are intending to speak on, or likely to be intending to speak on?

00:24:16:29 - 00:24:26:22

That's correct. Yeah. That's with your advice as to whether the procedural matters are most appropriately raised under 2 or 4 are both okay?

00:24:26:27 - 00:24:57:22

I am aware that you sent, I think, an email into our case team setting out some concerns about procedural matters. I don't think we can go into detail on on the substance of those today unless as matters that you as you mentioned, that things might affect the examination timetable when we get onto the individual agenda items, if there's something particularly you want to raise at that point, then then do so. Uh, also, I think your representation that you've previously made is on the, uh, national infrastructure website, and I will I'll raise this now.

00:24:57:24 - 00:25:10:23

I'm going to raise it later on, but I will raise it now and I will. They probably will do anyway. But I will ask the applicant to make sure that they respond, uh, to the representations that you've made, notwithstanding your separate procedural concerns.

00:25:10:25 - 00:25:19:00

And yeah, I would like that. Our submission on the transboundary consultation is separate to the procedural matters which arose subsequent to that submission.

00:25:19:15 - 00:25:36:12

Yeah, absolutely, I understand completely. Okay. Thank you. Thank you. That goes through the list of people who've notified us in advance of their wish to speak. Is there anyone else present in the room today who may wish to speak during the meeting?

00:25:39:06 - 00:25:53:05

Hi. Good morning. I'm also representing Lancashire County Council. I've got Andrew Schakowsky, who introduced himself a little earlier on the county council lead. Obviously, I'm Neil Stevens, I'm the highways and transport manager for the authority.

00:25:55:03 - 00:26:01:28

Mr. Stevens? That's correct. And you're representing the highway authority effectively? That's correct.

00:26:07:29 - 00:26:11:02

Anybody else in the room. Who wishes to speak?

00:26:11:05 - 00:26:11:20

Yes.

00:26:11:22 - 00:26:20:20

Apologies if I'm mentioning this at the wrong point, but I'm speaking this afternoon. But as soon as you picked up a couple of other people that were, it's Annette Sharkey. Okay. Afternoon.

00:26:20:22 - 00:26:38:08

Thank you. Good morning and welcome. And you're speaking this afternoon in the open floor hearing. Okay. Thank you. Okay. I think that is everybody in the in person room, so to speak, anybody online virtually who also wishes to speak this morning.

00:26:40:00 - 00:26:43:21

You can put your hand up, please. I've got a hand up with initials.

00:26:45:09 - 00:26:45:24

Uh.

00:26:46:00 - 00:26:49:21

JB, which I understand is just in Bern. I understand.

00:26:51:11 - 00:27:12:03

Thank you sir. Yes. My name is Justin Bern. I'm chair of in Clive Glass. Um, I would echo the concerns that Miss Erin, uh, made earlier. And, uh, I think in order to make your life easier, uh, it would be better if she speaks on our behalf as well. So I give her authority to speak on our behalf. And the same items two, three and four. More than likely.

00:27:13:03 - 00:27:14:27

Okay, I understand, thank you.

00:27:15:20 - 00:27:16:07

Thank you.

00:27:18:15 - 00:27:22:08

Okay. Anybody else online who wishes to speak this morning?

00:27:25:15 - 00:27:55:08

Okay. Thank you. If anybody else decides I wish to speak during the course of the meeting, uh, for example, to make comments in response to any representations made by other parties, you may do so. And please raise your physical or virtual hand. Moving on to the purpose and format of the meeting. Uh, we will be following the agenda as set out in annex A of the rule six letter. I don't know if it's helpful if we can have that on the the screen, please. Uh. Thank you.

00:27:59:08 - 00:28:30:18

And the purpose, as we said in our rule six letter of this preliminary meeting, is to discuss how the application should be examined and the process only. We are not going to talk about the substance of the proposed development at this time. Uh, obviously there's other opportunities for that in written representations and to the hearings. This meeting provides an opportunity for parties to provide your views on the examination process, including timetable discussions and representations about particular issues. And the merits of the proposed development are for the examination itself, which will begin following the close of the preliminary meeting.

00:28:42:19 - 00:29:18:08

And if you have your hand up either in the room or virtually, uh, and other people are speaking, if you can please be be be patient. And that applies for this this morning as well as the issue specific hearing and hearing later this this week. Just a note on, uh, data protection regulations, a link to the planning inspector's privacy notice was provided in our rule six letter, and we are assuming that everyone here today has familiarized themselves with this document, which establishes how the personal data of our customers is handled in accordance with the principles set out in data protection laws.

00:29:18:14 - 00:29:23:11

Please speak to a member of the case team if you have any questions about this.

00:29:31:11 - 00:29:43:12

And the meeting is being recorded today as well. And in accordance with Specter's policy, we will retain and publish the recordings for a period of five years from the Secretary of State's decision.

00:29:45:09 - 00:30:10:05

I won't go into any further detail on the data protection matters, as that is covered in our rule six letter. If only to say if you don't want your image to be recorded, you can switch off your camera virtually. And also, if you're in the room and don't want your image to be recorded. There's a seating area over. I can't see over there where the hands are up, where you'll be able to sit, make representations without being on camera.

00:30:12:28 - 00:30:42:28

Just a note on our website you'll find information about this application on the planning Inspectorate's National Infrastructure Planning website. And we would strongly encourage you to familiarize yourself with this website, because the examining authority will use it to communicate with you and to provide access to documents throughout the examination, and the full examination library is available on the website. Timing wise today we'll have a short mid-morning break at about 1130, and it is intended that the meeting this morning will close no later than 1 p.m.,

00:30:43:09 - 00:30:48:10

and a subsequent open floor hearing is scheduled in this room for 230 this afternoon.

00:30:49:28 - 00:30:57:21

Okay. Are there any comments before I move on? Uh, anybody wishes to make under agenda item one and what I've just set out.

00:31:02:08 - 00:31:20:23

Anything online. Okay. Okay. Thank you. That now concludes that item of the agenda. And we can now move on to item two, which is the examining authorities remarks about the examination process. And I will now hand over to my colleague Mr. Gorst to lead this item.

00:31:35:08 - 00:32:01:13

Uh, thank you, Mr. Cliff. Uh, in order to streamline the running of this event in annex B of of our rule six letter, we provided an introduction to the preliminary meeting and an outline of the examination



process, explaining how it will be conducted and how you can participate for expediency. I am assuming that everyone has read this and therefore I don't propose to spend time reading it out. Now.

00:32:03:22 - 00:32:47:15

There are some more general observations that I'd like to make about the examination process. In the interest of ensuring that it is a productive and efficient as it can be. Before we get into this examination process, I want to say a bit about what has happened so far during the pre examination period. Firstly, the examining authority has read the application documents to understand the proposed development and its effects. Secondly, in order to familiarise ourselves with elements of the application, the panel has undertaken an unaccompanied site inspection of the cable route and specific locations in the surrounding area.

00:32:47:22 - 00:33:15:16

On the 18th, the 19th and the 20th of March, a short notice. This site inspection which we carried out last month, including the locations we visited, is published on the National Infrastructure Project web pages. Thirdly, we have read all relevant representations and accepted additional submissions where parties have expressed their view about the proposed development.

00:33:18:01 - 00:33:49:13

Now, regarding the examination process, the examination of the application will commence once this preliminary meeting has been closed. The process is primarily a written one, supplemented where necessary by various types of hearings. The main body of evidence informing judgments and recommendations will come through the written representations. Responses to written representations. Local impact reports submitted by local authorities.

00:33:49:28 - 00:33:54:01

Statements of common ground and answers to our written questions.

00:33:56:08 - 00:34:02:25

The examination will take an inquisitorial approach as opposed to an adversarial approach.

00:34:04:12 - 00:34:23:07

Examining authority. The exa takes the lead in establishing what is important and relevant to the decision which the Secretary of State will have to take. So we shall be looking for evidence of what is important and relevant, testing the evidence put forward to see how robust it is.

00:34:25:07 - 00:34:28:08

There's also scope for a number of different hearings.

00:34:30:19 - 00:35:06:24

We have an open floor hearing later today. Interested parties who have registered to do so will have the opportunity to make oral representations to us about the application. You'll have seen that we are holding the first open floor hearing this afternoon at 2:30 p.m., but there may well be, if necessary, a further open floor hearing later in the examination. Secondly, there will be issue specific hearings. It is for the czar to decide whether to hold issue specific hearings and what topics they should cover.

00:35:07:25 - 00:35:28:29

Hearings will be held if we decide it is necessary to ensure adequate examination of an issue, or to provide an interested party with a fair chance to put its case. Parties should not assume that an issue specific hearing will be held on a particular topic, and should ensure that their full submission is provided in writing.

00:35:30:28 - 00:36:07:22

The first issue specific hearing will commence tomorrow, including discussion on site selection and alternatives. The scope of the proposed development and the applicants assessments. We will provide final notification of the dates and the specific subject matter of any future issue specific hearings in advance. Usually at least 21 days before they take place. The subject matter of hearings will depend on submissions made during the examination, including the local impact reports and the written representations.

00:36:09:11 - 00:36:39:16

A third form of hearing relates to the compulsory acquisition of land and rights. The first compulsory acquisition hearing will be held this Friday morning at 9:30 a.m., covering the applicant's strategic case for compulsory acquisition. A further compulsory acquisition hearing will be held later in the examination, when affected persons will have the opportunity to make specific representations where their land and or rights are affected.

00:36:42:06 - 00:37:04:29

Moving on to deadlines, we will come on to talk about the examination timetable shortly. I would like to highlight the importance of ensuring that information is submitted in accordance with with set deadlines. The timetable can only be delivered if all parties meet the deadlines and provide submissions that are as comprehensive as possible.

00:37:06:17 - 00:37:27:23

Late submissions restrict the ability of other parties involved to respond to the information, which can lead to unfairness in the process. It is therefore important for all to note that if you do submit something late, there is always the possibility that it might not be accepted into the examination.

00:37:30:28 - 00:37:57:13

Trying to resolve disagreement where there is disagreement between the parties on matters. We ask that all sides engage in a positive and timely manner to seek resolution where this is possible and as soon as possible. This includes progressing statements of common ground as proactively as possible and demonstrating progress with land negotiations and protective provisions where relevant.

00:38:01:24 - 00:38:36:20

Other comments on process there are set such statutory proceedings. And it's important that the examination is treated with due regard to its statutory status. There is potential to award costs if a party is, if their unreasonable behaviour causes another party to incur wasted expenditure. There is guidance on the Planning Inspectorate website and this includes examples of potentially unreasonable behaviour, including issues such as not submitting evidence on time.

00:38:38:02 - 00:38:48:26

I don't wish to overstate this issue, but please treat this examination seriously and expeditiously, and bear in mind that we have a duty to ensure that it is fair and open.

00:38:51:23 - 00:39:06:01

Moving on to examination outcomes. But the conclusion of this examination. We will provide or dxa will provide a recommendation report to the Secretary of State for Energy Security and net zero.

00:39:08:14 - 00:39:37:12

He or she will then consider the evidence and review our recommendation before making a final decision on the application. The recommendation will report will have, at its core, our recommendation as to whether or not the draft development consent order, either in the current form or as amended during the examination, should be approved. It will also contain recommendations on what land should be subject to compulsory acquisition if the Secretary of State approves the DCO.

00:39:39:01 - 00:39:58:29

Even if we do not recommend that consent should be given, we are required to put forward what we consider would be the most appropriate development consent order if the Secretary of State goes against the recommendation. The important point is that all matters relating to the draft DCO are integral parts of this examination.

00:40:01:24 - 00:40:22:13

That sets out the examination process. Does anybody need clarification on these general matters that will not be covered by later agenda items? If you have any specific points to make regarding the draft timetable, can I ask that these are raised under item four of the agenda?

00:40:27:27 - 00:40:40:06

I don't see any hands up. Yes, we do have one hand up virtually. So, um, if you'd like to, um, make your point, please. Uh, under ab.

00:40:42:09 - 00:41:26:03

Thank you very much. Attractive and fantastic and live class. And thank you very much for that overview. The concern I wish to raise at this point in time is the several references that you made to the procedure for written submissions and their importance and the use of the term interested party. We have been advised that we have missed the deadline to be registered as an interested party and notwithstanding our concerns and more general concerns in relation to the UK's procedure to require registration as interested parties, in the particular instance of this case, the deadline expired 33 days before the Irish public was actually notified of the transboundary consultation.

00:41:26:18 - 00:42:07:00

We have been advised that we are not an interested party, that we are another party, um, and that we can only participate in the in the inquiry at the discretion Of the examining authority. And clearly that is unacceptable not just to us, but to the interests of the wider Irish public. Um, there is some confusion, I would think, also in relation to the matters that surround the rule six letter, um, and the correspondence we have received, because there seems to be a discrepancy between the rights of another party under the rule six letter and what was intimated to us in correspondence.

00:42:07:18 - 00:42:45:22

Therefore, we just wish to formally, uh, have recorded on the record in the context of the procedures set out and that we have a reservations and concerns in respect of a requirement in the first instance to register as an interested party with specific reference to obligations of the UK under both the S2 and the our host conventions. And very particularly in the instant case, we have concerns in relation to the implications this has for us, given the discrepancy between the deadlines and the confusion in relation to our standing on this matter.

00:42:45:24 - 00:43:17:19

Despite the fact that the screening determination on this matter for transboundary impacts identified that the Irish public was an affected party. And thank you. So I just wish to have those concerns noted. I appreciate that, uh, consideration has been given to our correspondence and that we can expect a response in due course, which I hope will be constructive and will address a remedy. But this clearly has implications beyond us and for the examination timetable.

00:43:17:24 - 00:43:28:02

And as a matter not just in the context of this particular project, which is obviously unfortunate for, but a broader implications for the UK legislative approach. Thank you.

00:43:35:25 - 00:43:42:05

Thank you. Thank you very much for those comments. I just wondered if the applicant would like to respond in any way to those comments.

00:43:44:14 - 00:44:17:25

Uh, Les Dan, on behalf of the applicant, um, in respect of the Irish government's carrying out of its consultation, I'm not sure that's a matter for us. That's a matter for the Irish government in terms of when that transboundary consultation was undertaken. Um, and in respect of the planning inspectorate's procedure for registering interested parties and the discretion that you have to allow parties to become interested parties, even if they haven't, uh, um, uh, registered as interested parties within the deadline.

00:44:17:27 - 00:44:49:05

Clearly, there is a discretion to accept people outside of that and allow them to participate in the process that is for the examining authority. Um, the in terms of the representations that have been made, um, in the response, We will be responding to those at deadline one insofar as they are relevant to the project and to the points that have been made there. Um, I would suggest that in respect of procedural issues, um, those are matters for the examining authority.

00:44:49:10 - 00:45:17:22

Um, but we are happy to comment. Um, if if a position is put forward in terms of, um, things being taken forward and we would have no objection to, uh, this organisation. Apologies. I can't say your name or even know which party it is. Um, uh, that that they would that if the examining authority was to exercise its discretion to accept them as a party to the examination, we wouldn't have we wouldn't object to that.

00:45:18:29 - 00:45:21:12

Uh, thank you very much. Um, Miss Dunn.

00:45:27:05 - 00:45:58:01

Sir, I'd like to briefly respond. Um, I'm conscious that there's a number of other matters that you wish to address today and I don't want to overly detain. But with respect to the applicant, um, uh, comments about the Irish government's obligations, uh, ultimately, the responsibility for effective participation rests with the UK authorities in this matter, and it is the UK legislation which is militating against our having full standing as an interested party.

00:45:58:11 - 00:46:53:09

We welcome any discretion which would be extended to us as interested parties. But that is not sufficient. And let me be clear, because it would serve to discriminate against the rest of the Irish public. There is a fundamental issue with the concept of interested party registration requirements, and it is particularly egregious in the context of this, given the discrepancy on time frames. Um, so that that, I suppose, is, is the fundamental issue that discretion to be exercised in our instance and given the lack of clarity on what exact discretion is being extended is not sufficient, because there is a wider issue of discrimination, which has a procedural implication for the ability of people to participate in the ongoing examination which you have just outlined is going to be, you know, a process and and that discretion needs to be extended beyond us.

00:46:56:10 - 00:47:32:16

Thank you very much. You have made your position very clear and will take on board, um, uh, the points that you made. Thank you also to the applicant for their helpful comments. Um, so if you leave that with the examining authority and, um, we will respond through the case team, um, in the next few days, but, um, yeah, I think we, as the, uh, the panel understand the point you've been making. Uh, and, and we'll certainly take that on board and, uh, we'll be reverting through the case team fairly fairly soon now, so thank you.

00:47:32:20 - 00:47:50:12

Anyway, I think we do need to move on now. So that concludes the remarks. Um, about the examination process. Um, we're going to move on to item three of the agenda, which is our initial assessment of principal issues. Uh, and this will be led by a miss Erica. Thank you.

00:47:51:21 - 00:48:12:12

Thank you, Mr. Gorst. Um, so for this item, the examining authority's initial assessment of principal issues in appendix C of the rule six letter be shared on the screen, please. Thank you. And alternatively, you may also wish to refer directly to the list in your copy of the letter.

00:48:14:21 - 00:48:15:13

Can the list just.

00:48:15:15 - 00:48:19:27

Be scroll down to the actual what you got? There we go.

00:48:20:06 - 00:48:20:22

Okay.

00:48:21:21 - 00:48:27:20

It's on different pieces of paper. But if you could just scroll down as you talk through.

00:48:27:22 - 00:48:28:09

Thank you.

00:48:29:12 - 00:49:02:07

Okay. So section 88, subsection one of the Planning Act 2008, as amended, requires the examining authority to make an initial assessment of the principal issues arising on the application. This list therefore provides our initial assessment of the principal issues for the examination of the application. I will not go through each issue now as they are contained in appendix C. However, I would like to note some relevant points.

00:49:03:08 - 00:49:35:13

Firstly, that the principal issues have been compiled alphabetically and not in order of importance. Secondly, this annex is neither a comprehensive nor an exclusive list of all issues that are important and relevant to this examination. It is based on our reading of the application documents, the relevant representations received, and our initial consideration of any other important and relevant matters.

00:49:36:13 - 00:50:04:29

But it does not determine the full scope of the examination. It will inevitably be the case that other relevant issues will arise during the course of the examination. Those other issues will be considered and examined thoroughly when that happens. And equally, issues currently on the list may turn out to be not as important as they appear to be now.

00:50:07:11 - 00:50:35:18

I have three requests to speak on this item from parties representing the following organisations from Fylde Council, from Newton with Clifton Parish Council and Newton Residents Association and Freckleton Parish Council. And from BAE systems. So before I take comments from those parties, is there anyone else who wishes to speak on this item?

00:50:38:27 - 00:51:12:09

No, no. Hands up. Thank you. So by inviting you to speak, please remember that we are not here today to discuss the merits of the application. There will be opportunities for all parties to make those types of submissions as part of the detailed examination of the application, which commences after this preliminary meeting. So with that in mind, I now invite submissions with a further reminder to all parties to please introduce yourself when you are speaking.

00:51:12:18 - 00:51:15:15

So could I start with a Fylde Council?

00:51:18:00 - 00:51:18:19

Thank you.

00:51:18:21 - 00:51:19:06

Um.

00:51:21:04 - 00:51:39:10

My name is Paul Kim and the head of planning and Building control for Fylde Council and a short term planner. Uh, I'd just like to briefly outline four sort of principle matters, uh, that are of concern to us. Uh, this this relates firstly to the

00:51:40:29 - 00:52:17:21

holistic network design review process. Um, we we're a, a firm view that we that the whole process, we, in our view, has tilted the balance in terms of the option selection. And we wish to explore that further, uh, through, uh, with, with sales and with the applicant. Uh, secondly, at this stage of the process, we feel that there's a significant lack of technical detail, uh, that we and we do note that the applicant has submitted a number of outline reports,

00:52:19:14 - 00:53:08:16

with a commitment to discharge to the relevant authorities in respect of those of those matters. However, at this time we would have expected to see specific details. Not all details we recognise that, but specific details, um, particularly around construction management, uh, phase in, uh, traffic management and again, relating to phasing, uh defined monitoring and management arrangements, and in particular defined asset decommissioning processes and a commitment to a, um, effectively a legacy fund to fund those processes, because it's likely, uh, that, uh, the commission will fall on successor bodies, both private sector and public sector, uh, in that regard.

00:53:09:12 - 00:53:43:25

Um, thirdly, um, we note that, um, there is an outline employment and Skills plan. But again, at this stage of the process, we've also expected a firmer proposals around social value commitments, uh, in particular training, employability, uh, Stem support and apprenticeships, uh, as well as um, guidance around uh, local contractor supply registration, uh, for works and the like and the social value.

00:53:44:09 - 00:53:54:24

So can I just, uh, ask that you stick to more general points at this stage? Because those detailed outline plans, plans will be examined and discussed later on.

00:53:55:03 - 00:54:26:12

That's fine. I'll just just come to the end. So, uh, and then finally, uh, we expect that all detailed timing triggers of section 106 matters, uh, contributions, um, will be referenced in the DCO schedule. Uh, and we look forward to working with the applicants on statement of common grounds to cover those points off and present to you at a later date. Okay. I'd just like to briefly introduce, uh, my colleague, uh, John, uh, who's, uh, provide a short statement on behalf of the council.

00:54:28:26 - 00:54:51:29

Thank you. Good morning. Yes, sir. I note your request to kind of stick to the principal issues. Um, I'm just going to talk a little bit more. Um, I do touch on some specific matters, but it is with reference to agenda item two and the principal issues. And we've been asked to talk on. And so if you'll just allow me to speak for a few minutes and I'll make the kind of relevant point. Um, so.

00:54:52:01 - 00:55:20:07

Just as long as an absolute clarification, because I think it is difficult sometimes this area can stray into a representation on issues, and it is useful to get to know what actual issues. But if you can just keep to a summary headline of what those issues are without going into a long explanation of them, because that's for hearings and representations. I appreciate it, though. It's a very fine balancing line on this. But before you get into straying into actual talking about the issues. So if you can just summarize as much as you can. Yes. Thank you.

00:55:20:09 - 00:55:50:24

Yeah, I appreciate that. And I will provide a summary. I think in order to kind of make the general point that we want to make. It is necessary to just kind of provide some context, but I will keep it as brief as I can. So I'll be about three minutes. So thank you. Um, so yeah, just to let you know that the filed local plan, um, does acknowledge the potential of delivering renewables and low carbon energy development locally is significant, um, and sets out a positive strategy for supporting that delivery.

00:55:51:09 - 00:56:41:12

Um, the council has published its local development scheme for 2025, which sets out the their program for production of the next local plan. Um, the new plan will run to 2042, and the intention is that the new plan will incorporate existing policies where possible at the local Plan, as existing is designed to deal with development. Typically of a smaller scale and then that associated with ends. But even so, the impact of energy generation and, you know, is understood to be significant. And at a high level, there can be quite significant impacts and has certain sensitivities around land use and development and some of that of nationally and international kind of importance, and particularly with regards to nature conservation, uh, and um, military and defense operations.

00:56:42:16 - 00:57:16:28

Um, so the requirement for any development being brought forward in Fylde for energy is that it would be assessed in relation to those impact impacts as set out in the plan. We understand that Fylde is not the determining authority, but um, nevertheless, the end of that process, we understand, should be a front loaded process and that the application should be accompanied by all necessary information for the impacts to be properly understood. And we note that you echoed some of the queries raised in our relevant reps, and with regards to the kind of ambiguity of elements of the submission.

00:57:17:15 - 00:57:51:06

And we note the response from from the applicant. Um, but we're concerned that the information is in place is still incomplete, inaccurate and inconsistent. We're in the process of preparing our local impact report, which will provide further commentary on this. Um, it's vital, though, that those deficiencies are not overlooked. Um, the the chair of our planning committee, Councillor Ratcliffe, provided a statement along those lines which which we can provide to you, but generally just says that, you know, the impacts on Fylde are going to be really significant files.

00:57:51:12 - 00:58:22:24

It's kind of the authority area that will be most impacted by this development. And um, as my colleagues has touched on details around things like build out and operation and decommissioning are very light. And we saw sought clarification over different scenarios, and we don't consider that the



alleged kind of cases and maximum impact scenarios are thorough enough for us to be able to carry out the work that is required. Um, importantly. So this is a specific example for agenda item two.

00:58:22:26 - 00:59:00:00

In the end, the principal issues are continued consultation and work. Um has identified that with, for example, regards to risk and resilience and some main areas of risk that we've identified, um, as informed by the council's Corporate Emergency Planning and Risk Management officer. Um, the application is not considered to be significant. Um, sufficiently kind of evidenced and that we are of the opinion that there should be a separate topic around risk and resilience, uh, as opposed to, um, those matters being discussed in association with the other topics.

00:59:00:14 - 00:59:38:15

So just to summarize, it's vital that sufficient accurate information is provided to be able to properly understand and evaluate the range of likely impacts. And which in turn would likely give rise to impacts on the structure of the examination. So that example we've given in relation to risk and resilience highlights issues in the process. So far, we do not consider that the submission is sufficiently complete and accurate at this stage to be able to understand what is important and relevant. And therefore, uh, with regards to agenda item two and the structure of the examination, we don't feel that that exercise can be carried out in a properly informed manner.

00:59:39:01 - 00:59:39:18

Thank you.

00:59:42:12 - 00:59:43:03

Thank you.

00:59:46:12 - 00:59:48:25

We have noted your points.

00:59:53:15 - 01:00:02:07

Can I, uh, now turn to, uh, Newton with Clifton Parish Council plus Newton Residents association last Freckleton council.

01:00:03:03 - 01:00:30:13

Thank you, madam. Um, Angus Walker for Newton with Clifton Parish Council and others. I don't think you need to read them all out every time. Um, now, when I'm acting for an applicant, I don't think that this list carries a great deal of weight. However, having said that, are two main issues are really absent from the list. Um, if you could just scroll down to item five on the list.

01:00:32:25 - 01:01:06:07

Which is general matters. It does talk about alternatives, but we are concerned that there is an obviously material alternative route to the north that is not really, um, covered by that description in item five. Um, it does. We recognise that the project can't change to adopt that route. It would have to stop and start again. But nevertheless, we think it is much better and ought to be considered.

01:01:06:16 - 01:01:10:06

And the second item is under the construction scenarios.

01:01:11:25 - 01:01:35:12

Um, it really doesn't draw out the fact that the construction could be simultaneous or sequential, which would effectively double the environmental impact if it was sequential rather than simultaneous of the two, uh, lines. And so that ought to be given more prominence in this list. That's really my only submission. Thank you.

01:01:36:19 - 01:01:51:11

Thank you. Um, I can confirm that we will be covering both of those issues tomorrow. At issue specific hearing one. And can I now move to B systems, please?

01:01:53:23 - 01:01:54:11

Thank you.

01:01:54:21 - 01:02:35:02

Paul, for representing Bay systems. Um, I think firstly we, we welcome um, aviation being okay. I think as a principal issue, um, as we've seen from our representations, um, Wharton is a strategic, uh, asset in terms of UK defence. Um, so I think it is essential that it impacts our considered for the examination. Um, what I just wanted to clarify was that in our, um, relevant representations, we identify a number of aviation related concerns, um, principally bird strike risk and also, um, impact on the communication, navigation and surveillance equipment at the aerodrome.

01:02:35:14 - 01:02:58:20

Um, so we just wanted to ensure they were covered under the general aviation heading. Um, we also raised concerns over, um, the conflicts with a solar farm that supplies power to the average home. Um, and we just thought it might be a, an opportune place to to consider that as well, for completeness, when we're considering overall, uh, Implications for what? And I was wrong.

01:03:01:04 - 01:03:08:27

Thank you. We are aware of those issues already and I can confirm they will be explored further in this examination.

01:03:11:16 - 01:03:34:16

I would also like to remind parties that the submission of written representations will also provide an opportunity for interested parties to make detailed representations on those matters. And, um. Does anyone else, uh, wish to make any comments in relation to examining authority's initial assessment of the principal issues?

01:03:38:20 - 01:03:40:12

I'm not seeing any hands.

01:03:42:10 - 01:03:51:28

Uh, so finally, uh, coming to the applicants. Would you like to make any comment on any of the matters raised at this stage?

01:03:54:03 - 01:04:25:06

Uh, Liz, done. On behalf of the applicants know we note the comments that are made. I think, as Mr. Walker said, um, this list of principal issues is interesting but doesn't necessarily have much. I mean, it's for the examining authority in terms of the focus for the examination. We've noted the points that have been made. We'd consider that the list of principal issues is is pretty thorough, and I think the examining authority are well aware of the submissions that have been made and the focus of the examination going forward. So we don't have any further comment on it.

01:04:27:02 - 01:04:58:23

Thank you. Um, we recognise the number and content of the relevant representations received and the level of interest within the local communities, and our task now is to carry out our examination of the application, taking account of all of the representations and evidence that has been submitted to us. And I want to thank everyone for those submissions, and we will now move on, on to item four on the agenda, which is on the draft examination timetable. And this will be led by Doctor Morgan.

01:05:00:29 - 01:05:03:05

Thank you, Miss Kiska.

01:05:03:23 - 01:05:04:08

For this.

01:05:04:10 - 01:05:05:01

Agenda item, be.

01:05:05:03 - 01:05:05:18

Useful to.

01:05:05:20 - 01:05:06:20

Have appendix D.

01:05:06:29 - 01:05:07:14

Of.

01:05:07:16 - 01:05:08:01

Our.

01:05:08:03 - 01:05:09:27

Rule six letter in front of you. So if the applicants.

01:05:09:29 - 01:05:10:14

Could please.

01:05:10:16 - 01:05:11:01

Share.

01:05:11:03 - 01:05:11:18

That on the.

01:05:11:20 - 01:05:12:05

Screen.

01:05:15:00 - 01:05:20:12

That's great. Thank you. Uh, this annex sets out the proposed examination timetable.

01:05:20:14 - 01:05:21:12

Including deadlines.

01:05:21:14 - 01:05:24:09

For written submissions and dates for hearings.

01:05:24:23 - 01:05:25:08

It also.

01:05:25:10 - 01:05:25:25

Includes dates.

01:05:25:27 - 01:05:26:15

For the examining.

01:05:26:17 - 01:05:27:12

Authority to issue.

01:05:27:14 - 01:05:28:08

Documents.

01:05:28:15 - 01:05:40:21

Such as our written questions. Please note, for the avoidance of doubt, that the precise deadline for submission on each stated date is 11:59 p.m.. In the interests of efficiency.

01:05:41:01 - 01:05:41:21

I don't intend.

01:05:41:23 - 01:05:44:13

To go through the draft timetable in its entirety.

01:05:44:27 - 01:05:46:19

I'll highlight some key points.

01:05:47:23 - 01:05:48:19

So firstly, we.

01:05:48:21 - 01:05:49:13

Decided to hold an.

01:05:49:15 - 01:05:51:21

Open floor hearing at an early stage of the.

01:05:51:23 - 01:05:52:18

Examination.

01:05:53:27 - 01:05:54:12

To.

01:05:54:14 - 01:05:54:29

Allow parties.

01:05:55:01 - 01:05:55:16

Who wish to.

01:05:55:18 - 01:05:56:03

Do so.

01:05:56:05 - 01:05:58:03

And have registered to.

01:05:58:05 - 01:05:58:27

Orally set.

01:05:58:29 - 01:05:59:19

Out their views.

01:05:59:21 - 01:06:00:15

To us on the.

01:06:00:17 - 01:06:01:04

Proposed.

01:06:01:06 - 01:06:03:15

Development. Following the start.

01:06:03:17 - 01:06:04:10

Of the examination.

01:06:04:12 - 01:06:05:07

We will therefore.

01:06:05:09 - 01:06:05:24  
Hold.

01:06:05:26 - 01:06:07:03  
Our first open floor.

01:06:07:05 - 01:06:07:22  
Hearing this.

01:06:07:24 - 01:06:09:18  
Afternoon at 2:30.

01:06:09:20 - 01:06:10:11  
P.m..

01:06:11:09 - 01:06:13:00  
We propose holding a second.

01:06:13:04 - 01:06:13:19  
Open.

01:06:13:21 - 01:06:14:06  
Floor.

01:06:14:08 - 01:06:16:05  
Hearing if required, in the.

01:06:16:07 - 01:06:16:24  
Week commencing.

01:06:16:26 - 01:06:18:16  
The 23rd of June.

01:06:19:00 - 01:06:23:06  
The same week that we are proposing to carry out an accompanied site inspection.

01:06:23:25 - 01:06:24:10  
This will.

01:06:24:12 - 01:06:24:29  
Probably be held.

01:06:25:01 - 01:06:25:27  
In the evening.

01:06:26:05 - 01:06:26:20

To.

01:06:26:22 - 01:06:27:07

Allow.

01:06:27:09 - 01:06:28:28

As many people as possible to attend.

01:06:30:27 - 01:06:32:25

This week we will also be holding.

01:06:32:27 - 01:06:33:17

The first.

01:06:33:19 - 01:06:34:27

Issue specific.

01:06:35:03 - 01:06:36:01

Hearing on.

01:06:36:03 - 01:06:37:24

Wednesday and Thursday.

01:06:38:01 - 01:06:40:04

Which include discussion on the scope of the.

01:06:40:06 - 01:06:41:10

Proposed development.

01:06:41:25 - 01:06:49:10

Site selection and alternatives, initial compulsory acquisition hearing focusing on the applicant's.

01:06:49:12 - 01:06:49:28

Strategic.

01:06:50:00 - 01:06:52:27

Case for compulsory acquisition is scheduled for this.

01:06:52:29 - 01:06:54:06

Friday morning.

01:06:55:04 - 01:07:03:03

As soon as possible. After this week's events, we'll be publishing our rule eight letter, which will finalize the examination timetable.

01:07:04:10 - 01:07:05:26

Moving on to deadline one.

01:07:05:28 - 01:07:06:13

Which.

01:07:06:15 - 01:07:10:15

Is timetable for Thursday the 20th of May. This includes a deadline.

01:07:10:17 - 01:07:11:02

For the.

01:07:11:04 - 01:07:12:05

Submission of local impact.

01:07:12:07 - 01:07:14:17

Reports by local authorities.

01:07:14:27 - 01:07:17:06

And written representations from interested.

01:07:17:08 - 01:07:34:11

Parties. We propose to publish our first round of written questions on Tuesday the 17th of June, with responses due by Friday the 4th of July. As explained earlier and accompanied, site inspection is scheduled for week commencing the 23rd of June. There will also be.

01:07:34:13 - 01:07:34:28

Further.

01:07:35:00 - 01:07:45:00

Issue specific and compulsory acquisition hearings later in the examination. We propose that these take place in the week commencing the 20th.

01:07:45:02 - 01:07:45:17

8th.

01:07:45:19 - 01:07:46:04

Of July.

01:07:48:16 - 01:07:49:10

As with the events.



01:07:49:12 - 01:07:50:10

Taking place this week.

01:07:50:12 - 01:07:50:28

We propose.

01:07:51:00 - 01:07:51:15

That these.

01:07:51:17 - 01:07:52:02

Hearings.

01:07:52:04 - 01:07:52:19

Will be held in.

01:07:52:21 - 01:07:53:06

Person.

01:07:53:12 - 01:07:54:17

With a link for any person.

01:07:54:19 - 01:07:55:04

Who wishes.

01:07:55:06 - 01:07:56:06

To appear virtually.

01:07:56:18 - 01:08:00:21

Much like this, this meeting, if required, we propose to.

01:08:00:23 - 01:08:01:08

Publish.

01:08:01:10 - 01:08:09:20

A further set of examining authority's written questions on the 8th of September, with a deadline for responses to these on the 22nd of September.

01:08:11:11 - 01:08:12:26

Further dates have been allocated.

01:08:12:28 - 01:08:13:13

For.

01:08:13:15 - 01:08:31:12

Hearings, again if required. In the week commencing the 6th of October, these may be in person or entirely virtual. We are under a duty to complete the examination within six months of it opening, and this is by the 29th of October, 2025. Once the examination closes.

01:08:31:14 - 01:08:32:19

No further submissions.

01:08:32:21 - 01:09:06:19

Can be accepted unless specifically requested by the Secretary of State. I'm now going to go to the parties that have helpfully made submissions already at procedural deadline a about the timetable. So firstly, I've noted that the applicants requested the deadline to is moved from Tuesday the 3rd of June to Monday the 9th of June, and that deadline three is moved from Friday the 4th of July to Tuesday the 8th of July. Mr.. On behalf of the applicant, will you explain your reasoning behind that and any other comments that you may have?

01:09:07:12 - 01:09:41:00

Thank you. Sir, is done on behalf of the applicant. Um, the request to move deadline to from the 3rd of June, uh, Tuesday, the 3rd of June to Monday the 9th of July, um, is is primarily driven by, um, the period that there is between that. So deadline to um is the receipt by the examining authority of comments on written representations, comments on local impact reports, uh, further information requested uh, and the revised uh development consent order.

01:09:41:16 - 01:10:23:20

Um, I think the applicant's Position is that given the number of interested parties, and obviously there were a significant number of relevant representations made which the applicant has responded to in full already, the potential for a large number of written representations to be made, and for all parties to be able to review those and respond to them as needed. Um, and also the time it can take for material to be uploaded to the planning Inspectorate's website with the best will in the world of everybody involved, it can take 2 to 3 days before documents that have been submitted, uh, are available.

01:10:24:05 - 01:10:54:27

Uh, the applicant felt that, um, moving that deadline by, um, effectively four working days actually would benefit all parties to ensure that that that material can be properly reviewed. Um, and responded to um, it's also considered that that doesn't, um, affect any subsequent deadlines in terms of when that material is available. Uh, I think the applicant would also note that, um, that was a request that also was echoed by the MMO.

01:10:54:29 - 01:11:28:29

The marine management organization also asked. Um, they actually asked that deadline to is moved to the Thursday the 5th of June. So the applicants are asking for it to be moved slightly longer than that. Sorry, slightly further than that. So that's that's the request in respect of deadline two is just to provide, uh, some additional days for all parties to review the material that comes in at deadline one, um, as I said, which could be a significant amount of material, um, in order that full responses can be made to assist the examination.

01:11:29:22 - 01:11:44:19

Okay. Thank you. Mr.. I was going to come on to Natural England and the Marine Management Organization next. There was a suggestion that there may be a Represents. It gives you them today. Possibly online. Can I just check whether they are.

01:11:48:23 - 01:12:18:28

I can't see in the room or on online. Okay. Um, basically. Then I'll, I'll just briefly go through what they what they've requested. Um, so naturally, Natural England noted that deadline three falls on Friday, the 4th of July, which is one day after deadline eight for the Dogger Bank South Offshore Wind Farm examination, which could potentially constrain their ability to respond by the deadline. They therefore requested a revised deadline early the following week.

01:12:19:19 - 01:12:22:01

Natural England also noted the deadline for.

01:12:22:09 - 01:12:22:24

A.

01:12:22:26 - 01:12:32:06

Potential issue specific hearing to fall within the school. Summer holidays, with resourcing across all organisations, is likely to be more constrained and relevant.

01:12:32:08 - 01:12:53:05

Specialists may not be available. And finally, Natural England noted that the final deadline, deadline seven is the same day as the end of the examination, as this is for final statements and responding to a rule 17 letter if issued. They highlighted that there is a risk of documents not being seen until the examination is ended.

01:12:54:22 - 01:13:20:21

With regard to the Marine Management Organization, it requested that where possible, deadlines are not set on Mondays. It noted their deadline to is only eight days from deadline one, and requested that it moved to Thursday, the 5th of June. It suggested that deadline three is moved to the week commencing the 14th of July, to allow more time for it to respond to the examining authority's written questions, particularly on technical topics.

01:13:23:22 - 01:13:44:14

It also highlighted potential timetabling conflicts with other examinations in July, notably Dogger Bank South and North Falls. And finally, it noted that there are only seven days between deadline six and deadline seven in the draft timetable, and requested the interval between the two is increased to allow more time to resolve any outstanding issues by the final deadline.

01:13:46:03 - 01:14:02:00

In addition, the National Farmers Union, which is also not represented here today, requested its procedural deadline, a submission that the second set of issue specific and compulsory acquisition hearings are brought forward to an earlier date in the examination timetable.

01:14:04:08 - 01:14:12:01

Um, okay. So moving on to people who are in the room. If I can ask Mr. Walker, you wish to speak on the timetabling?

01:14:12:13 - 01:14:12:28

Thank.

01:14:14:15 - 01:14:32:10

Before you pass on to Mr. Walker on behalf of the applicant, we did have submissions on deadline three, which I haven't gone through. So if it's helpful for us to make our full submissions on timetable before you hand apologies, I thought we were going to go through in sequential order as opposed to doing them all together.

01:14:32:12 - 01:14:34:12

I know I was going to do each.

01:14:35:00 - 01:14:35:15

Can I.

01:14:35:17 - 01:14:36:02

Just make.

01:14:36:05 - 01:14:37:02

An apology?

01:14:37:09 - 01:14:40:07

Yeah. It's probably better if you complete all your representations.

01:14:40:14 - 01:15:22:29

Thank you. Um, so the second request we had was to move deadline three from Friday, the 4th of July to Tuesday the 8th of July. Um, again, this was to provide more time for parties to respond to the examining authority's first written questions. I think at the moment. Um, there's 13 working days, but that also includes the time, um, the period that's been set aside for the accompanied site inspection and open floor hearings, and recognizing that there will be potentially a number of parties involved in those who will be detracted from preparing the responses to to first written questions, then.

01:15:23:02 - 01:15:54:14

So the request there was that deadline. Three for the response to examining authority's first questions is moved to Tuesday the 8th of July. There was one further observation we had, which wasn't in the, uh, in our rule six letter response, which was that there is no date in the timetable at the moment for comments on responses to examining authority questions. So there's a there's obviously the date for the issuing of the examining authority's questions then for parties to respond.

01:15:54:16 - 01:16:20:26

But typically there would be another deadline whereby other parties can respond to responses made by those parties. Just a question as to whether that be useful, just to know if there's a specific date for

that. It could be included in the deadline for post hearings or but just just to make sure that's picked up. So parties are clear that they can comment on other people's responses to examining authority's questions.

01:16:21:11 - 01:16:24:19

Thank you. Okay. Thank you Mr.. Mr.. Walker.

01:16:26:02 - 01:17:05:09

Thank you sir. Angus Walker for Newton with Clifton, Etc.. Um, I got three points to make on on the timetable. First of all, I'm making, um, my first point is really, uh, helpful to, um. Well, it's a bit late now, but for the applicant and for applicants in general, I only feel I can. I'm brave enough to make this. When I point, when I'm making, when I'm representing an objector to a project. Is that in procedural deadline, a requiring response to all the relevant representations before the examination has even started is possibly unlawful.

01:17:05:11 - 01:17:05:26

Um,

01:17:07:16 - 01:17:38:12

and while you could make a sort of request that that is done, um, you should not penalize the applicant if it didn't manage to, um, achieve that deadline because it's legally supposed to be either the preliminary meeting or the date stated in the relate letter. Um, and it I'm going to criticize the applicant. Now that the the treatment of all the relevant representations is pretty superficial, and maybe that is because they weren't given enough time to respond to them properly.

01:17:39:12 - 01:18:18:02

That's my first point. Second point I support the fact that deadline two is too close to deadline one. I think there's too much work to do in that short period. Um, including for my clients. And finally, um, on issue specific hearings, if this is the right point to ask for topics to be covered, um, I'm not sure how much coverage the DCA will get in issue specific hearing one given it's such a mammoth agenda and is a very small item in the middle of that, so I doubt that's going to be more than a very superficial treatment of the DCO.

01:18:18:04 - 01:18:48:15

And so I would request that there is a more substantive DCO hearing later. And of course, Um, are two points about the existence of the, uh, a better route to the north and about timing of construction sequentially or or simultaneously. Again, if not dealt with in any detail at issue specific hearing one, we would wish the those two to be the subject of further issue specific hearing.

01:18:48:19 - 01:18:49:08

Thank you.

01:18:50:09 - 01:19:01:02

Thank you, Mr. Walker. It was noted. Um, can I move to Mr. Forshaw, MBA? You expressed the fact that you wanted to speak on this item.

01:19:01:15 - 01:19:31:15

Uh, thank you, Paul, for sure. Um, on behalf of BA systems, uh, I think similar to Mr. Walker, we were going to, um, raise a request for additional issue specific hearing looking at aviation matters. Um, with knowledge that there's time in the agenda in tomorrow's to look at those matters. I think that's probably from our representations. You'll be aware we've asked for a number of additional assessments to be undertaken in relation to aviation impacts. I think tomorrow is probably a good time to go through the scope of those.

01:19:31:23 - 01:19:48:11

Um. We would feel that another issue specific hearing. Once those assessments have been, um, drafted would be useful. Um, given the technical nature of those assessments, it would be useful to sit down and discuss with the relevant experts in the room.

01:19:51:11 - 01:19:57:00

Okay. Thank you. And then we come to, um, Mr. Brown online.

01:19:58:18 - 01:20:16:26

Thank you very much. And perfect pronunciation. Ten out of ten. Um, thank you sir. Um, just in relation to your comments that, um, the examining authority is obliged to conclude within six months, I would just like to first ask a question before I make some comments. Um,

01:20:18:13 - 01:20:30:02

I take it that this preliminary hearing doesn't or doesn't signify the start of the examination that the examination is still yet to start. Or can you clarify that for me from the outset?

01:20:31:23 - 01:20:38:12

That's correct. The examination starts the moment the preliminary meeting actually ends.

01:20:40:09 - 01:20:47:25

Okay. The moment that ends are when the examining authority actually decides that it is in a position to commence it. Surely?

01:20:54:09 - 01:20:54:25

Yeah.

01:20:56:08 - 01:21:07:15

Yes. It's it's following the preliminary meeting. Unless the preliminary meeting is actually adjourned. So as soon as this ends, formally ends, then the examination formally begins.

01:21:07:27 - 01:21:43:05

Unless it's adjourned. And so what I would like to propose is that it would be expedient and appropriate to adjourn the preliminary meeting, pending a clarification in relation to the matters that I've raised in, respect of this standing and issues around interested party. Status. Given the the issues that have arisen consequent on the mismanagement of timing. And I'm sorry if that sounds pejorative, but the unfortunate issues that have arisen around the the timing of the transboundary consultation with the Irish public if the hearing proceeds.

01:21:43:27 - 01:22:40:05

Let me be clear. I'm trying to be really constructive and very helpful here. If the hearing proceeds with the situation where you have a constituency of the public who are entitled under law and international laws, what I'm talking about here, to which the UK is a party, if it proceeds and they are disadvantaged and discriminated against, consequent on nationality and citizenship, in breach of article 39 of the RSA convention. This risks contaminating the whole process and any decision arising under it. Therefore, I would urge you to consider seriously adjourning this so that that six month window does not serve to move ahead before the Irish public are properly informed of their rights and can participate fully as is appropriate in this procedure, including ourselves.

01:22:40:21 - 01:23:11:00

Um, but I really want to make clear that it's not just on Clive Lawson Antarctica's interest that I am concerned with here, and but we champion environmental democracy. And as a result, the issues of the wider Irish public and indeed the Belgian public, um, and, and any other parties who may emerge as being interested in the fact of consequent on the emerging process and clarifications and changes that are invariably going to happen as this this process evolves. So that's that's the first point.

01:23:11:03 - 01:24:02:18

The second point I would just highlight more generally, um, I share the concerns just generally in relation to the timelines that have been set out, particularly the concerns made by Natural England and colleagues in respect of, um, the coincidence of certain timelines with traditional holiday periods. And I would highlight that the case law of the Convention Compliance Committee has made it very, very clear in findings endorsed by the meetings of the parties and that in considering what is effective public consultation and reasonable timelines, consideration has to be given to the volumes and complexities of materials and the extent to which there is coincidence with traditional holiday periods, and unfortunately, the timeline has set out is quite problematic in respect of all of those.

01:24:02:20 - 01:24:50:07

And I think there's ample evidence this morning to evidence the fact that there is concern. I fully appreciate that there is a six month, um, overall deadline and timeline, and I fully appreciate The urgency and the desire to advance projects such. Of this nature and and that is why I'm really desperately trying to be constructive here, to make sure that this isn't wrong footed from the outset, uh, consequent on the procedural matters that that we have identified. So respectfully, um, I would urge planning Inspector to avail of discretion on this matter to exercise a an adjournment with the view to keeping its options open, lest this proceed in advance, and be unfortunately wrongfooted as a consequence.

01:24:52:04 - 01:24:57:20

Okay, thank you for those really helpful comments. Perhaps I could ask the applicant if they got any comments at all.

01:24:58:20 - 01:25:29:02

Uh, listen, on behalf of the applicant, um, I point out that the start date for the examination is actually tomorrow. It's the day after the day that the preliminary meeting is held. That's under section 98 9082 of the Planning Act 2008. We certainly wouldn't support any adjournment or think there's any basis on

which this preliminary meeting needs to be adjourned. This process is being carried out under the Planning Act 2008, which has been in place for, um. Mr.

01:25:29:04 - 01:26:01:15

Walker will correct me if I'm wrong. Somewhere near 17 years now, I think, uh, 2008, it came in the first applications examined in 2010 and has been operating efficiently and effectively since then. As far as I understand it, the representations that are being made are about the process itself in terms of the planning act process and the procedures that sit under that. Uh, and those are matters of, of legal jurisdiction that aren't matters for this examination.

01:26:01:17 - 01:26:30:27

I would suggest, um, and yes, as I say, we haven't made detailed representations on submissions on this. I think this is a This is a question of UK law, not the as. As exists under the Planning Act 2008. I don't think it's about this particular examination or process as far as I understand it. Um, uh, so yes, we would we don't consider there's any basis on which there should be an adjournment of the preliminary meeting.

01:26:31:28 - 01:26:38:10

Okay. Thank you, Miss Dan. Are there any other comments on the examination timetable?

01:26:39:00 - 01:26:43:23

If I may be permitted, just to respond very briefly to those comments from the applicant, sir.

01:26:43:28 - 01:26:45:01

Uh, yes. Go ahead.

01:26:45:27 - 01:27:30:18

Okay. Um, judicial review of any decision arising out of this process will go to the procedural and substantive legality. Um, and secondly, in relation to the comments around the validity of the 2000 act. Unfortunately, there is history here of which I am personally very intimately acquainted in relation to issues that have been incurred in respect of trans boundary consultations in the past, for example in relation to Hinkley Point C and the difficulties that arose where effectively the Espoo Implementation Committee initiated an own investigation in relation to this, and there was a need to repeat the transboundary consultations with a number of of affected states.

01:27:30:29 - 01:28:12:00

So the issues are are really serious and and I'm sure you fully appreciate them. So I don't mean to be in any way disrespectful. And but with respect to the applicant's concerns, the issue is if we don't get this right from the start, it risks unravelling and that that is the problem. And this is no disrespect to the UK's, um, sovereign right to determine its energy mix and to proceed and to have its own laws, etc. but these are underpinned by international conventions to which the UK is a party, and there there are obligations which need to be read in light of those obligations.

01:28:12:24 - 01:28:22:20

Um, and I think a precautionary approach is, is warranted here in the broader sense of that word, uh, to make sure that we don't put ourselves.



01:28:24:04 - 01:28:36:27

Okay. Thank you, Mr. Brown, and thank you for those helpful comments. Uh, which we I think we fully understand. Uh, noting the time now. It's 1128. I think the time will come to for a break.

01:28:37:08 - 01:28:39:11

To speak and. Yeah.

01:28:39:13 - 01:28:43:18

Sorry. Before before adjourning. Is there anyone else who wants to speak on this item?

01:28:46:15 - 01:28:47:00

No.

01:28:47:16 - 01:28:53:00

Okay. Uh, I think we'll take a small break, then to 10 to 12.

01:28:54:24 - 01:28:55:14

Thank you.