

Hearing Transcript

Project:	Morgan and Morecambe Offshore Wind Farms Transmission Assets
Hearing:	Q&A on the EA's Part 5
Date:	1 May 2025

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FULL TRANSCRIPT (with timecode)

00:00:04:27 - 00:00:29:26

Good morning everybody. It's now 930 and time to resume issue specific hearing one which is on site selection and alternatives, the scope of the proposed development and the applicants assessments in connection with the application for a development consent order for the mauka Morgan Offshore Wind Farm Transmission Assets Project. Uh,

00:00:31:14 - 00:00:55:08

I won't go through all the usual introductions as this is a resumption of yesterday's hearing. Uh, but I will remind everybody of the fire escape doors, which are clearly signposted around the room. And for those not in attendance previously this week, the location of the toilets, which is into the foyer and then down the corridor on the, uh, on the left hand side.

00:01:01:14 - 00:01:33:21

So yesterday we dealt with, uh, relevant policy matters, site selection and alternatives, which is item four of the agenda and item five of the agenda. Well, the first part of item five on the agenda relating to the scope of the proposed development. So we've got up to item B of item five which we will continue with in a moment. Um, just on action points if we could.

00:01:34:09 - 00:01:35:10

I know yesterday.

00:01:38:24 - 00:01:52:27

Mr. Gorst ended up, uh, summarizing them at the end. But if we could continue with the applicants, making a note of those and going through at the end, if that's okay. Uh, I don't know. One of your team can do that because I.

00:01:54:22 - 00:02:08:25

Know it's done on behalf of the applicant. Yes, we can do that, I think, from yesterday. Um, uh, it's clear about the sort of level of detail that you're looking for in respect of those action points. Um, so we'll pull those together and read through at the end.

00:02:09:06 - 00:02:20:09

And we'll make a concentrated note of ensuring it's clear what is an action point on each occasion and the deadline it is requested for it, just so that everyone's clear that something is an action point or not.

00:02:20:25 - 00:02:51:16

So let's done on behalf of the applicant. Can I just, um, check whether the hearing action points will also be being published by the examining authority because, um, it certainly is a, so that that somebody within the Planning Inspectorate or the examining authority are actually taking a note of those so they can be published after the hearings. I just know that for, uh, where I know I appreciate that most of the hearing action points from yesterday are on the applicant, but there will be hearing action points for other parties.

00:02:51:25 - 00:03:22:06

And, uh, sometimes those parties aren't in attendance. Uh, so it is really, really important that those hearing action points are published as soon as possible after the hearings so that it, as I say, because it's often not just the applicant's responsibility, it's for other people to do things. And if the only record is an oral record from the hearings, there's a very, very high chance that those third parties aren't going to know what the hearing action points are and be able to follow them through.

00:03:22:08 - 00:03:27:23

So it is really critical that and I don't think, well, the applicant isn't in a position.

00:03:27:25 - 00:03:55:21

No, absolutely. We we will yes, we will publish the action points on the website. I think this time round it's going to be Bank holiday next week as well, isn't it. It's not going to be until early next week, uh, by the time they are published. Uh, but we will publish those. And of course, in future we'll look at getting action points published as quickly as possible because like you say, yeah, not all will be for the, uh, for the applicant. Absolutely.

00:03:58:15 - 00:04:39:25

Okay. Thank you. And also, just in terms of your request yesterday for reference to any relevant documents. There's not particularly many at all sort of for this hearing specific parts of documents that we would need to be put upon the screen. But I think for the next issue specific hearings where that is more likely, whatever topics they'll be on. We'll we will do a indicative list beforehand. It's always indicative because to be honest, you know, it's it's well it's like we're probably, you know, a day before add questions and depending on the material that we read, but we can provide an adhesive list for the next hearings, uh, if it helps move forward this afternoon.

00:04:39:29 - 00:05:00:21

Figure two is volume three at 135 is one that might might be useful to have up for this afternoon. But I think we're not there's not actually many. We're referring to documents, but not many particularly parts of documents that need to be on the screen. To be honest, although I appreciate you might wish to provide some documents on the screen as well as we go along, which.

00:05:01:04 - 00:05:31:04

Thank you, sir. Listen, on behalf of the applicant. It was it was also part of a sort of wider request about the agendas for the hearings. Um, going forward, um, and, um, you'll appreciate that. I think all parties here want to try and, um, assist the examining authority as much as possible, that these hearings are as efficient and effective as possible. Um, there are a very large number of people here from a number of organisations.

00:05:31:11 - 00:06:03:27

Um, and the more specific the agendas for the hearings can be appreciate. These have been at a high level, um, obviously a sort of initial exploration of, uh, of issues. Um, but if the examining authority is looking for for the right people to be in the room and for the right and for answers to be given to the questions that you're asking. I would ask for the agendas to be as detailed as possible in terms of the areas you're looking to cover, who you are looking to participate and hear from.

00:06:04:06 - 00:06:26:03

Um, during those, um, during those hearings, because that's the way it makes it most efficient. We have a very large team of people here waiting to answer questions on things which you may or may not ask from the applicant's perspective. We're here to assist the examination and make that go smoothly. But I know that for other parties, um, working out who needs to be here and when it is really.

00:06:26:05 - 00:06:59:07

Okay, that's that's understood. We'll make them as focused as we can. What we probably won't be doing. And I know some examining authorities do this. They always ask the questions in writing beforehand. I'm not sure that's that beneficial, because the idea of a hearing is that we're asking questions to people and we want an answer. Otherwise we'll just do all the written questions and not have hearings. There is probably a balance to be had. But where we have, for example, if we had a specific hearing topic on onshore archaeology. Uh, we would expect the applicants onshore archaeology experts to be there.

00:07:00:18 - 00:07:02:25

So, if I may, can you please.

00:07:02:29 - 00:07:37:09

I'll come back to you. Uh, so we'll be focused as we can, but we won't go down to the sort of level of detail. I think the examining priorities vary in terms of how their agendas are published. And I think that's I think that's fine. So we'll make those focused as we can. And we'll refer to particular topics at least that we'll be wanting to ask questions on, but not in all cases too much beyond that. And the DCO will probably list the bits of DCO we want to discuss as well later on, things like that. But what we won't be doing is sort of giving indication of what our written questions would be before the hearing, because I think that probably undermines the purpose of the hearing.

00:07:37:11 - 00:07:47:20

Exactly. On behalf of the applicant. Exactly. So. And I don't think that's what we're looking for. But but that focus around kind of which which of the areas that you're specifically interested or want wanted?

00:07:47:22 - 00:07:49:03

Yes I understand.

00:07:49:16 - 00:07:51:05

I think assist all parties.

00:07:51:10 - 00:07:52:28

Yes, absolutely I understand.

00:07:54:04 - 00:08:25:10

So Catherine Knight, Blackpool Council. I was just going to say exactly what Miss Dunn has said, that we aren't looking for a detailed questions. I understand exactly where you're coming from. That would greatly assist the council. The council officers extremely busy. Um, whilst I recognise that the council officers for Blackpool are in Blackpool, it's a matter of having sufficient detail so we can determine what level of officer is actually best able to assist the hearing panel with the questions. Traffic and transport, I think, is probably our closest example, whether it's a director level or whether it's more the consenting level.

00:08:25:12 - 00:08:29:26

So if you we would appreciate if we could just have that sort of detail coming through in the agenda.

00:08:29:28 - 00:08:41:20

Thank you. That is noted. Thank you. Right. I think that's everything for introduction stroke, housekeeping type things. I think we are.

00:08:43:15 - 00:09:14:25

At John Cope Ziegfeld Borough Council. I did just have one quick query arising from yesterday that I think it's important just to address. So, um, yesterday Miss Dunn stated that, um, Sport England are not a statutory consultee for the purposes of this consultation, this application. So we would just like to understand the basis upon which they believe this. Um, our interpretation of the NPO and understanding of their status leaves no ambiguity and that they are a statutory consultation. It's important that we have this clarified ahead of the local impact of.

00:09:14:27 - 00:09:20:21

The two of you. Have a conversation in one of the breaks today, and if anything needs to be clarified beyond that, to the to the examination. Well, it.

00:09:20:23 - 00:09:29:06

Was it was stated to the to the hearing in general that I think everybody present needs needs to know because it was stated, um, in front of everybody.

00:09:29:08 - 00:10:02:05

Okay. Well, you need to get agreement of the applicant, please have a conversation. And then the outputs of that can be just summarised when we get to the relevant section of the agenda, possibly later on today. I don't want to take any time up on that now, because I want to get going with the with the agenda. The we aim to finish again at 5 p.m. like yesterday. I might just go over, but we don't want to finish at all. Significantly beyond beyond that. Uh, we have got a lot to get through so people can keep their answers as focused as possible. Then that would be very helpful. And there's no need to repeat information that's just read out from application documents.

00:10:02:23 - 00:10:16:26

Um, okay, everybody, can we recommence the agenda? And I'll go to my colleague, Miss Kiska with item B, which is proposed development design parameters and project flexibility.

00:10:17:19 - 00:10:45:16

Thank you. Uh, so I'm going to follow the approach, uh, from yesterday. I will ask my questions and then after that, I will open, uh, the discussion, um, to the interested parties. So the first question I've got is, um, could the applicants explain their broad approach to the proposed design parameters, project flexibility, and the use of the Rochdale The envelope abroad approach, please.

00:10:48:21 - 00:11:09:16

Please turn on behalf of the applicant. Um, apologies. Um, I think we had, uh, considered that, um, design parameters and flexibility were matters that we covered in a. If we could have two minutes to just get the right people up to the table now to make sure that we can do that, um, so that we can answer those questions.

00:11:09:18 - 00:11:15:10

It's just an overview rather than a sort of specific discussion of substation parameters. Yeah.

00:11:15:18 - 00:12:06:26

Yeah. And in the meantime, I'll start giving an overview of the approach to, um, to the Rochdale envelope, um, and design parameters. Um, so, uh, the applicants have adopted, uh, the Rochdale envelope approach to the, uh, the design of the project. Um, for those that aren't familiar with it. Um, the Rochdale envelope approach is a way of, um. So if people are speaking at the table. Um, sorry. The Rochdale envelope approach, um, is a way of, um, identifying, um, the broad parameters, um, of the design of a project, um, often by setting maximum of those, those parameters or the biggest development that could be delivered within it, um, without necessarily, uh, very specific details.

00:12:07:00 - 00:12:38:18

Um, as you might have in a, in, for example, a very detailed planning application. It's a recognised approach taken for, uh, for large scale development projects. And it's specifically endorsed, um, through the, uh, the planning Inspectorate's advice note on the use of the Rochdale envelope. Sorry, I don't have the, uh, reference to the advice note, uh, in front of me at the moment. Um, so, so the, uh, effectively, it's an endorsed approach for this type of project.

00:12:39:03 - 00:13:14:10

Uh, The approach that the applicant has taken has been to identify. As I say, maxima, you'll hear talk of in respect of the Morgan project, up to four export cables, up to four onshore cables for the Morgan project, up to two uh cables comprises that project. Um, and then um, and then at the substation, as we've said, there is a um there are there are the specifics of, of the or there would be specific elements, uh, of electrical infrastructure that will be constructed at the substations.

00:13:14:12 - 00:13:56:05

And there are maxima in terms of um, of, of the sort of how large those, those elements, particularly the buildings, which are key parts of that would be those, uh, the way that the applicant has ensured that those maximum parameters, um, are considered within the environmental impact assessment, um, is by the use of what's called the Project Design envelope, or PDA, which is used a lot. And within the

project description chapter, there is a lot of detail around the maximum parameters that have been applied to the environmental impact assessment that's been carried out and taken through.

00:13:56:23 - 00:14:27:29

Those details have then gone into the specific project chapters, in terms of the way that the environmental impact assessment has been undertaken, uh, not just in terms of physical parameters. And I know we'll come on to it, but in terms of when works might take place and those sorts of things. So the different scenarios for the assessment. So those are set out in the project description chapter. Um, that's also then captured um, where, where it sets those maximum parameters through the development consent order.

00:14:28:01 - 00:15:00:17

And that relationship between the project description chapter and the um, development consent order, the works that are authorized within the development consent order. So the authorized development and then the requirements of the development consent order, which my colleague Mrs. Fuller will talk about later. Um, they they again fix those maximum parameters so that what has been assessed in the environmental impact assessment can't be exceeded by the purpose for the purposes of the development.

00:15:01:01 - 00:15:31:15

Those also work alongside the works plans and the works plans prescribe. Uh, if anybody's familiar with, um, with planning permissions, they're effectively the red line boundary for the project. So the the red line boundary is referred to in DCO applications as the order limits, which is the the sort of area that goes right around the edge of the development areas and then the works and the works plans are used to define particular works that can take place in particular areas.

00:15:32:21 - 00:16:04:22

Um, uh, in terms of of project flexibility. As I've said, the projects have sought to design, um, a maximum design envelope for the purposes of the project. Um, and, uh, wherever possible, uh, have sought to, um, identify those those areas separately for Morgan and for Morecambe because, uh, as we've said, it is very important in the delivery of these projects that they can be delivered independently from each other if they need to be.

00:16:04:24 - 00:16:42:21

Hence the use. And I think, again, it's something we'll probably talk about tomorrow. Uh, the, the use of the, um, the separate cable corridors. There are certain areas, though, where that isn't possible because of the nature of the works that are coming forward. We talked about it yesterday in respect of the works, um, at the beach and then, um, around the, um, we've got the work numbers around the care home and then up to the, um, up to the, um, the, the transmission transition joint base in area 1018 B where there is I think we talked about those areas of flexibility yesterday in terms of why they're there, why they're justified.

00:16:43:06 - 00:17:19:08

Um, I suppose the only area that to flag and it may come up in the DCO discussions is probably around the splitting of the cable or the different cable corridors at Blackpool Airport and the recreation ground. And I think it was noted yesterday that the projects, uh, that the the development consent

order authorizes up to four cables in each of those in each of those areas. But there is a and I don't have the reference in front of me at the moment. There is a requirement in the development Consent order five within requirement five of both schedules two A and two B of the Development Consent Order.

00:17:19:13 - 00:17:24:24

There is a requirement that says that within those two works, there can only be a maximum of six cables.

00:17:24:29 - 00:17:57:09

Thank you. I am looking for a broader approach at this stage, so I think that is sufficient. Yes. Um, I'm going to move on to the other question that is based partially on what you said now. So could you explain why the design parameters documents include terms such as indicative, anticipated and approximate. And for example, in table 3.26 of the project description, we've got a maximum approximate permanent footprint.

00:17:57:23 - 00:18:07:15

We've got maximum anticipated impermeable footprint. And in table 3.6 we've got indicative maximum cable burial depth.

00:18:08:25 - 00:18:44:13

At least done on behalf of the applicant. Um, not all the parameters that are set out in the project description are fixed parameters for the purposes of the project design. Some of them, as we've indicated, there are indicative. So the, uh, the where there are key parameters that need to be secured. Those are secured through the development consent order and they are specific. So for example, at 4K, up to four cables for the Morgen project and up to two cables for the Morgan project where where information has been provided.

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That is um, that is indicative at this stage. So for example, the size of the uh, substation footprint. Um, there is a, there are parameters that set the, uh, the amount of the permanent footprint for the substation. Um, and, uh, that is those are set out, um, in the project description, but they are also secured through the development consent order. So there is a there is there are maxima within the development consent order and requirement five around what those parameters could be.

00:19:18:03 - 00:19:48:16

But there are areas where it has been indicative. So it is um for the purposes of undertaking the assessment, um it isn't material to the assessment. It is. It is a matter that's being provided for information, as opposed to being a key parameter in terms of assessing or defining the nature of the project. So for example, um, burial depths for the cables. Those are subject to detailed design. They can't be fixed at this point.

00:19:48:19 - 00:20:00:02

So what the applicants have provided is a minima and a maxima indicative to say broadly, if you're trying to understand where these cables are likely to be, this is where they're likely to be.

00:20:07:02 - 00:20:23:28

I'm just struggling with understanding why it should be indicative maximum rather than stated maximum. When we take into account, um, the envelope approach and applicant being expected to work within set parameters.

00:20:24:28 - 00:20:55:12

At least on on behalf of the applicants, I think the Rochdale envelope prescribes the overall frame for the project. It isn't, um, as I've said, unless there's a very specific reason for setting a parameter, it is it. It isn't necessary for it to be secured. So a maximum cable burial depth, um, unless there is a very specific, uh, um, issue that needs to be addressed is not a matter that would be secured through the development consent order.

00:20:55:14 - 00:21:13:23

What about maximum approximate permanent footprint, for example. So so how much over the approximate then how much over that parameter would you potentially go should there be a limit of deviations included.

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So.

00:21:26:08 - 00:22:03:18

Lasdun on behalf of the applicants. Um the so the the I it's very difficult to be talking in generalities because they are different in terms of those different elements. So things like the maximum substation footprint is prescribed through the development consent order and through the works plans. The area that can be that could be used for the maximum substation footprint is the area that is set out in the on the, the, uh, the works plans and then through the requirements of the development consent order where that area is then prescribed.

00:22:03:22 - 00:22:14:05

The point is that at this point it could be anywhere within that work area. Therefore it's not it won't be, uh, it can't be prescribed at this point in terms of where it is.

00:22:14:16 - 00:22:45:22

If it's the maximum design parameter and the yes has been assessed on the basis of that maximum design parameter, I'm struggling. It's maximum. Surely maximum is maximum, not maximum plus an anticipated. I don't quite understand if the S has been assessed on the maximum design parameters. Why does words like approximate and anticipated appear? And I. I don't think I appreciate in some areas it might be acceptable, but there seems to be quite a wide range of this wording across the design parameters, which I think from my experience is a little bit unusual.

00:22:46:00 - 00:23:15:16

Uh, Liz Dunn, on behalf of the applicant, I think the best answer to this might be for us to take away the project description chapter, look at those elements, and be able to point to the examining authority about where at. Whilst the project description chapter might say that there are actually other controls throughout the documents or elsewhere, or how the assessments been based to make sure that that is

clear, because there are some of these where it is indicative and it's being provided for information only.

00:23:15:20 - 00:23:55:21

I appreciate that, but I think the way it's been displayed doesn't make it particularly clear in terms of talking about maximum design parameters, I do think it's quite unusual compared to the ones that I have. I have seen, and perhaps with some sort of worked examples of particular parts of the cable corridor or substations as to how these would apply in practice and obviously what would then be actually enforced through the, through the DCO. Uh, so I think some work on that would be helpful to explain further and perhaps looking at them to think, well, actually should that actually does that need to be a maximum or what these words mean? Anticipated it almost seems to create flexibility beyond the flexibility which you're seeking through the maximum design scenarios as I read it.

00:23:56:04 - 00:23:57:22

Hence. Hence the questions.

00:23:58:05 - 00:24:31:05

Thank you Liz, on behalf of the applicant, it's certainly not the intention that the the control documents and the the way that the Rochdale envelope is managed is through primarily through the development consent order, the works plans, the outline plans. And then insofar as you need to go to the environmental statement, it's quite far down in the kind of hierarchy of where you start. stuff. I do take the point, and I think we'll take that away and make sure that where. Where actually specific parameters have been taken forward. And that does form the basis of, of the Rochdale envelope.

00:24:31:07 - 00:24:34:23

Effectively. We'll make sure that that's clear and where those parameters are.

00:24:37:11 - 00:24:43:00

Thank you. Are there any further comments from interested parties on this? Mr..

00:24:45:03 - 00:25:15:27

Thank you. And good morning. My name is Angus Walker from Broadfield, Law, representing Newton with Clifton Parish Council, Freckleton Parish Council and Newton Residents Association. Um, I should first say that I'm sorry. I have unavoidable meeting to attend at 1130 for an hour. Um, so I'll be absent myself. And I hope that doesn't interrupt proceedings too much. Um, okay. Well, following on from your questions, it is.

00:25:16:11 - 00:25:49:08

First of all, it is clear that this project is leaving a lot to. Detailed design, which is legally permissible. That's fine. But it surely means that there should be even more clarity on what the limits of what is permitted are, because there's so much uncertainty still being left open. Um, Miss Dunn said that the, uh, work should be, uh, are to be built within the limits of deviation shown on the works plans. But I've read the DCO and I don't see where it actually commits to that.

00:25:50:10 - 00:26:23:15

Um, it says the the project must be built within the order limits, so the overall order limits. But there's nothing to say when that each individual work should be within its limit on the works plan, incidentally. So that sort of thing, um, is worrying. Um, take the example of the coffer dams yesterday that were raised where there didn't seem to be a limit on their height, and I still can't find any limit. Even if they don't know what height they're going to be, they should set a height above which they will not exceed.

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But I don't see that anywhere. Maybe it is somewhere, but it's not very clear. Um.

00:26:33:22 - 00:27:08:11

And the care home. Whether the cables are going both one side, both are the other side or one on each side. That is very important from the Rochdale envelope approach. All three of those scenarios are assessed. Um, that is the whole point of the Rochdale envelope approach and I hope that has happened. So just we're dealing with fairly high level principles here, but I think the controls on what can be built are not obvious enough, even if and possibly don't even exist enough.

00:27:08:17 - 00:27:12:22

Um, and I think that needs to be given a lot more scrutiny. Thank you.

00:27:13:25 - 00:27:16:05

Thank you. Fine. Please.

00:27:16:12 - 00:27:47:24

Thank you. John Cooper. Borough council. Um, and I think just a more general point to follow on is that, um. We note that the more detailed the DCO application is, the easier it will be for us to ensure compliance with regulations and assessments, our Local plan and the Rochdale envelope approach that the applicant is referred to. Um, sets out that the DCO must not permit the proposed development to extend beyond very clearly defined parameters.

00:27:48:15 - 00:28:18:08

Um, and the consequence of this is that consultees, um, our technical officers, um, members of public residents, um, are not able to properly understand and assess the impacts of the proposals because of this uncertainty. And, um, when they're looking at specific plans or specific reports and this uncertainty is introduced. It makes that assessment much more difficult, and that conflicts with the principles of the Rochdale envelope approach. Thank you.

00:28:19:26 - 00:28:22:29

Thank you. Are there any other comments?

00:28:26:19 - 00:28:28:02

Okay. We're going to.

00:28:28:09 - 00:28:31:20

Sorry on behalf of the applicants. Can I just respond to those points?

00:28:31:22 - 00:28:32:08

Yes, please.

00:28:32:10 - 00:29:04:09

Thank you. Um, uh, Mr. Walker will be, um, very aware of how the, um, the works plans and the detailed works set out within schedule. One of the draft consent order operate. Um, as I said, my colleague Mrs. Fuller will talk this through, uh, uh, later on today, but by reference to the works plans, um, there are very detailed explanations for each of the work areas in terms of the works that are permitted within those areas.

00:29:04:25 - 00:29:38:12

And, uh, Mr. Walker will be very aware that that's how the development consent order operates in terms of the interaction and the securing through the development consent. All of those work areas and the very specific, uh, development that can take place within them. Um, uh, just in terms of sort of, um, the position on the development consent order. Again, I would, I would, um, just direct Fylde Council to the works plans to the works descriptions. There are very detailed descriptions on what can take place in specific areas on this project.

00:29:38:14 - 00:30:09:25

It is exactly the level of detail that is provided on, uh, this type of infrastructure project across the country. There is no there is no lack of detail in this project in terms of the level of design that has been achieved for the purposes of this project. Um, in respect of of the application in respect of, of the details that have been provided, in fact, from my own experience, there's probably more detail on this application in terms of those parameters and the indication on how things are going to be done then.

00:30:09:27 - 00:30:44:16

Then there are in a number of projects that have been consented and have been taken through this process. So there is sufficient information for people to be able to understand what this project is and how it's going to be taken forward. It is subject to detailed design that is very, very clear for a project of this nature. It it is inconceivable to be developing it at a detailed design stage here. We don't know precisely where the cables are going to go. We don't know precisely the layout of the the substations and those areas, and that is entirely permissible.

00:30:44:18 - 00:31:15:11

And that is entirely how the Rochdale envelope should work. However, we have identified very specific areas where activities will be taking place, the parameters within which those will be done. And then indeed, the sort of even looking ahead to the permanent footprint of where the cables are, what the likely cable corridor width is going to be, and those sorts of things. So I, I would urge people, if they haven't yet done it, to read the draft development consent order. Look at the works plans. Look at the details of the descriptions.

00:31:15:13 - 00:31:30:20

We'll come on to it later. Look at the outline plans that actually indicate how these things are going to be delivered, because there is a lot of detail in that. And we do welcome comments and feedback on those, because obviously those will be key documents going forward. Thank you.

00:31:32:06 - 00:32:15:19

Thank you. We are going to move on to point C proposed construction scenarios, stages and durations. So the first question on this, um, the draft DCO for each project includes a requirement that the project must commence no later than the expiration of seven years from the date of the order, and potentially eight years if there was a challenge to the validity of the order. Why is such a long commencement period period required in this case? Bearing in mind the applicants aim that the projects will have an important part to play in securing the timely delivery of the government's renewable energy strategy.

00:32:16:19 - 00:32:26:16

And there will be another question related how does this commencement period relate to the current anticipated construction programmes for the Morgan and Morecambe generation assets?

00:32:27:25 - 00:33:02:06

Thank you. Listen on behalf of the applicants. So firstly, um, the reason for um, seeking seven years to implement um, both projects, um, is I think as we've set out um, and we've, we've explained previously, um, the, um, these are two infrastructure projects, two offshore wind farm projects. Um, as we've said, um, there is at this stage, the projects are I don't know when, um, the, uh, when they will be developing.

00:33:02:12 - 00:33:34:16

Um, they're clearly keen to develop as soon as possible, and it's important that that's done. Um, there are clearly targets around delivery of that. However, the development consent order does need to allow for and consider that there may be delays in the project delays. Those projects may take time to come forward. There may be, um, uh, it may be that one project uh, uh, receives gets the funding it needs through the contract for difference or decisions on when those projects are going to be brought forward.

00:33:34:19 - 00:34:11:05

They may happen at different times where you have projects, um, uh, which, um, are complex and indeed, um, involve, um, uh, more than one project. It there is precedent for seven years to be the time within which those projects can come forward. Uh, the sharing and sharing and and extensions, DCO, uh, grants those projects seven years, uh, in order to come forward. Um, and, uh, there is precedent from the Dogger Bank project as well in terms of those projects having seven years to come forward.

00:34:11:08 - 00:34:44:23

Those projects were also, uh, whilst they were within one JV, they were also to effectively two development consent orders coming through together. So the applicants will seek to develop their projects as soon as possible. But there are all sorts of factors that come into play as to whether that can or can't happen. And seven years is considered to be a reasonable time period. And to be able to do that, that is set out in a statement of reasons, the justification for that, um, uh, in terms of why why it's considered to be to be important.

00:34:46:06 - 00:34:48:25

Oh, sorry. It's the in the explanatory memorandum.

00:34:49:06 - 00:34:49:21

Is.

00:34:49:23 - 00:34:50:08

The, uh.

00:34:50:17 - 00:34:58:01

The final DCO is or submitted these draft decisions for Morgan and Morecambe generation. Are they both seven years at the end of the examination?

00:34:58:14 - 00:35:10:27

Uh, both projects are seeking seven years for implementation for both of those projects. What? Sorry. Certainly for Mona and for Morgan Generation. I can't speak for more Morgan Generation.

00:35:10:29 - 00:35:13:21

Morgan, which is just finished, hasn't it? Sorry. Yeah.

00:35:14:06 - 00:35:15:09

From what I can confirm.

00:35:15:11 - 00:35:19:04

The same confirmed seven years.

00:35:19:06 - 00:35:24:26

It is seven years at the end. Okay. Obviously not to wait to see what the Secretary state makes of that, but. Yeah, just to update that. Thank you.

00:35:27:27 - 00:35:28:16

Okay.

00:35:30:08 - 00:35:37:22

Can the applicants explain their approach to the proposed construction scenario? Stages and durations? Probably.

00:35:48:20 - 00:36:37:27

Um, less done on behalf of the applicants. Um, so the applicants have assessed, um, uh, And this was clarified in the material that was put in in response to the rule nine letter. Um, so the applicants have assessed concurrent construction, so both projects being constructed at the same time. And they've also assessed sequential construction, which is, um, either one project assessed a worst case of either concurrent construction or where there could be immediate sequential construction that, that that happening or construct construction with a gap between the projects of up to four years between those developments taking place.

00:36:38:19 - 00:36:40:00

Does that answer your question?

00:36:40:21 - 00:36:59:29

I've got some follow up questions. Um, so requirement free A and B of the draft DCO allows each project to be constructed in either a single stage or in two or more stages. Under what circumstances would to two or more stages be required.

00:37:00:18 - 00:37:41:16

Less than on behalf of the applicant. This is quite a standard um, DCI requirement. What it, um, it needs to be read across each project rather than across both projects. So the same requirement, uh, is in uh, schedule two a for the Morgan project and in to be for the Morgan project. And this is a this is a standard, uh, for this type of project, um, uh requirement which ensures that the project, uh, and particularly in respect of the discharge of the outlined plans and details, it doesn't need to be done across the whole project in one go.

00:37:41:19 - 00:38:25:14

So the project can be the the authorized development can be, um, separated into stages. Um, and then the, uh, the detailed management plans signed off in respect of that stage. So for So, for example, a stage for this project might be the as we discussed yesterday, given that there's a single continuous drill from the, um, from the tubes to the, uh, to where the cables come ashore, those work numbers. So that would be from work probably three a um, up to ten A could be grouped together in a stage, and then the detailed plans, um, that are required to manage, um, the works that are carrying on there.

00:38:25:16 - 00:38:45:00

So the code of construction practice, other things would be discharged in respect of that element of the works. So it's how the works are then delivered in a, um, in, in a, in a, in a staged way. Just to be clear, this isn't phasing. So this isn't that one cable would go in one year and another cable might.

00:38:45:02 - 00:39:09:07

I think that's the reason for the question. Stages almost implies it's a time thing that that might be done across a bit. Like with, I don't know a solar farm. You might build one bit and build another bit potentially, I don't know, but it's more of a compartmentalization. You mean rather than actual stages where you might it might start, in whatever reason, stop and then start again with another bit of bit of ducting or whatever it might be, or another, another cable circuits problem.

00:39:09:09 - 00:39:47:03

Yeah, I mean example. So Liz Dunn, on behalf of that, I think we've picked this up in false response and, and was it was one thing that we wanted to make clear. This won't be phased in the way that you might expect, as you say, with the housing development or perhaps with a solar project where part of it might come forward and then part might come forward later. The staging is about the delivery of, um, all the work's required for that section of um, for that, um, for that geographic area, though not in respect of the, there being, um, staging of the authorised development.

00:39:47:12 - 00:40:20:15

This is staging of where the works are being carried out at a particular time in respect of of those matters. So the there is no authorization within this development consent order or indeed within the generation assets that would allow that to be developed. You wouldn't get a situation where you build

out half of the generation assets and then put the cables in for that bit of the generation assets, and then come back and build the other half of the generation assets and put the other cables in.

00:40:21:10 - 00:40:23:19

And which part of the DCL actually prevents that?

00:40:24:09 - 00:40:55:16

Um, I'll have to check where it is, but it's inherent in how the DCO is structured. It's inherent in how the works and how the works are done. Is that just from a sorry, can I just finish? And from a practical perspective, you would never, ever, ever do anything like that because of the cost. I appreciate that actually bringing in. If you're going to develop and and build the offshore wind farm, the costs of building that wind farm. Of of getting the. You just wouldn't do it in a state.

00:40:55:18 - 00:41:04:24

No, I understand that completely. Is this an action point though? Just to just to signpost where in the DCO it actually, uh, provides for that

00:41:06:15 - 00:41:07:00

great

00:41:08:16 - 00:41:09:01

apology.

00:41:09:03 - 00:41:10:06

So I missed that question.

00:41:10:16 - 00:41:15:24

Is it an action? We have an action point. Then just to clarify where in the DCO that actually is provided for.

00:41:26:29 - 00:41:47:09

Okay. Um, another question in relation to the sequential scenario, um, why can you explain why the proposed development needs an up to four year gap between the project? Why is it four years? Why isn't it three years or two years? How has that been decided?

00:41:50:24 - 00:42:23:09

Phil Williamson on behalf of the applicants. Um, wouldn't state it as a need for four years. I think it is a consequence of the length of the consent DCO, which would be seven years. So the principle would be that in theory, um, once granted consent, um, the project A or project B could start as soon as possible, the grant of about seven years and that maximum duration of construction being either 30 months or 36 months, would take you up to potentially three years into that seven year period.

00:42:23:19 - 00:42:40:09

And then theoretically, because of the length of the DCO, uh, being seven years, there could be up to a gap of four years before the second project could follow, which would then be either 30 months or 36 months, depending on project A or project B going forward.

00:42:41:25 - 00:43:12:06

At least. I'll just I'll just um, so the seven year period for implementation. Um, it's the gap is a consequence of considering either sequential um, as. That's right. Either sequential um, uh, construction with both projects being able to have implemented their consent before seven years. There is one thing. I just, um, it's dangerous.

00:43:12:11 - 00:43:46:04

Um, to sort of add to what Mr. Williamson has said is that neither project can start works on day one, so there will inevitably be some time post grant of the development consent order before actually works can take place. It's the time that's needed to, uh, discharge the requirements, uh, and those matters. So that will typically typically be a sort of 3 to 3 would be very ambitious. But six months before actually, um, uh, the project can start, start work.

00:43:47:08 - 00:44:19:18

So if so, if the development consent order is granted on on day one of year one, you've you've got a period of, let's say six months before works could commence on either project. So your your time is ticking on the seven years of your implementation. You have project. The first project, whether that is Morgan or Mona, doesn't make a difference. Um, which then construct you then have a gap before that second period that that second project starts.

00:44:20:00 - 00:44:56:11

And in order for the second project to ensure that it has implemented before the expiry of seven years, it will also not leave it. You'd hope, until the very last day it would be some point before that in terms of it needing to discharge its requirements or whatever. You get to a four year gap, and that's what has been assessed for the purposes of the environmental impact assessment. I think I think the four year gap is used as a proxy for what is the greatest distance that there could be between the project, with both effectively implementing within the seven years.

00:45:02:26 - 00:45:04:01

Okay. Thank you for that.

00:45:04:03 - 00:45:24:14

Just on on that. Sorry, the construction scenario, uh, programs that are in the project description plate 3.3. I think that indicates a sequential scenario with no gap, but I don't think there's actually a construction scenario, indicative construction program for the four year gap.

00:45:26:06 - 00:45:52:02

I don't know if that would be useful for people. I don't want to get on to a discussion about effects of this for local communities, farming, et cetera, etc. but there have been representations that it has implications for that for people, as you'll you'll be aware, but it might be useful to actually update this, to have this sequential with the four year gap. So people have an understanding of what's the total timeframe they might get from the very start of the first project to the very end, construction wise, of the second project. That's a simple thing, but it's.

00:45:52:18 - 00:45:57:04

Done on behalf of the applicant. I think it's described in words. It's just that there probably is for it.

00:45:57:06 - 00:45:57:21

It's not.

00:45:57:23 - 00:45:59:12

Really if that would be helpful.

00:45:59:14 - 00:46:01:08

But the scenario is that this sort of thing, which might.

00:46:01:10 - 00:46:06:23

Be it is it is described. Um, but it if it's helpful to have it in a, in a sort of graphic.

00:46:06:25 - 00:46:19:28

I think as you've got one for the one sequential with no gap, I think it would be helpful to have one with the maximum gap. And I don't get into discussion about the implications of it that that will follow through the examination. But, um, I think that would be helpful.

00:46:21:16 - 00:46:22:01

Yes.

00:46:22:22 - 00:46:44:08

I can see there are some hands up both in the room and online, but I've got a few more questions to finish and then I'll open the discussion. So, uh, the next one is in relation to the sequential scenarios have overlapping construction timelines, uh, between project A and project B being assessed.

00:46:49:24 - 00:47:14:26

Is done on behalf of the applicant. Um, in terms of um, the again, this is for the purpose of the worst case for the environmental impact assessment. The worst case for the environmental impact assessment in terms of, um, of concurrent construction, is concurrent construction happening over the full period. So that's what's been assessed for the purposes of the environmental impact assessment.

00:47:17:00 - 00:47:20:19

For some scenarios, yes. And for some topics.

00:47:20:25 - 00:47:23:15

Lays down on behalf of the applicants. Yes. Whether that's the worst case.

00:47:25:22 - 00:47:34:09

But have you considered, uh, a scenario where it starts, one project starts and then another one starts halfway through?

00:47:38:19 - 00:48:17:19

Uh, through. Williamson on behalf of the applicants. Essentially, we've defined the maximum design scenarios of concurrent and sequential, and everything that falls in between is covered either by that maximum intensity, which is covered by the concurrent scenario, or maximum duration, which is covered by the sequential scenario. So all of the all of the scenarios, whether you stagger it by a month, are three months, six months still fall within the boundaries of those maximum design envelopes. And it would just mean that essentially you would have some sequential, um, some sequential realistic worst case assessment, some concurrent realistic worst case assessment.

00:48:18:06 - 00:48:23:27

But overarching the impact assessment covers all the scenarios in between those two scenarios.

00:48:25:17 - 00:48:26:02

Okay.

00:48:27:09 - 00:48:49:16

Okay. So one more question related to that. Um, we understand that for sequential construction scenario, construction compounds will be removed and later restored. Can you explain what the approach would be? If there is only a short gap between the completion of the first project and the commencement of the second project?

00:48:58:17 - 00:48:59:14

Thank you.

00:49:02:24 - 00:49:44:13

Phil Williamson, on behalf of the applicants. Um, it's a very it's very specific scenario describing and it's quite dependent on that sort of time gap and that overlap between the demobilisation of one project and then the 12 month window window for restoration and then the start of the next. Um, I think it very much depends on liaison with the local planning authority in the discharge of the requirements for the second project, um, and some aspect of coordination between the demobilisation, which obviously does need to be discussed with the local authority, and then the mobilization of the second project, which again would be discussed with the local, with the local authority as part of the discharge of requirements process.

00:49:45:03 - 00:49:51:27

So I can't get into the specifics of what you might potentially do, but that would be that would be discussed and agreed.

00:49:54:19 - 00:50:24:08

Because I think in your response to when you cover the, um, the sequential scenario of a four year gap, you just make a statement that those construction compounds will be removed and then later restored. Um, I would be interested in knowing how long they could potentially be left there. What is a short gap in your understanding and what the impact of that would be on, on the community in areas?

00:50:24:26 - 00:51:00:04

Valerie Williamson on behalf of the applicants. So the construction in the scenario you're describing with the four year gap, um, the end of construction of the first project. The DCO and I don't have the requirement, but the DCO requires that the land must be restored within 12 months. Therefore, there is a requirement to remove that temporary construction compound and restore it. And where we have overlapping compounds, which I think there is only one landfall, um, there would be a need to restore that compound as is defined within the DC.

00:51:00:07 - 00:51:32:24

The powers of the DC over the first project. The gap would then take place as you, as you, as you stated. And then the second project would begin and therefore would have to reinstate that same compound as requirement 16, which covers the 12 month window for restoration. Um, in terms of the impact that's considered, that is considered within the sequential construction scenario, within the assessment of the sequential construction scenario assessment. Bearing in mind that we're talking about very similar locations in terms of where those construction compounds would be.

00:51:40:05 - 00:52:06:15

Okay. Thank you for that. I've got one last question, and then I'll open the discussion to the eyepiece. The environmental statement states that the operational phase of the project is based on a 35 year period. Can you explain how this would work in practice? Um, noting that there is no requirement in the draft DCO requiring requiring decommissioning after 35 years.

00:52:08:10 - 00:52:40:27

At least done on behalf of the applicant. And the 35 years is a period that's considered for the purposes of the environmental impact assessment in terms of duration of effect. Um, there is no time limit, as you would have for perhaps an onshore wind farm, um, for this project or for the, um, indeed for the generation elements. It's not standard practice for offshore wind farms. There's no reason or justification for it. Um, and so it's not proposed that that's included.

00:52:44:25 - 00:52:57:15

Is the is based upon 35 years or and if it is based on 35 years, what assessment is there of it's staying beyond 35 years for heritage or I don't know, noise things like that.

00:53:02:05 - 00:53:24:25

But it's done on behalf of the applicant. Um, it is based on a on an operational lifetime of 35 years. But for the purposes of, um, assessing things like heritage that is considered to be permanent, there is no there is no, um, a weight placed on the fact that the development will be removed at a particular point, as there would be with a normal time, limited consent.

00:53:25:21 - 00:53:57:17

And just so I'm clear on this, even though it's an operational period of 35 years in making our recommendation to the Secretary of State. Should we assume that actually it will be there permanently, because there is no guarantee that it will be moved? So it's not a case of I don't know, obviously it's 35 years is still a long period of time, but potentially people approaching that 35 years might think, oh, this application is going to go after 35 years. Okay. I'll look forward to that. Further down the line. It's a long time. Obviously it's a generation and I appreciate that.

00:53:57:19 - 00:54:06:25

But there comes a point where that might be a situation, but that's not something to be taken into account, I assume. I'm assuming it's permanent as far as the assessment is concerned.

00:54:09:18 - 00:54:49:28

It's done on behalf of the applicants, and the development will be there for as long as the wind turbines that are constructed within the generation element continue to operate. 35 years has been assessed for the. It's been considered for the purposes of the environmental impact assessment. But as I say, for the purposes of the onshore infrastructure. The assessments considered that they would be its permanent. There's nothing there's no way to reliance been placed on the fact that they would be removed it in. If it can't operate indefinitely because the um, the generation element, um, will have a lifetime for the turbines that are installed.

00:54:50:00 - 00:55:15:20

There will be a lifetime of that project, and it's not 100 years. It'd be lovely if they did go for 100 years, but it isn't 100 years. It's it's limited by, uh, by the operational, um, uh, lifespan of the, of the generation development. But for the purposes of this infrastructure, it is it's considered as permanent infrastructure.

00:55:18:12 - 00:55:30:27

Okay. Thank you. I'm going to open this discussion now to interested parties. I am going to start with the online raised Hands, so bear with me. So I've got a Les initials.

00:55:32:18 - 00:55:40:20

Thank you. Hello. Yes, it's Louise Staples for the NFU. Um, please. Yeah, I have a few questions. Um,

00:55:42:13 - 00:56:17:09

one is to know exactly what is the maximum build out period, then if if the second one does happen after four years and I am going to have to mention it, it's just that that that impact is the impact on on the landowners and the farmers on their land. So that's why it's really important to understand that. Secondly, I'm not really clear why. Why actually the time of seven years is needed because it doesn't sound like actually it's necessary to have the four year gap.

00:56:19:00 - 00:56:33:00

Um, so I'm not really clear why they need seven years and that that that could be shorter because obviously the tighter we can make this the build out, the less impact it has on the landowners and farmers.

00:56:34:22 - 00:56:35:22

Um, then.

00:56:38:00 - 00:56:47:22

My second question was just moving on to where you were covering about reinstatement. I understand that it says about reinstatement always within 12 months.

00:56:49:11 - 00:57:07:11

Um, I just wanted to know then is the split between the widths that is needed for construction between Morgan and Morcom? I mean, that let's say if Morgan was built first, that the full width there would get reinstated and that Morcom will only need the width they need

00:57:09:05 - 00:57:10:13

during construction.

00:57:13:13 - 00:57:37:09

And my third question is, well, it's more of a statement is, um, yeah. We do not understand why. Um, they need, uh, their rights on a permanent basis. If the operation of the scheme is only going to be 35 years, then we think it should be limited to that. Thank you.

00:57:39:28 - 00:57:56:12

Okay. Thank you for that. Uh, we are going to ask the applicant to respond to all points at the end. So, uh, another hand up. I've got Mr. Paul initials AP online.

00:57:58:22 - 00:58:31:06

Good morning. Thank you. Uh, Alastair Paul, on behalf of Blackpool Airport. Um, yeah, I've just got a couple of questions to, um. Um, I would reiterate that, um, the the airport and the applicants are engaging on a commercial agreement. Um, but I think the, um, the construction sequencing is a matter first of all, that is in scope. Um, within our discussions currently and also is a project wide issue which will have an impact on on on the airport. Um, my first question was just in relation to requirement three, which was referred to by, um, Miss Dunn.

00:58:31:29 - 00:59:07:23

Um requirement three um, to, to um, summarize, I think is is a requirement whereby each project would have to approach the local planning authority to notify them whether whether the um project would be developed out in a single stage or in two or more stages. Um, I was just wondering if there was a similar requirement for the applicants together to notify the local planning authority of whether they would be proceeding under a, um, sequential construction, um, process or, um, separate construction process.

00:59:07:29 - 00:59:37:15

Um, so that's my first question. I can't see it anywhere, but it would just be good to understand that. Um, and then the second question, which, um, is perhaps linked to Miss Staples, uh, question around the overall construction period is just to understand if there is any requirement or control in a control document that's currently before the uh examining authority, which, um, limits the overall construction period. If they are, um, if they are using a sequential construction, uh, process.

00:59:39:09 - 00:59:39:28

Thank you.

00:59:41:17 - 00:59:42:20

Thank you for that.

00:59:44:27 - 00:59:50:23

I'm now going to ask if there are any comments in the room. Yes, Mr. Walker.

00:59:52:29 - 01:00:11:09

Thank you very much. Angus Walker for Newton, Clifton, etc.. Could I just ask that the, um, plate that Mr. Cliff mentioned earlier is displayed on the screen? So this is in document A, S0 24, which is the revised chapter three of the environmental Statement.

01:00:13:15 - 01:00:17:05

And it's on EPA, page 59.

01:00:20:01 - 01:00:27:10

Each page means the electronic page, not necessarily the number written on the page. It's easier to find.

01:00:30:15 - 01:00:33:01

It's page 44. In the actual document. I think.

01:00:33:26 - 01:01:10:19

It's changed. Actually, it's page 46. In the revised. I've got 46. Maybe I'm looking at the wrong one. You're probably right. Um, so here is the the famous plate showing the construction scenario. So now I'm going to go off on one. So, um, Miss Duncan gave an impassioned speech about the benefits of this project being co-ordinated. And we've talked about the holistic network design. And this is all designed to co-ordinate projects and minimise impacts on communities. And yet they are completely throwing that out and allowing themselves to build these projects separately too.

01:01:11:03 - 01:01:43:01

So there'll be no benefit to the communities of this coordination whatsoever. And all the environmental impacts will be doubled on the communities. And it'll be even worse if there's a gap between the project, because then there'll be sort of half built things lying around. And, uh, for a while and before they start the next project. So I can see that there are reasons that these projects are going to advance at different times, and there are external non planning factors involved.

01:01:43:03 - 01:01:53:29

ET cetera. ET cetera. But I would ask that that does not stop them being built together. The first project if it's ready can wait until the second one is ready. And then they can build them together.

01:01:55:19 - 01:02:29:08

And then if the second one is not going to go forward at all, then the first one can be built, but some sort of declaration that there's only going to be one project. So that's my first point. It is perfectly possible for the DCO to require the projects to be built simultaneously, or just one of them, Oh, none of them. Um, my second point is that we can see the, um, long period for each project there in quarters, but that is only indicative.

01:02:29:24 - 01:03:04:20

There is nothing limiting the overall time within which each project must be built. We've been told that it is inevitable that it will be a continuous construction, and because it would be a total waste

of money to sort of start and stop, etc.. So therefore, presumably the applicant applicants would have no difficulty having a limit within which the works must be substantially complete imposed on them. Um, this is not unprecedented. I'm asked for on the able marine energy Park and it has a time limit.

01:03:04:26 - 01:03:39:10

We're actually currently seeking to extend it. But anyway, um, uh, so that's the second. restriction to this is at the moment it's all on the side of the applicant. They can do whatever they like, and the local people who are affected by this project just have to suffer the consequences. There should be some balance between the applicant's flexibility and the impacts on the local communities. So I suggest a limited period for the works plus requiring simultaneous construction.

01:03:39:12 - 01:04:15:00

I know they're not going to like that, but, um, that is what we argue for. Um, on the final point that was raised about, um, the duration of the works, I think they should be limited in duration because that is the basis on which they've been assessed. If they, which I suspect is likely, do subsequently wish to extend the period that the project operates, then they will need to apply to extend that. And we can consider the impacts on the communities at that point rather than just assuming it's going to be 35 years now and then.

01:04:15:03 - 01:04:18:01

But the powers allow them to extend it indefinitely.

01:04:19:21 - 01:04:24:12

Um, just see if there's trying to keep it all very high level.

01:04:26:29 - 01:04:29:11

Yes, I think that'll do for now. Thank you very much.

01:04:31:29 - 01:04:38:15

Thank you. I'm just going to ask the applicant to respond and then move on to further questions from the interested parties.

01:04:40:09 - 01:05:15:15

Thank you. Listen, on behalf of the applicant, um, firstly, um, for Miss Staples, I think a couple of points to pick up on. Um, uh, Miss Staples, if you look at the, uh, works plans, you'll see that there are separate cable corridors, um, proposed for, uh, the Morgan and the Morgan project. Um, and that the works that each project can carry out are limited to those corridors. So, um, that is that was one of the very significant reasons for seeking to identify separate cable corridors for each project.

01:05:15:17 - 01:05:46:15

So it's clear as to which areas each project would be working in and where they have rights. So it isn't the case that, uh, each project would take the whole of the corridor, uh, the whole of the joint corridor for the purposes of its works. So just to put that make that very clear. Um, and, uh, the point on duration of rights, I think isn't a matter for today. Um, and probably something for the, um, the hearing tomorrow, um, respect of Mr.

01:05:46:17 - 01:06:21:11

Paul's submissions. Um, I think the question was, should there be something in requirement three that says that the, that the, um, applicant should notify the local authority as to whether they are constructing, um, uh, concurrently or sequentially? I think that was the that was the point that was being made. Um, the. I think we'd say that that that applicants consider. That wouldn't be necessary. The applicants will each need to be notifying the local authorities as to when those works are being carried out and taking place.

01:06:21:18 - 01:06:30:02

There needs to be a high degree of coordination between them, in any event. Um, so it I'd say it's it's not necessary.

01:06:30:11 - 01:06:47:03

Um, very quick points that I think it's similar to a requirement that was on Sheringham and Dudgeon. So it'd be useful not now but to get if it's not being proposed, what the differences are in this scheme and that scheme in this respect. But I think we'll come on to that in a little while anyway, on the agenda. But just a point on that.

01:06:47:07 - 01:07:18:28

Uh, yeah. That's fine. Um, and, um, in terms of Mr. Walker's points around, um, uh, the DCO requiring that the projects construct together or the DCO including something that says that the construction period for the project would be limited to the time put in to the assessment. I think those that both of those would be entirely unreasonable restrictions on the development in terms of the way it's brought forward.

01:07:19:15 - 01:07:54:13

Um, whilst we appreciate the concerns of residents, in particular around the, um, around the possible development scenarios and the potential for there to be a gap between the construction of the two projects. This has been considered from an environmental impact assessment perspective. And the, uh, the overall effect of either sequential construction or, um, concurrent construction have been considered and whether they're likely significant effects. Those have been, uh, those have been considered and mitigation, uh, is being offered.

01:07:54:15 - 01:08:33:08

So, um, whilst, um, it, it may be a preference for certain parties for things to happen in a certain way. I think it's important that we don't lose sight of the fact that, um, this has been assessed in terms of of what those possible scenarios are for. That's the purpose of environmental impact assessment is to understand what those effects are. And then, um, where there are, uh, whether it, if the effects of doing this were so extreme that or were of a scale that actually they led to significant effects all the way across the, the corridor.

01:08:33:21 - 01:09:10:26

Um, then, um, the impacts would be so great that we couldn't, you know, this scheme couldn't be coming forward as it is. I think it's important to remember, uh, to go back to the environmental impact assessment, the scale of the impacts that are considered and the mitigation that it's in place. It's also important to, um, remember that whilst, um, in in any scenario, um, there won't be works taking place

across the whole of the corridor at the whole of the time. The construction will move from various parts of the development through the corridor and at various elements.

01:09:10:28 - 01:09:44:13

So whilst we talk about a 36 um month, um, construction period for Morgan and we talk about 30 months for Morecambe, that won't be 30 months of those works taking place across the whole of the corridor, in all of those areas, all at the same time. And I think we've been sort to be or the applicants have been as specific as they can be about that around duration of works. We talked about it yesterday in relation to the duration of works at the beach, and we talked about it yesterday in respect to the duration of works, for example, within the playing fields.

01:09:44:15 - 01:09:47:20

So I think it's just important to bear that in mind. Thank you.

01:09:48:27 - 01:09:57:15

Okay. Thank you. I'm going to I see that we've got fresh hands up online, but I'm going to, uh, give the opportunity to speak to the interested parties in the room now.

01:10:00:11 - 01:10:30:06

Good morning, Neil Stephens, Lancashire County Council. It's one of clarity on a statement that was made with regard to restoration. When you're removing the compound and restoring the site, does that also include the the junction and the interaction with the public highway, restoring that back to its former, um, indication of how it previously looked? Or were you hoping to keep the junctions in place, because that would then create a safety issue for the highway authority?

01:10:32:13 - 01:10:33:00

And so to.

01:10:33:10 - 01:10:49:23

The applicants, that's correct. So all temporary access points will be reinstated at the end of construction. The only exception is where we have sought to, um, construct a new permanent access off Leach Lane into the airport. So that's the only exception to that.

01:10:51:00 - 01:10:56:07

I thank you for that. Can I just ask that the questions are directed to us, please? On the first instance.

01:10:58:09 - 01:11:00:10

Is anyone filed.

01:11:01:03 - 01:11:32:13

Thank you. John. I failed the council. Um, so I just wanted to comment that the the reference maximum duration and maximum intensity scenarios that the the applicant is, uh, relying upon, um, is, in our opinion, to simplify it for at least some impacts. So comments, for example, comments have been provided in, in relation to certain ecological and noise impacts, um, that raise concerns around this that are set out in our relevant reps and will be set out further in our local impact report.

01:11:32:16 - 01:12:07:25

But it also touches on other matters such as, um, risk management and resilience. So throughout the we're just talking about the construction scenarios here. So in terms of managing risk and resilience throughout the construction period, these different scenarios, not just maximum duration or maximum kind of concurrent intensity, have all sorts of implications for, uh, functions at the council and other responsible bodies are responsible for. So, for example, in relation to flood risk management, pollution and emergency response and monitoring and reporting.

01:12:07:29 - 01:12:14:08

So this is why this this rather simplified overview and it gives rise to some concerns.

01:12:16:21 - 01:12:20:26

Okay. Thank you. And Mr. Smith I believe.

01:12:25:17 - 01:12:57:18

Thank you. Gordon Smith from Lancashire Association of Local councils. Uh FRC and energy working Group. Um, my question I have a query about the point about the DCO reference is seven and eight years and also the duration of construction scenarios. Um, I looked yesterday at the National Grid Technical Register and it states for the two projects, Morgan and Morecambe, the the uh effective power uh dates for availability of the power for the grid.

01:12:58:02 - 01:13:03:00

For Morgan, it states that it's the 30th of November 2029,

01:13:04:17 - 01:13:31:09

and for Morcom, that's the 30th of June 2029, which I get to be 54 months from today and 49 months from today. Could I just understand how that expectation of power to the grid is reconciled with the DCO of seven years, and the construction scenarios previously displayed? Thank you.

01:13:32:15 - 01:13:46:05

Thank you, Mr. Smith. I will just take the final comments from the people online, and then I will ask the applicant to respond. So, uh, Miss Staples, your first.

01:13:47:23 - 01:14:18:12

Thank you. Louise Staples for the NFU. Um, yeah. Sorry. It was my second question that I asked, which is the again, the maximum time of the build out. And I really want to know this from a landowners farmers point of view. So if the first construction vehicles go in, let's say that is in year one and we have the first scheme built out, we then have the four year gap. We then start the second scheme and then we have to reinstate it.

01:14:18:20 - 01:14:23:09

Yeah. What year are we getting to. By the time all of that is concluded please.

01:14:25:06 - 01:14:27:14

Thank you and Mr. Paul.

01:14:31:06 - 01:15:04:23

Thank you Alister Paul on behalf of Blackpool Airport. Yeah. Again, it was my second question, which I think Mr.. And answered via mr. Walker the response to Mr. walker's question. But it's just again on that same point that Mr. Davis has raised. Um for my client, it's quite important because my client hosts both the Morgan and Morecambe, um, cable corridors. And so it's key for us to understand if we are in the worst case, um, scenario as assessed in the year. What is the overall construction period and how is that controlled?

01:15:08:29 - 01:15:16:09

Okay. Thank you for that. Um, could I ask the applicant, um, to respond to those queries, please?

01:15:16:22 - 01:15:27:19

Um, les, down on behalf of the applicants, I'll take that first point raised by Mr. Paul and by Miss Staples, and then others will deal with with other points that have been made. Um, so

01:15:29:06 - 01:16:01:04

I'll. So in terms of when, um, it's not a difficult maths to say. Um, so the point at which the first project starts, whatever time that is, that could be, as I've said, it could be six months post grant of DCO, it could be two years post grant of DCO. It could be six and a half years post grant DCO, assuming a seven year is granted. So there's no guarantee on when that first project is going to be would be started.

01:16:01:06 - 01:16:38:27

But assuming the first project starts, um, as soon as possible as it can after the grant of the development consent order, which let's take for um as being year one, let's just assume that's year one. Um, the, the duration of the more common project, because it's a smaller project, it's, it's less than the Morgen project and it's been considered at 30 months. So that's two and a half years from that point. In order for the Morgan Morgan Sorry project to then commence, um, before, uh, before its consent expires.

01:16:39:02 - 01:17:18:06

It would require to start its works, um, before the end of the seven year period within which the DCO allows it to work. So, um, and then you would add the 36 months from the, um, uh, that, uh, that is there as the indicative construction period for the Morgan project to start from that seven year period. So that would give you a, um, assuming a start in year one, then you've got 30, then you've got 30 months, then you've got to start the second project before the expiry of seven years, and then you've potentially got 36 months after that.

01:17:18:08 - 01:17:38:25

So that's, that's, that's the maximum period potentially over which works would take place. But I will just reiterate that doesn't mean that works are going to be taking place across the whole of the corridor over the whole of that period. Um, and um, so, so that would give you your, your duration.

01:17:40:29 - 01:17:41:14

Um.

01:17:41:23 - 01:17:43:29

If scenario statement is explained in.

01:17:44:01 - 01:17:57:28

That it's this is all explained in the construction scenario statement that was provided in response to the examining authority's rule nine letter, which is A0 1717.

01:17:58:00 - 01:17:58:16

Thank you.

01:17:58:22 - 01:18:00:05

1717.

01:18:05:28 - 01:18:44:03

I'm sorry. I'll come back also on the point that, um, filed made with reference to the, um, to the sort of details around how things are going to be done. I mean, that's entirely the purpose of the, uh, the requirements that are set within the development consent order and the staging of the process, the details as to how the works will be done, the details set out in the code of construction practice, the phasing. All of that will be provided to Fylde Council in advance of those works taking place, so that they can ensure that the relevant details and the relevant controls are in place and are adhered to.

01:18:44:13 - 01:18:52:10

And that would be across one project happening, if it's sequential, or if both projects are happening at the same time, those would be done concurrently.

01:18:55:10 - 01:18:58:06

What about Mr. Smith's point? Oh.

01:18:58:21 - 01:19:28:06

And so is on behalf of the applicant. So the dates that appear in the tech register are very much indicative and are still subject to change. So and that is that regularly does take place. Um, there is a key management system and effectively those are subject to change. We also know that the um National Grid substation have indicated that extension works are required. So that might be another reason that we need that flexibility. Um, in that connection date.

01:19:32:20 - 01:19:54:29

Thank you. Uh, I'll, I can see, um, staples that you have a raised hand. I'm going to have to, uh, move on from this item now. So I invite you to provide the comments in writing or um, at further point, if they are relevant to the agenda or tomorrow at the specific compulsory acquisition hearing.

01:19:56:25 - 01:19:57:17

Thank you.

01:19:58:19 - 01:19:59:21

So I'm going to move on.

01:19:59:23 - 01:20:03:23

Yeah. Sorry. Can I really do want to say something. I'm sorry. Louise Staples for the NFU.

01:20:03:25 - 01:20:09:01

Because we do have to move things on for the agenda, Miss Staples. And there is opportunity to discuss agriculture this afternoon as well.

01:20:09:07 - 01:20:45:06

Okay. I'm probably not going to be able to attend this afternoon, because I have to say, yesterday took a lot longer than what I thought it was going to thought we were going to be further through the agenda. And I just want to say, look, this is really important. And actually, Liz Dunn still has not stated. I think that makes it that the maximum build out could be 11 years. That is a very long time for those farms to be impacted. So I think there does need to be something. Following Mr. Walker's comment that there needs to be some restriction placed on. There has to be a very significant reason for the second project to be built out at that very late stage.

01:20:45:08 - 01:20:58:09

And at the minute that that is not clear at all of what is that reason why that's going to push it to mean that the second project couldn't, you know, might not end up being built out until the end of the seven year period. Thank you.

01:20:58:13 - 01:21:00:28

The point is understood. Absolutely. Thank you.

01:21:01:00 - 01:21:01:16

Thank you.

01:21:03:16 - 01:21:44:21

Okay. Um, we are going to move on now to a point de coordination between Markham and Morgan projects. And some of those questions have been touched on already. But I'm going to ask them regardless and I would appreciate the full response. So I'm going to start with a quotation from from the NPS National Policy Statement in five. And this is, um, coordinated transmission proposals are expected to reduce the overall environmental and community impacts associated with bringing offshore transmission An answer compared to an uncoordinated radial approach.

01:21:45:19 - 01:22:28:03

And another quote for onshore infrastructure. Reduced impacts could, for example, relate to fewer or co-located substations and converter stations and transmission lines, as well as demonstrating how environmental and community impacts have been avoided as far as possible. It is also noted that section 4.7.3 of the holistic network design highlights the value of coordination and minimising environmental impact. Section 5.1.2 states that the shared onshore and offshore cable corridor and landfall minimise the impact of the cables on the environment and local community.

01:22:29:16 - 01:22:57:26

So can the applicants explain the extent of the coordinated approach taken to reduce environmental and community impacts, and where any other options for a coordinated approach. Also considered,

but ruled out. And I would like to stress that I want this to be focused on environmental impact and community impact, rather than deliverability and economics, because that was covered yesterday.

01:23:01:21 - 01:23:36:18

At Lasdun, on behalf of the applicant. Um, so the recognize the um, the national policy statement policy, um, and um, and the endorsement that is there for that coordinated approach in terms of how coordination has, um, sought to, um, to, uh, reduce environmental effects. Those details are set out, I think, in the environmental statement, in terms of of how the applicants have have considered, um, the environmental impacts of the proposal, um, and ensured that by.

01:23:36:26 - 01:24:19:17

Uh Co-locating the projects as far as possible. That has ensured that. So if you think about it from a on a sort of geographic basis, it's ensured that, um, impacts are within a smaller area than they would be, uh, for two projects coming together. Um, we saw yesterday how, uh, constrained the Blackpool coast is in terms of, of where these projects could come ashore. Um, and the coordinated approach that's been taken by the applicants to that, uh, onshore landfall, um, and the use of that shared area, working together there to deliver those over a single area rather than having two separate areas.

01:24:19:28 - 01:25:04:02

Um, seeks to, uh, to reduce the environmental impacts of the project. Um, because, uh, if if the projects weren't coordinated in that way, um, there would be potentially a much greater impact over a greater period. So that's an example of where of where the, the coordination has, has um delivered that in terms of impacts on agricultural land, um, uh, and on uh, from the cable corridor, um, the by aligning the two, um, corridors together, you have a single obviously you have a single, a single area that's affected and appreciate that is potentially more intense than it would be if there were two cable corridors, but it is within a single area.

01:25:04:04 - 01:25:40:24

It's also presenting to, um, the, uh, to communities and to the local authority, these two projects together so that that further coordination can continue. Um, in other circumstances, it could be that the, uh, Morgan project is coming forward or Morgan projects coming forward at this time. And then, uh, and as we've said, it seeks to, uh, does its design. It, um, it starts to discharge its requirements. It, for example, puts in place its environmental mitigation or, if rights are secured, the biodiversity net gain areas.

01:25:40:29 - 01:26:17:05

And then two three years later, along comes another project which undermines all of that work, that it's been done. It then affects and we've seen it on. We see it on numerous projects where you have a second project coming forward in close proximity that then uses environmental mitigation areas that have already been established for one project, and then they have to be effectively co-located. You know, they have to be moved on somewhere else. So this provides that ability for coordination around mitigation, um, around and around those sort of those permanent benefits.

01:26:17:09 - 01:26:21:24

So I think those are fundamentals in terms of the approach that's been taken.

01:26:23:25 - 01:26:28:04

Okay. Um, my other question follows on from this one.

01:26:28:06 - 01:26:30:09

Just I'd like to add.

01:26:30:11 - 01:27:00:21

Something, Miss Houghton, on behalf of both applicants. I suppose just to pepper a bit more, um, detail about. Not too much though. So the development of both of the transmission assets infrastructure together so that delivery is coordinated by design. So for example when we are siting accesses or compounds, there is already inherently a cognizance of the other developer, as it were. Um, I would also say that this application is brought forward together.

01:27:00:23 - 01:27:34:20

And in its cumulative effects assessment, it brings together the whole project assessment for two offshore wind farms. So again, there's that added benefit of looking at the whole area together where otherwise you might have two radial connections. Um, bringing two separate applications. I would also just lastly say that the development of the joint outline plans again provides a joint basis of outline details on which the detailed management plans will be based on, um, Even if the projects were to come forward at slightly different timeframes.

01:27:34:22 - 01:27:42:10

And again, that is super key to making sure that, you know, both projects, um, or both offshore wind farms are consistent in their approach.

01:27:45:19 - 01:28:00:02

Oh, okay. So I'm I'm not quite understanding. You said delivery, um, is coordinated by design, but there's no detailed design yet. And there's a lot.

01:28:01:04 - 01:28:32:05

And so the path the applicant. So, uh, for example, we've we've spoken a lot about the route planning and site selection process. So in developing, um, what we've effectively done is incorporate the infrastructure of two offshore wind farms in an aligned cable route, the siting of the compounds, the siting of the temporary and permanent accesses. That has all been done holistically. So if you were to compare that to two separate CEOs coming forward, what I'm saying is that process is inherently holistic.

01:28:36:11 - 01:28:58:09

Okay. I will ask the second question because it builds on what we are talking about right now. And it is, um, explain what reduction and environmental and community impact would be achieved for each construction scenario, including the sequential scenario with, um, up to four years of a gap.

01:29:00:00 - 01:29:32:10

That lays down on behalf of the Atkins. We're not in a position to respond to that. We've explained in the, um, rule nine set, rule nine, um, response and the, um, the, uh, confirmation regarding the environmental assessment of the, uh, construction scenarios, how the environmental impact

assessment has considered those various scenarios. We have considered the scenarios. Sorry. We have assessed the project that we're putting forward.

01:29:32:12 - 01:29:59:06

We haven't assessed a theoretical separate project. We've assessed the project that we are proposing, and we've explained in the construction scenario statement and how the environmental impact assessment has considered both concurrent has, where the worst case has been considered for the purposes of the environmental impact assessment, particularly having regard to the potential for there to be a gap between one project and the other.

01:30:01:16 - 01:30:44:15

I think because you have, um, picked, what do you consider to be the worst case scenario for each topic? Sometimes it's sequential, sometimes it's concurrent. Um, there's no clarity on what's the comparison between the two. So what are the actual impacts on environment and community? If you compare concurrent, for example for noise versus sequential. And are they much worse in one case than the other? And I'm trying to understand basically, um, how this compares to a potential alternative uncoordinated radio approach.

01:30:44:17 - 01:30:52:24

If that was taken for one of the wind farms, for example. Would the community actually be less impacted in that case.

01:30:54:12 - 01:31:26:17

At least down on behalf of the applicant? Um, this project is not two separate radio connections. We haven't we have we can't we can't we can't come up with a, uh, hypothetical, uh, suggestion of where this where two separate radio connections might be, what those impacts might be, where that might be, how that. I mean, it it that isn't sorry. That isn't the purposes of the environmental impact assessment, and it isn't the project that we've done.

01:31:26:19 - 01:31:56:21

I appreciate you're looking for some clarity on how do we consider that, um, that, uh, from a policy perspective, uh, we meet that policy test and we're happy to respond to that, um, in writing. But we it is not the purposes of this process or indeed the environmental impact assessment process to be considering theoretical alternatives that haven't been presented and are not the not the application that there is, uh, there is being considered here.

01:31:57:11 - 01:32:12:25

So we're happy to come back in writing on on that uh, on that those elements of the policy. Um, but but just to manage everybody's expectations, it's not going to be a theoretical guess as to what two separate radio connections and the impacts might have been on local communities.

01:32:16:18 - 01:32:24:18

I yes, I would appreciate that. And, um, I would like you to make it clear.

01:32:27:10 - 01:32:27:25

Um,

01:32:29:14 - 01:32:48:16

is it clear? I would like to gain some clarity from what you submit. Is it clear that a coordinated approach, as proposed, has served to reduce overall environmental and community impacts in the way that is envisaged in both NPS policy and the holistic network design?

01:32:49:28 - 01:32:55:09

Thank you. Listen, on behalf of the applicant, we will take those points and consider those and provide a response.

01:32:58:19 - 01:33:12:12

Thank you. So it's now um 11:03. So we are going to take this opportunity to adjourn the meeting. So um, 11:25 we will restart. Thank you.