

IP 2005205 Anne Mason Dairy Farmer and Landowner

Oral submission from Open Floor Hearing 24/06/2025

Good evening!

Thank you for the opportunity to speak.

There are several points I'd like to make:

1) I'd like to draw the Examining Authority's attention to the financial incentives offered by the applicant to landowners in the latest voluntary Heads of Terms. These incentives are subject to the condition that we withdraw our submissions/representations to the Planning Inspectorate. I feel this is unethical, disingenuous and undermines the whole ethos of the Consultation process.

2) I am concerned that the applicant claims our land will be 'reinstated and returned to agriculture' once their cables have been installed. This is a nonsense. We have evidence on a smaller scale of the applicants so called reinstatement of land back to agriculture following investigative trench work. Our prime pasture land has not been reinstated properly and we look forward to showing you this during your site visit tomorrow.

3) We are deeply concerned that we will be deprived of our most valuable asset - our prime pasture land- for two significant periods of time. We are a third generation working farm and this project may well put us out of business. We thank the Examining Authority for their request for the applicant to provide an impact statement for each individual holding along the cable corridor by deadline 1 (Issue specific Hearing 1 part 8 video recording 2nd May 2025 32 mins in). I look forward to receiving the applicant's impact statement for our holdings following my Freedom of Information request on 12th June. It was not possible to locate these impact statements on the project page of the National Infrastructure Planning website despite the kind signposting to the relevant documents by Sian Evans. Sadly, these did not appear to be in the public information domain. I received a Distribution of Landholdings map from Ellie Dakin of Declour McLaren yesterday evening which fails to address my FOI request. Hopefully, this will be rectified within the 20 day timeframe.

4) I note the Examining Authority Question 5 1.13 'The intention is that part of the landholding of this family will be acquired for the Morecambe substation. The applicants refer to the explanation previously given that they are unable to commit to a concurrent construction. However, there is little acknowledgement as to the impact on the family business or the offer of attempts to mitigate this. In

this case, there may be significant private loss to the family with very little direct benefit for the Fylde area.' The permanent loss much of this 40 acres of prime grazing land/silage and crop land further adds to the stress on our farming business. It will simply not be possible to 'just find' alternative grazing locally since all the local farms will be struggling to find grazing as they will all lose land, albeit allegedly 'temporarily' to the cable corridor. Going further afield to graze, check, worm livestock, bring dairy cattle back to milk is not practical.

5) I remain deeply concerned about the applicants' vague responses to my written submission for Deadline 1 Another example is the Mason family. The applicants have responded to the written representation of Anne Mason at D2 [REP1-109.1 and 2]. I am grateful to the Examining Authority for their additional questions submitted to the applicant notably Q12 1.11, Q12 1.12 and Q12 1.10 which seeks to elicit clarification on several issues. I look forward to the applicant's response. The day to day impact on our farming business cannot be underestimated. It looks highly unlikely that our land will be restored to us in the same fertile state which has taken three generations to achieve. This ill- conceived project will negatively impact our farming business operationally, economically, permanently damage our land portfolio built up over three generations and has already impacted our mental health at a time when we are already dealing with a serious health issue.

6) Thank you to the Examining Authority for visiting our farm to view first-hand the impact that this cable corridor will have upon our beautiful prime grazing land.

Thank you

Anne Mason