

Stonestreet Green Solar

Draft Statement of Common Ground with the Environment Agency

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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this Statement of Common Ground

- 1.1.1 This Statement of Common Ground ('SoCG') has been prepared to support an application (the 'Application') for a Development Consent Order ('DCO') from the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero under Section 37 of the Planning Act 2008 (PA 2008) for the proposed Stonestreet Green Solar Farm (the 'Project'). The Application has been submitted by EPL 001 Limited (the 'Applicant').
- 1.1.2 This SoCG has been prepared between (1) the Applicant and the Environment Agency ('EA') (jointly referred to as the 'Parties'). It has been prepared in accordance with The Planning Act 2008: Examination stage for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects Guidance ¹.
- 1.1.3 The EA is listed as a prescribed consultee in Schedule 1 of the Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009² and so has been consulted during the preparation of the Application and following its acceptance.
- 1.1.4 The Examining Authority has requested that the SoCG include the following matters as set out in the Rule 6 Letter [[PD-004](#)] (Dated 22 October 2024) (Annex G).
- EIA Methodology
 - Water environment and flood risk, including ground and surface water protection, drainage, geology and soils
 - Climate change effects
 - Various Environment Management Plans, both during construction and operation
 - Any 'Shadow' licence applications
 - The DCO
- 1.1.5 This document has also been prepared in the context of the Initial Assessment of Principal Issues (Annex C), in particular:
- the use of land which are areas situated within Flood Zone 2 and Flood Zone 3, for the project, the sequential and exception tests and ensuring no increase to flood risk downstream;
 - the methodology for the installation of the cable by either using existing cable ducts or Horizontal Directional Drilling and effects on water quality from this installation;
 - effects on water quality from the construction and decommissioning phases
 - effects of surface water runoff from compounds; and
 - effects on Flood Storage areas.

- 1.1.6 It is agreed that any matters not specifically referred to in the final version of this SoCG are not of material interest or relevance to the representations submitted to the Examining Authority by the EA (the 'Representations') and therefore have not been considered in this document.
- 1.1.7 This SoCG has been produced to confirm to the Examining Authority where agreement has been reached between the Parties, where agreement has not been reached (and that is the parties' final position) and where discussions are still ongoing. This SoCG will be revised and updated as discussions between the Parties progress during the Examination.

1.2 Description of the Project

- 1.2.1 The Project comprises the construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning of solar photovoltaic ('PV') arrays and energy storage, together with associated infrastructure and an underground cable connection to the existing National Grid Sellindge Substation.
- 1.2.2 The Project will include a generating station (incorporating solar arrays) with a total capacity exceeding 50 megawatts ('MW'). The agreed grid connection for the Project will allow the export and import of up to 99.9 MW of electricity to the grid. The Project will connect to the existing National Grid Sellindge Substation via a new 132 kilovolt ('kV') substation constructed as part of the Project and cable connection under the Network Rail and High Speed 1 ('HS1') railway.

1.3 Current Position

- 1.3.1 Section 2 of this SoCG addresses the position of the Applicant and the EA, following a series of meetings and discussions with respect to the key areas of the Project and the Representations.
- 1.3.2 This is intended to be a 'live' document, and some aspects are still under discussion between the Parties. The intention is to provide a final position in subsequent versions of the SoCG, addressing and identifying where changes have been made and ultimately both Parties agree on relevant points.

1.4 Record of Engagement

- 1.4.1 The Applicant has undertaken consultation and engagement with the EA throughout the development of the Application. The Applicant consulted the EA, as a prescribed consultee, in accordance with section 42 of The Planning Act (as amended) about the Project and environmental impact assessment as part of the formal pre-application consultation and publicity procedures. This process afforded the EA the opportunity to provide responses to the information in various stages of the pre-application process.
- 1.4.2 As highlighted in the EA Written Representations ('WR') (paras 1.2 and 1.3) [\[REP1-083\]](#), the Applicant has held extensive discussions and has a positive working

relationship with the EA and a number of alterations to the design were agreed during the design development.

- 1.4.3 Table 1.1 shows a summary of the meetings and correspondence that has taken place between the Applicant (including consultants on its behalf) and the EA in relation to the Application.

Table 1-1: Record of Engagement

Date	Form of correspondence	Key topics discussed and outcomes (the topics should align with the issues tables)
25 March to 29 April 2022	Non-Statutory Consultation 2022	No comments received.
18 May 2022	EIA Scoping - EA consultation response to EIA Scoping Opinion (response to the Applicant's request for a Scoping Opinion submitted to PINS on 19 April 2022)	Response dated 26 May 2022 (Ref: KT/2022/129574/01-L01) provided after the statutory deadline. Key issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Flood risk ■ Groundwater and contaminated land ■ Fisheries, Biodiversity and Geomorphology
25 October to 29 November 2022	Statutory Consultation 2022 (Preliminary Environmental Information Report) – EA consultation response	Key Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Flood risk and NPPF ■ Environmental Permitting Regulations ■ Crossings and HDD
10 May 2023	Meeting with EA planning and flood teams	Key Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 2022 Statutory Consultation response ■ Flood Data and Modelling ■ Works within AFSA ■ Crossings approach Technical Note (SLR Ref: 425.064837.00001) dated 26 July 2023 was subsequently submitted to the EA to address the issues raised in the meeting.

Date	Form of correspondence	Key topics discussed and outcomes (the topics should align with the issues tables)
12 June to 17 July 2023	Statutory Consultation 2023 (PEIR Addendum)	<p>Key Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Flood risk ■ Environmental Permitting Regulations and river works
2 August 2023	EA Meeting	<p>Follow up meeting to discuss Technical Note (SLR Ref: 425.064837.00001) dated 26 July 2023.</p> <p>Key Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Approach to the hydraulic modelling and FRA ■ Set-backs, crossings and permits
30 August 2023	Correspondence with the EA	<p>Key Topics:</p> <p>EA Partnership and Strategic Overview teams comments to Technical Note (SLR Ref: 425.064837.00001) and Fisheries, Biodiversity and Geomorphology (river setbacks and BNG).</p>
8 February 2024	EA Meeting	<p>Key Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Permitting and protective provisions ■ Use of HDD and risk management ■ Hydraulic modelling ■ Protective provisions
12 February to 12 March 2024	Targeted Consultation 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ No specific comments were received.
27 February 2024	Draft documents issued for EA comment	Draft SLR hydrology and hydraulic modelling reports issued to the EA for comment.
23 April 2024	EA correspondence	The EA responded to draft SLR hydrology and hydraulic modelling reports.

Date	Form of correspondence	Key topics discussed and outcomes (the topics should align with the issues tables)
24 July 2024	EA Meeting	Key Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Works in and around the AFSA
14 September 2024	EA correspondence	Key Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting Minutes AFSA standoff advice.
8 November 2024	Email with the EA	Issue Draft SoCG to the EA
13 November to 13 December 2024	Targeted Consultation 2023	No specific comments were received.
22 November 2024	Email with the EA	The EA comments on Draft SoCG
5 December 2024	Email with the EA	The EA comments on the Applicant's revised Draft SoCG
7 January 2025	Email with the EA	The EA's request to be added as consultee to Schedule 2 Requirements (Requirements 5, 6, 8, 11, 12 and 14). The Applicant agreed to this position, and was reflected in the D2 submission.
16 January 2025	Email with the EA	The EA issued further comments on the Draft SoCG.
29 January 2025	Email from the EA	The EA issued further comments on Draft SoCG.
12 February 2025	Meeting with the EA	Meeting to discuss the outstanding matters in respect of securing the FRA mitigation and pollution control measures.

1.4.4 Additional correspondence relating to data request is not captured in Table 1.1.

1.4.5 It is agreed that this is an accurate record of the key meetings and consultation undertaken between the Parties in relation to the issues addressed in this SoCG as at the date of this SoCG.

1.5 Format of Document and Terminology

- 1.5.1 This SoCG has been structured to reflect matters and topics of interest to the EA in relation to the Project as set out in the EA Representations.
- 1.5.2 Section 2 summarises the issues that are ‘agreed’, ‘not agreed’ or are ‘under discussion’ under the topics of interest in tables as follows:
- Table 2.1: Flood Risk
 - Table 2.2: Other Consents and Licences
 - Table 2.3: Ecology
 - Table 2.4: Groundwater and Contamination Land
 - Table 2.5: Water Quality
 - Table 2.6: Water Framework Directive Assessment
- 1.5.3 The following terminology is applied in Section 2:
- ‘Agreed’ indicates where the issue has been resolved (no colour).
 - ‘Not Agreed’ indicates a position where both Parties have reached a final position that a matter cannot be agreed between them.
 - ‘Under Discussion’ indicates where points continue to be the subject of on-going discussions between Parties.
- 1.5.4 For any issues that are 'Under Discussion', the Parties have also indicated the likelihood that disagreement will remain by the end of the Examination using a “Low” (Green), “Medium” (Amber) and “High” (Red) traffic light model, as requested in the Rule 6 letter.

2 Areas of Discussion between the Parties

2.1 Flood Risk

Table 2-1: Flood Risk

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Description of Matter	EA Current Position	Applicant's Current Position	Status
2.1	WR	Assessment of National Policy	In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraphs 178 and 179), the proposed development is appropriate provided that the site meets the requirements of the exception test. The comments on the proposals relate to the part of the exception test that demonstrates the development is safe. The LPA have the final decision on whether the sequential and exception tests are passed.	The Applicant has provided its assessment of the Project in line with both the Sequential Test and the Exception Test in Appendix 2: Sequential and Exception Test Report of the Planning Statement (Doc Ref. 7.6) [APP-151] . This confirms that the requirements of both tests have been satisfied in accordance with NPS EN-1. ABC confirmed that the Sequential and Exception Test has been passed in the Statement of Common Ground with ABC (Doc Ref. 8.3.1(B)) .	Agreed
2.2	WR	Flood Risk Assessment	The EA are satisfied with the submitted Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) in principle (<i>Doc Ref. 5.4(A)</i>). The EA have no further comments.	Noted.	Agreed

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Description of Matter	EA Current Position	Applicant's Current Position	Status
2.3	WR	Securing Mitigation	The EA have reviewed and is satisfied with the updated FRA and the measures detailed in the consented FRA shall be retained and maintained thereafter throughout the lifetime of the development.	Embedded Mitigation within the design of the Project is set out in the Design Principles (Doc Ref. 7.5(C)) and is secured by Requirement 4 in Schedule 2 (Detailed design approval) of the Draft Development Consent Order ('DCO') (Doc Ref. 3.1(E)) . The drainage scheme is set out in the Outline Operational Surface Water Drainage Strategy (Doc Ref. 7.14(C)) and is secured by Requirement 11 (Operational Surface Water Drainage Strategy) in Schedule 2 of the dDCO (Doc Ref. 3.1(E)) .	Agreed
2.4 to 2.6	WR	Issue 1 – Buried Cables	<p>Aldington Flood Storage Area could be compromised by water channelling through cable routes increasing flood and ground water in areas that have not previously been an issue or flood waters diverting past the dam and hydrobrake.</p> <p>Following the updated Outline CEMP dated December 2024 (Doc Ref. 7.8 (A)), the EA are satisfied with details of the planned cable routes and the construction. It is noted that the EA have been added</p>	<p>Drawing No. 142-02-18 (Rev 01) – Illustrative Cable Trench Detail Plan within the Illustrative Project Drawings (Doc Ref. 2.6(B)) [REP3-004] shows illustrative construction details for different cable types. The exact location of cables is not known and will be confirmed as part of the detailed designs submitted to discharge Requirement 4 (Detailed design approval) in Schedule 2 of the Draft DCO (Doc Ref. 3.1(E)).</p> <p>Paragraph 4.8.10 of the Outline CEMP (Doc Ref. 7.8(A)) [REP1-044]</p>	Agreed

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Description of Matter	EA Current Position	Applicant's Current Position	Status
			as a statutory consultee for the approval of the Detailed CEMP secured by Requirement 6 of the Draft DCO (Doc Ref. 3.1(C)) which they are satisfied with.	<p>confirms that, <i>'once electrical cables are laid, all trenches will be backfilled and reinstated to the existing ground level and seeded to reduce the risk of runoff of fine sediments into watercourses'</i>.</p> <p>A Construction Method Statement for cables within the AFSA and in its vicinity would be provided as part of the detailed CEMP(s). The Applicant has updated the Outline CEMP (Doc Ref. 7.8(A)) [REP1-044] to include this requirement.</p>	
2.7 to 2.9	WR	Issue 2 - Flood Risk associated with precast concrete block ballasts	<p>It is understood that it is unlikely that foundations in the form of pre-cast reinforced concrete blocks or similar will be required and that there is additional flood storage available.</p> <p>Following the review of the updated Outline OSWDS (Doc Ref. 7.14(A)) as secure by Requirement 11 in the Draft DCO, the EA are satisfied with the commitments stated in section 4.6.24 and 5.1.8 which ensure that the Project would not result in a net loss of flood storage from the PV array frames/PV panel frames, and that appropriate compensation (if</p>	Some of the foundations for PV mounting structures could be pre-cast reinforced concrete blocks or similar solutions that are set on the ground surface. This approach would only be necessary if archaeology is discovered that is required to be left in situ such that piled foundations are not appropriate. However, the application surveys have identified no such evidence. In the unlikely event this is required within the floodplain areas, this would result in small and localised losses of flood storage.	Agreed

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Description of Matter	EA Current Position	Applicant's Current Position	Status
			<p>required) is in place before construction.</p> <p>The EA have been added as a statutory consultee for the approval of the Detailed OSWDS secured by Requirement 11 of the Draft DCO (Doc Ref. 3.1(C)) which the EA are satisfied with.</p>	<p>The flood storage created through the depressions included in the Illustrative Landscape Drawings (Doc Ref. 2.7(B)) [REP3-005] would more than compensate for these small and isolated losses.</p> <p>The Outline OSWDS (Doc Ref. 7.14(C)) and Schedule 2 Part 1 Requirement 11 in the Draft DCO (Doc Ref. 3.1(E)) secure detailed design approval of drainage details by ABC. To address the concern raised by the EA, the Outline OSWDS (Doc Ref. 7.14(C)) has also been updated to include a commitment to ensure that the Project would not result in a net loss of flood storage and that appropriate compensation (if required) is in place before construction.</p>	
2.10 to 12	WR	Issue 3 - Flood Storage Calculations	<p>The EA have reviewed and are satisfied with the updated Outline OSWDS (Doc Ref. 7.14(A)) dated December 2024. Section 4.6.8 of the updated Outline OSWDS confirms that the Project would not result in a net loss of storage capacity with the AFSA.</p>	<p>None of the works proposed within the AFSA involve any build up in ground levels.</p> <p>The works proposed relate to;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Superficial treatments and vegetation management with a commitment made that vegetation management will be 	Agreed

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Description of Matter	EA Current Position	Applicant's Current Position	Status
			<p>Additionally, the EA are satisfied with the updated Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) (Doc Ref. 5.4(A)) which includes level for level flood storage calculations for the land upstream of the AFSA embankment shown in Appendix D 'Upstream of AFSA Embankment: Floodplain Compensation Level for Level Calculations'. Section 11.3.9 of the assessment also shows a net increase in flood storage capacity within Aldington Flood Storage Area.</p>	<p>ongoing with any accumulated material removed from the AFSA. Such work would therefore have a neutral impact on flood storage,</p> <p>2. The provision of fencing around the skylark area in Field 29 as illustrated on the Illustrative Landscape Drawings (Doc Ref. 2.7(B)) [REP3-005] (Sheet 3 of 5 - drawing number 011998.00001.712). The fence posts would result in a negligible loss of flood storage, but at a level that would be difficult to quantify.</p> <p>3. The creation of ecological scrapes and ponds as illustrated on the Illustrative Landscape Drawings (Doc Ref. 2.7(B)) [REP3-005] (Sheet 3 of 5 - drawing number 011998.00001.712). These would be formed by excavation only with all spoil removed disposed of outside of the AFSA. As such these works would only increase the available flood storage volume.</p>	

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Description of Matter	EA Current Position	Applicant's Current Position	Status
				<p>4. The creation of the wetland area which will receive storm runoff from the Project Substation. This will be formed by excavation and will not involve impounding water to a level above the existing ground surfaces. As such the formation of this feature can only increase the volume of flood storage available.</p> <p>The net effect of these works will clearly be an increase in the available flood storage volume within the AFSA.</p> <p>ES Volume 4, Appendix 10.2: Flood Risk Assessment (Doc Ref 5.4(A)) [REP1-036] [REP1-037] and [REP1-038] has been updated at Deadline 1 to quantify the changes resulting from items 2, 3 and 4 above. In addition, the Outline OSWDS (Doc Ref. 7.14(C)) includes a commitment to ensure no net loss of storage capacity within the AFSA.</p>	
2.13	WR	Issue 3 - Flood Storage Calculations	The EA are satisfied with the updated Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) (Doc Ref. 5.4(A)) which has confirmed that there is no loss of flood storage capacity in Aldington	Noted. See response as above.	Agreed

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Description of Matter	EA Current Position	Applicant's Current Position	Status
			Flood Storage Area from the landscaping works including but limited to the woodland planting, tree planning, habitat scrapes and habitat ponds.		
2.14 to 17	WR	Issue 4 – Unrestricted access	<p>The EA will need unrestricted access to Aldington Flood Storage Area at the North end for continued maintenance and particularly in emergency situations. This may include delivering plant to the site. The EA also require unrestricted access to the EA owned assets on the south end of Field 24 downstream of the Hydro-brake outlet.</p> <p>The EA are satisfied with the Applicant's confirmation that there will not be restricted access upon any of the EA's land interests and assets. Please notify the EA Asset Performance Team prior to works starting on the cable routing across the northern access road.</p>	<p>The Project will not restrict access to the AFSA or impinge upon any of the Environment Agency's land interests and assets within the Order limits.</p> <p>Paragraph 3.6.2 of the Outline CEMP (Doc Ref. 7.8(A)) [REP1-044] states '<i>Access to the Aldington Flood Storage [Area] for the Environment Agency will be maintained at all times</i>'. The same commitment is made for the decommissioning stage at paragraph 3.6.2 of the Outline DEMP (Doc Ref. 7.12) [APP-157]. In relation to the operational phase of the Project, paragraph 4.3.1 of the Outline Operational Management Plan ('OMP') (Doc Ref. 7.11(A)) [REP1-050] requires the detailed OMP to include '<i>Measures to allow the Environment Agency appropriate access to the AFSA</i>'.</p> <p>Additional drawings have been prepared to show the indicative cable route. The drawings show that the</p>	Agreed

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Description of Matter	EA Current Position	Applicant's Current Position	Status
				<p>installation of cabling across the access to the primary substation will not restrict the ability of the EA to access their assets. The proposed cable will use the underground ducting as illustrated in drawing 142-02-48-EA-02 Duct Area ISS01. The duct will be installed in two sections allowing half of the access route to remain open during this installation process.</p> <p>During construction, access would be secured through the use of road plates that could be placed over duct trenches when required.</p> <p>These works would be programmed for summer months, or dry periods, to further reduce any risk, with the cables then be pulled though at a later date with no impact to the access route.</p> <p>An updated AFSA (ES Volume 4, Appendix 10.4: Aldington Flood Storage Area Risk Assessment (Doc Ref. 5.4(A)) [REP1-034] has been provided at Deadline 1 (10th December) incorporates the above commitments.</p>	

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Description of Matter	EA Current Position	Applicant's Current Position	Status
2.18 to 20	WR	Issue 5 - Drainage and impact on the East Stour water levels	<p>The drainage strategy on the site adjacent to the East Stour downstream of the hydro-brake outlet on the south end of Field 24 may increase water levels in this area. There is a privately owned sluice gate downstream of the outlet that the owner operates to always ensure they have water ponding in their garden. This restricts the maximum flow on this section of river.</p> <p>However, the EA are satisfied with the Applicant's response to the drainage impact on the East Stour water levels. No further comments.</p>	<p>An Outline OSWDS (Doc Ref: 7.14(C)) demonstrates that the Project would have a neutral effect on the volumes and rate of storm water runoff, and the operation of the private sluice on the river should have no influence on this matter. Requirement 11 (Operational surface water drainage) in Schedule 2 of the Draft DCO (Doc Ref. 3.1(E)) then secures detailed design approval of drainage details by ABC, which would have appropriate regard to these considerations.</p>	Agreed
2.21 to 23	WR	Issue 6 – Aldington Flood Storage Area standoff area	<p>The EA noted the updates in the FRA (Doc Ref. 5.4(A)) and the Aldington Flood Storage Area Risk Assessment on the changes in the standoff area to address the standoff document in Appendix A of the EA's Written Representation Letter submitted at Deadline 1.</p> <p>Standoff area overlap points 2 and 3 are off the flood defence asset and on natural high ground. The EA are satisfied with the solutions to</p>	<p>The standoff area shown in ES Volume 4, Appendix 10.4: Aldington Flood Storage Area Risk Assessment (Doc Ref. 5.4(A)) [REP1-034] has been updated so that it aligns with the standoff area shown in Appendix A of the EA's response letter. That document has also been updated to explicitly discuss the points below.</p> <p>The update confirms that all solar panels, fencing and above ground</p>	Agreed

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Description of Matter	EA Current Position	Applicant's Current Position	Status
			<p>maintain their access during the construction of these. Point 3 is more significant as where the overlap is indicated EA have drains in that area. The construction of the access track along the standoff area and above the outlet will need to be reviewed to ensure it has no impact on their asset, but this will be picked up as part of the FRAP process. The EA will also need to agree an access licence through legal for use of the EA's land.</p> <p>The EA will review the FRAP application once submitted.</p>	<p>infrastructure that might restrict the EA's ability to access and maintain their assets are outside of the standoff zone. There are however three points where proposed works would extend inside this standoff area. These are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The temporary access track to the south where it crosses the outlet from the AFSA – this temporary feature is positioned within the standoff because the crossing has to be as close as possible to a right angle to the East Stour River channel. Repositioning it further west would result in a greater impact on trees (including the loss of a large Category B tree) and impacts the existing public footbridge and right of way. We can confirm that this feature will not require any excavations, will be permeable and will be for temporary use only. 2) The access track where it enters the main project substation – the works associated with this are above ground only comprise improvements to the surface treatment only. 	

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Description of Matter	EA Current Position	Applicant's Current Position	Status
				<p>3) The cable route to the main project substation – it is not possible to relocate the underground cable route fully outside the area you have advised is required as the AFSA standoff. However, in response to the EA's comments we have minimised any impact and relocated the trench to the far north of this area. As a result, the cable crosses the standoff above the projected maximum flood level and outside the embankment area so there can be no risk to the structural integrity of the embankment.</p> <p>None of these elements will restrict the EA's ability to access and maintain their assets and, as set out in Schedule of Other Consents and Licences (Doc Ref. 3.4(A)) these works would only be progressed following receipt of a FRAP from the EA.</p>	
2.24 to 26	WR	Issue 7 – Flood Mitigation Measures Implementation	The EA discussed with the applicant team their concerns towards a requirement covering the FRA. The EA have therefore suggested another requirement wording instead, targeted only at	The Applicant has discussed this matter further with the EA, and Requirement 11 has been amended to reflect the EA request, which secures a detailed floodplain compensation scheme:	Agreed

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Description of Matter	EA Current Position	Applicant's Current Position	Status
			<p>the flood compensation scheme which remains their main concern, and confirm they are happy that the FRA is listed on the DCO as part of the documents to be certified. This requirement will enable the EA to recheck calculations and ensure the scheme to be implemented is fit for purpose at the time works are to commence. Wording is requested as follows:</p> <p>Flood compensatory storage</p> <p>(1) No part of the authorised development is to commence until a detailed floodplain compensation scheme for that part, that reflects the mitigation within the flood risk assessment, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority in consultation with the Environment Agency.</p> <p>(2) The scheme must be implemented as approved and subsequently maintained.</p>	<p><i>Operational surface water drainage strategy and flood compensation storage</i></p> <p><i>11.—(1) No phase of the authorised development may commence until—</i></p> <p><i>(a) a OSWDS for that phase has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority, such approval to be in consultation with the Environment Agency and the lead local flood authority; and</i></p> <p><i>(b) a detailed floodplain compensation scheme for that phase has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority, such approval to be in consultation with the Environment Agency.</i></p> <p><i>(2) The OSWDS for each phase of the authorised development must be in accordance with the outline OSWDS.</i></p> <p><i>(3) The OSWDS for each phase of the authorised development must be implemented as approved.</i></p> <p><i>(4) When considered as a whole across all phases of the authorised development, the detailed floodplain compensation schemes approved</i></p>	

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Description of Matter	EA Current Position	Applicant's Current Position	Status
				<p><i>pursuant to paragraph (1)(b) must include mitigation measures that are in accordance with the measures described in Appendix 10.2: Flood Risk Assessment of the environmental statement relating to flood storage upstream and downstream of the Aldington Flood Storage Area embankment.</i></p> <p><i>(5) The detailed floodplain compensation scheme for each phase of the authorised development must be implemented and maintained as approved.</i></p> <p>It has been confirmed that all mitigation relied on by the ES Volume 4, Appendix 10.2: Flood Risk Assessment (Doc Ref 5.4(A)) [REP1-036] [REP1-037] and [REP1-038] have been secured by either the Design Principles (Doc Ref. 7.5(C)), or the Outline OSWDS (Doc Ref: 7.14(C)). These documents secure all mitigation relied on by the FRA and AFSA. Requirement 11 (Operational surface water drainage) in Schedule 2 of the Draft DCO (Doc Ref. 3.1(E)) then secures the commitments made by the Outline</p>	

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Description of Matter	EA Current Position	Applicant's Current Position	Status
				<p>OSWDS (Doc Ref: 7.14(C)) and requires that the drainage details are submitted to and approved by ABC, following consultation with the EA.</p> <p>These controls are considered to provide appropriate securing mechanisms for these matters.</p>	

2.2 Other Consents and Licences

Table 2-2: Other Consents and Licences

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Description of Matter	EA Current Position	Applicant's Current Position	Status
2.27 to 29	WR	Access licence	<p>An access licence will be required for the access track improvement works and ongoing access on Environment Agency land under Land Registry Title Number: K514584.</p> <p>Work planned to improve the access track between Fields 24 and 25 will require an access license to be agreed with the EA in advance of any works starting. This license can cover the development of the site and the ongoing use of the access track following construction being completed. (Field 24 and 25 shown in</p>	<p>Noted. The Schedule of Other Consents and Licences (Doc Ref. 3.4 (A)) has been updated to include the access licence for the access track improvement works and ongoing access on Environment Agency land.</p>	Agreed.

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Description of Matter	EA Current Position	Applicant's Current Position	Status
			<p>Drawing number: 142-02-44-pg2, Revision: 01, Titled: Works Plans Sheet 2 of 5 and Drawing number: 142-02-44-pg3, Revision: 01, Titled: Works Plans Sheet 3 of 5 in APP-009 – Doc 2.3 Work Plans)</p> <p>Discussions between EA legal representatives and developers or landowners will be needed to agree mutual access permissions to cover during construction and ongoing use of any access tracks.</p>		
2.30 to 32	WR	Environmental Permits	<p>The Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016 require a permit or exemption to be obtained for any activities which will take place:</p> <p>Environmental permit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> on or within 8 metres of a main river (16 metres if tidal) on or within 8 metres of a flood defence structure or culverted main river (16 metres if tidal) on or within 16 metres of a sea defence involving quarrying or excavation within 16 metres of any main river, 	<p>The Schedule of Other Consents and Licences (Doc Ref. 3.4(A)) provides information on the other consents and licences outside of the DCO and includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> FRAPs; IDB Land Drainage Consents; and Water Discharge Activity Permits. <p>FRAPs will be sought as appropriate under the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016.</p> <p>The Applicant notes that extensive discussions regarding the Project have taken place with the EA during the pre-</p>	Agreed

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Description of Matter	EA Current Position	Applicant's Current Position	Status
			<p>flood defence (including a remote defence) or culvert</p> <p>in the floodplain of a main river if the activity could affect flood flow or storage and potential impacts are not controlled by a planning permission</p> <p>The applicant should not assume that a permit will automatically be forthcoming once planning permission has been granted, and the EA advise the Applicant to consult with them at the earliest opportunity.</p> <p>The EA note that the 'Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016' have not been listed under 'Schedule 3 - Legislation to be disapplied' of the updated Draft Development Consent Order (Doc Ref : 3.1(B)). The EA are satisfied that FRAPs will need to be applied for, for this development.</p>	<p>application period and no concerns regarding the proposals have been raised that would suggest permits will not be forthcoming.</p>	

2.3 Ecology

Table 2-3: Ecology

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Description of Matter	EA Current Position	Applicant's Current Position	Status
3.1 to 3.2	WR	Overview	<p>During previous discussions, requirements included consideration of rivers, river margins, the need for river habitat surveys and species surveys for some riparian mammals.</p> <p>The consultation documents that have reviewed have included most of the information the EA requested be provided.</p>	Noted	Agreed
3.4	WR	Issue 7 - Invasive species (giant rhubarb <i>Gunnera</i>)	<p>While giant rhubarb <i>Gunnera</i> spp. was not reported as per Table 9.9: Summary of Recent Invasive Species Records in the Biodiversity Chapter of the Environmental Statement (ES), it is known to be in the catchment upstream of the development site. The cultivation of <i>Gunnera</i> is now banned. (APP-033 – Doc 5.2 Environmental Statement Volume 2: Main Text Chapter 9: Biodiversity)</p> <p>At Deadline 1, the EA noted that giant rhubarb <i>Gunnera</i> is listed in schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act,</p>	<p>The Outline CEMP (Doc Ref. 7.8(A)) [REP1-044] sets out measures to prevent and control the spread of invasive non-native species. Detailed CEMP(s) are then secured by Requirement 6 in Schedule 2 of the Draft DCO (Doc Ref. 3.1(E)), which would ensure that appropriate measures to control the spread of invasive species are applied during each relevant stage in the construction. The Detailed CEMP(s) would include consideration of all relevant species listed under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act</p>	Agreed

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Description of Matter	EA Current Position	Applicant's Current Position	Status
			and welcome that the detailed CEMP (secured by Requirement 6) will include it.	1981 (as amended). The Outline CEMP (Doc Ref. 7.8(A)) [REP1-044] and Outline DEMP (Doc Ref. 7.12) [APP-157] include a requirement for supervision by an Ecological Clerk of Works within Biodiversity Protection Zones ('BPZs') which will include the East Stour corridor. Any works within BPZs would be approved by and supervised by an Ecological Clerk of Works.	
3.6 to 3.7	WR	Issue 9 - Invasive species (mink)	Mink was recorded as being in the area and surveys confirmed their presence, as per Table 9.9: Summary of Recent Invasive Species Records in the Biodiversity Chapter of the ES. (<i>APP-033 – Doc 5.2 Environmental Statement Volume 2: Main Text Chapter 9: Biodiversity</i>). This project could contribute to the effort to eradicate mink in the United Kingdom with support for the Waterlife Recovery Southeast (WRSE) project (launched on 27 September 2024). The EA are keen for the project to contribute financially to WRSE and have provided further explanations justifying this request in their response to the ExA's first written	Annex 3 of the Outline LEMP (Doc Ref. 7.10(B)) [REP3-020] includes a requirement for pre-commencement surveys of invasive species, along with the potential requirement for a Mink Control Strategy should those surveys identify a level that may lead to impacts to water voles. The need for a Mink Control Strategy would be defined in the Detailed LEMP, which is secured by Requirement 8 (Landscape and biodiversity) in Schedule 2 of the Draft DCO (Doc Ref. 3.1(E)) . The Applicant notes the EA's request for a contribution to the WRSE, but such a contribution is agreed as not being necessary in planning terms. Such a contribution would be over and	Agreed

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Description of Matter	EA Current Position	Applicant's Current Position	Status
			questions on 29 January 2025 [REP3-051] .	above the agreed Mink Control Strategy, which has already secured by the Annex 3 of the Outline LEMP (Doc Ref. 7.10(B)) [REP3-020] and Requirement 8 (Landscape and biodiversity) in Schedule 2 of the Draft DCO (Doc Ref. 3.1(E)) .	
3.8 to 3.9	WR	Issue 10 - Tree planting	While the EA usually support tree planting, there are occasions where, due to their requirements for access for river management, trees can be an obstacle to flood risk management works. EA are satisfied with the updated Outline LEMP (Doc ref. 7.11(A)) which confirms the suitability of the proposed locations of the riverside tree planting. It is noted that the Environment Agency have been added as a statutory consultee for the approval of the Detailed LEMPs secured by Requirement 8 of the Draft DCO (Doc Ref. 3.1(C)) which EA are satisfied with.	Requirement 8 (Landscape and biodiversity) in Schedule 2 of the Draft DCO (Doc Ref. 3.1(E)) secures the detailed design of the landscape scheme and would be submitted to and approved by LPA. The Applicant is willing to commit to discuss the planting proposals and specification along the East Stour River before detailed landscape proposals are submitted to the LPA. This commitment is secured in the Outline LEMP (Doc Ref. 7.10(B)) [REP3-020] . The Outline LEMP includes further measures to minimise risks of debris and obstacles to flood risk management works as follows: <i>'4.4.8 There should be no change in the creation of woody debris within the Aldington Flood Storage Area and any cleared vegetation will be removed.'</i>	Agreed

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Description of Matter	EA Current Position	Applicant's Current Position	Status
				<i>'4.5.8 Watercourses would be monitored annually. Any deadwood that becomes dislodged and blocks the central channel will be removed or repositioned should it pose a flood risk and any unwanted vegetation and litter/debris would also be removed from the watercourses on a monthly basis under ecological supervision if necessary...'</i>	
3.11 to 3.12	WR	Issue 11 - Beavers	Pre-commencement surveys listed in paragraph 5.3.3 of the OLEMP do not specifically include beaver (<i>APP-155 – Doc 7.10 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan</i>). Beaver should be added to the list of species for which surveys will be completed.	Annex 3: Indicative Mitigation and Enhancement Measures of the Outline LEMP (Doc Ref. 7.10(B)) [REP3-020] includes the commitment for Pre-commencement surveys (riparian mammals), which would include 'water voles, otter, beavers'. These surveys are secured by the Outline LEMP (Doc Ref. 7.10(B)) [REP3-020] and would be submitted within the Detailed LEMPs submitted to discharge Requirement 8 (Landscape and biodiversity) in Schedule 2 of the Draft DCO (Doc Ref. 3.1(E)) .	Agreed
3.13 to 3.14	WR	Issue 11 - Aquatic/Marginal	Section 6.17 'Proposed Aquatic/Marginal Planting' of the original OLEMP did not refer to provenance of the species that are	ES Volume 2, Chapter 8: Landscape and Views (Doc Ref. 5.2(A)) [AS-012]	Agreed

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Description of Matter	EA Current Position	Applicant's Current Position	Status
		planting provenance	<p>being planted (APP-155 – Doc 7.10 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan). Specimens that are of local provenance should be procured. All specimens must also be carefully checked for the presence of aquatic non-natives.</p> <p>Following further discussion with the Applicant, the EA are satisfied with the updated Outline LEMP (Doc ref. 7.11(A)) in response to this matter. The EA are a statutory consultee for the approval of the Detailed LEMPs secured by Requirement 8 of the Draft DCO (Doc Ref. 3.1(C)) which the EA are satisfied with.</p>	<p>notes at paragraph 8.6.23 that native species would be used.</p> <p>The Applicant is willing to commit to native species being used for the Project, and which would be included in the detailed landscape proposals submitted to the LPA. This commitment is secured in Section 6.17 (Proposed Aquatic / Marginal Planting) of the Outline LEMP (Doc Ref. 7.10(B)) [REP3-020].</p>	

2.4 Groundwater and Contaminated Land

Table 2-4: Groundwater and Contaminated Land

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Description of Matter	EA Current Position	Applicant's Current Position	Status
4.1	WR	Ground Water and Contaminated Land	The EA have reviewed the relevant documents related to land contamination and risks posed to groundwater for the proposed development. The EA are satisfied that risks to groundwater have been appropriately considered and that the mitigation measures proposed are acceptable.	Noted.	Agreed
4.2	WR	Horizontal Directional Drilling	The EA understand that the project will include horizontal directional drilling. Further liaison with the EA and compilation of site-specific risk assessments (as part of the detailed CEMP) will be undertaken to address these works which the EA welcome. Various other mitigation measures are proposed for other activities (e.g. refuelling of vehicles), many of which are standard best practice (<i>APP-153 - 7.8 Outline Construction</i>	A series of mitigation measures are secured in paragraph 4.8.7 'Watercourse crossings/HDD' of the Outline CEMP (Doc Ref. 7.8(A)) [REP1-044] and in the Outline DEMP (Doc Ref. 7.12) [APP-157] . An HDD risk assessment will be provided as part of the detailed CEMP(s) and the Emergency Preparedness Plan ('EPP) will include actions required in the event of a breakout of HDD fluids.	Agreed

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Description of Matter	EA Current Position	Applicant's Current Position	Status
			<i>Environmental Management Plan</i>).	A series of mitigation measures to protect the water environment and surface water quality during all construction activities are secured in paragraph 4.8.10 'General Measures' of the Outline CEMP (Doc Ref. 7.8(A)) [REP1-044] and in the Outline DEMP (Doc Ref. 7.12) [APP-157].	
4.3	WR	Land Contamination Assessments	The EA understand the land contamination assessments have concluded that the risk to controlled waters is low to very low, and as such no specific remediation is required/proposed. Based on the information the EA have reviewed, they agree with those conclusions (<i>APP-035 – Doc 5.2) Environmental Statement Volume 2: Main Text Chapter 11: Land Contamination</i>).	Noted.	Agreed

2.5 Water Quality

Table 2-5: Water Quality

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Description of Matter	EA Current Position	Applicant's Current Position	Status
5.1	WR	Overview	<p>Given the potential for high-risk surface water pollution from silt, oil, chemicals, etc., the pollution prevention measures outlined in the Outline Battery Safety Management Plan (BSMP) and the Outline Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) are satisfactory and appear to meet high standards (APP-153 – Doc 7.8 Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan; APP-161 – Doc 7.16 Outline Battery Safety Management Plan).</p> <p>The EA are satisfied that they have been added as a statutory consultee for the approval of the Detailed BSMP, Detailed CEMP, Operational Management Plan and DEMP secured by Requirements 5, 6 12 and 14</p>	Noted.	Agreed

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Description of Matter	EA Current Position	Applicant's Current Position	Status
			of the Draft DCO (Doc Ref. 3.1(C)).		
5.2 to 3	WR	Issue 13 – Water Pollution Measures Implementation	<p>The key measures identified in the plans are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water quality surveys • Oil, chemicals, and machinery storage • Silt management • Inverter and Battery unit location • Firewater management • Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) <p>The EA require that these pollution prevention measures be fully implemented throughout the construction, operational, and decommissioning phases. It is crucial that all contractors and subcontractors are made aware of these measures to ensure protection of surface water from contamination. The EA also require that the results of the Water Quality Surveys</p>	<p>Noted. The Outline CEMP (Doc Ref. 7.8(A)) [REP1-044] sets out the general mitigation measures that would be applied during the construction works, which include measures to prevent and control potential pollution and ensure water quality during construction. Detailed CEMP(s) are then secured by Requirement 6 in Schedule 2 of the Draft DCO (Doc Ref. 3.1(E)), which would ensure that appropriate water quality control measures.</p> <p>The Outline OSWDS (Doc Ref. 7.14(C)) then secures the operational water quality measures, including the commitment that firewater collected and retained within the affected compound area would be pumped to tanker and removed from Site for treatment and disposal at a</p>	Agreed

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Description of Matter	EA Current Position	Applicant's Current Position	Status
			be shared with the Environment Agency.	<p>suitable licenced facility (paragraph 4.8.5).</p> <p>Paragraph 4.8.2 then notes <i>'Inverter Stations and Project Substations compounds will be constructed with an impermeable lining and with stormwater storage provided above this within a gravel subbase'</i>.</p> <p>Requirement 11 (Operational surface water drainage) in Schedule 2 of the Draft DCO (Doc Ref. 3.1(E)) then secures the commitments made by the Outline OSWDS (Doc Ref: 7.14(C)) and the detailed design approval of drainage details by ABC, following consultation with the EA. These controls are considered to provide appropriate securing mechanisms for these matters.</p> <p>In the context of the above, no further requirements are considered necessary.</p>	

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Description of Matter	EA Current Position	Applicant's Current Position	Status
5.4 to 5	WR	Advice to applicant: Dewatering permit	One aspect not clearly addressed in the plans is the potential need for dewatering from excavations. This project may require temporary dewatering during the construction phase. According to the Environment Agency's Regulatory Position Statement (RPS) 261, dewatering is allowed for up to 3 consecutive months. If the discharge activity is expected to exceed 3 consecutive months, a Water Discharge Activity Permit will be required.	Noted.	Agreed

2.6 Water Framework Directive Assessment

Table 2-6 Water Framework Directive Assessment

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Description of Matter	EA Current Position	Applicant's Current Position	Status
2.6.1	S42 Consultation Response to 2023 Statutory Consultation	Scope of Water Framework Directive (WFD) Assessment	The EA are content that the scope of the ES Volume 4, Appendix 10.3: WFD Assessment (Doc Ref. 5.4) is appropriate.	This scope is reflected in ES Volume 4, Appendix 10.3: WFD Assessment (Doc Ref. 5.4(A)) [AS-013] and relevant correspondence with the EA is provided as Annex C of the same Appendix.	Agreed
2.6.2	S42 Consultation Response to 2023 Statutory Consultation	WFD (Assessment of Effects)	The EA are content that the ES Volume 4, Appendix 10.3: WFD Assessment (Doc Ref. 5.4) provides a reasonable assessment of the potential effects of the Project.	ES Volume 4, Appendix 10.3: WFD Assessment (Doc Ref. 5.4(A)) [AS-013] demonstrates that watercourse crossings will not affect the geomorphology, ecology or water quality of the watercourse.	Agreed

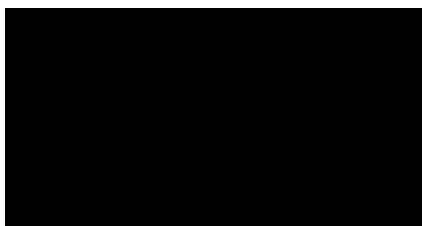
3 Signatures

This Statement of Common Ground has been prepared and agreed by EPL 001 Limited and Environment Agency.

On behalf of EPL 001 Limited

Name: 

Position: Director



Date: 11th March 2025

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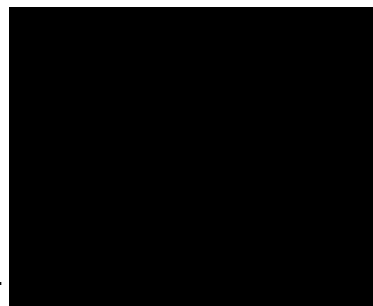
On behalf of the Environment Agency

Name: 

Position: Planning Specialist

Date: 11th March 2025

Signature:



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References

¹ *Planning Act 2008: Examination stage for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects*. [online] GOV.UK. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/planning-act-2008-examination-stage-for-nationally-significant-infrastructure-projects> [Accessed 17 Sep. 2024].

² Legislation.gov.uk. (2023). *The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009*. [online] Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2009/2264/schedule/1/made>.