



EAST PARK ENERGY

East Park Energy

EN010141

Applicant's Response to Deadline 6 Submissions

Document Reference: EN010141/DR/8.75

Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and
Procedure) Regulations 2009: Regulation 5(2)(q)

September 2026

Version P01

EAST PARK ENERGY

Planning Act 2008

Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed
Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009

Applicant's Response to Deadline 6 Submissions

APFP Regulation Reference:	Regulation 5(2)(q)
Planning Inspectorate Scheme Reference:	EN010141
Application Document Number:	EN010141/DR/8.75
Author:	BSSL Cambsbed 1 Ltd

Version	Date	Status
P01	September 2026	Deadline 7

© AXIS P.E.D. Ltd 2026. All rights reserved.

This document and its accompanying documents contain information which is confidential and is intended only for the use of the client. If you are not one of the intended recipients any disclosure, copying, distribution or action taken in reliance on the contents of the information is strictly prohibited.

Unless expressly agreed, any reproduction of material from this document must be requested and authorised in writing from AXIS P.E.D. Ltd. Authorised reproduction of material must include all copyright and proprietary notices in the same form and manner as the original and must not be modified in any way. Acknowledgement of the source of the material must also be included in all references.

CONTENTS

1.0	Introduction	2
1.1	Overview	2
1.2	Note about National Policy Statements	2
2.0	Response to Deadline 6 Submissions.....	4
2.1	Response to Bedford Borough Council	4
2.2	Response to Cambridgeshire County Council.....	9
2.3	Response to Great Staughton Parish Council	10
2.4	Response to Huntingdonshire District Council	13
2.5	Response to British Horse Society and Borough of Bedford Local Access Forum15	
2.6	Response to Stop East Park Energy	24
2.7	Response to Andrew Cox.....	49
2.8	Response to Anna Phillips.....	50
2.9	Response to Christopher Lacey	51
2.10	Response to Elaine Anne Wheeler.....	52
2.11	Response to Helen Stark.....	54
2.12	Response to Ju Fletcher.....	56
2.13	Response to Peter Mills.....	60
2.14	Response to Sara Jane Knightley	65
2.15	Response to Shaun Woodward.....	67

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

- 1.1.1 This document sets out the responses of BSSL Cambsbed 1 Limited ('the Applicant') to the Deadline 6 submissions submitted by Interested Parties in relation to the Development Consent Order (DCO) application for the East Park Energy project (the 'Scheme').
- 1.1.2 The documents submitted with the application and at previous examination deadlines are referenced using the reference number assigned by the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) i.e. **[APP-XXX]**. Where application documents have been updated based on feedback received at Deadline 6, this response document sets out that the relevant updated document is "**[as updated alongside this submission]**".
- 1.1.3 In preparing this document, the Applicant has sought, where practicable, to avoid repeating points addressed in its previous submissions. The Applicant has therefore responded only to substantive points, in particular where it considers that matters set out in the Application have been misunderstood or misinterpreted, where clarification or additional information has been requested, or where a point of disagreement has been raised that may not have been addressed in the Applicant's previous written submissions. Where the same or a substantially similar point has been raised by multiple Interested Parties, the Applicant has not necessarily provided a separate response to each party.
- 1.1.4 Accordingly, whilst the Applicant has considered all submissions made at Deadline 6, the Applicant has only responded to a selection and has not responded to every individual submission.

1.2 Note about National Policy Statements

- 1.2.1 Section 1.6 of the 2026 NPS EN-1 confirms that for schemes accepted for examination before the final publication of the approved 2025 amendments,

the 2024 suite of NPSs should have effect. East Park Energy was accepted for examination in October 2025 prior to the final publication of the 2025 amendments. The 2024 NPSs therefore have effect for decision making.

- 1.2.2 All references to the NPSs in this document made by the Applicant are to the 2024 NPSs unless stated otherwise.
- 1.2.3 The Applicant has prepared a separate **Note on updated National Policy Statements EN-1, EN-3 and EN-5 [PDA-018]**.

2.0 RESPONSE TO DEADLINE 6 SUBMISSIONS

2.1 Response to Bedford Borough Council

Table 1: Response to Bedford Borough Council Comments on Deadline 5 Submissions [REP6-056]

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
BBC-D6-01	The Applicant has submitted an updated draft Development Consent Order (dDCO) [REP5 006] at Deadline 5, incorporating amendments requested by the Host Authorities as part of the legal review undertaken. Whilst some matters remain outstanding, ongoing discussions are continuing to address and agree matters. The Council notes the Applicant's intention to provide a schedule at Deadline 6 identifying those provisions that remain under discussion or have not yet been agreed.	The Applicant submitted the Summary of outstanding matters on the draft DCO between the Host Authorities and the Applicant [REP6-053] at Deadline 6.
BBC-D6-02	Highways Side Agreement: the Council notes that Parties are in discussion regarding a Highways Side Agreement that would replace the current Highways Protective Provisions set in the DCO Agreement. A draft Highway Side Agreement has been circulated between Parties with the intention that this would be concluded prior to the end of the Examination. The Council intends that any remaining areas of disagreement or unresolved drafting points will be captured in the updated draft Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) to be submitted at Deadline 7 (1 September).	The Applicant notes that there are not currently protective provisions for local highway authorities within the draft DCO. The Applicant has explained its position on this matter previously with reference to CCC-RR-24 to CCC-RR-28 in Applicant Response to Relevant Representations - Host Authorities, Statutory Environmental Bodies and Other Interested Parties [REP1-055]. The Applicant is continuing to negotiate the highways side agreement with Bedford Borough Council and Cambridgeshire County Council and it is hoped this will be concluded by the end of examination. The Applicant will provide a final update on this matter at Deadline 8.
BBC-D6-03	Dead of Easement: it is noted that in the Council's Covers to Deadlines 3 to 5, that the Local Highway Authorities (LHA) have	The Applicant notes this comment.

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
	been in discussion with the Applicant regarding the Applicant's request of securing land and property rights and power through a separate licence outside the DCO Agreement. The Applicant tabled the possibility of a Deed of Easement which was directed at private property rights in the subsoil interests below the highway strata, assumed that the Councils were the freehold owner and held an interest in the land beyond it being adopted highway. Both Parties remain in discussion to conclude this matter.	
BBC-D6-04	The Host Authorities have reviewed and considered the Applicant's proposed approach to the replacement phase following ongoing discussions since Deadline 5. The Host Authorities consider that, as a matter of principle, the DCO should contain a defined replacement phase which is secured with the DCO itself. Whilst this is not yet common practice within precedent DCOs, the Host Authorities view is that this approach should be taken in light of the potential need for significant replacement works across the lifetime of the project and the known likelihood of technological change and advance over the duration of the Scheme. Notwithstanding this in principle position, the Host Authorities have reviewed the amended approach now set out in the updated outline Operational Environmental Management Plan (oOEMP), and other related Management Plans, and are content with the substantive details now contained within the oOEMP including the inclusion of, distinction between, and provision for, a) Routine Replacement Works, b) Planned Partial Replacement Campaign, and c) Major Replacement Campaign Method Statement and Environmental Review. Consequently, without prejudice to the Host Authorities' in-principle position that a "replacement phase" should be embedded within the DCO itself for this Scheme and others in the future, the Host Authorities agree that the Applicant's approach as now amended can be progressed.	The Applicant welcomes agreement with the Host Authorities on this matter.

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
BBC-D6-05	On the basis that the Management Plans will be amended as committed to by the Applicant (Applicant's email 03.08.2026); namely: a) 'Inclusion of an appendix in each relevant management plan providing a consolidated list of the additional plans and documents that may be prepared pursuant to that plan, together with their purpose and minimum requirements; b) Alignment of the management plans with the updated approach to replacement works. This includes incorporating a definition of replacement works linked to the oOEMP and reviewing the commitments within each plan to ensure that they adequately address operational, maintenance and replacement activities; c) Clarification of roles and responsibilities, including the responsibilities of the undertaker, contractors, Environmental Manager and other relevant personnel for implementing, monitoring and reporting compliance with the plans; d) Improved coordination between the management plans, including clearer cross references, removal of unnecessary duplication and identification of the plan under which particular controls, approvals or records will be managed; e) Greater clarity on implementation, review and amendment procedures, including when plans must be reviewed, the circumstances that may trigger an update and the requirement for approval before material amendments are implemented;	The Applicant notes this comment.

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
	f) Review of the use of the terms “temporary” and “permanent” to provide greater clarity where works or measures are specific to a particular phase; g) Review of the monitoring requirements within each plan to provide greater clarity regarding the actions to be taken in the event of a failure or non-compliance and the mechanisms for enforcement; h) Strengthening of inspection, incident and record-keeping arrangements, including the recording of inspections, defects, complaints, incidents and near misses, together with corrective actions and the maintenance of an auditable record; i) Review of the wording of commitments throughout the plans to remove terms such as “would” and “may” and replace them with “will”, where appropriate’; the Council would have an in-principle agreement on the Management Plans, subject to: (i) The amendments being made as suggested by the Applicant above; (ii) Review by the Host Authorities of the Management Plans as to be submitted by the Applicant against Deadline 6; (iii) Detailed resolution to agree the outline Management Plans prior to Deadline 7; and, (iv) Noting that the FINAL Management Plans would be prepared post Examination subject to LPA’s approval, the Council suggests that substantial resolution can be attained on the various Management Plans prior to the end of the Examination.	

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
BBC-D6-06	While it is noted that the Community Benefit Fund (CBF) is not a planning consideration, it is a voluntary commitment made by the Applicant against this Scheme, it is felt and hence noted by the Council that some reference to the CBF needs to be made by the Examining Authority in the Examination. The Council's current position is that in-principle discussions have been undertaken with the clear understanding that the Applicant will engage with the community, local councils, and the Council in framing and attaining an agreement.	The Applicant notes this comment.

2.2 Response to Cambridgeshire County Council

Table 2: Response to Cambridgeshire County Council Comments on D5 Submissions [REP6-058]

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
CCC-D6-01	The Applicant has submitted an updated Draft Development Consent Order (dDCO) [REP5-006] at Deadline 5, incorporating amendments requested by the Host Authorities as part of the legal review undertaken. Whilst some matters remain outstanding, ongoing discussions are continuing with the Applicant to address these points. The Council notes the Applicant's intention to provide a schedule at Deadline 6 identifying those provisions that remain under discussion or have not yet been agreed. The Council intends that any remaining areas of disagreement or unresolved drafting points will be captured in the updated draft Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) to be submitted at Deadline 7.	The Applicant submitted the Summary of outstanding matters on the draft DCO between the Host Authorities and the Applicant [REP6-053] at Deadline 6. The final Statement of Common Ground will be submitted at the new Deadline 8.
CCC-D6-02	The Council acknowledges the Applicant's explanation in Section 7 of the Cover Letter regarding the limited time available between Deadline 4 and Deadline 5 to review and respond comprehensively to the detailed comments submitted by the Host Authorities on the outline management plans and the approach to replacement works. The Council welcomes the Applicant's commitment to provide a substantive response at Deadline 6, including any necessary revisions to the outline management plans and associated documentation. The Council can confirm that constructive engagement with the Applicant has continued in the intervening period on these matters. Whilst agreement has been reached on a number of matters, some issues remain under discussion. The Council intends that any outstanding areas of disagreement at Deadline 7 will be captured within the final SoCG to assist the Examining Authority.	The Applicant notes this comment.

2.3 Response to Great Staughton Parish Council

Table 3: Response to Great Staughton Parish Council Comments on D5 Submissions [REP6-059]

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
GSPC-D6-01	The updated Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan relies heavily on self regulation and retrospective reporting. We remain concerned that there is no robust, real-time enforcement mechanism to stop HGVs from routing directly through our village. Relying on voluntary compliance by third-party hauliers is inadequate to protect our community from the physical impact of heavy vehicles. There should be binding, independently monitored routing enforcement for HGVs.	The Applicant has previously addressed this concern at response SW-D6-05 in the Applicant's Response to Deadline 4 and 5 Submissions – Other Interested Parties [REP6-052] . The outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (oCTMP) [REP6-032] does not rely upon voluntary compliance or retrospective self-reporting. The construction access routes are identified as the only permitted routes for construction HGVs. All other routes are treated as restricted routes and the use of any such route by a Scheme HGV would constitute a breach of the CTMP.
GSPC-D6-02	While the developer has proposed a voluntary car-sharing plan, there seems to be no plan to enforce it. Hundreds of private cars and light commercial vans will still be free to use our village and our narrow local lanes as a daily shortcut. To avoid this outcome, the Parish Council requests that the examining authority replaces the applicant's reliance on voluntary compliance with binding requirements: • 100% of workforce vehicles must report to the main site D access, with direct private vehicle access to satellite compounds via local roads being prohibited • windscreen permits for all project-related vehicles, combined with ANPR monitoring on the local roads and independent enforcement	The Applicant does not accept that the construction workforce strategy relies solely upon voluntary car sharing. Lift-sharing is one means of reducing the number of vehicles, but it is separate from the routing and access controls. As previously explained at paragraphs 2.12.4 to 2.12.7 of the Applicant's Response to Deadline 4 and 5 Submissions – Other Interested Parties [REP6-052], the assumed average vehicle occupancy of 1.4 was suggested by National Highways as a reasonable trip-generation assumption for a large rural energy project. A Construction Workers Travel Plan, an internal minibus service, collection and drop-off arrangements, controlled on-site parking and the construction access strategy provide the wider management framework. The Site also has sufficient space to accommodate the peak workforce without parking on the public highway. The outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (oCTMP) [REP6-032] already reflects the Parish Council's first request. Construction traffic, including construction staff trips, is required to approach the Site from the A1 via the B645. Staff vehicles will

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
		report to the main compound in Site D, from where workers will be transported to the active work areas by minibus. The only anticipated staff movements not passing through Site D are approximately two or three vehicles per day associated with functions such as establishing traffic-management measures and deploying banksmen to open and manage accesses and crossing points. An absolute requirement for 100% of staff to report first to Site D would therefore be unnecessary and could impede the personnel who must establish those controls before the wider workforce arrives. Whether an individual worker shares a vehicle or travels alone does not give that vehicle unrestricted access to village roads or the satellite compounds. All construction operatives must use the access and parking arrangements in the approved final CTMP and Construction Workers Travel Plan. Construction-related parking on the public highway or surrounding local roads is prohibited, parking will be monitored daily, and non-compliance may result in removal from the Site. The Applicant does not consider that windscreen permits and a network of ANPR cameras monitoring every private workforce vehicle on local roads would be necessary or proportionate. A windscreen permit would identify a vehicle but would not itself prevent inappropriate routing. The oCTMP [REP6-032] instead targets the vehicles with the greatest potential to cause physical highway impacts. Scheme HGVs must be identifiable, with route, timing and speed data collected, and compliance with their prescribed routes monitored through either ANPR or GPS-based geofencing. The final monitoring system, responsibilities and timetable must be approved by the relevant planning authority following consultation with the highway authority.

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
GSPC-D6-03	The updated plans still envisage that large volumes of construction traffic will use a narrow stretch of the Great Staughton Road, located just west of the Town around SA12 and the Zandra/Agrovista site at Garden Farm. This pinch point is unsuitable for increased heavy construction traffic and other workforce vehicles. The current submission by the developer does not provide adequate measures to manage the safety and bottleneck risks at this location. Also, if there are access points from this section of highway to the sites, it will further incentivise worker traffic to take shortcuts through the local villages rather than using the main site entrance. We request that all site traffic should be routed through the construction site rather than using this unsuitable section of public road.	The Applicant has previously addressed this matter in responses BHSB-D2-08 and SEPE-D2-19 of the Applicant's Response to Deadline 2 Submissions – Other Interested Parties [REP3-074]. All construction HGVs will enter the Scheme at the Main Site Access, SA16, before travelling internally through Sites D and C. Only a short section of Great Staughton Road and Spring Hill between SA12 and SA10 is required to connect Sites C and B, thereby avoiding HGV movements through Great Staughton. A wholly off-road connection was considered but was not considered justified when balancing practical, safety, landownership and environmental considerations, including the additional temporary land take and works that would be required. SA12 is an existing access approved for HGV use, and Figure 9 in Appendix D of the oCTMP [REP6-032] provides two-way vehicle tracking along Great Staughton Road and identifies the widening required to accommodate the largest construction vehicles. The routeing and access arrangements will be secured through the final CTMP under Requirement 8, and the Applicant therefore does not consider that an additional internal haul road is necessary or proportionate.

2.4 Response to Huntingdonshire District Council

Table 4: Response to Huntingdonshire District Council Comments on D5 Submissions [REP6-060]

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
HDC-D6-01	The Applicant submitted an updated Draft Development Consent Order (dDCO) [REP5-006] at Deadline 5, incorporating amendments requested by the Host Authorities as part of the legal review undertaken. Whilst some matters remain outstanding, progress has been made through ongoing discussions between the Applicant and Host Authorities, with a substantial number of issues now agreed, resolved or agreed in principle. The Council notes the Applicant's intention to provide a schedule at Deadline 6 identifying those provisions that remain under discussion or have not yet been agreed. Following review of those submissions, any remaining areas of disagreement or unresolved drafting points will be captured in the updated draft Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) to be submitted at Deadline 7.	The Applicant submitted the Summary of outstanding matters on the draft DCO between the Host Authorities and the Applicant [REP6-053] at Deadline 6. The final Statement of Common Ground will be submitted at the new Deadline 8.
HDC-D6-02	The Council can confirm that constructive engagement with the Applicant has continued on these matters. Since Deadline 5, the Applicant has presented and shared with the Host Authorities a number of proposed amendments to the outline management plans for review and discussion. Subject to those amendments being reflected in the formal Deadline 6 submissions, the Council's preliminary view is that the majority of the concerns raised within its Deadline 4 submission [REP4-036] could be satisfactorily addressed.	The Applicant notes this comment.
HDC-D6-03	The Council can also confirm that the Applicant has made extensive amendments to all management plans, to incorporate their approach to the Operational – replacement campaign – Phase as	The Applicant welcomes agreement on this matter.

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
	set out in the Technical Note on Replacement Works [REP3-075] to address the concerns raised by the Host Authorities.	
HDC-D6-04	The Host Authorities have reviewed and considered the Applicant's proposed approach to the replacement phase following ongoing discussions since Deadline 5. The Host Authorities consider that, as a matter of principle, the DCO should contain a defined replacement phase which is secured with the DCO itself. Whilst this is not yet common practice within precedent DCOs, the Host Authorities view is that this approach should be taken in light of the potential need for significant replacement works across the lifetime of the project and the known likelihood of technological change and advance over the duration of the Scheme. Notwithstanding this in principle position, the Host Authorities have reviewed the amended approach now set out in the updated outline Operational Environmental Management Plan (oOEMP), and other related Management Plans, and are content with the substantive details now contained within the oOEMP including the inclusion of, distinction between, and provision for, a) Routine Replacement Works, b) Planned Partial Replacement Campaign, and c) Major Replacement Campaign Method Statement and Environmental Review. Consequently, without prejudice to the Host Authorities' in-principle position that a "replacement phase" should be embedded within the DCO itself for this Scheme and others in the future, the Host Authorities agree that the Applicant's approach as now amended can be progressed.	The Applicant welcomes agreement on this matter.

2.5 Response to British Horse Society and Borough of Bedford Local Access Forum

Table 5: Response to British Horse Society and Borough of Bedford Local Access Forum Comments on Deadline 5 Submissions [REP6-062 / REP6-063]

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
BHS-D6-01	Various parties have expressed concerns that the LVIA does not give sufficient weight to the loss of open views on a number of PROW - in particular the loss of views to the north of Bolnhurst & Keysoe BW37. The evidence before the Examination does not, in our view, support the conclusion that “the openness of views across the landscape will remain intact” (as stated by the Applicant at 2.1.13) nor that “the openness is clearly retained in view” (2.2.20). While some views may remain available, the development would result in the permanent loss of a substantial part of the existing panoramic experience, particularly from the elevated sections of BW37.	The Applicant has previously addressed the visual effect at Viewpoint 12 at BHSB-D5-01 of the Applicant's Response to Deadline 4 and 5 Submissions - Other Interested Parties [REP6-052] and in Appendix C of the Written Summary of Applicant's Oral Submissions at Issue Specific Hearing 3 (ISH3) and Action Points [REP4-110], and refers BHS/BOBLAF to those responses. The Applicant does not agree that the effect has been understated. The visual assessment does not assume that the existing panoramic experience would remain unchanged. It takes account of the visibility of the solar arrays, the effect of mitigation planting, the extent and duration of the change, reversibility and the components of the view which would remain. Panels would be evident to the west and some views would ultimately be screened, but far-reaching views across the Kym valley to the east and south-east would remain. The Applicant therefore maintains the Year 10 assessment of a moderate adverse, not significant effect.
BHS-D6-02	I note that point 4 of Appendix A of Applicant's REP4-110 is shaded grey. It states that the LAF was to submit 'plans' relating to viewpoint 12 – I believe this should be photos. I assume that the grey indicates that it has not been done? These photographs form the final two pages of our post-ISH submission (REP4-044) and were emailed to the Applicant on 10 June.	The grey shading in Appendix A of [REP4-110] identifies an action allocated to a party other than the Applicant; it does not indicate that the action was incomplete or outstanding. The photographs submitted in [REP4-044] were reviewed and addressed at BHSB-D5-01 of Applicant's Response to Deadline 4 and 5 Submissions - Other Interested Parties [REP6-052].
BHS-D6-03	Much is made by the Applicant of the fact that these are not regionally or nationally important routes or views. To those affected by this loss of amenity this is irrelevant, as they are very important	The Applicant has not suggested that the local value of the affected routes or views is irrelevant. This point is addressed at JL-D5-01 of Applicant's Response to Deadline 4 and 5 Submissions - Other Interested Parties [REP6-052] and in Written Summary of

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
	locally, as the ExA heard at the ISH. I note that the Applicant acknowledges this but has not sought to minimise these impacts.	Applicant's Oral Submissions at Issue Specific Hearing 3 (ISH3) and Action Points [REP4-110]. All affected PRow have been assessed and a local route may have high sensitivity where its particular characteristics and users' experience justify it. National or regional status is one consideration in assessing receptor value and is not a substitute for assessment of local effects. The Applicant also does not accept that it has failed to minimise effects. The design response includes route buffers and landscaped corridors, retention and reinforcement of existing vegetation, and the avoidance of solar development on the south-east side of BW37 to retain views across the Kym valley.
BHS-D6-04	We share the Host Authorities conclusion that there is some under-representation of significant effects and that the screening of views has been assessed as an improvement rather than a potentially adverse change. We do not find the Applicant's responses compelling and consider that the professional judgement, particularly in the case of the views from Bolnhurst & Keysoe BW37, has not adequately appreciated the permanence of the loss of views over quite a distance of bridleway (about 1 km).	The Applicant has previously addressed the Host Authorities' position in Appendix C of Written Summary of Applicant's Oral Submissions at Issue Specific Hearing 3 (ISH3) and Action Points [REP4-110] and maintains that response. The LVIA does not treat mitigation planting solely as having a beneficial screening impact, and recognises that planting may filter, truncate or restrict existing open views, increase enclosure and alter the experience of PRow users. Those changes, together with the extent and duration of the affected section of route, form part of the professional judgement applied to the residual effects. The Applicant therefore does not agree that significant effects have been under-represented.
BHS-D6-05	The 'safety measures' put in place for equestrians on this Bolnhurst & Keysoe BW37 during construction are in our view inadequate. The Applicant continues to insist that these are adequate despite evidence provided in the virtual site inspection videos that the banksman (if present) will have inadequate visibility of approaching horses and so the proposals to stop traffic and construction at such	The Applicant considers that this comment is overtaken by the Applicant's Deadline 6 update set out at BHSB-D5-02 of Applicant's Response to Deadline 4 and 5 Submissions - Other Interested Parties [REP6-052]. A temporary construction phase diversion of Bolnhurst and Keysoe BW37 and Pertenhall BW26 has now been agreed with the relevant

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
	times are unworkable. Nor has the method and speed of communication of such 'stop' messages been adequately explained. I note that the summary of the safety measures presented at 2.3.10 and 11 no longer refers to the plan to tell workmen to cease work when a horse is present. This may well be because the Applicant has realised that this is a communication challenge and unrealistic. But it now means that equestrians will be riding just meters away from potentially noisy and percussive construction work over a significant distance of approximately 1km and even further if cable laying is taking place past the BW40 junction.	landowner, is shown on Figure 2 of the updated outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan (oPROWMP) [REP6-040], and will be provided for so long as construction works are taking place which affect the relevant PRow. The diversion is secured through Requirement 11 of the draft DCO [REP6-006]. The Applicant considers that the diversion resolves the concern regarding banksman visibility and communication at the immediate construction interface. The other route-specific controls remain, including the clarified circumstances in which a banksman will be deployed.
BHS-D6-06	It is stated in 2.3.10 that the proposals are in line with the BHS's own Advice Note. I disagree. I have attached the August 2024 version of this advice note, which is the version extant at the start of the Examination. I draw your attention to the section entitled "Horses' reactions": It should be remembered that we are talking about percussive piling which will be a particularly challenging noise for many horses. The lack of a proper means of communication to the machinery operators and the failure to provide banksmen on all lines of approach at all times of construction and cable-laying are particular omissions:	Paragraph 2.3.10 of Written Summary of Applicant's Oral Submissions at Issue Specific Hearing 3 (ISH3) and Action Points [REP4-110] did not state that every aspect of the proposed management regime replicated the BHS Advice Note. It stated that the proposed minimum 50m separation, increased to 100m where forward visibility allows, reflected and exceeded the separation distances in that advice. The wider comments concerning communications, banksmen and the pausing of activity were addressed at BHSB-D2-03 to BHSB-D2-06 of Applicant Response to Deadline 2 Submissions - Other Interested Parties [REP3-074].

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response												
BHS-D6-07	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>BHS advice</th><th>Applicant's proposed measure</th><th>Remaining deficiency</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Machinery and noise should be capable of being stopped while horses pass</td><td>Applicant proposes banksmen/traffic management</td><td>No demonstrated reliable communication with operators and banksman not able to see all approaching horses</td></tr> <tr> <td>"Sentries" (Banksmen) should warn approaching riders and be obvious on approach</td><td>Banksman arrangements proposed</td><td>Not present at all times – only when deemed necessary – plus banksman not able to see all approaching horses or be seen by all approaching riders</td></tr> <tr> <td>Activity should not resume until horses are safely clear (20m+ if horse calm, 50m+ if horse distressed)</td><td>General safety measures described</td><td>No enforceable procedure demonstrated</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	BHS advice	Applicant's proposed measure	Remaining deficiency	Machinery and noise should be capable of being stopped while horses pass	Applicant proposes banksmen/traffic management	No demonstrated reliable communication with operators and banksman not able to see all approaching horses	"Sentries" (Banksmen) should warn approaching riders and be obvious on approach	Banksman arrangements proposed	Not present at all times – only when deemed necessary – plus banksman not able to see all approaching horses or be seen by all approaching riders	Activity should not resume until horses are safely clear (20m+ if horse calm, 50m+ if horse distressed)	General safety measures described	No enforceable procedure demonstrated	The stated 'remaining deficiencies' do not reflect the final control framework secured by Requirement 11 of the draft DCO [REP6-006]. The final PROWMP will establish the detailed roles, communication methods, hold points and management procedures for the relevant work fronts and must be approved under Requirement 11. The newly agreed temporary diversion provides an additional route-specific control and addresses the identified interface while the relevant construction works are undertaken.
BHS advice	Applicant's proposed measure	Remaining deficiency												
Machinery and noise should be capable of being stopped while horses pass	Applicant proposes banksmen/traffic management	No demonstrated reliable communication with operators and banksman not able to see all approaching horses												
"Sentries" (Banksmen) should warn approaching riders and be obvious on approach	Banksman arrangements proposed	Not present at all times – only when deemed necessary – plus banksman not able to see all approaching horses or be seen by all approaching riders												
Activity should not resume until horses are safely clear (20m+ if horse calm, 50m+ if horse distressed)	General safety measures described	No enforceable procedure demonstrated												
BHS-D6-08	At 2.3.30 of REP4-110 the Applicant acknowledges that it should ensure that foreseeable risks are appropriately controlled through a proportionate and enforceable management regime. This proposed management regime will not in my view protect against foreseeable risks. Just one example is a horserider approaching Bolnhurst & Keysoe BW37 from the west – they will not be seen in approach and none of the proposed safety measures will benefit them.	The Applicant does not agree and considers that the comment does not reflect the measures set out in the oPROWMP [REP6-040]. During construction hours, equestrians approaching Bolnhurst and Keysoe 37 from the west will be directed onto the temporary diversion, away from the affected construction-access alignment, with temporary fencing provided where the diversion runs adjacent to construction traffic. Their safety will therefore not depend upon first being seen by a banksman. Banksman, stop-and-hold and separation-distance controls will remain additional safeguards at the remaining crossing and vehicle interfaces. Outside construction hours, no Scheme vehicle movements will use the affected bridleway. These measures are secured through Requirement 11, under which the final PROWMP must be approved by the relevant planning authority in consultation with the highway authority. The Applicant therefore considers the identified risk to be appropriately controlled and enforceable.												

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
BHS-D6-09	I note that at 2.1.21, reference is made to the past use of part of Bolnhurst & Keysoe BW37 for access to the existing Manor Farm solar facility. The previous use referred to by the Applicant was materially different in scale and circumstances from that proposed under the current Application. In particular, the relevant section had substantially better visibility and does not provide a comparable precedent for managing construction activity along the much longer sections (over 2km) of bridleway affected by the proposed development.	The previous use of part of BW37 for construction access to the Manor Farm Solar Farm was provided as contextual information and was not relied upon as a direct precedent or as the sole basis of the Applicant's safety case. The proposed arrangements have been developed for the particular circumstances of this Scheme. In any event, the temporary diversion now secured addresses the construction interface on BW37 while the relevant works are taking place.
BHS-D6-10	Once again, the Applicant has not addressed the point made in REP4-044 and also made by Cllr Sira, that these inadequate safety measures effectively close BW37 to horse riders and that the horses kept in Brook End have no alternative safe off-road routes available to them. A safer diversion route is required, not least for the vulnerable child who keeps his horse in Brook End. Or, as I have previously suggested, the arrays alongside BW37, to the west of the junction with BW40, could be removed from the Scheme which would not only address these safety issues but also local residents' concerns about the impact on views.	As set out above at BHS-D6-05, a temporary diversion of BW37 and Pertenhall BW26 has been agreed with the relevant landowner and will be available for the duration of the relevant construction works. The Applicant therefore does not agree that equestrian access would be effectively closed or that removal of the arrays west of the BW40 junction is necessary. No construction works will take place before 8am or after 6pm between Mondays and Fridays, or before 8am or after 1pm on Saturdays. There will therefore be evenings through the spring / summer months, Saturday afternoons, Sundays, and public holidays where there is no construction work happening on Site. It is therefore incorrect to suggest that the PRow will be effectively closed to users for the entirety of the construction phase.
BHS-D6-11	In summary, we invite the ExA to conclude that the proposed construction management measures are insufficient to ensure the continued safe use of BW37 by equestrians. We therefore request that the Applicant be required either to: • provide a safe and suitable temporary diversion for equestrians for the duration of the relevant construction works; or	The first of the measures requested by BHS/BOBLAF has now been secured. A temporary diversion has been agreed and will operate for so long as the relevant construction works affect BW37 and Pertenhall BW26. Its delivery is set out in the updated oPROWMP [REP6-040] and secured by Requirement 11. The final PROWMP will also provide the detailed and enforceable arrangements for implementation. The Applicant therefore does not

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
	• amend the scheme to remove the arrays and associated construction activity adjacent to BW37 west of its junction with BW40; or • demonstrate, through an enforceable and detailed management plan, how construction activity will be safely managed in accordance with appropriate equestrian safety principles.	consider that removal of the arrays or any further amendment of the Scheme is necessary.
BHS-D6-12	The applicant has not offered any further additional public access, nor agreed to upgrade permissive routes offered to dedicated routes, despite repeated requests from ourselves and the Host Authorities. At present, the Applicant states (2.3.23) that no further mitigation or enhancements are needed to make the Scheme acceptable in planning terms. We disagree. This failure to provide further public access is attributed to the landowners, although it is stated that the Applicant is continuing to consult landowners regarding additional access (see 2.1.31). These farmers will be benefitting very significantly from the development and, whilst it is accepted that the Applicant cannot impose further access, it can certainly influence them and make them aware that such additional access may assist their cause.	The Applicant has considered the additional routes suggested during the Examination and has continued to engage with landowners. In addition to retaining the existing PRoW network, the Scheme provides approximately 5.3km of permissive access during operation, including the 2.35km equestrian connection between the B660 and Green End. As set out at BHSB-D5-06 and BHSB-D5-07 of Applicant's Response to Deadline 4 and 5 Submissions - Other Interested Parties [REP6-052], paragraph 2.10.44 of NPS EN-3 requires opportunities to be considered and maximised taking account of landowner views; it does not enable the Applicant to impose permanent or permissive rights where the necessary agreement has not been obtained. The Applicant remains willing to engage on further deliverable opportunities but does not consider further access necessary to make the Scheme acceptable.
BHS-D6-13	The Applicant takes the view that such provision is not 'mitigation' but rather opportunities to improve access. Whatever the rationale, this is a very large development covering about 1,900 acres and the permissive routes currently offered amount to: • The upgrade of 2,350m of footpath to bridleway – appreciated but not an increase in public access, being of no benefit to walkers • 1,725m new circular footpath around a parcel of land which is no longer to have panels on it following archaeological finds	The Applicant notes the route lengths identified but does not agree that the 2.35km route is not an enhancement simply because the underlying route is already available to pedestrians. The proposal materially extends the lawful user group and creates a substantial off-road equestrian connection between two roads. Taken together with the new circular and connecting pedestrian routes, the Scheme provides approximately 5.3km of additional permissive access. The Applicant has consistently acknowledged that this benefit should attract limited positive weight.

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
	• 1,230m being 5 short connecting sections of footpath.	
BHS-D6-14	At 2.3.26 the Applicant acknowledges that the benefit that should be attached to these new paths is limited as they are limited in scope and not dedicated as permanent access improvements. I note that the negative impact of the development on PROWs will be permanent – which may explain why the Applicant is seeking to argue that the permissive paths are not mitigation measures as if they are they should be permanent mitigation for permanent harm. We continue to press for dedication and for the upgrade of the circular footpath to bridleway (with a connection to the nearby bridleway Hail Weston 112/7) as well as the further paths requested by BOBLAF.	The Applicant has previously addressed the request for dedication and additional equestrian access at BHSB-D5-06 to BHSB-D5-08 of Applicant's Response to Deadline 4 and 5 Submissions - Other Interested Parties [REP6-052] and refers BHS/BOBLAF to those responses. The premise that the visual effects of the solar infrastructure are permanent is not accepted as the Scheme has a time-limited operational period and decommissioning is secured through the draft DCO [REP6-006]. The permissive routes are enhancement measures and there is no policy requirement that a time-limited recreational benefit must be dedicated permanently in order to attract weight. Permanent dedication, the upgrade of the Site C circular route and a connection to Hail Weston BW112/7 would require landowner agreement and would also need to be compatible with the archaeological, security and PRoW network constraints previously identified.
BHS-D6-15	We remain of the view that the spirit of EN-3 requires further public access. Notwithstanding the strict legal position that the landowners need to agree, the reality is that this development will be beneficial to these landowners and detrimental to public rights of way users. Most of the routes requested will apparently not be returned to agriculture after decommissioning so are available to be provided as dedicated routes in perpetuity, without significant implications for the landowners.	The Applicant does not agree that the 'spirit' of NPS EN-3 <u>requires</u> the further routes or permanent dedication requested. Paragraph 2.10.44 expressly requires the views of landowners to be taken into account. The commercial arrangements between the Applicant and individual landowners do not confer power on the Applicant to impose permanent public rights or remove the need for landowner agreement. Assumptions about the future use of land following decommissioning do not establish that the requested routes are available, deliverable or necessary mitigation.
BHS-D6-16	As regards the potential closure of permissive routes due to antisocial behaviour, it remains the case that the Site Operator will be able to close such routes without the agreement of the Host Authority. We regard such requirement for consent as a necessary	As set out in the oLEMP [REP6-038] and oPROWMP [REP6-040], incidents associated with the permissive paths must be recorded, and material or repeated incidents must be reported to the relevant authorities. Closure is limited to a substantiated pattern of repeated

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
	protection and good governance – particularly as the identity of the Operator is unknown and may well change during the lifetime of the operation.	anti-social behaviour or a serious incident giving rise to unacceptable risk. No permanent closure or material reduction in the permissive path network may be implemented without the prior written approval of the relevant local planning authority following consultation with the relevant highway authority. The Applicant does not consider it necessary or proportionate to require prior approval before every short-term action that may be needed in response to an immediate safety or security incident.
BHS-D6-17	A similar concern relates to the proposed quarterly monitoring. The Site Operator does not appear to be under an obligation to share the outcome of such inspections with the Host Authority or the Community Liaison Group. The only mention of reporting to the Host Authority is if an issue that falls outside the control of the Site Operator is identified – so there is no safeguard to ensure that the Site Operator (whoever that may be) does indeed monitor and remedy issues.	The updated oPROWMP [REP6-040] requires operational inspections at least quarterly and additionally following maintenance or replacement activity, severe weather, user reports, or incidents. Defects must be recorded together with the required action, responsible party and target timescale, and all monitoring records must be made available to the relevant authorities on request, and shared with the relevant highway authorities on at least an annual basis. These commitments are secured through the final PROWMP approved under Requirement 11 and will be enforceable. The Applicant does not consider automatic circulation of every inspection record to the Community Liaison Group to be necessary. The relevant authorities retain regulatory oversight and the Community Liaison Group provides an additional engagement mechanism.
BHS-D6-18	In summary, we ask for: • Dedication of the proposed permissive routes. • Upgrade of the proposed circular footpath to bridleway. • Connection from that circular route to Hail Weston BW 112/7. • Further routes previously requested by BOBLAF and by the Host Authorities.	The Applicant refers to its responses above to BHS-D6-12 to BHS-D6-17.

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
	• Appropriate Host Authority oversight before any closure of permissive routes. • A requirement to report monitoring results to the Host Authority and Community Liaison Group.	
BHS-D6-19	The versions of the videos subsequently published in the Examination Library have, in our experience, presented technical and usability difficulties, including a fish-eye distortion and an inability to use the 360-degree viewing facility. In addition, the segmentation of individual routes means that they do not provide the same continuous representation of the experience of travelling along the relevant PROWs as the single, continuous versions available on the Applicant's website. For example, the video of Route 9b is in 13 segments in the Library but a single video on the Applicant's website. As a result, I do not consider that the videos within the Examination Library give a proper view of the PROWs surveyed, as was the original intention.	The Applicant has provided comment on this matter at Section 7 of its Deadline 6 Cover Letter [REP6-001].

2.6 Response to Stop East Park Energy

Table 6: Response to Stop East Park Energy Comments on Deadline 5 Submissions [REP6-065]

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
SEPE-D6-01	SEPE's Deadline 4 submissions raise an extensive range of detailed, evidence based issues spanning technical robustness, potential omissions from the Applicant's assessments, internal inconsistencies, unsupported assumptions, methodological concerns, evidential deficiencies, questions over the adequacy of mitigation and control measures, and broader issues relating to the implementation and performance of the Scheme. As a consequence of the procedural issues outlined above, many of these detailed matters remain unanswered at this late stage of the Examination. Following the deferral of the Applicant's substantive responses to Deadline 4 submissions until Deadline 6, any consequential issues identified by Interested Parties can only be raised at the final Examination deadline, leaving no meaningful opportunity for the Applicant's responses to be addressed or tested by Interested Parties or statutory consultees before the close of the Examination.	The Applicant notes the examination timetable has been amended by the Rule 8(3) and 17 - Change to examination timetable and request for further information [PD-012] .
SEPE-D6-02	SEPE notes that the Applicant once again relies largely on generic policy support rather than providing regional or local data modelling to support its assertions relating to Scheme performance. SEPE set out its response on overplanting, the Scheme's "indicative installed capacity of approximately 485 MWp" and inappropriate reliance on DESNZ's 'Renewable Energy Generation Cost and Technical Assumptions – Onshore Wind and Solar PV' in its REP5-033 submission ('East Park Energy: questions over technical robustness, evidential gaps and internal inconsistencies in the Application', section 6). Once more the Applicant selectively cites the study (2.2.3) and refers to "a range of 11.5% to 14.5% [as] the typical capacity factor" without including the report's critical	The Applicant refers to responses SEPE-D3-35 and SEPE-D3-40 in the Applicant's Response to Deadline 3 Submissions - Other Interested Parties [REP4-109] , and paragraphs 2.2.1 to 2.2.6 of the Applicant Response to Deadline 4 Submissions [REP5-023] . The generation estimate is based on technical modelling for the Scheme, including its proposed overplanting. The DESNZ range was cited as relevant national context and was not the sole basis for the estimate. The operating performance of an adjacent solar farm cannot be treated as a directly transferable proxy without equivalent information on its panel specification, configuration, system losses, availability, maintenance and downtime. The Applicant remains satisfied that the generation assumptions are realistic and does not

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
	qualifications around installation age, degradation and site specificity. In response to the Applicant's claims at paragraph 2.2.3, SEPE reiterates that its references to local generation data are not related to the age of the infrastructure. Instead, SEPE benchmarked actual local generation data against contemporaneous national averages (see REP1-156 and REP4-085). Generation data is taken from a solar power site directly adjacent to, and surrounded by, the East Park Energy target site, and relates to newly installed panel arrays during their first two full years of operation. As these datasets are benchmarked against national averages for the same period, underperforming the national average by 10–15%, the Applicant's references to "more efficient panels now available" are largely irrelevant. SEPE submits that the Applicant's concession that it "has not undertaken any specific sensitivity testing using lower irradiance or alternative long-term meteorological assumptions" (2.2.5) demonstrates a further weakness in both its assessment and the Application.	consider that a further lower-irradiance sensitivity test is necessary to establish the planning merits of the Scheme.
SEPE-D6-03	SEPE notes that the Applicant refers to having followed Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Practitioners (ISEP) guidance on GHG assessment (2.2.7), stating that ISEP does not prescribe a specific method. However, SEPE contends that the issue at hand is not one of selected methodology. The Applicant's responses to both individual Interested Parties and SEPE acknowledging flawed assumptions and potential errors in its calculations suggest that the Applicant's assessments undertaken for the Scheme's greenhouse gas evaluation are not robust.	SEPE is correct that errors were identified during the Examination. These errors were acknowledged and addressed through the amendments already made to ES Vol 2 Appendix 15-1 [REP4-021] and ES Vol 1 Chapter 15 [REP4-014]. The Applicant's position is that those matters have been resolved. The fact that the corrections were made does not demonstrate that the assessment as amended is not robust. An evidence-based approach was adopted, drawing on experience from the development of solar farms and other major infrastructure projects, to produce a reasonable and proportionate assessment of GHG emissions. The purpose of the assessment is not to predict the Scheme's precise emissions with exact certainty, but rather to

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
		provide a reasonable estimate that gives assurance as to the likely scale of GHG emissions. The Applicant remains satisfied that the figures presented in ES Vol 2 Appendix 15-1 [REP4-021] are appropriate for the purposes of the Examination and provide a proportionate assessment of the Scheme's likely GHG emissions, and likely significant effects.
SEPE-D6-04	At paragraph 2.2.8, discussing limitations and assumptions relating to its assessment of greenhouse gas emissions, the Applicant suggests: <i>"Where assumptions were made within the Applicant's assessment these were conservative estimates to align with a reasonable worst-case assessment scenario."</i> SEPE submits that it is difficult to characterise the Applicant's assessment as "conservative" and refers to SEPE's REP3-108 (section 4.1 and Appendix A) and REP5-033 (section 5.1). SEPE's alternative analysis of the Scheme's greenhouse gas emissions was conducted on a selection of Scheme components, presenting a partial calculation, and is therefore an underestimate of overall Scheme emissions. SEPE analysis of the Scheme's BESS cells, PV panels and PV framework suggests that lifetime emissions of these components alone would total well in excess of 1,000,000 tonnes of CO₂e. Moreover, calculating emissions associated with further products and materials, including for example, concrete, thermal sand and cabling, SEPE estimates that the Scheme would generate additional emissions in the region of between 200,000 and 300,000tCO₂. This is in sharp contrast to the Applicant's current claim that total Scheme emissions are 735,000 tCO₂e. Even SEPE's lower bound estimate puts Scheme emissions over 60% higher than the total suggested by the Applicant. The Applicant has not substantively contested SEPE's initial alternative analysis set out in REP3-108 and, further, has acknowledged that its own assessment contains errors and materially flawed assumptions, as set out below.	The Applicant has acknowledged SEPE's alternative analysis within section 4.1 and Appendix A of Comments on any updated or additional documents submitted by the Applicant at Deadline 2 [REP3-108] and responded on it previously within the Applicant Response to Deadline 3 Submissions - Other Interested Parties [REP4-109] and Applicant Response to Deadline 4 Submissions [REP5-023]. The Applicant does not consider it necessary to substantively contest SEPE's alternative analysis, as it reflects a different approach based on different assumptions and scope, rather than identifying any deficiency in ES Vol 2 Appendix 15-1 [REP4-021]. Additionally, when the Applicant reviewed SEPE's calculations within section 4.1 and Appendix A of [REP3-108] against ES Vol 2 Appendix 15-1 [REP4-021], the Applicant noted that they broadly align, with the main differences arising from the battery calculations. The Applicant has already amended the emission factor error in ES Vol 2 Appendix 15-1 [REP4-021] and has explained this in [REP4-109].

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
SEPE-D6-05	At paragraph 2.2.9, the Applicant concedes its assessment is flawed: <i>“The applicant acknowledges that errors have been identified in some of the assumptions made within ES Vol 2 Appendix 15-1 [REP4-014].”</i> Significantly, in its response (REP4-109) to SEPE’s alternative calculations for a partial set of the Scheme’s greenhouse gas emissions (REP3-108), the Applicant stated: <i>“The largest difference between the Applicant’s calculations and SEPE’s calculations appears to be the production emissions and replacement emissions associated with the batteries.”</i> The Applicant acknowledged an error in its calculation for the Scheme’s batteries: “The Applicant has amended the calculations in ES Vol 2 Appendix 15-1” Acknowledging the flawed assumptions identified by SEPE relating to its overall Scheme greenhouse gas assessment, the Applicant additionally conceded an error in its assumptions for batteries: <i>“The Applicant has reviewed the literature and has concluded the batteries generally have a service life of 10-20 years and has completed a sensitivity analysis for the batteries having at the lower end of the service life range (i.e. a 10-years). The sensitivity would increase the total GHG emissions to 809,000 tCO₂e”</i> SEPE has already raised concerns over this particular acknowledgement (REP5-033, section 5.2), suggesting it appears to demonstrate a lack of understanding of a fundamental aspect of battery safety.	The Applicant refers to its response to SEPE-D6-03. SEPE is correct that errors were identified during the Examination. These errors were acknowledged and addressed through the amendments already made to ES Vol 2 Appendix 15-1 [REP4-021] and ES Vol 1 Chapter 15 [REP4-014]. The Applicant has noted that the Applicant and SEPE used different assumptions. SEPE assumed three battery replacements over the operational lifetime of the Scheme, equating to one replacement every 10 years, whereas the Applicant assumed one battery replacement over the operational lifetime of the Scheme, equating to one replacement every 20 years. As explained within the Applicant Response to Deadline 3 Submissions - Other Interested Parties [REP4-109], the Applicant subsequently completed a sensitivity analysis for the batteries having a service life of 10 years. The sensitivity increased the total GHG emissions, but this would not affect the conclusions of the assessment. As the difference in assumption was not an error, and the change in assumption did not affect the conclusions of the assessment, the Applicant did not update ES Vol 2 Appendix 15-1 [REP4-021], but outlined the findings within [REP4-109]. Furthermore, SEPE’s suggestion that the Applicant demonstrates a lack of understanding of a fundamental aspect of battery safety because of the assumptions adopted in ES Vol 2 Appendix 15-1 [REP4-021], including battery life and emission factors, is misplaced. The use of a GHG emission factor, or assumptions adopted for the assessment of lifecycle emissions in ES Vol 2 Appendix 15-1 [REP4-021], does not relate to battery safety.
SEPE-D6-06	Despite the Applicant’s acknowledgement in REP4-109 that its unsound assumptions “would increase the total GHG emissions to	As explained within the Applicant Response to Deadline 3 Submissions - Other Interested Parties [REP4-109] , the

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
	809,000 tCO₂e”, at paragraph 2.2.19 the Applicant nonetheless repeats its claim: <i>“The total emissions over the lifetime of the Scheme are estimated to be approximately 735,000 tCO₂e”</i> Its current Greenhouse Gas Emissions Assessment (REP4-021) still states: <i>“As shown, using the conservative assumptions the total emissions over the lifetime of the Scheme are ~735,000 tCO₂e.”</i>	Applicant completed a sensitivity analysis for the batteries having a service life of 10 years. The sensitivity increased the total GHG emissions, but this did not affect the conclusions of the assessment. As the difference in assumption was not an error, and the change in assumption did not affect the conclusions of the assessment, the Applicant did not update ES Vol 2 Appendix 15-1 [REP4-021], but outlined the findings within [REP4-109].
SEPE-D6-07	In addition to acknowledging further errors and flawed assumptions in its own assessment, as noted above, the Applicant has made no substantive attempt to challenge SEPE’s alternative analysis, relying instead on reference to generic national policy, and its claim that the Scheme would “still have a net carbon benefit over its lifetime” (REP4-109, page 67). SEPE’s alternative analysis of greenhouse gas emissions avoidance suggests that this is not the case. SEPE’s analysis, presented in ‘East Park Energy: review of the Applicant’s carbon assessment – reliability, transparency and alternative lifecycle analysis’ (REP4-086) suggests that the Scheme would instead generate well over a million more tonnes of carbon dioxide than it would avoid: <i>“Over its lifetime, SEPE calculates that the Scheme would generate at least 1,524,206 tonnes of CO₂e while avoiding only 295,418 tonnes of CO₂e. This represents a minimum net carbon increase of 1,228,788 tonnes of CO₂e over the lifetime of the Scheme.”</i> REP4-086 sets out SEPE’s alternative analysis of carbon dioxide emissions avoidance and questions a number of apparent inconsistencies in the Applicant’s greenhouse gas assessment. SEPE submits that the Applicant has materially understated the Scheme’s operational greenhouse gas intensity. While the Applicant	The Applicant does not consider it necessary to substantively contest SEPE’s alternative analysis, as it reflects a different approach based on different assumptions and scope, rather than identifying any deficiency in ES Vol 2 Appendix 15-1 [REP4-021]. The Applicant has used several counterfactuals for displaced electricity generation within ES Vol 1 Chapter 15 [REP4-014]: • the current long-run marginal generator, 6,104,646 tCO₂e; • the 2024-2025 grid average, 2,461,035 tCO₂e; • the DESNZ Green Book long-run marginal generation-based electricity emission factors, 172,820 tCO₂e; and • adjusted DESNZ Green Book long-run marginal generation-based electricity emission factors, 359,321 tCO₂e. The counterfactuals used have been used on other recent schemes and the Secretary of State has accepted that there are a range of counterfactuals that can be used. The Applicant refers also to its responses to SEPE-D6-09 to SEPE-D6-11 below. As explained in paragraph 15.8.25 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 15 [REP4-014] and the Applicant Response to Deadline 4 Submissions [REP5-023], the operational GHG intensity was calculated to enable a comparison with the GHG intensity of the current grid and the DESNZ Green Book projections, which only consider

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
	continues to claim an operational intensity of 0.246 gCO₂e/kWh based on “total operational GHG emissions”, SEPE contends that this figure excludes the majority of operational emissions identified in the Applicant’s own assessment, as demonstrated in this section. When those emissions are included, SEPE calculated an operational intensity of approximately 18.6 gCO₂e/kWh$\pm$ (REP4-086), suggesting that the Applicant’s published figure does not accurately represent the Scheme’s operational greenhouse gas intensity and consequently understates its operational emissions while overstating its environmental performance. However, the Applicant implies (2.2.10) that Deadline 4 submissions suggesting that the “Applicant has materially understated the Scheme’s lifecycle carbon emissions and materially overstated its claimed carbon savings”: <i>“...appear[] to be due to a misunderstanding of the approach used to determine GHG intensity and the lifetime GHG savings.”</i> In its specific response to SEPE’s suggestion that a miscalculation or misrepresentation was apparent in the Applicant’s operational greenhouse gas intensity figure, at paragraph 2.2.12, the Applicant states: <i>“Stop East Park Energy has calculated the operational GHG intensity using the total operational emissions presented in ES Vol 2 Appendix 15-1 [REP4 021].”</i> Nonetheless, despite this assertion relating to “total operational emissions”, SEPE notes that in its Climate Change document (version at time of SEPE submission: REP2-012), the Applicant employs almost identical language at paragraph 15.8.25, followed by significant caveats, to present its operational GHG intensity figure: <i>“the average operational GHG intensity of the Scheme has been calculated by dividing the total operational GHG emissions by the</i>	operational emissions. The average operational GHG intensity of the Scheme was calculated by dividing the operational GHG emissions by the total energy generation of the Scheme. The construction, replacement of parts and decommissioning emissions were not included within this calculation to allow for a like-for-like comparison with the projected grid intensity, which relates only to generator emissions in the operational phase and does not include emissions related to the fuel supply chain or maintenance activities. SEPE is correct that the only emissions included within the operational GHG intensity are the provision of clean water and treatment of wastewater, and travel of workers to Site. This is because all other operational emissions had been scoped out throughout the consultation period, as documented within Tables 15.3 and 15.4 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 15 [REP4-014], so these were the only emissions calculated within the operational phase.

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
	<i>total energy generation of the Scheme. The operational GHG intensity of the Scheme is 0.246 gCO₂e/kWh</i> However, it appears that the Applicant's given figure of 0.246gCO₂e/kWh does not, in fact, represent "average operational GHG intensity ... [from] ... total operational GHG emissions", as presented in REP2-012. The "Total Operational Phase" emissions are set out in Table 16 of its Environmental Statement Volume 2 – Technical Appendices Appendix 15-1: Greenhouse Gas Emissions Assessment (version at time of SEPE submission: REP2-021). It is on this more comprehensive set of emissions figures that SEPE had based its calculation of 18.6gCO₂/kWh, and it appears that the Applicant has now confirmed that this is indeed the appropriate figure for overall operational intensity. The Applicant appears to be advancing two inconsistent positions: referring to total operational emissions figures, while simultaneously asserting that its calculation is not based on total operational emissions. On SEPE's further analysis, the only calculation that would achieve the Applicant's figure of 0.246gCO₂e/kWh is effectively achieved by excluding the majority of what the Applicant describes as "total operational GHG emissions" (Climate Change document) or "Total Operational Phase" emissions (Greenhouse Gas Emissions document). Following analysis of the line-by-line emissions set out at Table 16 (REP2-021), the only emissions the Applicant appears to incorporate in its "average operational GHG intensity" are: <i>"Provision of clean water and treatment of wastewater"</i> <i>"Travel of workers to site"</i> SEPE suggests that it is difficult to justify the omission of almost the entire range of additional emissions associated with the operational phase of the Scheme, including as it does:	

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
	<i>"leakage of GHGs ... replacement of equipment [including] embodied GHG emissions associated within the replacement of equipment, transportation of replacement equipment to Scheme, transportation of replaced equipment to recycling and disposal, and disposal and recycling of replaced equipment."</i>	
SEPE-D6-08	The performance of photovoltaic panels begins to deteriorate from the point of installation, which is why extensive equipment replacement programmes are an inherent and necessary aspect of the long term operation of grid-scale solar schemes such as East Park Energy. The associated emissions are therefore an integral component of the Scheme's operational lifecycle, making the apparent decision to exclude them from the Applicant's calculation of operational GHG intensity all the more difficult to sustain.	The Applicant agrees that the replacement of parts forms part of the Scheme's lifecycle emissions. However, as set out above, the construction, replacement of parts and decommissioning emissions were not included within the operational GHG intensity calculation to allow for a like-for-like comparison with the projected grid intensity, which relates only to generator emissions in the operational phase and does not include emissions related to the fuel supply chain or maintenance activities. Those emissions have not been omitted from ES Vol 2 Appendix 15-1 [REP4-021] .
SEPE-D6-09	The Applicant's position appears internally inconsistent. It accepts avoided emissions as the basis for calculating lifetime GHG savings, but rejects the DESNZ Green Book methodology when it produces a lower estimate of those savings. Paragraph 2.2.13 states that the Scheme's lifetime GHG savings comprise the emissions associated with constructing and operating the Scheme offset against the emissions avoided by displacing other electricity generation. SEPE notes that the Applicant does not refer to the emissions associated with decommissioning and disposal of Scheme infrastructure. However, paragraph 2.2.15 rejects the use of the DESNZ Green Book long-run marginal generation emission factors on the basis that they show the avoided emissions falling over time as the electricity grid decarbonises. If lifetime GHG savings are to be calculated using the emissions actually avoided over the Scheme's operational life, then the progressive decarbonisation of the grid is	Paragraph 2.2.13 of the Applicant Response to Deadline 4 Submissions [REP5-023] was a concise summary and does not reproduce every source in the lifecycle inventory. Decommissioning emissions were assessed in ES Vol 1 Chapter 15 [REP4-014]. SEPE has used the DESNZ Green Book long-run marginal generation-based electricity GHG emission factors to calculate displaced electricity generation in [REP4-086]. As explained in ES Vol 1 Chapter 15 [REP4-014] and the Applicant Response to Deadline 4 Submissions [REP5-023], those factors reduce significantly throughout the operational phase of the Scheme due to the projected implementation of renewable projects, such as the Scheme. This means that there becomes a point at which the GHG emissions offset by the electricity generated by the Scheme are lower than those associated with the Scheme. However, developments such as the Scheme are required to achieve the projected reductions in generation based GHG emission factors. This results in a Catch-22 situation for the purposes of assessing

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
	an inherent part of that calculation. Rejecting those emissions factors because they reduce the claimed carbon benefit is therefore difficult to reconcile with the methodology described in paragraph 2.2.13.	GHG emissions from the Scheme. This position was reinforced by the Secretary of State's decision on Morecambe Offshore Windfarm Generation Assets, which dismissed the approach of assuming renewable developments displace the future UK grid mix, stating that the assumption would undermine the GHG reduction benefits of renewable projects by assuming they are in competition with, rather than complementary to, decarbonisation initiatives.
SEPE-D6-10	Where the Applicant relies on greenhouse gas savings as a significant beneficial environmental effect, those savings must be assessed on the basis of clearly defined parameters. If the range of scenarios is so broad that the likely GHG savings cannot be robustly quantified across the assessed envelope, SEPE suggests that the environmental assessment cannot properly demonstrate the likely significant effects in accordance with the Rochdale principles. In those circumstances, the assessment should adopt the reasonable worst case for the claimed environmental benefit. The Applicant itself acknowledges that the DESNZ Green Book long-run marginal emission factors reflect the expected decline in grid carbon intensity over the Scheme's operational life. As these are the only established government forecasts of the emissions likely to be displaced, they provide the most robust basis for assessing likely lifetime GHG savings. Assuming greater savings than those indicated by the Green Book would risk overstating the Scheme's likely significant beneficial effects.	The Secretary of State's approach in the recent solar DCO decisions for One Earth and Beacon Fen is that the use of unabated CCGT, as the current long-run marginal generator, as a comparator is also not appropriate. However, those projects were granted consent on the basis that they would result in carbon savings during operation and would support the trajectory to net zero. Additionally, the Rochdale Envelope principle does not require an assessment based on a series of extreme worst-case assumptions, but an assessment of the likely significant effects of the maximum realistic development scenario. The displaced GHG emissions calculated through the counterfactuals are not fixed development parameters, but projections derived from the electricity generated by the Scheme and assumptions about the wider energy system. As with any projection, sensitivity to assumptions is critical, particularly given the uncertainty surrounding the rate at which the electricity grid will decarbonise, which is outside the Applicant's control. Therefore, the Applicant's approach to the range of counterfactuals represents a proportionate and robust assessment of the likely significant GHG effects for the Secretary of State to review.
SEPE-D6-11	At paragraph 2.2.18, the Applicant repeats two of the scenarios it set out in REP2 012. SEPE's REP4-086 provides a reasoned critique of those scenarios, questioning both their underlying assumptions and the transparency of the methodologies adopted.	The Applicant refers to its above responses and notes that a reasonable, evidence-based approach has been adopted within ES Vol 2 Appendix 15-1 [REP4-021], drawing on experience from the development of solar farms and other major infrastructure projects and recognising that a range of assumptions and counterfactual

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
	At 2.2.19, the Applicant refers to its Scheme emissions figure of “735,000 tCO₂e” (yet to be amended), linking it into these two purported scenarios. As set out earlier in this section, by contrast, SEPE estimates that, at a minimum, there would be a net carbon increase of 1,228,788 tonnes of CO₂e over the lifetime of the Scheme.	scenarios could result in either higher or lower emissions. The Rochdale Envelope principle does not require an assessment founded on a series of extreme worst-case assumptions, but an assessment of the likely significant effects of the maximum realistic development scenario. That is the approach the Applicant has taken. Additionally, ES Vol 2 Appendix 15-1 [REP4-021] is not intended to predict the Scheme's precise GHG emissions with absolute certainty, but to provide a reasonable and credible estimate of the GHG emissions for the purposes of the Examination. The Applicant notes the position of the Examining Authority at paragraph 3.12.61 of the One Earth Solar Farm Recommendation Report that <i>“The ExA concludes that the proposed development would contribute positively to climate change mitigation, both in isolation and cumulatively with other similar developments. However, these benefits are considered to be inherently captured within the substantial positive weight already attributed to the need for energy, as set out in NPS EN-1. Accordingly, the ExA does not assign additional weight to climate change effects separately in the overall planning balance in order to avoid double counting.”</i>
SEPE-D6-12	SEPE continues to contend that the Applicant has not accurately defined the limits of the Scheme (paragraph 2.2.23). For example, SEPE has provided evidence suggesting that the Applicant has not used “maximum traffic movements” and has not taken a sufficiently comprehensive approach to defining the Scheme’s extent, for example, by considering U-turn junction impacts.	The Applicant has repeatedly addressed the concerns raised in this comment throughout the Examination, as reiterated and summarised within Section 2.12 of the Applicant Response to Deadline 4 and 5 Submissions – Other Interested Parties [REP6-052]. The fact that SEPE considers additional junction modelling desirable does not mean that the Scheme limits have not been defined. The construction routing, peak traffic assumptions and relevant junction effects have been assessed, and the approach and conclusions have been considered by the local highway authorities and National Highways.

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
SEPE-D6-13	Similarly, SEPE contends that design parameters (2.2.24) are limited in detail. For example, for access tracks, Table 6 of the Applicant's Design Parameters and Principles Statement (REP4-023) states for Work No 6, 'Scale': <i>"The access tracks will have a width of up to 4m, and a depth of up to 0.25m below ground level."</i> SEPE is concerned that the 0.25m depth is insufficient for HGVs and could damage the subsoil. The Applicant should provide pavement calculations to demonstrate that its track design is adequate.	SEPE has treated a maximum below-ground depth parameter as though it were a complete specification. The final access track design will respond to ground conditions, drainage, anticipated loading and the selected construction method, while remaining within the maximum parameters assessed and secured through the Design Parameters and Principles Statement [REP4-023]. The track construction may include material above existing ground level or temporary surface systems, and the detailed design will be developed after ground investigation and contractor appointment.
SEPE-D6-14	By comparison, the Scheme component 'BESS Internal Access' (Work No 2) for 'Design' has the following applicable design parameter: <i>"The BESS compound internal access roads will be up to 6m wide and up to 0.5m depth below ground level."</i>	The 0.5m parameter for BESS internal access is a maximum design parameter and not a complete specification. The BESS compound has different functional requirements from the wider solar access network, including concentrated permanent infrastructure, heavy component deliveries, crane access and emergency-service access. It is therefore appropriate for the relevant Work No. 2 parameter to allow a different maximum width and depth. The final design will be determined through detailed design within the assessed envelope.
SEPE-D6-15	The same applies for 'Substation Internal Access' (Work No 3), under 'Design'. It has not been made clear why the pavement thickness is double at these locations compared to the remaining sections of access tracks.	
SEPE-D6-16	Similarly, SEPE suggests that it is not clear what type of "open-span crossing" (Work No 6) is proposed at water crossings (Table 6, 'Design') that will not cause flooding issues. The Applicant does not provide details.	The proposed watercourse crossings have been assessed in ES Vol 2 Appendix 8-3 Watercourse Crossing Assessment [APP-100]. The Applicant has also responded to this issue at SCEL-D3-01 in Applicant Response to Deadline 3 Submissions - Other Interested Parties [REP4-109]. With the exception of the identified culvert crossing, the new crossings are proposed as clear-span bridge structures. Their detailed span, soffit level, abutment arrangement and hydraulic design will be developed post-consent so that flows are not obstructed and flood risk is not increased, and

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
		will be subject to the applicable detailed approval and permitting controls.
SEPE-D6-17	As a further example, SEPE notes that the Applicant suggests that temporary access tracks will use “heavy duty construction matting” (Work No 6 and 7) (Table 6). Once more SEPE suggests that a lack of detail about the “matting” type raises concerns over potential compaction damage to the topsoil/subsoil.	Heavy duty construction matting is a temporary surface solution intended to distribute vehicle loads and avoid the excavation and imported aggregate otherwise required for temporary routes. The precise product and arrangement will be selected by the Principal Contractor having regard to loading, ground conditions and the approved Soil Management Plan. The Soil Management Plan controls will provide for unsuitable wet conditions, use of established routes, ground-pressure reduction, inspection, removal of temporary materials and remediation of any compaction or rutting. The absence of a matting specification at this stage does not give rise to an unassessed effect.
SEPE-D6-18	Firstly, SEPE notes that the Applicant has still not engaged with the specific and detailed concerns set out across SEPE submissions, including, at Deadline 4, its ‘East Park Energy construction traffic evidence submission: construction material and delivery traffic reconciliation, omitted traffic categories and wider transport issues’. Key concerns presented in REP4-081 include: - SEPE’s technical transport analysis identifying categories of construction traffic that appear to have been omitted from the Applicant’s assessment, including delivery of construction plant, car park surfacing materials, landscaping deliveries, fuel tankers, haul road removal activities and associated plant movements. - A sample reconciliation analysis undertaken by SEPE suggesting that the Applicant’s published construction material quantities have not been accurately reconciled with its published construction traffic calculations. On the information currently presented in the Application,	Paragraphs 2.12.1 to 2.12.13 of Applicant Response to Deadline 4 and 5 Submissions - Other Interested Parties [REP6-052] respond to the matters summarised by SEPE, including plant deliveries, compound surfacing, landscaping and fuel deliveries, removal of temporary tracks, construction-worker trip assumptions, parking and minibus measures, accident data, decommissioning traffic and the Site D access.

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
	aggregates deliveries alone would account for in excess of 9,000 two-way HGV movements, indicating that the published material quantities and traffic assumptions cannot presently be independently reconciled. • An apparent internal inconsistency in the Applicant's construction worker travel assumptions, whereby the assessment relies on voluntary car sharing and extensive minibus use to reduce vehicle trips, while simultaneously providing parking for up to 500 vehicles and identifying overspill capacity for the full peak workforce, with no enforceable mechanism to secure the assumed reductions in private car use. • Concerns regarding the Applicant's assumptions relating to replacement and decommissioning traffic, impacts relating to the removal and reinstatement of sections of the internal haul road network, and the potential for additional, unassessed impacts arising from late-stage amendments to the plans during the Examination. • A failure to justify apparent inconsistencies in the road safety evidence, including the omission of fatal collisions from the collision tables despite their inclusion elsewhere in the Applicant's own Transport Assessment. • The Applicant's acknowledgement that the current Site D construction access was influenced by the failure to agree commercial terms for the original Sharps Barn access, without adequately addressing whether this resulted in a less favourable outcome from a highway safety perspective.	
SEPE-D6-19	SEPE notes the Applicant's emphasis on "congestion" (2.2.39–2.2.42) and reiterates its position across submissions that its	The Applicant's assessment is not limited to congestion and includes driver delay, severance, pedestrian delay, amenity, fear and intimidation, accidents and safety. The proposed U-turning

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
	concerns regarding construction traffic and transport are, in substance, broader concerns relating to safety risks. Irrespective of the Applicant's assertions at paragraphs 2.2.39 and 2.2.41, SEPE contends that the Applicant has been selective in the routes and junctions modelled, specifically the omission of modelling of the impact on the four potential U turn junctions.	arrangements and the relevant A1 junctions have been addressed in responses SEPE-D2-15 and SEPE-D2-16 of Applicant Response to Deadline 2 Submissions - Other Interested Parties [REP3-074], and paragraph 2.12.8 of Applicant Response to Deadline 4 and 5 Submissions - Other Interested Parties [REP6-052]. Peak construction HGV traffic on the A1 would be limited to 30 movements in each direction per day for a relatively short period, and the final routing position has been considered and agreed with National Highways. No additional junction modelling has been requested by National Highways or the local highway authorities.
SEPE-D6-20	SEPE remains concerned that the Applicant has still not produced a single comprehensive "restricted routes" plan, which is normal and accepted practice for NSIP schemes	The Proposed Construction Access Strategy plan at Appendix C of the outline Construction Traffic Management Plan [REP6-032] identifies the routes which construction traffic is permitted to use. As explained at SEPE-D2-18 in Applicant Response to Deadline 2 Submissions - Other Interested Parties [REP3-074], routes not shown on that plan are restricted routes, and use of a restricted route would constitute a breach of the approved CTMP. A second plan showing the inverse of the same information is not necessary.
SEPE-D6-21	SEPE contends that the local highway authorities and National Highways have not had the opportunity to comment on wider traffic impacts because neither modelling nor a report has been produced for specific junctions, including the A1 Buckden Junction, A1 Little Paxton Junction, A428 Black Cat Junction and A1/A428/B1428 Wyboston Roundabout.	The relevant highway authorities have reviewed and scrutinised the Applicant's transport assessment. The Applicant would note that no modelling or reporting has been undertaken on the A1 junctions referred to be SEPE since this was neither requested nor deemed necessary by National Highways. As noted above, the forecast volume of daily construction traffic using the A1 was discussed by the Applicant and National Highways. National Highways has confirmed that it is satisfied that the forecast construction traffic would not result in a detrimental impact on the A1, as per the Statement of Common Ground with National Highways [REP4-103].

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
SEPE-D6-22	SEPE notes that the Applicant relies heavily on the absence of objection from the host highway authorities (for example, 2.2.42 and 2.2.54), but does not engage with the specific evidence and concerns raised by SEPE (REP4-081 and earlier submissions) regarding the reconciliation of construction traffic assumptions, potential omissions from the traffic assessment, worker travel, replacement and decommissioning traffic, highway safety and the completeness and transparency of the transport evidence. Those concerns remain outstanding irrespective of the authorities' acceptance of the Applicant's assessment methodology.	The Applicant has not relied on the absence of highway authority objection as a substitute for responding to SEPE. Detailed responses are provided at paragraphs 2.12.1 to 2.12.13 of Applicant Response to Deadline 4 and 5 Submissions – Other Interested Parties [REP6-052] and in the earlier responses cross-referred to there. The agreement of the local highway authorities and National Highways is nevertheless relevant independent confirmation that the methodology, routing, traffic volumes and highway conclusions are robust. SEPE's continued disagreement does not demonstrate that the matters remain unanswered.
SEPE-D6-23	At paragraphs 2.2.45– 2.2.52, the Applicant repeats its previous assertions, once more employing language that implies that the lack of a stand-alone grid connection for the Scheme's battery energy storage system is simply a matter of timing: "Gate 1 applies where the full Gate 2 criteria are not yet met. It does not provide a confirmed grid connection date or queue position, although the project may seek to progress through a later connection window once readiness is demonstrated." "the absence of a Gate 2 import offer for the BESS at this point in time does not make the BESS or solar development undeliverable. At most, it relates to the timing and extent of the BESS's ability to provide grid import and balancing services."	The Applicant has not assumed that the BESS will progress to a Gate 2 import connection. The current connection position is a Gate 2 offer for 400 MW export and a Gate 1 position in respect of BESS import. Paragraphs 2.2.45 to 2.2.52 of the Applicant Response to Deadline 4 Submissions [REP5-023] explain that the absence of a Gate 2 import offer affects only the possible timing and extent of supplementary grid-import and balancing services. It does not prevent the BESS from being constructed, charged from the Scheme's solar generation and exporting stored solar electricity through the Gate 2 export connection. Any future progression to an import offer is a possibility, not an assumption on which the assessment or planning balance depends.
SEPE-D6-24	The Applicant does not engage with the central issues set out in SEPE's submission, 'East Park Energy: implications of Gate 1 BESS connection status for claimed benefits, available evidence, and the Scheme under Examination' (REP4-085), namely: the extensive project-specific, regulatory and industry evidence (including from NGET, NESO, DESNZ/Ofgem and Brockwell Energy Group) demonstrating that the BESS's	The Applicant has addressed the substance of [REP4-085] at paragraphs 2.2.45 to 2.2.52 of the Applicant Response to Deadline 4 Submissions [REP5-023] , and responses SEPE-D5-11 and SEPE-D6-02 in the Applicant Response to Deadline 4 and 5 Submissions – Other Interested Parties [REP6-052] . The Applicant accepts that progression from Gate 1 to Gate 2 for import is uncertain and has not relied on import dependent services in establishing the need for, or benefits of, the Scheme. The BESS

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
	Gate 1 status creates material uncertainty and that progression to Gate 2 cannot be assumed - that, without a secured Gate 2 import connection, the BESS cannot deliver the import-dependent benefits claimed in the Application • the Application’s continuing reliance on BESS capabilities and policy benefits which have not been evidenced as secured under the connection agreement - the Applicant’s progressive recharacterisation of the role of the BESS during the Examination without corresponding adjustment of the Application itself, creating a material discrepancy between the Application and the Scheme now under examination, and - the continuing evidential gap arising from the absence of key connection and operational information needed to verify the deliverability of the claimed BESS benefits and assess the appropriate planning weight to be attributed to them.	remains capable of performing its core co-located function by storing electricity generated by the solar arrays and exporting it later within the 400 MW export connection. Relevant application documents were updated to remove references suggesting that a 100 MW import connection had already been secured. There is therefore no material discrepancy between the Scheme assessed and the Scheme under Examination.
SEPE-D6-25	See SEPE submissions REP4-085 and REP5-033. The latter highlights the fact that the Applicant has now updated its ‘Grid Connection Statement’ (REP4-031), to state: “The Applicant received notification of a Gate 2 Phase 1 offer for a 400 MW export connection.” However, the remainder of the Application has not been revised accordingly and continues to rely on references to an ‘import’ connection and the associated capabilities and claimed benefits, despite National Grid having presented evidence at Deadline 1 on 7 April to the Examination that the Scheme has not been offered an import connection, a position that the Applicant only came to acknowledge during the later stages of the Examination in response to questions raised by Interested Parties.	The Applicant has already reviewed and updated relevant application documents to remove references implying that a 100 MW import connection is secured, as set out in response SEPE-D6-02 of Applicant Response to Deadline 4 and 5 Submissions – Other Interested Parties [REP6-052]. The fact that earlier wording required correction does not alter the authorised development, its assessed physical parameters or the environmental effects of the Scheme.

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
SEPE-D6-26	The Applicant's position on the Eaton Socon Substation relies on the assumption that the necessary upgrade works will be completed by October 2028, despite acknowledging uncertainty over both the scope and programme of those works. As noted in SEPE's submission, 'East Park Energy: questions over technical robustness, evidential gaps and internal inconsistencies in the Application' (REP5 033, section 1), the Applicant provides no evidence to support this assumption or to demonstrate that the planning, consenting and construction processes required for those works can be completed within the necessary timescale. SEPE contends that the resulting uncertainty has not been adequately reflected in the assessment of the Scheme's deliverability or its cumulative and construction impacts.	The Applicant refers to response SEPE-D6-01 in Applicant Response to Deadline 4 and 5 Submissions – Other Interested Parties [REP6-052]. October 2028 is the connection date contained in the Applicant's connection offer, with an October 2030 backstop. The Applicant has been clear that the precise scope and programme of any wider National Grid works at Eaton Socon Substation are outside its control and have not yet been confirmed. In the absence of a sufficiently developed alternative National Grid scheme, the reasonable assessment assumption is that the Scheme will connect to a new generation bay within the existing substation, as authorised by Work No. 5.
SEPE-D6-27	SEPE notes that the Applicant repeats its case for not providing a bond or other secured financial mechanism to guarantee decommissioning and restoration. However, the Applicant does not engage with the central issue identified by SEPE in its 'East Park Energy: decommissioning, restoration and the absence of secured financial assurance' (REP4-083): that legal obligations to restore the site, remove and dispose of all solar, BESS and associated infrastructure are of limited value if there is no independently secured funding available to discharge those obligations at the end of the Scheme's operational life. This concern is particularly acute given the Scheme's proposed 40-year lifespan, the high likelihood of changes in ownership, and the fact that the Applicant is a special purpose vehicle (SPV), meaning future financial capacity cannot be assumed. SEPE contends that this is especially important where a development targets such a significant percentage of high-grade agricultural land, as is the case with East Park Energy.	The Applicant refers to paragraphs 2.2.43 to 2.2.47 of Applicant Response to Deadline 4 Submissions [REP5-023]. Requirement 18 of the draft DCO [REP6-006] secures decommissioning and restoration, and no decommissioning activity may commence until the required plans have been approved. There is no policy requirement for a decommissioning bond for solar development and the Secretary of State has repeatedly concluded that such security is not necessary where enforceable DCO requirements are in place. The Scheme's 40 year duration, the use of a special purpose vehicle and the proportion of BMV land do not, individually or collectively, establish that a bond is necessary or proportionate. The DCO obligations would bind the undertaker responsible for the Scheme and remain enforceable regardless of any hypothetical change in ownership or operator.

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
SEPE-D6-28	SEPE notes that at paragraph 2.2.47, the Applicant states: “Ultimately the Applicant and Scheme would be subject to the requirements of the DCO irrespective of circumstance and this places a legal obligation on whoever is operating the Scheme to carry out decommissioning in accordance with the approved details.” SEPE suggests that the phrase “this places a legal obligation on whoever is operating the Scheme” reinforces SEPE’s concerns over the uncertainty of future ownership and the lack of certainty that future operators will possess the financial capacity to fulfil those obligations. The existence of a legal obligation is not, in itself, equivalent to a secured financial mechanism capable of ensuring that decommissioning and restoration will be carried out in the event of insolvency or other financial failure.	
SEPE-D6-29	At paragraph 2.2.48, the Applicant states: “The BESS has no confirmed import connection, and it would only operate as part of the co-located solar generation.” SEPE contends that this suggests a further instance of internal inconsistency. It is a particularly emphatic acknowledgement that the Scheme has not secured an import connection. Elsewhere in REP5-023 (2.2.45– 2.2.52), as SEPE discusses in section 6 of this submission, the Applicant implies that obtaining an import connection is simply a matter of timing. As SEPE set out in its ‘East Park Energy: implications of Gate 1 BESS connection status for claimed benefits, available evidence, and the Scheme under Examination’ (REP4-085), industry evidence overwhelmingly demonstrates that this is not the case.	The Applicant does not consider there to be any inconsistency. The Applicant’s assessed position is that the BESS has no confirmed import connection and can operate as part of the co-located solar generating station. Separately, the Gate 1 process leaves open the possibility that an import offer may be obtained through a future connection window. The Applicant has not assumed that this will occur. The statement that Gate 1 relates to the timing and extent of possible import and balancing services describes the consequence if those supplementary services are pursued and it does not treat progression to Gate 2 as guaranteed. The Applicant refers to paragraphs 2.2.45 to 2.2.52 of the Applicant Response to Deadline 4 Submissions [REP5-023].

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
	SEPE notes that this is an additional example of the material discrepancy between the Scheme described in the Application, and the Scheme currently undergoing Examination.	
SEPE-D6-30	The Applicant goes on to repeat: “The intended operational model, dispatch logic and cycling regime is not a matter that needs to be considered as part of the planning merits of the approach taken, nor is it something that the Applicant could accurately quantify or define in any meaningful way at this stage.” SEPE has consistently questioned this position (REP1-156, REP3-108), however, the Applicant has not engaged with the substance of those concerns. The Applicant’s suggestion that the intended operational model is not a planning matter is difficult to sustain. While it is clear that the precise timing and frequency of operation over the lifetime of the Scheme cannot be predicted in detail at this stage, evidence-based assumptions on likely charging patterns, cycling intensity and seasonal operation are plainly material to the assessment of environmental effects, safety, replacement cycles, carbon performance and, ultimately, the overall planning balance. Given that the BESS represents a £73 million investment – nearly 20% of the Scheme’s estimated capital cost – SEPE suggests that it is not plausible to suggest that the Applicant is unable to meaningfully define or quantify its intended operational model. While operational parameters may evolve over time, an investment of this scale would necessarily have been supported by assumptions regarding its expected operation, utilisation and commercial performance. SEPE therefore contends that it is reasonable to expect the Applicant to provide those evidence-based assumptions to inform the Examination.	The environmental assessment has considered the maximum physical and operational parameters of the BESS, including its capacity, dimensions, noise, safety controls, traffic, replacement and decommissioning. Those effects do not depend on disclosure of a fixed commercial strategy. Actual charging and dispatch will vary over the Scheme’s life in response to solar output, system conditions, market arrangements, maintenance and the connection rights available at the relevant time. The BESS safety regime will be governed by the approved BSMP and manufacturer requirements rather than by a particular revenue model. The estimated capital cost does not make private commercial assumptions a necessary part of the land-use planning assessment. In the present connection position, the assessment does not rely on grid import and the BESS can operate by storing and later exporting electricity generated by the Scheme.

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
SEPE-D6-31	SEPE's concerns relating to financial/commercial aspects of the Application (2.2.49, 2.2.50) are based on: - the potential for stranded asset risk arising from the suspension or premature cessation of the solar power station and/or BESS during construction or operation - risks around the availability of funding for the extensive decommissioning and restoration work across the 1,900-acre site required at the eventual close of the project, exacerbated by the Scheme's status as an SPV. This concern is particularly acute for a site consisting of 74% Best and Most Versatile land - wider concerns around funding as a result of the Applicant's strong resistance to National Gas's request for a bond or similar financial security mechanism relating to the protection of its gas infrastructure, including a live pipeline in close proximity to the BESS compound - the BESS charge/discharge cycles depending on commercial operation plans and consequent impacts on safety risks and cell replacement cycles SEPE therefore contends that the range of issues it has raised pertaining to these aspects are directly relevant to the DCO Application and community safeguarding.	The Applicant does not agree that anticipated revenues, profitability or the risk of a private investment becoming stranded are matters which determine the planning acceptability of the Scheme. Decommissioning security is addressed separately at SEPE-D6-27 and SEPE-D6-28. National Gas Transmission's request for financial security under its protective provisions concerns the protection of its own apparatus and is a separate commercial and legal matter; it does not establish a general need for a decommissioning bond.
SEPE-D6-32	SEPE is concerned that the Applicant does not appear to have a detailed understanding of school bus routes, the locations of bus stops, and bus timetables (2.2.51– 2.2.56). For example, school buses from Little Staughton depart before 08:00. Therefore, if “construction deliveries would be coordinated to avoid the conventional highway peak periods of 08:00–09:00...”, this particular school bus service would still be affected. SEPE also	The Applicant would note that the hours of construction, as secured by Requirement 17 of the draft DCO [REP6-006], would be from 08:00 to 18:00 on weekdays. Construction deliveries schedule to avoid the highway peak hour of 08:00-09:00 would therefore not arrive at the Site until after 09:00 and as such would have no impact on a school bus that departs before 08:00.

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
	notes that school buses and other local traffic are likely to be impacted by traffic management measures, such as temporary traffic signals associated with roadworks.	The Applicant would also note that the identified areas where the use of temporary traffic signals will be required are predominantly linked to works associated with the laying of cables beneath the street. As such, temporary traffic signals would only be in place for a short period of time in any one area, so the impact on background traffic flows would be minimal.
SEPE-D6-33	In its cover letter (REP5-001), the Applicant states at item 7, 'Response to Host Authorities': "The Applicant notes that the Deadline 4 submissions from the Host Authorities contain extensive and detailed comments on a number of the outline management plans, as well as the approach to replacement works. Given the nature and level of detail of the comments, the Applicant is undertaking a careful review alongside relevant technical discipline leads and, where appropriate, is drafting amendments to the management plans. It would not assist the ExA or the parties for the Applicant to provide a necessarily abbreviated or insufficiently considered response within the very limited time available between Deadline 4 and Deadline 5." Firstly, SEPE notes the Applicant's acknowledgement of the Host Authorities' "extensive and detailed comments on a number of the outline management plans", while deferring its substantive response until after Deadline 5, as a consequence of the "very limited time available between Deadline 4 and Deadline 5", further demonstrating that important matters remain outstanding at this advanced stage of the Examination.	The Applicant's decision to undertake a careful technical review of the Host Authorities' detailed comments does not demonstrate that the application material was inadequate or that the matters remained unresolved. The resulting responses and amendments are set out comprehensively in the Applicant Response to Deadline 4 and 5 Submissions - Host Authorities [REP6-051]. The Applicant notes the examination timetable has been amended by the Rule 8(3) and 17 - Change to examination timetable and request for further information [PD-012].
SEPE-D6-34	SEPE particularly notes that in their Deadline 4 submissions, local authorities raise wide-ranging concerns about the Applicant's Technical Note on Replacement Works, questioning whether it adequately assesses, controls and secures the impacts of large-scale replacement campaigns.	The Applicant refers to its responses below and to the detailed responses to the Host Authorities at BBC-D5-64 to BBC-D5-81 in the Applicant Response to Deadline 4 and 5 Submissions - Host Authorities [REP6-051] .

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
SEPE-D6-35	Local authorities identify significant deficiencies in the Applicant's Technical Note on Replacement Works. Their comments go well beyond drafting matters, challenging the underlying assumptions, impact assessment, enforceability and management of replacement activities. For example, Bedford Borough Council expresses concern that: <i>“the durational impact(s) of any major replacement campaign(s) could be significant, and that these are not addressed by the Applicant.”</i>	The Host Authorities' comments on replacement works have been addressed individually at BBC-D5-64 to BBC-D5-81 in Applicant Response to Deadline 4 and 5 Submissions - Host Authorities [REP6-051]. Those responses include amendments to the replacement assessment and the operational management framework. In particular, the replacement assessment has been incorporated into the ES as ES Vol 2 Appendix 2-4: Replacement Works [REP6-028], and the oOEMP [REP6-034] now defines and controls routine replacement works, planned panel replacement campaigns and major replacement campaigns.
SEPE-D6-36	Significantly, a dedicated Replacement Phase Management Plan is called for. The authorities also criticise the lack of enforceable commitments. Bedford Borough Council states, in relation to ensuring that “such works do not give rise to any materially new or materially different environmental effects compared to those identified in the environmental statement”, the Technical Note: <i>“does not address how the Council will be able to monitor and enforce such commitments (with potential financial and/or stop-work penalties). This remains a concern for the Council.”</i>	A separate Replacement Phase Management Plan is not necessary as replacement works are part of the operational phase and will be controlled through the final OEMP and the relevant topic-specific approved plans. The Applicant notes that as set out in Deadline 6 submissions, the Host Authorities are now satisfied with the Applicant's approach to and assessment of replacement works.
SEPE-D6-37	Referring to a worst case solar panel replacement scenario, Bedford states: <i>“this should be acknowledged by the Applicant as a prolonged industrial activity with related disturbance and harm to the local community.”</i> The significant concerns raised by local authorities demonstrate that the issues relating to repeated replacement works activities across the target site are substantive, extensive and remain unresolved at a late stage in the Examination.	The Applicant refers to BBC-D5-68 to BBC-D5-72 in Applicant Response to Deadline 4 and 5 Submissions - Host Authorities [REP6-051]. The Applicant notes that as set out in Deadline 6 submissions, the Host Authorities are now satisfied with the Applicant's approach to and assessment of replacement works.

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
SEPE-D6-38	SEPE's submission, 'East Park Energy: response to the Applicant's Technical Note on Replacement Works – assessment of key issues' (REP4-082) mirrors many of the concerns set out by the local authorities, independently identifying the same deficiencies in the Applicant's Technical Note and questioning whether replacement works have been properly assessed or secured through the draft DCO. Key issues identified by SEPE include: • Failure to demonstrate that replacement works would remain within the assessed environmental envelope throughout the Scheme's 40-year operational life. • An arbitrary and unjustified 20% notification threshold, which could be circumvented by successive sub-threshold campaigns and does not appear to place an upper limit on the scale of replacement campaigns. • Reliance on assumptions rather than enforceable DCO controls, including future management plans and a notification process lacking clear regulatory powers. • Failure to properly assess the implications of future technological change, despite acknowledging replacement equipment may differ from that originally installed. • Inadequate assessment of replacement traffic, highway safety and soil impacts, including routing HGVs through villages, cumulative traffic effects and the absence of secured soil protection measures.	The Applicant has responded to each of these matters at SEPE-D5-01 to SEPE-D5-09 in Applicant Response to Deadline 4 and 5 Submissions – Other Interested Parties [REP6-052], read together with BBC-D5-64 to BBC-D5-81 in Applicant Response to Deadline 4 and 5 Submissions - Host Authorities [REP6-051].
SEPE-D6-39	Replacement works are a significant component of the Scheme, with the potential to generate substantial environmental effects throughout its 40-year operational life. Yet the Applicant's proposed approach has only emerged at the closing stages of the Examination, leaving very limited time or scope for the evident	Replacement works have been considered as part of the operational phase in the application and were consolidated in the Technical Note on Replacement Works submitted at Deadline 3 [REP3-075]. The subsequent revisions respond to questions and representations made during the Examination, which is the purpose

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
	deficiencies identified independently by both the Host Authorities and SEPE – to be properly scrutinised, tested or resolved before the Examination concludes.	of the process. The assessment has now been incorporated into the ES as ES Vol 2 Appendix 2-4 [REP6-028], and the updated oOEMP [REP6-034] and topic-specific plans provide the applicable controls. The Applicant refers to BBC-D5-64 to BBC-D5-81 in Applicant Response to Deadline 4 and 5 Submissions - Host Authorities [REP6-051] and SEPE-D5-01 to SEPE-D5-09 in Applicant Response to Deadline 4 and 5 Submissions – Other Interested Parties [REP6-052]. The Applicant notes that as set out in Deadline 6 submissions, the Host Authorities are now satisfied with the Applicant's approach to and assessment of replacement works.
SEPE-D6-40	SEPE additionally notes that REP5-023 paragraph 2.2.9 omits references to damage caused during the operation of the Scheme, and associated replacement works, and the decommissioning phase: "The Applicant will be responsible for ensuring that any damage to the highway network attributable to construction of the Scheme is repaired, rather than the cost falling to the relevant highway authority."	The Applicant would note that Applicant Response to Deadline 4 Submissions [REP5-023] provides a summary of responses to collated comments from interested parties submitted at Deadline 4. In this case, the comments being responded to related specifically to the construction phase. The definitive position regarding the Applicant's commitment to restoration of damage during the decommissioning phase is set out in the outline Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan (oDEMP) [REP6-036]. This clearly sets out within Section 2.5 that the mitigation measures set out in the oCTMP [REP6-032] would also apply to the decommissioning phase. This would therefore include measures covering the monitoring of the condition of the highway during the decommissioning phase. The oDEMP also sets out that a specific Decommissioning Traffic Management Plan (DTMP) will be prepared prior to commencement of the decommissioning phase, in consultation with the relevant LPA, as set out at Requirement 18 of the draft DCO [REP6-006]. With regard to replacement activity, Table 5.5 of the outline Operational Environmental Management Plan (oOEMP) [REP6-034] sets out that "<i>the relevant Site access and adjoining highway</i>

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
		<i>will be visually checked during the replacement campaign for any obstruction, mud, debris or damage attributable to the works. Any required cleaning or repair will be recorded and undertaken as soon as reasonably practicable".</i>

2.7 Response to Andrew Cox

Table 7: Response to Andrew Cox Comments on Deadline 5 Submissions [REP6-066]

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
AC-D6-01	As the freehold owner of my home and the land on which it stands, located in close proximity to the proposed East Park Energy construction routes and working areas, my property will be directly affected by prolonged construction noise, heavy vehicle movements, and loss of amenity over the three year build period. As a residential landowner under the Planning Act 2008, I am concerned that these impacts are not adequately addressed by the Applicant's proposals. I note the Bushmead Estate's request for a Land Value Impact Agreement for affected neighbouring landowners. Given the scale of disruption and the number of homes impacted, I respectfully request that the Examining Authority extend this principle to all affected landowners, including residential homeowners. I reiterate my points that the Applicant's proposed £6 million Legacy Fund is trivial relative to the size of the development and offers no meaningful or proportionate compensation for individual landowners experiencing amenity loss or potential diminution in property value. I therefore ask the Examining Authority to consider recommending that the Secretary of State require the Applicant to enter into Land Value Impact Agreements with all affected landowners to ensure fair, transparent, and proportionate mitigation should this scheme be granted.	The Applicant has previously addressed alleged effects on private property values and generalised blight at item 9B of Table 3 in the Applicant Response to Stop East Park Energy [REP2-045]. Private property value and market stigma are not, in themselves, environmental effects or material planning considerations. This does not mean that residential amenity has been disregarded as construction noise, traffic, landscape, and visual effects on residential receptors have been assessed in the ES and will be controlled through the management plans secured by the draft DCO [REP6-006]. The Planning Act 2008, together with the wider compensation code, provides a statutory compensation regime where qualifying interests are acquired or otherwise affected by the exercise of DCO powers. It does not require the Applicant to enter into a general Land Value Impact Agreement with every neighbouring property owner in respect of perceived amenity effects or a potential change in market value. The East Park Legacy Fund is a voluntary community benefit which is separate from the mitigation secured through the draft DCO and from any statutory entitlement to compensation. It is not intended to operate as compensation for individual property owners and is not relied upon to make the Scheme acceptable in planning terms.
AC-D6-02	I am concerned about safety at the junction between Wood End Lane, Pertenhall, and Kimbolton Road. This junction has difficult visibility. Inevitably there will be more traffic in the whole area and including Kimbolton road, increasing the risk of accidents.	The Applicant notes that no development related traffic would be directed past this junction during any phase of the Scheme.

2.8 Response to Anna Phillips

Table 8: Response to Anna Phillips Comments on Deadline 5 Submissions [REP6-067]

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
AP-D6-01	The applicant cannot ignore the increasing seasonally high temperatures and drought, and I would like to pick up on [redacted]'s point at the public hearing about the lack of fire engines. The flat arable land in question and in the surrounding area, makes fire risk extremely hazardous and quick to spread. I have evidence through photographs taken today 3/8/26 that a nearby solar park on the Bushmead Road to Eaton Socon has allowed dry grasses and weeds to grow high which in the event of battery fire or solar panel over heating is a grave concern and high risk for spreading wildfire. The BBC reported this on 27 July 2026 : Current fire incident reporting does not allow the government to determine how many fires have been directly caused by solar panels. However, the number of incidents, external in England where "solar panel" or "photovoltaic (PV) panel" has been mentioned in the fire incident records doubled from 39 in 2020 to 81 in 2024	The Applicant recognises the need to monitor and manage wildfire risk during periods of hot and dry weather. An Emergency Response Plan will be prepared for the Scheme, as set out in the outline Construction Environmental Management Plan [REP6-030]. Climate resilience has been considered within the ES, and vegetation across the Scheme would be actively managed through the approved LEMP and OEMP, including grazing or cutting, monitoring and remedial management. The condition of vegetation at a separately operated solar park is not evidence of how the Scheme would be managed. The cited fire statistics record incidents in which solar panels were mentioned, but do not establish that the panels caused the fires or that the incidents involved comparable ground-mounted solar farms. They therefore do not demonstrate that the Scheme would give rise to an unacceptable wildfire risk.

2.9 Response to Christopher Lacey

Table 9: Response to Christopher Lacey Comments on Deadline 5 Submissions [REP6-070]

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
CL-D6-01	The Applicant has confirmed their understanding that Funding Statement must demonstrate the estimated project cost, funding sources and a confirmation that the Applicant would be able to meet the costs relating to the delivery of the Scheme and any compensation liability arising from the exercise of compulsory acquisition powers. The Applicant's Funding Statement as updated [REP3-015] fails to satisfy these self acknowledged requirements. It is clear from a review of the latest accounts for BSSL Cambsbed 1 Limited and the other companies above it within the group structure of parent company Lantern Holdco Limited that there is insufficient financial strength to enable BSSL Cambsbed 1 Limited to enable it to fund the construction, operation, maintenance and ultimately to decommission and restore the scheme land back to food producing farmland. Whilst Lantern Holdco's shareholders may have substantial financial resources that is academic as without legally binding guarantees they have no legal or financial obligations beyond their equity interests in that group of companies. A satisfactory funding statement would require substantial long term external funding to cover the full costs of the EPE project and a legally binding performance bond to cover the full cost of decommissioning. None of this is currently in place and without it the Examining Authority cannot be satisfied regarding the hollow words of the Applicant's Funding Statement	The Applicant has responded to this matter at CL-D3-01 in the Applicant Response to Deadline 3 Submissions - Other Interested Parties [REP4-109], Section 4 of the Applicant Response to Stop East Park Energy [REP2-045], and paragraphs 2.2.43 to 2.2.47 of the Applicant Response to Deadline 4 Submissions [REP5-023]. The Funding Statement [REP3-015] was submitted because the draft DCO seeks compulsory acquisition powers. Its purpose is to indicate how the acquisition and associated compensation liabilities would be funded. It is not a requirement that a final financing package for the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Scheme is contractually committed before development consent is granted. The Funding Statement explains the intended financing approach and the experience and resources available through the Brockwell Energy group. Article 48 of the draft DCO [REP6-006] also prevents the exercise of compulsory acquisition powers until guarantees or other security for the relevant compensation liabilities are in place. Decommissioning and restoration are secured separately by Requirement 18. As previously explained, there is no policy requirement for a decommissioning bond for solar development and the Secretary of State has repeatedly concluded that such a bond is not necessary where enforceable DCO requirements are in place.

2.10 Response to Elaine Anne Wheeler

Table 10: Response to Elaine Anne Wheeler Comments on Deadline 5 Submissions [REP6-073]

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
EAW-D6-01	I would draw attention to the fact that the Riseley Wolds are constantly throughout the document referred to as 5.6.28. Riseley Clay Farmland not as shown in all Borough documents including the Local Plan.	The relevant landscape character areas (LCAs) used in ES Vol 1 Chapter 5 [REP4-008] are Bedford Borough LCA 1B, 'Riseley Clay Farmland', and, within Huntingdonshire, the 'Southern Wolds' LCA. The term 'Riseley Wolds' is not used by the Applicant as the title of a landscape character area or as any designated landscape area. Paragraph 5.6.28 therefore correctly refers to the published Bedford Borough character area
EAW-D6-02	The reference to the condition of the present hedges can be tracked back to the start of consultation on this proposal – the farmers involved stopped managing them and also started to leave the fields to 'wilding' or seeded with inappropriate wildflower mixes.	The environmental baseline is based on the condition of the Site recorded through field surveys, desk study and other available evidence at the relevant survey dates. It does not depend on assumptions as to why a landowner may or may not have undertaken a particular management activity. The condition of existing hedgerows and fields has been taken into account in the landscape, ecological and arboricultural assessments. The Scheme will retain the substantial majority of existing hedgerows and would secure their reinforcement, establishment and long-term management through the approved LEMP under Requirement 4.
EAW-D6-03	The charts in 5.8.44 show that there will be a significant detrimental effect on a high number of the PROWS 5.8.71. actually states that there will be significant negative affects in sites A,B,C and D and several of the roads such as Great Staughton will be a significant negative impact.	The Applicant acknowledges that ES Vol 1 Chapter 5 [REP4-008] identifies significant adverse effects for users of a number of PROw during construction and, in some locations, during the early operational years. The assessment is receptor- and phase-specific and does not identify significant adverse effects on every PROw, road or part of Sites A to D. The Applicant has explained its assessment of PROw and landscape effects in the Written Summary of Applicant's Oral

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
	These comments are very brief and concentrate on access and landscape only. Put these with the submissions on the other facets of this proposals and it becomes a very flawed and negative proposal that should not permitted to proceed.	Submissions at ISH3 [REP4-110], including at Appendix C The assessment accounts for the establishment of characteristic hedgerow and woodland planting, while also acknowledging where residual significant visual effects would remain. A significant effect in EIA terms is not, by itself, equivalent to an unacceptable planning effect or an automatic reason for refusal. Those effects must be considered in the overall planning balance alongside the substantial renewable-energy and other benefits of the Scheme.

2.11 Response to Helen Stark

Table 11: Response to Helen Stark Comments on Deadline 5 Submissions [REP6-077]

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
HS-D6-01	The applicant has not submitted adequate wintering bird data in relation to the development area. There are gaps in the survey effort (including missing months according to the recognised standard methodology, guided by BTO WeBS reports), which mean that the assessment of impacts on wintering birds is not comprehensive. For example, Field 312 has only been surveyed in the latter winter survey and therefore, requires a second wintering bird survey due to its highlighted importance, having recorded a high count of 450 golden plover and 500 lapwing (a significant flock of SPA qualifying birds). Field 44 meets the Functionally Linked Land (FLL) criteria for the Upper Nene Valley Special Protection Area (SPA) (see below). Golden plover (a mobile species) uses this field for a range of activities including feeding and roosting. Indeed, this field had more than 1% of the cited SPA population identified on more than one occasion over successive years, despite being slightly over the 10km 'limit' at 11.5km (at the closest point to the SPA). It is notable that 'functional connectivity' under the Habitats Regulations refers to how well plants and animals can move between separated 'natural' areas, based on the landscape layout and their movement skills (see below). Lapwing are also considered to be an important part of the winter bird assemblage for this SPA as 56 individuals equate to 1% of the cited figures.	The Applicant does not agree that the wintering bird evidence is inadequate. As previously explained in response to CCC-RR-11 in the Applicant Responses to Relevant Representations [REP1-055] and CCC-WR-04 in the Applicant Response to Written Representations [REP2-044], wintering bird surveys were undertaken from November 2021 to March 2022 and from November 2023 to March 2024 The scoping of potential impacts to statutory designated sites for nature conservation has been undertaken in consultation with Natural England, including specific advice on potential impacts to statutory designated sites for nature conservation provided through Discretionary Advice Service dated 29th February 2024. The subsequent assessment in relation to non-breeding birds and statutory designated sites for nature conservation has been accepted by Natural England [AS-023], who are the principal adviser on matters relating to statutory designated site for nature conservation such as the Upper Nene Valley SPA. Natural England has agreed the Applicant's conclusions in relation to internationally designated sites and all matters recorded in its Statement of Common Ground [REP2-039]. The Applicant therefore does not consider that a further wintering bird survey is necessary.

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
HS-D6-02	Adequate objective scientific evidence has not been provided by the applicant to the Competent Authority to assess the development under the Habitats Regulations. It should be noted that HRA applies to the development alone or in combination with other plans or projects. Comprehensive wintering bird data is needed to follow through the three-stage process (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nationally-significant-infrastructure-projects-advice-on-habitats-regulations-assessments). At present, there is a risk that the applicant may breach legislation in relation to the Habitats Regulations. It is recommended that an independent suitably qualified and experienced surveyor is appointed to undertake further bird surveys. The Competent Authority, the applicant and other relevant stakeholders should re examine the requirement for HRA.	The likelihood of implications of European sites has been responded to by all key consultees over the course of the examination, with most recent positions set out as follows: • Natural England, as set out at item 1 of Table 2 in the Statement of Common Ground with Natural England [REP2-040]; • Bedford Borough Council, as set out at item 41 of Table 2 in the Statement of Common Ground with Bedford Borough Council [REP5-019]; • Huntingdonshire District Council, as set out at item 34 of Table 2 in the Statement of Common Ground with Huntingdonshire District Council [REP5-020]; and • Cambridgeshire County Council, as set out at item 32 of Table 2 in the Statement of Common Ground with Cambridgeshire County Council [REP5-021], and reiterated in their response to the Examining Authority's Rule 17 letter [REP6-057]. Natural England has agreed the Applicant's conclusions for internationally designated sites through the Statement of Common Ground [REP2-039]. The Applicant considers that sufficient objective information is available for the competent authority to reach the necessary conclusions.

2.12 Response to Ju Fletcher

Table 12: Response to Ju Fletcher Comments on Deadline 5 Submissions [REP6-081]

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
JF-D6-01	I have looked at the Appendix 7.3 Wintering Bird Survey Report this morning. Whilst I appreciate the developers have a large area in which to survey this survey is insufficient and inadequate in many areas. Functional Connectivity is not constrained by arbitrary distance buffers. With Field 312 only being surveyed in the latter winter survey and being highlighted as important, this requires a 2nd wintering bird survey. The identification of Field 44 meeting the Functionally Linked Land criteria for the Upper Nene Valley SPA shows that Golden Plover, as a mobile species, actually uses this field for core activities like feeding, roosting or loafing. It is means that further Winter Bird Surveys are required, undertaken to meet Natural England's strict requirements. This evidence shows that there is a requirement for a Habitats Regulation Assessment. The law is strict, under the Habitats Regulations, a project cannot bypass this assessment if there is a potential risk to a protected habitat site. The Planning Inspector / Secretary of State must ensure a HRA is completed before consent can be granted.	Natural England issue impact risk zones which provide guidance as to the potential develop types which may cause harm to a Site of Special Scientific Interest (which underpin SPAs). The Site is not included within such an impact risk zone. Further Natural England have been extensively consulted and along with all statutory consultees have indicated they are content with the assessment with regards to European sites, as set out in response to HS-D6-01 and HS-D6-02. This includes specific advice on potential for impacts to statutory designated sites to nature conservation through Discretionary Advice Service dated 29th February 2024. As such, while Natural England may provide differing advice for other sites, in other locations, this has not been the case for the East Park Energy scheme.
JF-D6-02	Who directed the details for this survey? Natural England routinely request 2x sequential wintering bird surveys which run from SEPTEMBER to March. To survey for species such as Golden Plover and Lapwing they require nocturnal surveys. As these species forage at night and evidence shows that the fields utilised diurnally are different from those utilised nocturnally (See wood lodge Solar Farm Appeal from Thrapston)	The survey scope and methodology were determined by suitably qualified ecologists using desk-study information, consultation, recognised ecological guidance and professional judgement. There is no universal requirement that every solar project must undertake two September to March survey seasons or nocturnal wintering bird surveys. Natural England may request further survey and assessment work for other developments in other locations, however along with all statutory consultees, have indicated they are content with the

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
		assessment with regards to European sites, as set out in response to HS-D6-01 and HS-D6-02.
JF-D6-03	The survey effort is not high enough, Natural England, bird survey guidelines say that the survey effort should have covered each area every 10 - 14 days during the survey season. This survey was only once a month and only from November to March. It should have been twice a month from September to March. This is crucial, the reason that the surveys should be conducted during the correct months is guided by the BTO WeBS reports and follows the historic pattern of overwintering birds in the area. Golden Plover and Lapwing were active in neighbouring SPA & RAMSAR area in September and October but then departed the area. By the survey effort missing two months of the window when these species are active in the area has missed potential sightings.	Survey design must be proportionate to the likely effects and informed by the site context. Two winter periods were surveyed and the scope and limitations were reported transparently. The possibility that an additional visit or nocturnal surveys might record another individual or flock does not itself demonstrate that the baseline is inadequate. The purpose is to obtain sufficient information to characterise use of the Site and assess likely significant effects, rather than to record every bird present on every date. As outlined in JF-D6-02 above, Natural England may have other survey requirements for other developments in other areas, but have been consulted throughout the development of the Scheme and along with all statutory consultees have indicated they are content with the assessment with regards to European sites, as set out in response to HS-D6-01 and HS-D6-02.
JF-D6-04	lack of nocturnal surveys to assess foraging and loafing of crepuscular birds	See response to JF-D6-03 above.
JF-D6-05	The survey limitations says it missed the October passage season during both the 2021/22 & 2023/24 surveys. It gives no excuse as to why October was missed for both seasons. It also makes no mention that September should have been covered as well.	See response to JF-D6-03 above.
JF-D6-06	The results under play the significance of bird numbers saying the majority were in low numbers and sporadically present. Golden Plover in the Upper Nene SPA have declined by 96% since 2011. 1% of the cited figures is 37 individuals (1% of the current figures is just 4 individuals). The survey tables give the conservation Status of	The wintering bird survey report [APP-093] clearly displays the number of birds present within each field during each survey, and highlights where larger numbers are present. The conservation status listed (i.e., green listed) is therefore accurate, with the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) describing the

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
	Golden Plover as Green, Ann1 doesn't include they are named SPA qualifying species, (although you are outside the 10km range that NNC use in their planning documents, Golden Plover and Lapwing are known to travel much further than this to forage - See Natural England docs). Golden Plover were recorded in numbers over the 1% cited figures on the following occasions: Winter 21/22 Field 44 - Survey 1 - 107 Field 64 - Survey 1 - 117 Field 94 - Survey 1 - 60 Winter 23/24 Field 7 - Survey 1 - (85) Field 44 - Survey 1 - 53 Field 312 - Survey 2 - 450 Field 312 - Survey 4 - 10 (26) Field 312 - Survey 5 - 35 Field 326 - Survey 3 - (38) Field 331 - Survey 3 - 80 This shows that Field 44 is vitally important to Golden Plover, it qualifies as Functionally Linked Land to the Upper Nene Valley SPA as had more than 1% of the cited population sighted on more than one occasion over successive years. It is just over the arbitrary 10km limit, being 11.5km from the SPA at its closet point. Field 312 had a high count of 450 Golden Plover and 500 Lapwing is also very significant flock of SPA qualifying birds. Lapwing are considered part of the winter bird assemblage of the Upper Nene Valley SPA and 56 individuals are considered 1% of the cited figures. So again this species has been recorded in significant numbers Winter 23/24 Field 24 - Survey 3 - 61 Field 37 - Survey 3 - 150 Field 312 Survey 1 - 41 Survey 2 - 500 Field 301 Survey 1 - 192 Field 331 Survey 3 - 60 Field 344 Survey 3 - 152 Whilst I appreciate some of the above figures are for the Wider Survey Area an impact assessment on these species needs to be undertaken.	species as green listed, common and on the IUCN list as Least Concern¹. Through consultation with Natural England, it was not considered necessary to assess species in detail with regards to the Upper Nene Gravel Pits SPA. The Applicant therefore maintains the position set out in HS-D6-01 above.

¹ <https://www.bto.org/learn/about-birds/birdfacts/golden-plover#conservation-status>

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
JF-D6-07	The figures of Linnet and Yellowhammer are also large for farmland birds which are declining in population. High count of 207 for Linnet and Yellowhammer high count of 250 To keep this objection on a complex topic simple I have focuses just on Golden Plover and Lapwing, but it can be extrapolated to other species. However, demonstrates that even with an inadequate survey effort that the area is utilised in significant numbers of these qualifying species to the SPA. With Field 44 being particularly crucial to Golden Plover and Field 312 important to both species. The need to clear sight-lines for these two species means that they cannot use fields covered in solar panels. These species are also disturbed easily for example with noise	The records for these species were considered in ES Vol 1 Chapter 7 [APP-043]. The outline Farmland Bird Mitigation Strategy forming Appendix C of the oLEMP [REP6-038] considers likely outcomes for farmland birds, including non-breeding species, as previously explained at SEPE-D3-55 in the Applicant Response to Deadline 3 Submissions - Other Interested Parties [REP4-109]. The Scheme would not remove all bird habitat from the panelled fields, and would replace intensive arable management with managed grassland beneath and between the arrays, retain and reinforce hedgerows and field margins, and provide large scale open grasslands.

2.13 Response to Peter Mills

Table 13: Response to Peter Mills Comments on Deadline 5 Submissions [REP6-085]

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
PM-D6-01	Can the applicant explain further the reasons for site access SA09 near Little Staughton Village. The access point has been placed in a dangerous position just past a bend and with limited long visibility of the road in both directions, also it has been proposed to be very close to Little Staughton village & houses. Why is it not sited further away from the village on straighter roads and also why widen the road impacting the view considerably when entering our village, potentially with impact to hedgerow/screening to widen the road, and provide access. Surely not a suitable location for safety reasons and to near the vicinity of the village.	Access SA09 utilises an existing field access track. As illustrated in Figure 5 in Appendix D of the outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (oCTMP) [REP6-032], this access would require minimal modification in order to safely accommodate development traffic, which therefore reduces the overall impact of the Scheme compared to constructing a new access. It should also be noted that the land to the west of Green End immediately to the north of access SA09 falls outside of the Order Limits. Figure 5 in Appendix D of the oCTMP [REP6-032] demonstrates that the access is suitable for use by Scheme traffic with regard to the required visibility splays. However, to further mitigate against highway safety concerns it is proposed to extend the existing 30mph speed limit through Green End to cover this access during the construction phase when the access would be in regular use. During the operational phase, the volume of development-related traffic using the access would be extremely low. It is not proposed to widen the road along Green End in the vicinity of this access.
PM-D6-02	Secondly would like to understand how the applicant would construct all the access points, specific detail like how much tree/hedge row would be lost to each one, how wide is the access proposed to be, what will be done to stop mud going on the road over 3yrs work, and which access points on the map are construction vs longer term. Impact statement: Views every time passing these points will show the swathes of panels across fields every time you come into green end Little Staughton and all other access points will be a similar dramatic impact on currently enjoyed scenic views, with little	The Applicant has provided responses on these matters at PM-D5-04 and PM-D5-05 in the Applicant Response to Deadline 4 and 5 Submissions - Other Interested Parties [REP6-052]. The access layouts and dimensions are shown in Appendix D of the oCTMP [REP6-032]. The vegetation clearance required at each access is shown on ES Vol 3 Figure 2-6 [APP-126], supported by Table 2-34 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 2 [REP6-018] and the Tree Impacts Plan in ES Vol 2 Appendix 2-2 [APP-056]. Mud and track-out would be controlled through the final CEMP and CTMP, including wheel-cleaning, road inspection and road-

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
	screening in a number of places if this is not carefully considered and details specifically stated up front. The solar panel development near St Neots, shows a depressing mud bath with signs and barriers, wide openings, this needs to be avoided in this application.	sweeping measures where required. Any removed or damaged hedgerow would be restored or replaced in accordance with the approved LEMP. The access works and their landscape and visual effects have therefore been assessed and would be subject to detailed approval and management rather than being left uncontrolled.
PM-D6-03	Further issues need to be flagged to the planning inspector and highways department/council around drainage in the area of the proposed development and its knock-on impact due to the undulating landscape and type of soil, linked with very narrow country lanes, and in some cases insufficient ditches for increased water runoff. a) The absence of farmers being able to maintain channels through the soil underground (e.g. mole buster equipment) which helps drain water off some of the 1900 acres of land, would subject to permission being granted for this application be covered in panels and become a major concern, in that run off water into ditches (and likely mud/silt) would be irregular instead of a steady trickle through these channels, it would mean a mass run off of water as soon as rain occurs as a result of the umbrella created by the circa 700,000 panels, and no underground drainage performed by farmers any longer. The impact of point a) above would be: b) Excessive water run off flowing into ditches WHERE ditches exist, and due to the increased volume of water would not likely be able to cope, as many ditches have not been designed with great amounts capacity. Even the one pictured in (DR02 very large field ditch) is flowing into another ditch (pics DR4 +DR6) that has very small capacity therefore has no substantial flow rate to take the increased volume of water, Additionally, sites without ditches or poorly	The Applicant has responded to these points at PM-D5-01 and PM-D5-02 in the Applicant Response to Deadline 4 and 5 Submissions - Other Interested Parties [REP6-052]. Flood risk and drainage have been assessed through ES Vol 1 Chapter 8 [REP4-010], the Flood Risk Assessment [REP4-017] and the outline Surface Water Management Plan (oSWMP) [REP6-048]. Solar panels do not form a continuous impermeable surface or an 'umbrella' over the fields. Rainfall would fall from the panels onto the vegetated ground beneath and between the rows. The change from cultivated arable soil to permanent managed grassland is expected to improve ground cover and infiltration, and runoff from panelled areas is expected to remain at greenfield rates. The hydraulic modelling also demonstrates that the panel supports would not materially obstruct flows or displace floodwater. The Applicant maintains that the Scheme would not increase flood risk on or off-site.

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
	maintained ones would just flow straight onto roads, as already occurred over many years but substantially worse, along with mixed sludge. c) Roads would become even more likely to be unpassable for road traffic due to deep flooding (as has occurred on this same stretch of road where pics are taken) and mud onto roads in numerous places. Already historically villages have been unable to get through to their destination or return to houses by car on many village roads due to flood levels and road closures in multiple locations, and that's without any additional water. d) Kimbolton river near the bend has constantly over flowed, if water from this development causes further problems Kimbolton may become cut off and children not get to Kimbolton school as it has only two directions of access in Kimbolton. Other flood spots are bridge in pictures at Great Staughton and near the Kangaroo junction (Pic BR01,BR02), and the brook running alongside houses in Staploe	
PM-D6-04	Excess water flooding roads, along with the likelihood of mud being left on the road and large increased volumes of traffic due to construction, is a recipe for disaster for anyone using the surrounding network of minor roads, so serious safety issues exist. Visibility along these unclassified class roads, and sharp bends is again a recipe for accidents to happen, these are country lanes not A class roads and are insufficient to support this development/volume of increased traffic. Increased flooding is likely to further damage these small village roads, when winter comes and roads break down due to ice expansion especially when used by heavy traffic with increased	The Transport Assessment considers the suitability of the rural highway network and the forecast peak traffic flows. Mud, vehicle routing, speed, delivery management and highway inspection would be controlled through the final CEMP and CTMP. The Applicant, rather than the highway authority, would be responsible for repairing damage to the highway network demonstrated to have been caused by Scheme construction traffic. The oCTMP [REP6-032] requires pre-construction and post-construction condition surveys, agreement of the roads to be surveyed and the survey methodology, regular inspections during construction and correction of Scheme attributable defects to the satisfaction of the relevant highway authority. The obligation does

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
	weight volumes (e.g. heavy machinery/Substantial amount of Construction materials). Has funding for of any repair/road resurfacing costs over the 3 years development and afterwards due to the wear put on them, been allocated by highways agency/council/developer, and what about the serious impact to locals trying to use these narrow routes along with associated pot hole/ car damage? Roads in the vicinity planned for this development are not at all in a good state of repair (see example pics), pot hole repairs in this country are already under financial stress and need billions spending to resolve the issue. Therefore, two issues exist, firstly the construction traffic generated by workers cars and lorries can only damage the roads further, or even cause an accident as they become substantially worse supporting this planning application project. Eventually if this is approved when completed in 3 years' time, it is likely to leave a legacy for highways department having to do substantial full-scale resurfacing on numerous roads that have been impacted for miles, putting a major cost on the government/public	not extend to pre-existing defects or ordinary deterioration unrelated to the Scheme.
PM-D6-05	There are so many views across the fields that will be absolutely devastated if this proceeds, attached are just a few selections of pictures that explain this, and viewing them should need no further explanation of why this development in this place should not proceed • Pic View from Little Staughton church from churchyard, church dated from C13, bench in churchyard to be able to sit in and reflect *See pic VW02, VW03 • Pic general across fields near Little Staughton, views would be obliterated *See pic VW01	The Applicant has prepared a landscape and visual impact assessment reported at ES Vol 1 Chapter 5 [REP4-008] that provides a detailed assessment of the visual effects of the Scheme, including from the locations identified.

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
	Summary: There are many other such views that make this area the place it is, to propose putting panels across this farmland is fundamentally flawed on so many fronts raised by so many people, and is unbelievable the developers consider it viable in their opinion, due to the impact to countryside and risk mentioned	

2.14 Response to Sara Jane Knightley

Table 14: Response to Sara Jane Knightley Comments on Deadline 5 Submissions [REP6-089]

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
SJK-D6-01	I should also like to ask the Applicant to confirm at which temperature the solar panels can safely function. In many instances the solar panels have NOT been designed or tested for external temperatures over 30C. As we have recently been experiencing temperatures in excess of 35C on more than one day can the Applicant confirm that the solar panels they will be using will be capable and safe operating at temperatures in excess of 30C which we will no doubt be seeing in the future. There are already instances of solar panels catching fire and everyone is aware of the terrible effects of wildfires currently affecting many countries including the UK	The final manufacturer and model of solar module will be selected at detailed design stage. The Applicant cannot therefore provide a single component-specific operating temperature at this stage. The installed modules will be required to comply with the applicable product and electrical safety standards and to be operated within the manufacturer's specified environmental and temperature limits. The assertion that solar panels are generally not designed or tested for ambient temperatures above 30°C is not supported by evidence in the submission. The future climate baseline and resilience of the Scheme has been assessed in ES Vol 2 Appendices 15-2 and 15-3 [APP-117] and [APP-118], including increased summer temperatures, drought-related conditions and extreme weather. The Applicant recognises the need to monitor and manage wildfire risk during periods of hot and dry weather. An Emergency Response Plan will be prepared for the Scheme, as set out in the outline Construction Environmental Management Plan [REP6-030]. Climate resilience has been considered within the ES, and vegetation across the Scheme would be actively managed through the approved LEMP and OEMP, including grazing or cutting, monitoring and remedial management. The condition of vegetation at a separately operated solar park is not evidence of how the Scheme would be managed. The cited fire statistics record incidents in which solar panels were mentioned, but do not establish that the panels caused the fires or that the incidents involved comparable ground-mounted solar farms.

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
		They therefore do not demonstrate that the Scheme would give rise to an unacceptable wildfire risk.

2.15 Response to Shaun Woodward

Table 15: Response to Shaun Woodward Comments on Deadline 5 Submissions [REP6-092]

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
SW-D6-01	Water usage – This seems grossly understated, when considering the figures include water for making concrete, screen planting, panel cleaning, wheel washing etc and particularly for fire-fighting purposes. For example, I calculated in my earlier submissions that cleaning the solar glass using only 500ml of water per sqm, would use over 1 million gallons of water alone for a single clean, which would use up most of the applicants stated usage making a mockery of their figures. Please press them on this issue and where the water will be sourced from.	The Applicant has responded in relation to the BESS fire water and panel cleaning points at SW-D5-10 and SW-D5-11 in the Applicant Response to Deadline 4 and 5 Submissions - Other Interested Parties [REP6-052] . Water would be sourced from a combination of rainwater harvesting and an appropriate licensed and controlled source and would not rely on a live mains supply.
SW-D6-02	Positioning of a live gas main very near to the proposed new Bess site - This is a serious issue which has not been addressed properly, and is more pertinent now the gas operators are taking an interest, and because the applicant is still pushing the detail design and layout for the BESS compound and final specification beyond the issue of a DCO and therefore beyond IP public scrutiny. This is serious issue which should be properly scrutinized now, and a full design submitted before the DCO is granted to prove a safe design solution. Any Fire Service documentation supporting the application now cannot possibly be thorough or comprehensive if the final BESS design and it's proximity to a major live gas main has yet to be established. Surely this aspect should be resolved within the Inspectors oversight and whilst IP's are still able to test the design?	The Applicant has addressed the gas pipeline at SEPE-D6-03 in the Applicant Response to Deadline 4 and 5 Submissions - Other Interested Parties [REP6-052]. The operational National Gas pipeline has been identified and the Scheme has been designed around its easement and the minimum buffers agreed with National Gas Transmission. Part 4 of Schedule 13 to the draft DCO [REP6-006] contains protective provisions for National Gas. Specified works cannot commence without the submission and written approval of plans and method statements, and National Gas may require design modifications or protective works necessary to safeguard the pipeline. Those controls apply to the final BESS design and are legally enforceable. The use of a parameter-based design does not place the matter beyond scrutiny. The maximum design envelope and environmental effects have been assessed, while the final layout must comply with the DCO, the design parameters, the approved BSMP and the National Gas protective provisions. A fully fixed BESS supplier

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
		layout is not necessary before development consent can be granted.
SW-D6-03	Ground maintenance – The task of managing the grass and weeds within the site are understated. I calculated for a mower to travel past each of the arrays for a single cut, is 452km journey. This does not include maintenance of areas not covered in BESS or panels, or the considerable 452km journey also required for panel washing. Calc: If panels are 1.3m wide x 2.34m tall (from supplied EPE Canadian Solar sample panel spec sheet), stacked in pairs in portrait orientation on the supports, the maths are simple. 1.3m x 695,760 panels divide by 2, which as a continuous row of panels = 452km. This does not address the issue of strimming under the panels, only between them. This should be acknowledged, and machine working included in lifetime GHG calculations.	The Applicant does not dispute that the calculation produces an indicative aggregate panel row length of approximately 452km, or 281 miles, on the assumptions adopted. However, in GHG assessment terms, Mr Woodward’s calculation does not identify a material omission, and a tractor or other mower travelling 281 miles in a single year (or doing this multiple times a year) would not result in GHG emissions that would materially affect the GHG emissions assessed by the Applicant. The Applicant also notes that fully electric and autonomous tractors designed to manage vegetation between solar arrays, battery-powered robotic mowers capable of solar charging, and autonomous panel cleaning systems are already commercially available. These technologies are not relied upon as mitigation by the Applicant, but demonstrate reasonably likely alternatives to diesel powered machinery that could be utilised to operate a Scheme of this size over its operational phase.
SW-D6-04	Sheep for grazing the site – My question about the practical use of sheep for grazing this proposed site is still unresolved, despite the applicants answer to my previous submission. I suggest even if sheep are only allowed within the fenced panelled areas of the site, they will be near impossible to shepherd in large numbers from these huge land areas with arrays and infrastructure as major obstructions. Managing sheep in such a landscape will be very difficult. Even with rotation across the site, a significant flock will be required to keep the whole site grazed effectively and prevent some areas becoming over grown in peak season. Are landowners going to invest and manage such flocks which would represent about 10% of the county’s current sheep population. I feel not. I also read that sheep do not always eat everything, leaving some plant species	The Applicant responded to this point at SMW-WR-01 in the Applicant Response to Written Representations [REP2-044]. Sheep grazing is established as a practicable management option for solar farms and the Applicant has received expressions of interest from local livestock farmers. It is not, however, relied upon as the only means of maintaining the Site. The secured requirement is that the grassland habitats achieve and retain their target condition. Responsibility remains with the Site Operator, supported by a specialist Landscape and Ecological Maintenance Contractor and Landscape Manager. Mechanical cutting would be used where grazing agreements are not entered

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
	upstanding and still requiring mower cut. Sheep also have a carbon footprint. Minutiae matters here, because on balance I feel collectively such factors will combine in making sheep grazing impractical with grid scale low positioned panel layouts like EPE. The owners of established smaller solar schemes in our area, where it would be easier to use sheep have never done so. Why? I don't believe sheep will ever be used to graze this site if it goes ahead and suggest despite denials their inclusion is only included to enhance the applicant's 'green' credentials for the DCO and is in practice impractical for larger grid scale schemes. Time will tell.	into, where grazing ceases or where grazing alone does not deliver the required outcome.
SW-D6-05	Incorrect material specifications - I questioned the accuracy of some of the material specifications for substantial infrastructure elements, where the wrong type of steel was quoted and incorrect CO2 figures were used for calculations deflating the carbon footprint by a significant amount. These are basic errors by the applicant but with major consequences for understating GHG calculations.	The Applicant has provided a response to Mr Woodward's comments on mounting structures, material composition and emission factors at SW-D6-01 in Table 23 of Applicant Response to Deadline 4 and 5 Submissions - Other Interested Parties [REP6-052]. The GHG assessment uses transparent assumptions and recognised emission factors where the final supplier, steel grade, material composition and place of manufacture cannot yet be known. Mr Woodward's selection of a different material specification or emissions factor represents an alternative assumption; it does not establish that the Applicant has used the 'wrong' steel or made a basic calculation error. The Applicant's review concluded that the alternative inputs proposed would not materially alter total lifecycle emissions, the significance of the effect or the conclusion that the Scheme would deliver substantial net greenhouse gas savings.
SW-D6-06	Replacement of panels at the 20 year point - There were many questions about the applicant's plans for replacing all the panels and infrastructure and fencing at the 20 year mark, trying to position the total replacement of about 90% of the entire original infrastructure as 'maintenance'. A five-year rolling replacement with	The Applicant responded to the matters raised on replacement works by Mr Woodward in his previous submission within Section 2.10 and 3.7 of the Applicant Response to Deadline 4 and 5 Submissions - Other Interested Parties [REP6-052] .

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
	suggested minimal manpower for the changeover deserves to be questioned. I argued in my last submission in detail about the likely unfeasibility of what was being proposed, both on commercial and numerical grounds using figures and examples. Those questions are all reasonable and should be specifically answered by the applicant, not waved away by referring to previous applicant submissions, the source of these questions in the first place, or stating there is no legal obligation for them to answer.	
SW-D6-07	Traffic at the A1 Eaton Ford Junction - There is still a large question mark over how the thousands of HGV vehicles and commuting traffic will join the A1 southbound. This has not been satisfactorily resolved. Rigid control of traffic and commuting must be included in the DCO and not weakened by allowing the entire unsuitable road network to be used for HGV traffic at the 20 and 40 year points.	The Applicant would note that the proposed restriction on construction traffic entering the A1 using the southbound slip road at the Eaton Ford junction only applies to HGVs, not construction staff movements. Construction HGVs would be required to turn round at Buckden Roundabout or at the Wyboston junction, depending on the direction of travel. There would be a maximum of 30 HGV movements per day in each direction along the A1 during the construction phase (approximately 4 movements per hour). This volume of HGV traffic would only occur for a 3-month period. National Highways has confirmed that it is satisfied that the forecast construction traffic would not result in a detrimental impact on the A1, as per the Statement of Common Ground with National Highways [REP4-103].
SW-D6-08	De-commissioning Bond – Many feel the applicant should create a watertight bond to cover the cost of decommissioning this massive site, and returning it to agriculture. This fund should be outside the control of the applicant or it's parent companies or future owners/operators. This is a sensible precaution to protect society as in 40 years the operators may well become insolvent leaving the problem to the public purse. I note in a recent submission the	The Applicant refers to paragraphs 2.2.43 to 2.2.47 of Applicant Response to Deadline 4 Submissions [REP5-023]. Requirement 18 of the draft DCO [REP6-006] secures decommissioning and restoration, and no decommissioning activity may commence until the required plans have been approved. There is no policy requirement for a decommissioning bond for solar development and the Secretary of State has repeatedly concluded that such security

Our Ref.	Comment	Applicant Response
	applicant states only £10M for the decommissioning stage, which seems unrealistic. Compared to the total cost of the project this seems pitifully low, particularly if the cost of recycling nearly 700,000 panels is taken into account. If this £10m figure is indeed correct why would the applicant even resist creating such a bond for such a small sum in the grand scheme which could be paid for by a small percentage of future income over say the first 10 years of the plant's operation?	is not necessary where enforceable DCO requirements are in place. The Scheme's 40 year duration, the use of a special purpose vehicle and the proportion of BMV land do not, individually or collectively, establish that a bond is necessary or proportionate. The DCO obligations would bind the undertaker responsible for the Scheme and remain enforceable regardless of any hypothetical change in ownership or operator.
SW-D6-09	Recycling panel volumes - Finally, there has been no response to my observations and calculations for the recycling of panels after 20 and 40 years. I calculate the UK NSIP's alone will generate around 20 to 25 million degraded panels in quick succession in roughly 20 years time, and currently there is no recycling capacity globally that can deal with such quantities. The largest is in the USA which can process around 260,000 panels per annum. This is a big flaw in the application, and surely cannot be swept forward into the future without serious planning consideration from the outset. How can any projected carbon calcs be accurate, when should that situation happen today the only solution would be land fill. I note the applicant uses only a 100km distance from site to a future fictitious recycler, which is very understated. A more realistic target should be set for the purpose of GHG calculations. It is also perfectly possible that degraded panels in 20 years become worthless and become more expensive to recycle than to buy new, so the recycling market may not evolve as the developers expect it to.	Recycling capacity, transport assumptions and end-of-life treatment were addressed under 'Recycling, disposal and future infrastructure' in response SW-D6-01 in the Applicant Response to Deadline 4 and 5 Submissions - Other Interested Parties [REP6-052]. The GHG assessment conservatively assumes that 50% of equipment and materials would be recycled and 50% would be disposed of to landfill, with a 100km journey to both a licensed recycling facility and a licensed landfill. The 100km distance is a transparent modelling assumption, not a representation that a particular future facility already exists. Mr Woodward's alternative assumes that current capacity remains static for several decades, that no nearer UK or European capacity develops and that the claimed volume of panels becomes waste in quick succession. The Applicant does not consider these propositions to be likely effects. End-of-life components and materials would be managed through the approved Waste Management Plan, the waste hierarchy and the applicable waste legislation at the relevant time. The Applicant does not consider that a speculative worst-case recycling market requires the GHG assessment to be revised.

