

Planning Inspectorate

Our ref: XA/2025/100456/03-L01

Your ref: EN010151

[via PINS portal]

Date: 31 October 2025

Dear Sir/Madam

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY RESPONSE TO DEADLINE 3. BEACON FEN ENERGY PARK, LINCOLNSHIRE.

This response constitutes the Environment Agency's (EA) Deadline 3 response. We have reviewed the Deadline 2 submissions, in particular:

- Appendix 2.4 Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (Revision 3) [[REP2-017](#) and [REP2-018](#)]
- Detailed Land and Rights Negotiations Tracker [[REP2-011](#)]
- Biodiversity Net Gain Strategy [[REP2-029](#) and [REP2-030](#)]
- Biodiversity Net Gain Strategy: BNG Metric [[REP2-031](#)]
- Applicant's Responses to Examining Authority's First Questions (ExQ1) [[REP2-040](#)]
- Water Demand and Source Options Appraisal [[REP2-042](#)]
- Chapter 7 Ecology (Revision 2) [[REP2-015](#) and [REP2-016](#)]

The Environment Agency's latest position is shown in Appendix A.

EA08 Consumptive Water Use

We are pleased to see the submission of the Water Demand and Source Options Appraisal [[REP2-042](#)]. We consider this document to be an excellent options appraisal, and we are confident that the water demands of the Project can be evaluated at the detailed design stage with full awareness of the practical and environmental implications of the sources of supply available. This issue can be considered resolved.

EA12 CSM – Fire Water and Thermal Effects

Following discussions with the Applicant in regard to guidance relating to thermal effects of underground cables, we confirm that we have no specific published guidance relating to assessing the thermal effects of cables. However, heat remains a groundwater pollutant, and it is the developer's responsibility to determine whether the input of heat into groundwater is a groundwater activity ([Defra guidance, section](#)

[3.34](#)). The guidance we have available is in draft and is not directly relevant to buried cables, but we feel that clear comparisons can be drawn between the two. In line with this guidance, the Applicant should ensure that, where practicable, the proposed cabling:

- Is fully sealed – the Applicant will need to confirm this. However, this can be part of the detailed design and specific details do not necessarily need to be given at examination.
- Does not discharge pollutants other than heat transfer to the environment – you will need to confirm this. However, this can be part of the detailed design and specific details do not necessarily need to be given at examination.
- Does not cause pollution of surface water or groundwater – the Applicant will need to confirm this. However, this can be part of the detailed design and specific details do not necessarily need to be given at examination.
- Is not within a groundwater source protection zone 1 (SPZ1) that's used to supply water for domestic or food production purposes – no part of the site is within an SPZ1.
- Is not within 50m of a well, spring or borehole used to supply water for domestic or food production purposes – the Applicant has confirmed there are no private water supplies and there are no wells or springs noted on Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 mapping for the site.
- Installation does not mobilise any contaminants present in the subsurface to the extent that the pollution of groundwater occurs – to be managed by embedded mitigation during the construction phase, including a robust discovery strategy for previously unidentified contamination
- Is not adjacent to a septic tank or cesspit, including the infiltration system – the Applicant will need to confirm this, including consideration of siting and design of operational staff welfare facilities.

On consideration of these factors, we are satisfied that no specific further action needs to be taken on this matter prior to examination. However, some details will still need to be addressed prior to final construction design.

Please note that issue EA12 remains outstanding as the matter relating to firewater has not been addressed.

EA20 Otter & Water Vole

We are pleased to see that the Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) [[REP2-017](#) and [REP2-018](#)] has been updated to include pre-commencement otter surveys. For clarity, water vole pre-commencement surveys were already included.

We are satisfied that Chapter 7 Ecology (Revision 2) [[REP2-015](#) and [REP2-016](#)] has also been updated so that otter surveys form part of the mitigation for the Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA).

We had requested that water vole should be taken into consideration as part of ditch management/enhancement and that this should be included within the ditch management measures outlined in the Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP). We note that the LEMP states that ditch management will be undertaken in line with The Drainage Channel Biodiversity Manual which includes the actions to

take to protect water voles during ditch management.

As a result, we consider this issue to be sufficiently addressed.

EA04 (Protection of Fish) and EA06 (Drain Downs – Risk to Fish)

We note that additional mitigation for fish has been included in Section 7.7.4 of Chapter 7 Ecology (Revision 2) [[REP2-015](#) and [REP2-016](#)]. We are still considering this matter and will provide an update at Deadline 4.

Below are our comments on Deadline 2 submissions that are not linked to issues raised within our Relevant Representations [[RR-006](#)].

Detailed Land and Rights Negotiations Tracker [[REP2-011](#)]

The EA Estates team have reviewed the detailed land and rights negotiations tracker [[REP2-011](#)] and are satisfied with the status of agreement with the EA. Heads of Terms have been agreed and will be processed by Legal.

Applicant's Responses to Examining Authority's First Questions (ExQ1) [[REP2-040](#)]

We have reviewed the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) strategy [[REP2-029](#) and [REP2-030](#)] and BNG Metric [[REP2-031](#)] and can confirm that we are satisfied with the approach taken to achieve at least a 10% net gain for all units. We are particularly satisfied to read that a 15.95% net gain in watercourse units will be achieved through ditch enhancements and incorporating buffer strips.

It should be noted that as the South Forty Foot Drain falls within the Order Limits, it should be subject to a River Condition Assessment in line with BNG best practice guidance. However, we agree with the approach of using trenchless techniques to avoid impacts of the cable crossing to the watercourse. As a precaution, we would recommend the entry and exit pits are placed at least 10m from bank top for this watercourse to avoid impacts on the riparian zone.

We trust this advice is useful.

Yours faithfully

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APPENDIX A – SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENT AGENCY POSITION

Subject	Work package	Scope	Method and Assumptions	Results of Assessment (i.e Impact)	Mitigation / Enhancements Agreed	Requirement	RR ID
Ecology Water Resources	Biodiversity Net Gain Strategy					8	
	Ecological Assessment					7	EA01, EA02, EA03, EA04, EA05, EA06, EA20
	Water Environment Regulations Compliance						EA01, EA02, EA03, EA04, EA05, EA06
	Water Supply Strategy						EA08, EA15
Flood Risk	Flood Risk Assessment						EA01, EA02, EA03, EA21, EA22, EA23, EA24, EA25, EA26, EA27, EA28, EA29, EA30
	Hydraulic Model						EA23, EA26, EA29
Water Quality	Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan					12	
	Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan					18	
	Outline Battery Safety Management Plan					6	EA32
	Foul & Surface Water Drainage					10	EA10, EA33
	Water Environment Regulations Compliance						EA05
Groundwater Protection	Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan					12	EA13, EA14, EA19
	Groundwater Protection						EA09, EA10, EA12, EA13, EA19, EA31, EA32, EA33
	Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan					18	EA17, EA19
Waste	Waste Management Strategy						EA16
Geomorphology	Water Environment Regulations Compliance						EA01, EA02