
Steeple Renewables Project

Technical Note – National Highways

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Technical Note – National Highways

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Transport Technical Note.

Applicant response to National Highways matters DCO Deadlines2/3 – Steeple Renewables Project DCO.

On behalf of Steeple Solar Farm Ltd.

Planning Inspectorate Reference: ENO10163
Date: 18 March 2026
Pegasus Group Reference: P22-1144 TN05
Author: CB/KE

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Transport Technical Note (TN05) has been prepared by Pegasus Group on behalf of Steeple Solar Farm Ltd in relation to the DCO application for the Steeple Renewables Project (Planning Inspectorate reference ENO10163).
- 1.2. The matters raised by National Highways (NH) during the previous stages of the DCO process set out in RR-032, REP1-017, REP1-018, REP3-042, REP4-026, REP4-027 have largely been resolved through discussions and provision of information and further to discussions during an MS Teams meeting with Pegasus Group and NH on the 10th February 2026.
- 1.3. The last remaining matter comprises NH's request for additional justification regarding the development traffic's impact at Blyth Interchange A1(M) J34 including the potential AM and PM peak hours impact during the peak construction month ('Month 7'). NH have stated that *'With the traffic impact at the Blythe Interchange is over 30 vehicles / hour during both AM and PM peaks, we recommend junction capacity assessment shall be provided for the Month 7 (peak delivery month) scenario'*.
- 1.4. It is considered that this TN provides the required additional information for NH to confirm that they have no objection to the proposals and no further information is needed to confirm there are no valid highway or transportation reasons associated with the potential traffic impact on the SRN which would prevent the development of the Steeple Renewables Project DCO.

2. Context and Timeline

- 2.1. The timeline of discussions with NH to date are as follows:
 - Pre-DCO submission discussions were held between Pegasus Group and NH (with meetings on 9th December 2024 and 15th April 2025). During these discussions, NH advised that there were no existing capacity issues or constraints at the Blyth Interchange A1(M) J34 and on this basis, the Applicant considered that neither traffic count data nor capacity assessments were required based on this advice.

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Reference: P22-1144 TN05

- The Transport Assessment (April 2025) [APP-128] outlines the traffic impact associated with the Proposed Development, including the potential impact at Blyth Interchange A1(M) J34 set out in paragraphs 8.15–8.18 for Month 7. This provided the theoretical “Worst Case” peak traffic flows as an example of the peak month and a peak hour.
- Representation by National Highways dated 26 August 2025 responded to this by requesting further information.
- In response to this representation, the Applicant provided P22-1144_TN01 to NH which provided additional information responding to the points raised. This led to resolving all matters raised with the exception of the Month 7 development traffic impact at Blyth Interchange during the AM and PM peak period.
- NH submitted ‘Steeple Renewables Project: DCO Pre-Examination Consultation’ letter (REP1-018) dated 27 November 2025. This stated that *‘With the traffic impact at the Blythe Interchange is over 30 vehicles / hour during both AM and PM peaks, we recommend junction capacity assessment shall be provided for the Month 7 (peak delivery month) scenario’*. It is understood that this is a ‘Rule-of-Thumb’ rather than reference to any policy requirement. The letter acknowledged that the impact of 64 vehicle trips during the AM and PM peak periods (in Month 7) has led to NH recommending a junction capacity assessment is undertaken or further justification is requested for not undertaking a junction assessment.

2.2. The requested justification for not undertaking a junction assessment is set out below.

3. Justification

Construction Trips

- 3.1. There are 64 two-way development vehicle trips forecast to impact on Blyth Interchange A1(M) J34 during the ‘Month 7’ (peak construction delivery month) AM and PM peak hours. With suitable mitigation and management however (e.g. reducing deliveries during the peak hour), this number will be reduced and if possible, avoided altogether.
- 3.2. Considering the distribution of the 64 two-way peak hour trips on the individual junction arms during the AM peak hour, the development traffic impact is forecast as follows:
- 21 vehicles entering Blyth Interchange A1(M) J34 northbound slip (from the south). This equates to one vehicle movement every three minutes on average during the AM peak hour.
 - 21 vehicles entering Blyth Interchange A1(M) J34 southbound slip (from the north). This equates to one vehicle movement every three minutes on average during the AM peak hour.
 - 22 vehicles entering the Blyth Interchange A1(M) J34 from A614 (local road network) from the east during the AM peak hour. This equates to one vehicle movement every three minutes on average during the AM peak hour.
- 3.3. During the PM peak hour these vehicle movements are reversed, and therefore during the PM peak hour, the development traffic impact on each arm of Blyth Interchange A1(M) J34 would be as follows:

- 11 vehicles entering at Blyth Interchange A1(M) J34 southbound slip (from the north). This equates to one vehicle movement every six minutes on average during the AM peak hour.
- 11 vehicles entering Blyth Interchange A1(M) J34 northbound slip (from the south). This equates to one vehicle movement every six minutes on average during the AM peak hour.
- 42 vehicles entering from the A614 (local road network). This is an average of one vehicle every 1-2 minutes.

- 3.4. With suitable mitigation put in place through delivery management during the AM peak, through vehicle scheduling which avoids deliveries during peak hours where possible, then any potential impact would be much less than this on Blyth Interchange A1(M) J34.
- 3.5. During the AM peak period there will be a maximum of 42 vehicle trips potentially impacting on the SRN arms of Blyth Interchange A1(M) J34, which is marginally above the rule-of-thumb advice from NH. It is considered that the traffic flows dispersed on each arm, are not significant in the context of National Highways advising previously that there are no existing capacity operational issues at this junction.
- 3.6. During the PM peak period, there will be a maximum of 22 vehicle trips potentially impacting on the SRN arms which is below the rule-of-thumb advice from NH. Additional modelling is not considered to be required for the PM peak hour based on this advice.
- 3.7. Month 7 provides the peak month for deliveries and is therefore considered to provide a worst-case scenario. The average month traffic forecast, without mitigation in place, is a total of 18 two-way trips per hour. This is less than National Highways 'rule of thumb' of 30 trips per hour potentially impacting on Blyth Interchange A1(M) J34.
- 3.8. In addition to the above, NH have confirmed that the daily trips (Average Annual Daily Traffic AADT) associated with the proposed development as set out in the Environmental Statement Chapter, are acceptable and no further assessment is required. On this basis it is therefore considered that with appropriate management of restricting deliveries during the AM and PM network peak periods where possible, that the potential traffic impact during the peak hours is also acceptable.

Construction Routing Strategy

- 3.9. The routing strategy was discussed and agreed with NH prior to DCO-submission.
- 3.10. The local road network between the site and the SRN has various vehicle height/weight restrictions as well as residential areas preventing suitable routing for the majority of construction vehicles. The proposed route using Blyth Interchange A1(M) J34 for all site related traffic was therefore proposed as this was the best route to avoid the majority of these constraints.
- 3.11. The use of the Blythe Interchange A1(M) J34 was also proposed and agreed for the routing strategy associated with the Bumble Bee BESS and Solar Farm site (planning application ref: 22/OO358/FUL), and the West Burton Solar Project site (Ref: EN010132 (NSIP)). Neither of these schemes required a junction capacity assessment to be undertaken by NH at Blyth Interchange A1(M) J34.

3.12. Therefore, based on this previous approach and precedent, it is considered reasonable that no assessment is required associated with the construction traffic for Steeple Solar Farm either. The potential impact in the peak period is for a very short duration and can be managed to mitigate the potential impact.

Potential construction traffic impacts of implementing highway mitigation schemes at Blyth Interchange A1(M) J34

3.13. The construction period is 24 months and therefore will be temporary. Out of the 24 month period, Month 7 has been confirmed by Steeple Solar Farm Ltd as the 'peak' time of construction deliveries.

3.14. Due to the temporary nature and the short term potential impacts of peak construction traffic delivery movements, management of delivery vehicle impact, it is considered that rather than proposing highway works mitigation (which in itself could cause traffic disruption) this management and mitigation was considered to be more suitable in this instance. This was discussed and agreed with National Highways prior to the application submission.

3.15. The approach is set out in the oCTMP [APP-129] and TA [APP-128], and as part of the mitigation measures within Requirement 8 of the dDCO [REP3-005].

Absence of suitable available traffic data

3.16. Several data sources have been reviewed to acquire base data at Blyth Interchange A1(M) J34, as follows:

- Following a review by the Applicant and NH, it is understood that there is no suitable WebTRIS data available for Blyth Interchange A1(M) J34 including the A1(M) mainline or the slip roads.
- The Bassetlaw District Council Planning Portal was reviewed for data associated with similar local development sites. The review concluded that there was no suitable baseline traffic information available in the public domain for use by Steeple Solar Farm.
- Applicant data collection was considered further to receiving NH pre-examination consultation letter dated 27th November 2025. Due to timescales of the DCO Hearing in February 2026, data collection was not considered suitable during this timeframe (Based on DfT *TAG UNIT M1.2 Data Sources and Surveys* guidance which advises against undertaking surveys in the weeks before and after the Christmas Holidays). There were therefore no neutral periods available to collect any data for further junction analysis.

3.17. As there is no suitable baseline traffic data available, the Applicant has therefore been unable to provide a potential percentage impact assessment or capacity assessment for Blyth Interchange A1(M) J34. In addition to this, the average construction traffic flows are very low, and the peak periods are able to be mitigated and managed through measures outlined in the oCTMP [APP-129].

4. Conclusions

- 4.1. This Transport Technical Note (P22-1144_TN05) has been prepared to justify that no further assessment is necessary for the potential development traffic impact during the AM and PM peak hours during Month 7 of the construction period. As set out above, the potential traffic impact is not considered to be significant due to:
- The proposed construction routing, including Blyth Interchange A1(M) J34 was agreed during the pre-DCO submission discussions. NH further advised that there was no existing capacity issues at this junction.
 - The daily traffic movements have been confirmed as acceptable by NH.
 - The potential impact of the average hourly vehicle trips is very low during the majority of the temporary 24 month construction period.
 - The potential traffic impact during the AM peak hour is marginally more than the NH rule-of-thumb with a potential maximum of 42 two-way trips (comprising 21 vehicles on the northbound slip road and 21 vehicles on the southbound slip road), which is not considered to be significant.
 - During the PM peak period, there will be a potential maximum of 22 vehicle trips (comprising 11 vehicles on the northbound slip road and 11 vehicles on the southbound slip road), which is not considered to be significant and is below the rule-of-thumb advice from NH recommending further assessment.
 - Mitigation is proposed to reduce (and avoid where possible) delivery vehicles travelling through Blyth Interchange A1(M) J34 during the peak periods. This includes delivery management and scheduling. This is outlined in the oCTMP [APP-129] which is secured through Requirement 8 of the dDCO [REP3-005].
- 4.2. The Applicant would therefore be grateful if NH could confirm that the development's potential traffic impacts in conjunction with mitigation in the oCTMP [APP-129] are acceptable on the SRN.