

## Connah's Quay Low Carbon Power

### Applicant's Written Summary of Oral Submissions at Preliminary Meeting and response to Action Points

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# 1. Written summary of the Applicant's Oral Submissions at Preliminary Meeting

## 1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 This section of the document summarises the oral submissions made by Uniper UK Limited (the Applicant) at the Preliminary Meeting which took place in a blended format at the Village Hotel, Chester and on Microsoft Teams on 13 January 2026.
- 1.1.2 In what follows, the Applicant's submissions on the points raised broadly follow the Agenda for the Preliminary Meeting set out in the Examining Authority's (ExA) letter which was published on the Planning Inspectorate's website on 9 December 2025 (the Rule 6 letter) [PD-008]. Where the comment is a post-hearing note submitted by the Applicant, this is indicated.
- 1.1.3 The Applicant, which is promoting the Connah's Quay Low Carbon Power project (the Proposed Development), was represented by [REDACTED] KC of 39 Essex Chambers, instructed by Herbert Smith Freehills Kramer LLP.

## 1.2 Agenda Item 1: Welcome and introductions

- 1.2.1 The ExA welcomed all attendees to the Preliminary Meeting and introduced himself.
- 1.2.2 The ExA explained that there would be live Welsh translation available and that Welsh speakers would be welcome at the Preliminary Meeting and throughout the hearings of the examination. Headphones were made available throughout the room and via the livestream. No one in the room nor online stated that they wished to speak in Welsh.
- 1.2.3 The ExA noted that the Rule 6 letter had been issued.
- 1.2.4 The ExA explained that the purpose of the Preliminary Meeting was to discuss how the examination will be conducted, focusing only on procedure, rather than any merits or concerns of the Application itself.
- 1.2.5 The ExA explained why some members of the public were not notified of this meeting. It was explained that there are two types of persons who need to be notified, defined as (1) Affected Persons and (2) registered Interested Parties. Whilst members of the public will not necessarily fall under these categories, any members of the public can participate in the examination and there is no prevention of this. The ExA clarified that the lack of formal notification does not mean that members of the public are not important in this examination.
- 1.2.6 [REDACTED] KC, of 39 Essex Chambers, introduced himself on behalf of the Applicant. [REDACTED] KC was instructed by [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] of Herbert Smith Freehills Kramer LLP. [REDACTED] KC was acting on behalf of the Applicant. [REDACTED] KC also

introduced Mr Roger Brandwood, Project Manager at the Applicant and Mr Nicholas Stayt, Environmental Impact Assessment Lead at Aecom, acting for the Applicant.

1.2.7 [REDACTED] of Flintshire County Council (FCC) introduced herself, as well as [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. It was noted that FCC would like to make representations on Agenda Item 4.

1.2.8 [REDACTED] of Climate Emergency Science Law noted he would like to speak to Agenda Item 4.

## 1.3 Agenda Item 2: Examination Process

1.3.1 The ExA noted that a lot of detail is provided in the Rule 6 letter.

1.3.2 The ExA outlined that the purpose of the examination is so that the ExA can make a recommendation to the Secretary of State as to whether development consent should be granted for the Application. This is primarily a written process but there will be the opportunity for parties to comment on evidence received during the hearings. From the commencement of the examination, the ExA explained that there will be 6 months to examine the Application and that it is expected a decision will be made on the Application in approximately 12 months' time.

1.3.3 The ExA explained that there will be the opportunity to submit written evidence and comment on evidence submitted by others, and that such written information will be made available on the national infrastructure planning website.

1.3.4 The ExA outlined that key documents include:

- Local Impact Report, which will be submitted by FCC (the Rule 6 letter sets out a deadline for this of 10 February 2026);
- Statements of Common Ground, which are covered under Agenda Item 6; and
- Written Representations, which are an opportunity for a party to explain their comments on the Application.

1.3.5 The ExA noted that the following hearings will also take place:

- an Open Floor hearing will take place if any party requests this;
- a Compulsory Acquisition hearing will be held if requested by an Affected Person; and
- Issue Specific hearings will cover details of any specific issues raised.

1.3.6 The ExA noted he is interested in views regarding whether these hearings be held hybrid or fully virtual. Preference from a member of the public was expressed as being for hybrid hearings, such as that arranged for the Preliminary Meeting, Issue Specific Hearing 1 (ISH1) and Issue Specific Hearing 2 (ISH2).

## 1.4 Agenda Item 3: Initial assessment of principal issues

- 1.4.1 The ExA read through and summarised the list of principal issues identified in Annex C of the Rule 6 letter.
- 1.4.2 No comments were raised by any attendee on the Annex C list.

## 1.5 Agenda Item 4: Draft examination timetable

- 1.5.1 The ExA explained that the examination period can take up to 6 months but that the aim is to conclude within 5 months. Within this period, the ExA has sought to avoid clashes with other Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project applications in proximity to the Proposed Development as well as avoiding school holidays and other potential clashes.
- 1.5.2 The ExA aims to issue the Rule 8 with the confirmed timetable after the Preliminary Meeting.
- 1.5.3 There were no oral requests for a Compulsory Acquisition hearing or Open Floor hearing recorded during the Preliminary Meeting.
- 1.5.4 The ExA mentioned comments submitted by Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and Natural England (NE) regarding a suggested delay to the Ecology hearing scheduled for ISH2. The ExA confirmed that he would not delay ISH2 and would not delay Deadline 1.
- 1.5.5 The ExA noted the Applicant's request for the April hearings to be delayed to 4 May 2026. Whilst the ExA noted that this delay could cause duplication in written questions, he was content to move the hearing slot.
- 1.5.6 The ExA noted that NE had requested to move Deadline 5 from 14 to 23 April 2026 due to school holidays. In light of the delay to the third round of hearings, the ExA was content to agree this.
- 1.5.7 The ExA noted that NE and NRW had asked for Deadline 6 to be moved to 2 June 2026. [REDACTED] KC requested this deadline be 29 May 2026 instead.
- 1.5.8 The ExA confirmed that the 5 May 2026 deadline will be maintained for Item 14 of the draft examination timetable in Annex D of the Rule 6 letter.
- 1.5.9 [REDACTED] stated this is the first time FCC has been made aware of these proposed new dates and suggested she would need time to consider these proposals and whether FCC will have any concerns.
- 1.5.10 [REDACTED] KC explained that these details are available in documents published on the Infrastructure Planning website on 2 January 2026 and so confirmed that FCC could view all of this detail there.
- 1.5.11 FCC noted the timescales of interaction on the Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) with the Applicant:
  - On 17 July 2025, the Applicant sent a draft SoCG to FCC.
  - On 1 August 2025, FCC responded to the draft SoCG.

- On 18 December 2025, FCC requested an update from the Applicant on the draft SoCG.
- On 23 December 2025, the Applicant sent an updated draft SoCG to FCC.

1.5.12 FCC said that the anticipated change application to be submitted by the Applicant will have an impact on this draft SoCG and the Local Impact Report. FCC stated they are not aware of what the implications of the change application are. They said this was a significant concern to FCC and affects the two deadlines for submission of the SoCG and Local Impact Report.

1.5.13 The ExA confirmed that it is content for the SoCGs to be progressed throughout the examination and for this to be submitted without members' approval in draft and then finalised later in the examination.

1.5.14 [REDACTED] KC noted that the Applicant is seeking to progress the SoCGs. This is an iterative process and there will be an opportunity to update this document as time goes on. The Applicant has been engaging with third parties, including FCC, and there have been meetings with FCC in the interim to seek to narrow points and identify matters of common ground. A draft was provided on 23 December 2025. The Applicant would prefer that deadlines be kept but this does not prevent there being scope for further updates.

1.5.15 In relation to the change notification, [REDACTED] KC noted that the examination proceeds on the basis of the Application as submitted. He noted that there is the ability to request changes throughout the examination and in this case this has been done earlier than might otherwise be done. The change process has its own procedure, including a consultation with persons who may be interested. That is the point at which comments should be made on the change application, rather than within the Local Impact Report. This submission of the change notification was not intended to delay the timetable for commenting on the Application. With regard to the Local Impact Report, the Applicant would endorse that this should cover the Application as made and the current timetable enables FCC to do this. The Applicant does not wish to prejudice consideration of the change notification in due course. However, comments can be updated throughout the examination to accommodate any concerns or support for matters within the change notification. The Applicant welcomes continued engagement with FCC, and their comments on the change application in due course. However, the Applicant would be reluctant for this to hold up comments on the Application.

1.5.16 Whilst FCC noted that there could still be implications for the Local Impact Report, the ExA confirmed that it was content for the Local Impact Report to be submitted as the Application stands, caveated as subject to the change application, and then there will be ample time to update this as required.

1.5.17 [REDACTED] stated that he had submitted an email on 30 December 2025 covering his request that the principal issue of climate change should be included in one of the rounds of Issue Specific hearings. [REDACTED] wanted to lodge a marker that he considered there is considerable debate over the science of scope 3 upstream emissions. [REDACTED] requested that a slot be

reserved within the climate change Issue Specific hearing for this issue to be properly raised.

- 1.5.18 [REDACTED] would find the week commencing 4 May 2026 challenging to attend and stated a preference for the climate change Issue Specific hearing to be included within the second round of hearings, if at all possible.
- 1.5.19 The ExA thanked [REDACTED] for his submission. The ExA confirmed he was happy to accept this submission and the request for an Issue Specific hearing. The ExA is expecting to hold a hearing on climate change and this will likely be scheduled for round 2 of the hearings. The ExA confirmed that he will reserve an item for upstream emissions within the climate change hearing.
- 1.5.20 The ExA reminded all parties that this examination seeks to examine the matters of the Application, rather than government policy and planning statements. It is requested, in preparing for the hearings, any person can make comment on any matters so long as not vexatious, but there is nothing that can be done about government policy for the purposes of this specific examination.
- 1.5.21 [REDACTED] confirmed he will make a submission for Deadline 1.

## 1.6 Agenda Item 5: Notification of Initial Hearings

- 1.6.1 The ExA confirmed there will be two hearings over the course of the next two days.
- 1.6.2 The ExA reassured all parties that ecological matters are still to be discussed early and will continue with holding Issue Specific Hearing 1, noting comments from NE and NRW.
- 1.6.3 The ExA reiterated that he is minded to hold a climate change hearing in the second round of hearings.
- 1.6.4 The ExA confirmed that hearings would be held at this location and also online. Details will be issued through the usual hearing notification letters.

## 1.7 Agenda Item 6: Procedural Decisions

- 1.7.1 The ExA stated that he had made a request for the Applicant to submit a derogation case on the basis of NE's submission to the ExA. The Applicant has taken this on board. The Applicant disagrees with the need for a derogation case but has prepared and submitted a without prejudice derogation case regardless.
- 1.7.2 A change notification was submitted to the ExA by the Applicant on 9 January 2026. This has not yet been accepted by the ExA. The ExA invited the Applicant to explain, in outline, the proposed changes.
- 1.7.3 [REDACTED] KC outlined the proposed changes:
  - Change 1 – proposes a reduction of powers in the Proposed CO2 Corridor. Following engagement with Liverpool Bay CCS Limited (LBCCS), the Applicant can confirm it is not anticipated such powers would be needed.

- Change 2 – aligns the Proposed CO2 Connection Corridor indicative landscape plan with the HyNet project. As a result of further engagement with LBCCS, the Applicant has noted that the indicative landscape plan (Appendix A of the **Outline landscape and ecological management plan (LEMP) [APP-250]**) did not reflect the same plan as for the HyNet project. This change is to ensure that the plan accords with the HyNet project plan. This change is not considered to have any implications on the Environmental Statement assessment and no new or different likely significant effects are identified. It is also anticipated this change will not cause an issue for FCC bearing in mind the HyNet project is a consented scheme.
- Change 3 – forms a land designation adjustment, involving minor changes to area of retained habitats within the Main Development Area, as originally designated as retained habitat within the Outline LEMP – these are habitats of low ecological value. These were assessed as retained habitat and factored in that way. However, having reviewed the existing operational activities, these areas are required to be used by the existing Connah's Quay power station and may be required as laydown. The consequences of not treating this as retained habitat have been addressed in the notification and any additional net benefit for biodiversity will be provided offsite in an area already provided for. This does not change the works to be undertaken or the assessment assumptions.
- Change 4 – is the reduction in the Heat Recovery Steam Generator (HRSG) stack heights and absorber stack heights. The proposed stack heights are being reduced and this reduction follows engagement with Airbus Operations, the operator of Hawarden Aerodrome, which has obstacle limitation surfaces in respect of aviation activity. This change seeks to reduce the stack heights to below the plane of obstacle limitation. The Applicant has done work in relation to air quality modelling because reducing stack heights can affect air quality modelling and does not foresee any likely significant effects.

████████ of Oakenholt Farm, representing Oakenholt residents, requested confirmation of the original heights. █████ KC confirmed the reduction is 20m for the HRSG stack (150m to 130m) and for the absorber stacks it is a 5m reduction (150m to 145m).

████████ requested a visual impact assessment by the Applicant of what the impact will be on the farm specifically.

FCC noted a previous increase was to respond to public health considerations and emission factors. FCC would want to ensure this is considered.

- Change 5 – is the relocation of the existing contractors' facilities. These are temporary modular structures. The proposal is to relocate those to allow them to continue to be used. They were originally proposed to be southeast but following a review of the available space, these cannot be accommodated in that area and proposed change 5 involves moving them to a new location. This does not affect construction worker volumes or vehicle movements.

FCC noted that this reflects on the reclassification of that area, which impacts the Net Benefit for Biodiversity (NBB) calculation (alongside proposed changes 2 and 3). FCC considered that these changes could significantly impact the NBB calculation as originally submitted.

- Change 6 – relates to the Connah's Quay North Jetty and expansion of proposed hard standing at that area. There is a proposal to extend the hard standing to deal with the existing offloading area at that location. The proposal is to extend the loading to allow for additional areas for equipment deliveries during the construction phase. The implications of doing this are all the subject of assessment and no new or different likely significant effects are expected. This does require an amendment to the Order limits but without the need for compulsory acquisition powers.

1.7.4 The ExA is minded to accept the change notification as it now stands and allow the Applicant to consult on this basis. The ExA recommended the Applicant look at the landscape visualisations prepared by local residents and also considers air quality impacts at local and designated sites. The ExA noted that the consultation approach seems reasonable.

1.7.5 The ExA queried, in relation to the Jetty, whether the landowner (Tata) has consented or objected to this change. [REDACTED] KC confirmed discussions are ongoing with this landowner.

1.7.6 [REDACTED] KC requested comment from the ExA on the consultation approach by 20 January 2026 so it could be incorporated into the consultation which is due to commence on 21 January 2026. The ExA confirmed he would progress a response on this as soon as possible.

### SoCGs

1.7.7 The ExA noted that the Scottish Power SoCG covers SP Energy Networks and so is already in draft form.

1.7.8 [REDACTED] KC noted that the Applicant is willing to enter into a SoCG with National Highways. The ExA queried the status of who owns and operates the Strategic Road Network (SRN) in Wales and England.

1.7.9 *Post hearing note: National Highways owns and operates the English SRN. In Wales it is the North and Mid Wales Trunk Road Agent. Further clarification is provided in the **Applicant's Written Summary of ISH2 and response to Action Points (Document Ref. 9.8)**.*

1.7.10 In relation to Public Health Wales, [REDACTED] KC confirmed no SoCG was proposed because their relevant representation confirms previous concerns have been addressed by the Application.

1.7.11 Likewise, the Maritime Coastguard Agency's relevant representation refers the Applicant to the relevant harbour authorities and conservancies and so the Applicant does not consider it necessary to include an SoCG with this organization, as opposed to dealing with the harbor authorities.

### Accompanied Site Visit (ASI)

1.7.12 The ExA commented that requests for locations to be visited as part of the ASI have been provided by the Ramblers and the ExA does not consider there are any sites within this request that are not publicly available.

1.7.13 [REDACTED] confirmed she would welcome the ExA to attend her property to view the Site from her property.

1.7.14 The ExA explained the process of an ASI and noted that there is an alternative for an access required site inspection instead of a full ASI.

1.7.15 [REDACTED] confirmed she would be content for either approach.

1.7.16 [REDACTED] KC explained its understanding that all of the Ramblers' suggested locations are publicly accessible, save that a fee may be payable for one of the locations. It is noted that a provisional date for the ASI is 16 March 2026.

1.7.17 FCC want to reserve their position in relation to the ASI pending submission of the Local Impact Report. The ExA requested to be informed as soon as possible.

#### *Approach to notification of members of the public*

1.7.18 The ExA explained that certificates pursuant to section 56 and 59 of the Planning Act 2008 (the 2008 Act) were submitted by the Applicant. There is a duty under the 2008 Act to notify Affected Persons and Interested Parties. There are members of the public who may not fall into those categories. If members of the public do not fall under those categories, the best way to be involved in the process is to register with the Planning Inspectorate so that an email is provided whenever there is any update to the examination. There is no mechanism for contact in any other way.

1.7.19 [REDACTED] stated that she understood that door knocks and meetings took place as part of the consultation, but she stated she was not made aware of this. She requested to be informed of who the 220 people who experienced a door knock were and what has been done as part of the face to face consultation.

1.7.20 [REDACTED] expressed concern because she said her family's previous experience with the original power station was extremely bad with noise, vibration, smell of gas and traffic problems.

1.7.21 [REDACTED] noted that her parents experienced issues during construction of the original power station. She stated that whilst the Application notes that no complaints were received for the original power station, she notes that this is not the case.

1.7.22 *Post hearing note: the Applicant notes that **Environmental Statement (ES) Chapter 9: Noise and Vibration [APP-047]** states "FCC confirmed there were no noise complaints regarding the existing power plant. The Applicant mentioned there have been three noise complaints over the entire plants' life". It further states "there have been no recent noise complaints".*

1.7.23 The ExA requested that [REDACTED] private visualisation be submitted to the examination.

1.7.24 The ExA also noted that the construction industry has come along a lot and there will be mitigations secured through the construction environmental management plan.

### ***Section 51 advice response***

1.7.25 The ExA noted that an update has been received to the Funding Statement in response to section 51 advice.

## **1.8 Agenda Item 7: Any other matters**

1.8.1 No matters raised.

## 2. Applicant's Response to Action Points arising from the Preliminary Meeting

2.1.1 The Applicant sets out responses to Action Points arising from the Preliminary Meeting within Table 2.1.

**Table 2.1- Applicant's response to Action Points arising from the Preliminary Meeting**

No.	Action	Response
1	Applicant to confirm which highways authorities have authority in respect of the relevant affected highways (taking into account the differing position between Wales and England).	Please refer to the post hearing note at paragraph 1.7.9 above.
2	Applicant to comment on ASI locations proposed by third parties.	Please refer to the <b>Applicant's Deadline 1 Covering Letter (Document Ref. 9.3)</b> and <b>Applicant's Draft Itinerary for Accompanied Site Inspection (Document Ref. 9.9)</b> , which sets out the Applicant's draft Itinerary for an ASI.
3	Applicant to explain why people who were consulted then dropped out of the list at s56 stage, and who they were.	Please refer to Appendix A (Summary of Applicant's approach to consultation and section 56 notification) for the Applicant's response to this Action Point.
4	Once the visualisation is submitted by [REDACTED] comment on and respond to this visualisation.	The Applicant awaits a copy and will comment at the next available deadline once received.

# Appendix A: Summary of Applicant's approach to consultation and section 56 notification

## 1. Introduction

This response addresses the ExA's query regarding the Applicant's approach to consultation and, in particular, the reasons why certain individuals and organisations who were consulted during the pre-application phase were not included within the Section 56 notification list following acceptance of the Application.

The Applicant has undertaken comprehensive pre-application consultation on its proposals prior to submitting the Application, including a four-week Non-Statutory Consultation, a six-week Statutory Consultation and a four-week non-statutory Targeted Consultation (Targeted Consultation). The Statutory Consultation accorded with the requirements of the 2008 Act, the Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009 (APFP Regulations) and the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (EIA Regulations) and had regard to guidance issued under section 50(3) of the 2008 Act. In addition, the Applicant undertook non-statutory engagement throughout the pre-application stage in compliance with the 2008 Act, the APFP Regulations and relevant Planning Inspectorate guidance and advice for applicants.

The Applicant considers that its approach was proportionate and consistent with both statutory requirements and recognised best practice.

## 2. Consultation strategy and principles

The Applicant developed the approach to consultation and engagement in line with the requirements of the 2008 Act, associated guidance and the Planning Inspectorate's advice for applicants.

The Applicant has a long-standing presence at Connah's Quay and recognises the importance of being a good neighbour. To ensure local people were consulted on the proposals, the Applicant agreed a programme of local community consultation with the relevant host local planning authorities: FCC and Cheshire West and Chester Council (CWCC). This programme was set out in the Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC), provided at **Appendix B-3 of the Consultation Report (EN010166/APP/5.2)**.

In developing the consultation programme, the Applicant committed to going beyond the minimum statutory requirements to maximise opportunities for participation and to ensure a wide range of local views could influence the proposals. Engagement was undertaken in line with the Cabinet Office Consultation Principles (2018), which emphasise that consultation should be clear, targeted, proportionate, informative and part of an ongoing process of engagement.

## 3. Multi-phase consultation approach

In order to maximise the opportunity for a wide range of stakeholders to participate in the programme of consultation and engagement, and to increase the range of local

views able to influence proposals, the Applicant committed to undertake a multi-phase programme.

The Proposed Development was publicly launched in February 2024, alongside an initial Non-Statutory Consultation held between 26 February 2024 and 25 March 2024. This early engagement provided members of the local community and stakeholders with an opportunity to learn about the proposals at a formative stage and to provide initial feedback. During this phase, the Applicant received 54 responses from a range of stakeholders, including local residents, local authorities, and environmental organisations.

Prior to the Statutory Consultation, the Applicant prepared the SoCC, informed by feedback from FCC officers on an informal 'Approach to Consultation' document, which had been provided prior to Non-Statutory Consultation. Feedback received from the local authority informed the approach taken to early engagement and was used to aid in the preparation of the SoCC to ensure consistency of approach.

Statutory Consultation took place from Tuesday 8 October 2024 to Tuesday 19 November 2024. A total of 132 responses were received during this round of engagement. The consultation set out the refined proposals inclusive of environmental assessments and technical detail contained within the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR).

In addition, a non-statutory Targeted Consultation on a specific design an update - an increase to the proposed emission stack heights - was carried out from Thursday 8 May 2025 to Friday 6 June 2025.

#### **4. Indicative site boundary and host authorities**

At the point of Statutory Consultation, the Indicative Site Boundary also included land within the administrative area of CWCC in England as the Applicant explored options for delivery of Abnormal Invisible Loads (AILs) to the Site. As a result of this, both FCC and CWCC were treated as host Section 43 local planning authorities prior to and throughout Statutory Consultation.

Following the close of the Statutory Consultation and further refinement of the proposals, the proposed Indicative Site Boundary was updated to remove Ellesmere Port. As a result of this change, CWCC is not considered to be a host authority for the purposes of the Application.

#### **5. Residents and refinement of the consultee list**

Throughout the pre-application phase, consultation was intentionally broad to ensure that individuals and communities who might potentially be affected by early iterations of the proposals had an opportunity to engage and provide feedback.

As the design evolved and the Order limits were refined, the Applicant reviewed and updated the list of parties with a direct interest in land within the Order Limits, informed by land referencing and technical assessments. Some residents who were consulted during the Non-Statutory and Statutory Consultation phases were no longer located within, or directly affected by, the final Order limits of the Proposed Development as submitted in the Application.

In accordance with the statutory purpose of Section 56, which is to notify those with a direct land interest or statutory role in relation to the submitted Application, these individuals were not included in the Section 56 notification list. Their earlier inclusion

reflected the Applicant's commitment to early, inclusive engagement, rather than a determination of ongoing impact.

## **6. Compliance with statutory consultation requirements**

The Applicant consulted prescribed bodies under Section 42(1)(a) of the 2008 Act, Schedule 1 of the APFP Regulations and the consultation bodies listed in the EIA Scoping Opinion adopted by the Planning Inspectorate (on behalf of the Secretary of State) on 20 March 2024. Consultation was also undertaken with local authorities in accordance with Section 42(1)(b) and those with an interest in land within the Indicative Site Boundary in accordance with Section 42(1)(d) of the 2008 Act.

**The Consultation Report (EN010166/APP/5.1)** accompanying the Application sets out in detail how the Applicant has complied with the consultation requirements set out in the 2008 Act, summarises the responses received to the consultation and explains the account taken by the Applicant of those responses in finalising the Application.

## **7. Ongoing engagement and Examination**

Since submission of the Application in August 2025, the Applicant has continued with detailed design development and refinement, while also continuing to engage with stakeholders and interested parties. As a result of this continued engagement, the Applicant has identified a need for changes to the DCO Application.

From Wednesday 21 January 2026 to Wednesday 18 February 2026, the Applicant is therefore conducting a consultation, specifically about these proposed changes, technically referred to as a 'Change Consultation'.

Although the DCO Application has already been submitted to the SoS, via the Planning Inspectorate, the feedback received during this consultation will be carefully reviewed and considered before submission of the Change Application.

Comments relating directly to the proposed changes will inform how those changes are finalised and presented as part of the Examination process. A summary of consultation responses and an explanation of how they have been considered will be provided to the Planning Inspectorate, ensuring that the views of consultees are taken into account as part of the decision-making process.

To support the Change Consultation, the Applicant has undertaken the following engagement activities:

- Postcards announcing the launch of the Change Consultation were delivered across the Primary Consultation Zone, covering 20,821 addresses and in line with previous consultations undertaken by the Applicant.
- Hard copies of the consultation newsletter have been delivered to local deposit locations in the vicinity of the site. These locations already hold USBs containing the full DCO application documents.
- Adverts publicising the Change Consultation have been published online on the websites of local publications the Wirral Globe, The Leader and The Chester Standard.
- Letters notifying statutory consultees of the Change Consultation were delivered by post and issued by email where valid email addresses are held.

- Non-statutory consultees and individuals who have registered to receive project updates have been notified of the Change Consultation via email.
- The project website has been updated to provide information about the Change Consultation and the Welsh-language website has similarly been updated.

However, The Applicant recognises that consultation and engagement do not end with submission of the Application or the Change Consultation. All interested parties, including those consulted earlier in the process but not included at the Section 56 stage, continue to have the opportunity to engage with the Examination by registering as Interested Parties and participating in the Planning Inspectorate's examination procedures.

Information relating to the Proposed Development remains publicly available via the project website and the Applicant will continue to engage with stakeholders as the project progresses through the Examination stage.

## **8. Conclusion**

The Applicant considers that its consultation approach was comprehensive, proportionate and compliant with statutory requirements and best practice guidance. The refinement of the Section 56 consultee list reflects changes to the Indicative Site Boundary and Order Limits and the statutory purpose of Section 56 notification, rather than any reduction in the Applicant's commitment to engagement.

The Applicant therefore considers that the consultation undertaken provides a robust and adequate basis for the Examination of the Proposed Development.