



Event Transcript

Project:	Sea Link
Event:	Issue Specific Hearing 2 (ISH2) - Day 1 - Part 1
Date:	28 January 2026

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FULL TRANSCRIPT (with timecode)

00:00:05:05 - 00:00:40:18

Can I just confirm with the case team that I can be heard clearly, and that the live stream of this event has commenced? Thank you. The time is now 10:00, and I would like to welcome you all to this issue specific hearing for the application by National Grid electricity Transmission for an order granting development consent for the seedling project. My name is Sarah Holmes. I'm a plan inspector and a chartered civil engineer. I have been appointed by the Secretary of State for the lead member of the panel to examine this application. I'm now going to ask my fellow panel members, who have also been appointed by the Secretary of State to examine this project to introduce themselves.

00:00:41:14 - 00:00:47:05

Good morning. My name is Nancy Thomas. I am a planning inspector and a chartered town planner.

00:00:48:26 - 00:00:53:28

Good morning. My name is Doctor Richard Hunt, a planning inspector and a chartered environmentalist.

00:00:55:22 - 00:01:00:04

Hello. Good morning. My name is Stephen Rennie. I am a planning inspector and a chartered town planner.

00:01:01:16 - 00:01:06:18

Good morning. My name is Luke Regan. I'm a planning inspector and a chartered transport plan.

00:01:08:13 - 00:01:47:10

I can confirm that all members of the examiner authority have made a formal declaration of interests, and that there are no known conflicts of interest. With regard to his examining this application, together we constitute the examining authority, or X for this application. There were other colleagues from the Planning Inspectorate with us today. You will have all spoken to Caroline Allen, Harper Kerr, Emma Smith, our case officers in the joining conference. I'd also like to introduce Louise Hathaway, the case manager for this project. She is supported by Stella Clark, our case officer, and we're also joined by two inspectors, Chris MacDowell and Carl Pelling, who are observing the hearing for training purposes and have no role in this examination.

00:01:47:22 - 00:02:05:25

In addition, there are technicians from CVS international who are attending solely for the purpose of managing the recording and the live streaming of the hearing. If you have any questions regarding the application process in general. Could I ask that you please email the case team who will be happy to help? I will now hand over to Mr. Regan who will deal with the arrangements for this meeting.

00:02:07:17 - 00:02:37:19

Before we consider the items on the agenda this morning, we need to deal with a few housekeeping matters. I will try and get through these as quickly as I'm able. Firstly, please can everyone attending make sure that your phone is switched off or turn to silent? No fire test is planned for this morning. Should an alarm sound, it is an emergency and we will need to vacate the building. Emergency exits are located in the corners of the room, and the doors through which you entered the assembly point at the far is.

00:02:37:21 - 00:03:11:12

It's at the far end of the building outside the western entrance. If anyone needs assistance, please can you let the case team know? Toilet facilities, including disabled, can be found to the rear of this room. Past room 20 on the left hand side. For those of you attending the satellite venues to minimize background noise, please make sure your phones are switched off or turn to silent. If you wish to speak, please raise your hand and a roving mic will be brought to you for those attending virtually.

00:03:11:16 - 00:03:48:03

Can I please repeat the request made in the Arrangements conference, which again, is to make sure that your phones are also turned to silence or switched off. Please also make sure that you stay muted with your camera turned off unless you are speaking. I would also ask that if you wish to speak, you turn your camera on and either use the raise hand function in teams or ask to speak to the appropriate time. Can I also remind people that the chat function on teams will not work? So please do not try to use this to ask any questions or comments.

00:03:49:13 - 00:04:16:28

For those watching the live stream, should we at any point adjourn proceedings, we will have to stop the live stream to give us a clear recording. Files. As a result, at the point at which we start the meeting again and the live stream, you will need to refresh your browser page will remind you of this at the appropriate time. Should we need to adjourn at this stage, please could I ask if there are any members of the press in attendance?

00:04:19:26 - 00:04:21:03

Seeing any hands?

00:04:26:05 - 00:04:39:20

As far as I'm aware, there are no requests have been made for any special measures or arrangements to enable participation in this meeting. If anyone does need a break or extra support, please do let the case team know.

00:04:42:02 - 00:05:12:28

This event is being both livestreamed and recorded. Our letter of the 19th of September, which we referred to as the rule six letter, Explained that because we retain and publish the digital recordings, they form a public record to which the General Data Protection Regulation applies. The Planning Inspectorate publishes and retains recordings for a period of five years from the Secretary of State's decision on the Development Consent Order.

00:05:13:06 - 00:05:24:26

So if you participate in this meeting, it is important you understand you'll be recorded and that you that you can sense the retention and publication of the digital recording.

00:05:29:19 - 00:05:34:06

Can I ask at this point? Does anyone else intend to film or record this meeting?

00:05:36:19 - 00:05:37:07

Okay.

00:05:39:21 - 00:06:20:29

We will only ever ask for information to be placed on the public record. That is important and relevant to the planning decision to avoid the need to edit the digital Recordings. We would ask that you try your best not to add information to the public record that you would normally wish to be kept private, or confidentiality, or confidential. This could include address details, financial circumstances, or details of medical conditions. For example, if you do feel that you need to refer to something that is private or confidential, please discuss this with the case team first to explore whether this could be submitted in writing or redacted.

00:06:22:09 - 00:06:29:25

Can I now check if anyone has any questions with regards to what I've just said in the room or online?

00:06:32:05 - 00:06:32:26

Thank you.

00:06:37:11 - 00:07:09:21

Moving on to the purpose of today's hearing. Today's issue specific hearing is being held at the examining authorities request because we want to explore and discuss a number of environmental matters. This is to ensure that we all have the information we need to make our reports to the Secretary of State. Today's hearing will be a structured discussion based upon the published agenda. It is important that we get the right answers to the questions that we ask.

00:07:10:11 - 00:07:40:06

I reiterate this is a predominantly written process. Therefore, if you cannot answer the questions that are being asked or require time to get the information requested, then rather than give a restricted or potentially incorrect answer, can you please indicate that you need to respond in writing? We can then defer the response either to an action point to be submitted at deadline for which is the 10th of February, but to the second written questions or a later hearing.

00:07:42:00 - 00:07:58:20

I'd like to reassure you that while we may not ask a particular question on a particular issue. It doesn't mean that we necessarily believe this matter has been fully addressed. It could be that we will be examining it further at a later hearing or through written questions.

00:08:00:18 - 00:08:35:29

We're expecting that most of today's contributions will be from the applicant and statutory bodies, in response to the direct questions we have. This is a public examination though, so if there's a point that

you want to make, please do raise your virtual hand and switch on your camera so that we can hear from you. However, whilst we will give parties the opportunity to comment at appropriate points, this should be in direct response to our questions. If you have other matters or topics that you wish to raise, this should be done in writing, please.

00:08:37:27 - 00:08:52:20

Again, this is a predominantly written process. If we do not have time to hear from everyone who wants to contribute, would ask that anything relevant is submitted in writing on or before deadline, for which again is Tuesday 10th of Feb.

00:08:55:03 - 00:09:10:27

Firstly, I would like to remind everyone that this is not an inquiry unless we specifically request it. There will be no formal presentations of case or cross-examination. This means that any questions you have for other parties need to be addressed through the essay.

00:09:13:00 - 00:09:17:12

Are there any questions at this stage about the procedural side of today's hearing?

00:09:21:20 - 00:09:24:02

I'm not seeing any hands in the room online.

00:09:26:23 - 00:09:27:11

Okay.

00:09:28:24 - 00:09:41:25

Um, rule 14 two of the examination procedure rules requires that at the start of the hearing, the examination, the examining authority should identify measures to be considered at the hearing.

00:09:44:07 - 00:09:46:00

I'm sorry. I've just seen a hand up there.

00:09:50:11 - 00:09:52:13

There's a hand up there. Can I invite them to.

00:09:53:16 - 00:10:52:22

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. Marianne Fellowes, local resident attending a Ufford Park satellite site with colleagues. Um, good morning and thank you for your time today. Just one practical point to assist. There is a little bit of a delay, sir. So in moving on to another topic, if you would pause slightly longer, perhaps to assist those indicating in this location that we wish to assist you. Um, please, may I ask, you said, were there any questions about the process of the time today? Are you intending to take the items in the agenda in the order that is published, or are you aware of any changes to that agenda? And in terms of items that are not included on these three days, I note with some sadness that you have cancelled the time set aside for the week in February.

00:10:52:24 - 00:11:14:20

That was going to be for open floor hearings three and additional issue specific hearings. So if we're not able to get firstly to the topics as published in these three days, or secondly, if you're not able to include a topic that's not listed, for example, the needs case, uh, when might they be agenda. Thank you.

00:11:15:14 - 00:11:57:02

Thank you. Um, thank you for your points with regards to the delay. And that's helpful. And we'll do our best to make sure we accommodate an extra bit of time to, to enable that to be dealt with with regards to the agenda. It is our intention over the next couple of days to, um, follow the agenda in terms of the, the orders of the items as presented in that agenda. Um, we will be intending to stick to the content of that agenda, although there may be some points where we wish to explore related matters, but generally we will be keeping um in accordance with and to the order of the published agenda.

00:11:57:13 - 00:12:40:00

Uh, if there are any or any other items that you wish to be raising, uh, which are associated with topics which we are not intending to address today, as I've just said, this is a predominantly written process. We would find it incredibly helpful if those could be submitted at the next written deadline, which is deadline for, so that we can give exactly the same amount of weight to it as we would any other submissions, including those made orally at hearings. Um, whilst it isn't our intention to have hearings at the end of February at the moment, um, we will be intending to issue, um, second written questions on appropriate matters.

00:12:40:02 - 00:13:00:23

So again, we will be inviting feedback from all parties through that questioning process. And as you will see from the published, um published programme for the examination, there is also an opportunity for us to be having further hearings, including open floor hearings, towards the end of March. Thank you.

00:13:05:12 - 00:13:40:22

Thank you. So I just pick up I think I'm going to start at the beginning of that paragraph again. Um, rule 14 two of the examiners examination procedure rules requires it at the start of the hearing. The examiner, the examining authority, shall identify matters to be considered at the hearing. These are set out in the agenda for this hearing, which is every 6002 in the examination library. And for the sake of expediency, I do not propose to read out all the separate agenda items, but I'd ask now for the applicant to display that on the screen, please.

00:13:44:25 - 00:14:19:13

Thank you. So as I've said, we do intend to follow the agenda, but it is for guidance only. There is possibility that we may tweak the running order slightly or add additional items as we see fit. As we progress through the issue specific hearing, we will seek to allocate sufficient time to each of these issues to allow for proper consideration. Before we move on, is there anything about this procedural side that anyone else wishes to comment on either in the room? Yes, Mr.

00:14:19:15 - 00:14:20:01

Mahoney.

00:14:22:12 - 00:14:24:04

Thank you. James Burton.

00:14:28:11 - 00:15:05:09

On behalf of Suffolk Energy. Excellent solutions. No, not not not not at all. So this is Mr. Marney sitting in back to my. To my left. Yes. So I speak on behalf of Suffolk Energy Action Solutions, as I said. Um, sir. Madam. Could I perhaps clarify on behalf of my client? I'm sure you are aware that, um. Um. I think Miss Playful raised it just now. We have been pressing repeatedly for the issue of need and the linked issue of, um, economy and efficiency. That, of course, is written into policy to be scheduled specifically for consideration and issue specific hearing.

00:15:05:17 - 00:15:41:20

Um, I know you've received numerous requests from my client on that basis. Um, it would be wonderful if it could be scheduled at this issue specific hearing. Um, however, if it is not going to be scheduled at this issue specific hearing equally, um, I would be grateful to know because I have a quasi expert who is waiting in the wings, but would essentially be rearranging things in order to come, um, to or virtually or in person, but probably in person.

00:15:41:22 - 00:16:12:18

Just just to remind you that the reason we're so exercised by this is, as you know, we say that the applicants need case has collapsed from 2000MW in the Sizewell group to 352, even including line on a worse case. And that is a very significant change. Um, and whilst the evidence is, um, well, whilst we say the answers are straightforward, the conclusions to be drawn a straightforward are straightforward.

00:16:12:20 - 00:16:42:20

The evidence is not necessarily straightforward and might need some some explanation. And similarly, the reason that whilst NASA's Clean Power 2030 says Sealink is a critical project, again, the reasons for that have also fallen away. And again, there is some there is some complexity to that. So that's why we're anxious that it might be something you actually need a bit more from parties, on a bit more clarification, and can't just be dealt with in writing.

00:16:42:23 - 00:16:54:13

But as I say, if, if, if you are thinking about bringing it to this hearing, which we'd love, perhaps we can have an indication. So I think it's Mr. Dunn can rearrange things. So thank you.

00:16:54:15 - 00:17:25:21

Thank you, thank you for raising that point. Um, we're not covering it in this in this hearing. So you can stand your expert down. We have read your submissions at late deadline three, so we understand your concerns with need. The applicant will be responding to those at deadline four. And as we've said previously, this is a predominantly written process. And what we'd like is all the evidence in writing. So we can consider it and then we can decide if it needs a discussion. So if you've got more evidence that you need to submit above and beyond what you put at deadline three, if you could submit that in writing as well. And then we can look at that.

00:17:25:23 - 00:17:32:28

We can look at what the applicant says and we can decide if it needs further written questions or it needs exploring in a hearing. Thank you.

00:17:36:28 - 00:17:57:03

Thank you. Um, if we could now move on, please. To the introduction of participants. The case team has provided me with a list of interested parties and other parties who have wished, expressed a wish to be heard today. Um, firstly though, please could I ask the applicant to introduce themselves?

00:17:57:22 - 00:17:58:11

Thank you sir.

00:17:58:13 - 00:18:35:12

Good morning. I appear on behalf of the applicant. My name is Sarah Carver, King's counsel. I appear together with my colleague Hugh Flanagan, who's sitting next to me. Um, it's also a barrister. Uh, we are jointly instructed by BCP on behalf of the applicant. Um, in particular, Mr. James Parker has conduct of this matter. Um, so we also have the full complement of expertise that you indicated would be useful to you in the agenda. And they're all in this room. I'm not going to introduce them now, but as they are, as they come forward to give their assistance to you, they will introduce themselves or I will at that point.

00:18:35:20 - 00:18:47:22

Thank you very much. And now move on to the local authorities and councils, and I'll ask them to introduce themselves, please. So firstly, Suffolk County Council, if you could introduce yourselves please.

00:18:48:10 - 00:19:05:18

Thank you sir. My name is Michael Bedford, King's counsel. I'm instructed by Suffolk County Council. Um, in addition to me, there are online various team members that I will introduce as and when we need to when we get to them in the agenda, if that's satisfactory to you. Thank you sir.

00:19:06:05 - 00:19:09:27

Thank you. Um, could I move, please, to Kent County Council?

00:19:13:11 - 00:19:15:05

Kent County Council online.

00:19:22:04 - 00:19:27:13

Seeing any hands? Okay, I'll move on then. Um, do we have East Suffolk Council?

00:19:30:00 - 00:19:53:20

Yes, sir. Good morning. My name is Mark Westmoreland Smith, King's counsel. I'm instructed by Brian Greenwood. He's a partner at Clyde and Co, and I have with me Graham Studley, who's the principal planner and Sola lead at the council. And we, in addition to that have a team of various specialists who I will introduce as and when they come up to speak. Thank you.

00:19:55:00 - 00:19:59:00

Thank you. Um. And Thanet District Council, please.

00:20:00:24 - 00:20:10:14

Good morning, Helen Johnson. I'm the lead officer for the district council, and we have other colleagues from the council available, should they be needed throughout the hearing. Thank you.

00:20:10:28 - 00:20:15:20

Thank you for that. Um, and Dover District Council, please.

00:20:17:04 - 00:20:22:01

Good morning sir. I'm Rachel Morgan, principal planning officer, on behalf of Dover District Council.

00:20:23:27 - 00:20:29:19

Thank you for that. And Friston Parish Council. I believe we have them in the room. Thank you.

00:20:29:21 - 00:20:36:07

Yes. Um, my name is Michael Marney and I'm here today with Mary Shipman, both representing Christian Parish Council.

00:20:36:20 - 00:20:41:06

Thank you for that. And do we have Miles Parish Council?

00:20:45:13 - 00:20:48:05

Miles for the parish council today online please.

00:20:58:02 - 00:21:03:25

Say miles offered. So I'll move on. Um, do we have Wold Beswick parish Council?

00:21:07:14 - 00:21:08:13

Um, yes.

00:21:10:05 - 00:21:19:08

It's Josie bassinet on the, um, parish councillor who represents um Walbrzych within CIPs. Thank you.

00:21:20:08 - 00:21:25:21

Thank you very much. And do we have West Alton Parish Council, please?

00:21:27:09 - 00:21:30:09

Uh, yes. Andrew Turner, representative West and parish council.

00:21:31:09 - 00:21:37:10

Thank you very much. And we have Thebarton and East Bridge parish Council.

00:21:38:21 - 00:21:44:21

Yes. Paul Collins from seven East Parish Council responsible for energy projects and answers.

00:21:45:07 - 00:21:50:15

Thank you very much. And we have Ben Hall and Stanfield Parish Council, please.

00:21:56:28 - 00:21:57:15

Yes.

00:21:58:01 - 00:21:59:21

Charlotte Fox representing Pendle.

00:21:59:23 - 00:22:01:09

And Stanfield parish Council.

00:22:02:21 - 00:22:06:19

Thank you. And do we have Snape Parish Council?

00:22:19:21 - 00:22:21:08

Snape Parish Council.

00:22:26:23 - 00:22:32:06

I think we'll move on then. Um, we have Woodbridge Town Council, please.

00:22:37:05 - 00:22:41:05

Yes. Robin Sanders representing Woodbridge Council as leader.

00:22:44:15 - 00:22:50:03

Okay. Thank you. And do we have Saxmundham Town Council?

00:22:51:18 - 00:22:54:06

Good morning sir. Yes it's Geraldine Parker.

00:22:54:08 - 00:22:55:04

Representing.

00:22:55:06 - 00:23:02:06

Saxmundham Town Council. I deal with major infrastructure projects on behalf of the council. Thank you.

00:23:03:10 - 00:23:14:20

Thank you for that. And there were just three councils there who are invited to introduce themselves who didn't comment. So before I move on, I'll just check. Um, do we have Kent County Council online, please?

00:23:19:19 - 00:23:24:01

We have the archaeological office of the Kent County Council. Simon Mason.

00:23:24:28 - 00:23:30:19

Okay. Thank you. Um, do we have Kent County Council online, please?

00:23:34:27 - 00:23:36:02

Can we get some feedback there?

00:23:39:10 - 00:23:39:25

Mason.

00:23:40:28 - 00:23:41:13

Okay.

00:23:42:26 - 00:23:45:07

I'm getting a hand up for Am online, please.

00:23:47:08 - 00:23:48:03

Uh, this is.

00:23:48:05 - 00:23:51:08

Andrew MacDonald representing Snape Parish Council.

00:23:54:13 - 00:23:55:12

Thank you for that.

00:23:59:07 - 00:24:02:02

Mute your mic. I think we get some feedback in the room.

00:24:03:08 - 00:24:03:25

Uh, this.

00:24:03:27 - 00:24:07:08

Is Andrew McDonald representing Snape Parish Council.

00:24:08:04 - 00:24:12:03

And we have Aylesford Parish Council in the room.

00:24:16:19 - 00:24:17:20

Or online.

00:24:19:14 - 00:24:30:03

Um, so by my records, that is all of the council's. Can I just check if there are any councils, either in attendance or online, that I have not invited to introduce themselves?

00:24:33:18 - 00:24:37:23

I don't believe I'm seeing any additional hands. Okay.

00:24:37:25 - 00:24:42:27

Can we just ask for the applicant to take the agenda down now as well, please? Thank you.

00:24:46:17 - 00:24:55:00

Now we're going to move on to the statutory bodies and ask them to introduce themselves, please. So firstly the Environment Agency.

00:24:58:03 - 00:24:59:20

Good morning, Sir Morgan.

00:24:59:22 - 00:25:18:16

Hagman on behalf of the Environment Agency, on the call, I have a series of technical specialists who I will not name at the moment, as it's quite a long list. A quick question I have, just because my technical specialist will be jumping in and out Based on the agenda item that comes up. Do we know what time we'd break for lunch today?

00:25:20:07 - 00:25:31:19

Um, we don't know exactly when it will be, but it will probably be somewhere around 1:00. But it will be slightly fluid, depending on where we get to in the agenda to make sure that we're breaking at an appropriate time.

00:25:32:11 - 00:25:34:23

Okay. Thank you very much I appreciate that.

00:25:34:29 - 00:25:35:17

Thank you.

00:25:37:06 - 00:25:41:12

Next, do we have London Gateway Port in attendance, please.

00:25:46:06 - 00:25:47:21

London gateway port.

00:25:53:19 - 00:25:58:22

Not seeing any hands. Do we have the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, please?

00:26:10:19 - 00:26:17:10

I'm not seeing any hands there. Um, do we have Historic England, please?

00:26:20:21 - 00:26:31:02

Good morning, sir. I'm a writer. I'm inspector of ancient monuments for Suffolk, representing Historic England, now joined by my colleague Chris Reid from Kent.

00:26:32:20 - 00:26:38:21

Thank you. And do we have the Port of London Authority in attendance, please?

00:26:45:07 - 00:26:46:24

Port of London authority.

00:26:50:03 - 00:26:59:08

Okay. And please, can I just check at this point? Are all of the statutory bodies that are in attendance have been invited to introduce themselves, please.

00:27:06:26 - 00:27:52:23

Not seeing any hands. So I'll move on to interested parties. In the interest of time, I won't be asking all of the interested parties to be introducing themselves, but I will be going through them all. So please do listen out for your names to make sure we're aware of who is in attendance. Um, firstly, I'm going to go through a block of people from Suffolk Energy Action Solutions and the names I have are Paul Atkinson, Michelle Boulger, Nick bridges, James Burton, Geoffrey Dunn, Richard l'OMS, Fiona Gilmore, Andrew MacDonald, Rupert Taylor, Irina Taluk, uh, Tricia Austin.

00:27:53:09 - 00:28:01:02

Um, so they're all from Suffolk Energy Action Solutions. I then have Keith Bennetts from His Majesty's Coast Guard.

00:28:03:05 - 00:29:12:16

Paul Bangor's Gareth from the Aldeburgh Society. Susan Bridges, Ian Brown, councillor. Abbey Smith, Colin Ennis from ScottishPower Renewables Matthew Denny, councillor Julia Hewitt from East Suffolk Council Marianne Fellowes, Louise Fincham, Anthony Fincham, Rhett Griffiths, David Kiani Zaidi, David Mackie, Alice Maynard from five Estuaries offshore wind farm, Karen Mackenzie from Save Minster Marshes, David Pelly, Pippa Southbourne, David Ricks, Harry Robert, Glennis Robertson, Robin Sanders, Sheridan Steen, David Stevens, Adrian Smith, Richard Thompson from C p r e Kent, Theresa Thorn and Mueller from Kent Wildlife Trust.

00:29:12:24 - 00:29:18:17

Councillor Rebecca Wing from Thanet Green Party and.

00:29:21:02 - 00:29:22:08

Gordon Young.

00:29:29:27 - 00:29:37:20

Can I just check please, that I have listed everybody in terms of the IP's who wish to participate in the hearings today?

00:29:39:16 - 00:29:40:01

Yes.

00:29:40:03 - 00:29:40:18

Hello.

00:29:41:27 - 00:29:42:12

Hi.

00:29:42:14 - 00:29:45:29

I'm sorry. Sorry. In the room. Please. Please. Thank you.

00:29:46:15 - 00:30:17:24

Thank you, Mr. Regan. James Burton. On behalf of Cees, just to clarify, and I believe a message did go to you. Um, Michelle Bolger, my landscape visual witness is unavoidably unavailable for this. for this hearing. Happily, Mr. Nicholas Bridges, who I believe he actually already heard from another hearing, is here and able to cover landscape and visual and indeed heritage as well.

00:30:17:26 - 00:30:49:18

And the other matter is, um, Mr. Matthew, um, Denny, whose name you read out later, but not in relation to C's ecology. He or should be giving evidence for C's in relation to ecology today. Um, although I have been past a note that he, I think might not be available till until 11, which I appreciate is unfortunate because ecology I think is the is the first item. But in any event that just just wanted to make those two clarifications.

00:30:49:20 - 00:30:50:08

Thank you.

00:30:50:10 - 00:30:56:28

Thank you very much for that. That's helpful. And there's a hand on line I believe actually several hands.

00:30:58:04 - 00:31:09:03

Hello. Hi, I'm Councillor Tricia Austin. You mentioned my name, but I think you put me under a different group. I'm actually from Ramsgate Town Team, which is a voluntary group representing Ramsgate.

00:31:10:21 - 00:31:12:14

Okay. Thank you for that clarification.

00:31:12:16 - 00:31:13:07

Thank you.

00:31:22:12 - 00:31:25:19

Okay. Is there a virtual hand up. Is that.

00:31:33:11 - 00:31:36:08

Is there a hand up from Suffolk, please?

00:31:40:08 - 00:31:43:29

Yes. Is there a hand up for Suffolk? Who would like to introduce themselves?

00:31:44:21 - 00:31:49:12

Sorry, I don't think you mentioned. East Suffolk community energy partnership.

00:31:52:05 - 00:31:53:12

We did register.

00:31:55:02 - 00:31:57:15

Okay. Could I invite you to introduce yourself now, please?

00:31:57:21 - 00:32:01:27

Robin Sanders, I'm chair of the East Suffolk Community Secondary Partnership.

00:32:04:24 - 00:32:06:05

Thank you, Mr. Sanders.

00:32:11:28 - 00:32:25:04

I'm not seeing any other hands up either in the room or online, so hopefully. I have now heard from or listed everybody who wishes to participate in this issue specific hearing.

00:32:27:25 - 00:32:31:27

Just give a minute just to make sure that I'm not missing any virtual hands.

00:32:35:24 - 00:32:45:28

Okay. At that point, I think it's appropriate for me to pass over to Doctor Hunt, who will take us through the next item on the agenda, which is item two.

00:32:47:29 - 00:33:20:29

Thank you. Um, at issue one, I directed a number of questions to National Grid regarding the Nemo link works. I also asked first written questions on the subject. It was made clear in issue one that National Grid Electricity Transmission or Net, the applicant, and National Grid Ventures are two separate corporate entities. Since the applicants explained the functional separation of the two different companies previously, and various parties have commented on this, we won't go over that again today. However, I did have a number of questions that I wish to put to National Grid Ventures regarding their name and link project.

00:33:21:09 - 00:33:53:18

And as National Grid Ventures have declined to attend this hearing, I'll include my questions as action points for them following the session, and I'll briefly list those out. So I wanted to ask National Grid Ventures to confirm the basis for their final decision to use open cut rather than horizontal directional drilling for Nemo link. Uh, work ground conditions, specifically unexploded ordnance, a factor in using open cut trenching if unexploded ordnance was an issue.

00:33:53:20 - 00:34:10:06

Whether this was in the marine or the terrestrial space Where the relevant information on ground conditions has been or could be supplied to Njit if not already done. Whether there are any measures that could be taken to mitigate the effect of the Nemo link works

00:34:12:03 - 00:34:27:14

and National Grid Ventures commentary on the discharge of planning conditions relating to Nemo link, just to understand the full context of that project. Before I move on with the applicant, I'd like to comment on any of those points. Just briefly.

00:34:29:18 - 00:34:44:10

Thank you, Sarah Kubicek, on behalf of the applicant. So no, we don't wish to make any comments. Now, we know that you've asked, um NB to deal with these points. Um, we will of course revert with any, uh, responses that would be helpful to you.

00:34:47:03 - 00:34:47:18

Um,

00:34:49:01 - 00:34:52:00

apologies. Sorry. Could you just repeat that? Uh, just.

00:34:52:02 - 00:35:13:07

Yes. Yes, of course, of course. Um, I simply say said for the applicant, I simply made the point that we note you have raised a number of points for NGV. Um, we don't wish to comment on anything at this moment. We will, of course, respond to any points that you would find helpful once we've had the responses from NGV. Um, and of course anything else that would be helpful in that context.

00:35:14:05 - 00:35:21:19

Thank you. Uh, my colleague was pointing out to me that we actually skipped over Agenda item two and went straight on to agenda item three. So.

00:35:25:19 - 00:36:01:18

Yeah, sorry, there's a typo in the agenda, so apologies for that. Um, just just briefly covering item two, which is massing matters arising from the supplementary agenda, having reviewed representations from previous deadlines. We've highlighted a number of questions which we consider require relatively straightforward responses, clarifications, and or the submissions of additional information or evidence, which we did not feel the need to be raised orally during the hearing today. So rather than using the time at the hearing to ask these questions, we've published a supplementary agenda.

00:36:02:01 - 00:36:31:28

The agenda EV 6003 in the examination library details these queries and requests, and requires that we will be provided with a written response at deadline four unless otherwise agreed. However, as set out in that agenda, I just wanted to take the opportunity before handing back to Doctor Hunt to ask if anyone considers that any of those questions and requests needs to be specifically explored orally at today's hearing.

00:36:34:04 - 00:36:37:15

Not seeing any one hand in the room? Yes, please.

00:36:38:16 - 00:37:17:24

Thank you sir. James Burton, on behalf of Suffolk and Jackson Solutions. Um, I, I'm not going to attempt to press need and economy and efficiency again. I understand the position there. Um, it's just a suggestion Regarding the first two supplementary questions. So that's ish 201 and ish 202 there. Of course, the, um, questions concerning the Planning and Infrastructure Act and the new um, 2025, in effect this month suite of um, national policy statements concerning energy.

00:37:17:26 - 00:37:50:14

And you're asking, of course, everyone, not just the applicant, but everyone for any comments on essentially whether they have an effect on this application. Um, I did wonder whether in terms of efficiency of what comes to you and indeed also perhaps the efficiency of of all the parties, whether it might be sensible if the applicant went first with a deadline for the applicant and then everyone else went Second.

00:37:50:16 - 00:37:52:20

It's just just a thought right now.

00:37:53:27 - 00:38:24:14

So I appreciate what you're saying. I think the the issue that we have is that there aren't actually that may deadlines left, and we need as much information as possible from all parties as soon as possible so that we can assess it. Um, so ideally we do want everything and it deadline for. So if you do have comments please put them at deadline for. You can also add more comments. Have to see what the applicant says at deadline for and put them in later. But we then have our second written questions, so we really do need that information as soon as possible.

00:38:24:16 - 00:38:26:12

If you have got anything you want to add.

00:38:27:14 - 00:38:34:15

Madam, I entirely understand it was in an effort to focus things for you and all concerned, but I'm fine.

00:38:36:08 - 00:38:42:04

Seeing a few hands on online as well who wish to comment on this item. Um, firstly SM please.

00:38:48:20 - 00:38:51:05

As I am wishing to comment on this agenda item.

00:38:52:27 - 00:38:53:21

Thank you, Karen.

00:38:53:23 - 00:39:24:15

Mackenzie, for saving Mr. Marsh's. At the supplementary questions, you've asked us to provide a clear map of the extent of Minster Marshes. Um, before we provide that to you, I'd just like to know a little bit more about what you have in mind. We are able to provide an overlay that shows the 0.1m rise in sea level and storm surge that would cover the whole area, and we can show that up to the extent of the parish boundary between Monkton and Thar.

00:39:25:03 - 00:39:33:15

Um, but obviously the marshes carry on as far as Dodd Marsh. So we're not really sure what you have in mind here, and we're happy to provide it. Thank you sir.

00:39:35:01 - 00:39:54:10

So just to clarify, um, obviously many, many representations talk about Minster Marshes. There is a label saying Minster Marshes on the map, but the actual extent of Minster Marshes isn't defined on the map, so I just want to understand what the boundary is of the marshes where how far they go. What is the total area of the marshes?

00:39:56:11 - 00:40:16:28

Um, with respect, sir, and thank you very much. I still don't think that that quite explains it. I can show it all the way up to Stod Marsh, which is Canterbury. I can show it all the way around to the north of Kent coast. It's all marshy land that is prone to flooding and has been farmed with dikes to make that less likely.

00:40:19:17 - 00:40:20:05

And.

00:40:22:09 - 00:40:28:17

I think we'll take this. We'll take this offline and we'll provide a clarification following, uh, following the session.

00:40:28:21 - 00:40:29:24

Thank you very much.

00:40:29:29 - 00:40:30:18

Thank you.

00:40:33:12 - 00:40:37:21

Thank you. Um, do we have a remaining hand up? MH.

00:40:41:21 - 00:41:30:10

Thank you. Sir. Morgan. Hangman, on behalf of the Environment Agency. In these supplementary questions, we do have a point of clarification that I might as well raise now to the applicant could take that away and get a response to us in regards to question number ish 2.022 um, advance mitigation planting. We're not clear as to whether advance mitigation planting would involve riparian planting, and whether this would be considered as advanced mitigation if the applicant could either give us an answer now or take that away and get back to us, that'd be really useful so we can provide a more fuller response to that question in the supplementary questions you issued.

00:41:32:27 - 00:41:40:21

Um, if the applicant can briefly respond, but otherwise I think we'd perhaps rather deal with it in the appropriate agenda item. Is there a.

00:41:41:04 - 00:41:47:00

Notice I was about to say sorry for the applicant. I was about to say exactly that and we'll deal with it if that helps you at the appropriate.

00:41:47:02 - 00:41:52:03

Thank you very much. We'll cover that later on through on the hearing under the appropriate agenda item. Thank you. Um.

00:41:52:05 - 00:41:52:20

Thank you.

00:41:52:22 - 00:42:02:20

I'm not not seeing any other hands up either. In the room. I'll just give another moment. Are there any other virtual? Yeah. Suffolk. Is there a comment there, please?

00:42:02:27 - 00:42:35:14

Thank you. Sir. Ladies and gentlemen, Marion Fellows, Auburn resident. Um, there are several questions within the document to the supplementary agenda, additional questions that will have impact on the matters that you're discussing today. And I wonder how that's going to work, in the sense that making best use of your time today to assist it would it would be important if we could, um, briefly and verbally add as we go if we have relevant information.

00:42:35:16 - 00:43:11:09

I'll quote to you as an example. Um, 021. With regard to the visual and landscape from the old, old, sorry, the old estuary, um, that is obviously very relevant to item nine on your agenda in terms of landscape and visual. And 2.026 the cumulative impact of the Suffolk Water Transfer Project. Um, that's going to be crucial in terms of all the items we look at today and in fact into tomorrow.

00:43:11:11 - 00:43:25:03

So it was just about, um, are you planning then to revisit, uh, the issue, specific matters that may be changed by responses to the questions you have posed?

00:43:25:26 - 00:44:01:02

Um, well, certainly the examination does does evolve on the basis of submissions that are made throughout the whole examination. Um, as we said at the beginning, our our primary objective for this hearing is to get through the agenda items, and we have therefore split out the items into the supplementary agenda so that we can still have as much information as possible as soon as possible, which will be afforded the same weight with regards to the crossover that you've just referred to with regards to some of the supplementary agenda questions under the agenda items.

00:44:01:04 - 00:44:36:14

As we've said, if there is time within the appropriate agenda items for parties to make specific comments and observations with regards to the specific agenda items, then we are happy to hear those, time permitting. Um, but again, we have a finite amount of time that we have to have to use to get through the agenda. So we do need to be a bit flexible, but please do, um, seek to raise any directly related matters to agenda items as we move through the agenda and if we are able to hear them, we will.

00:44:36:16 - 00:44:37:10

Thank you.

00:44:37:12 - 00:45:10:25

Yes. I just think it's important to say that, for example, the principle of whether you consider a view from the old estuary is valid yes or no. Because if it is, then it needs to be incorporated into our discussions within these three days, um, and under the governing principles, as you know, it's about having that time and the wider, um, contribution from the public who have local evidence that may be available, you know, to assist you.

00:45:10:27 - 00:45:42:29

So firstly, it should be at a formative stage and obviously things are changing day by day. We heard only yesterday the introduction of the site of Link Road as a potential element to this, um, application. So it's very difficult for us. And I apologize for taking your time this morning, but just to raise at an early stage that we do feel there is a need to have time to actually read these documents and engage with you, and then provide the information back to you of assistance.

00:45:43:05 - 00:46:02:07

And we feel that things feel as if they're moving very quickly and relying only on a written or relying promoter primarily on a written process is an effective strategy for yourselves. It's making it quite difficult for us as equal agency to assist you.

00:46:05:07 - 00:46:16:08

In other words, you know, it's really difficult when things keep getting added in and we're having to read huge volumes of documents to be able to give you the information you need if you decide.

00:46:16:21 - 00:46:50:09

Thank you. We do. We do completely understand that this is a difficult process. Um, we have a legal obligation to do the examination in six months, and the most efficient way of doing that is to get everything in writing. Um, because as you can appreciate, Hearings also take up a lot of time. Um, but we do appreciate that it's hard for other parties to, to participate. Um, but please do put everything you want to put in writing to us and we will read it all. We have let every single submission, um, we are aware of the issues.

00:46:55:03 - 00:47:02:03

Thank you for that. I'll just give one final moment to see if there are any other hands that are coming up virtually due to any delays.

00:47:05:03 - 00:47:15:07

Not seeing any other virtual hands. So I'll now hand back to Doctor Hunt to resume where he got to on item three. Thank you.

00:47:17:00 - 00:47:38:15

Apologies for the confusion, everyone. Um, I'd like to turn to District Council and just ask them for their comment on the status of the new mailing planning application and whether any conditions remain to be discharged relating to landscape reinstatement. Or are there any plans to undertake any further remediation in relation to the project?

00:47:47:23 - 00:48:09:14

Good morning, Helen Johnson for Thanet District Council. I can confirm that there are no conditions left to discharge and our comments with regards to the implications of the previous cable works we've outlined within our response to the first set of questions, which is. Reference rep 3-103. Question 1P2. So we don't have anything to add at this stage with regards to that.

00:48:11:16 - 00:48:18:12

Okay. So that's that's purely just the focus on the open cut versus the horizontal directional drilling in in terms of the rep three.

00:48:26:17 - 00:48:30:02

Um, Mr. Johnson, are you with us?

00:48:32:24 - 00:48:35:00

Okay. We'll move on. Um.

00:48:37:04 - 00:49:08:22

The applicant's response to issue one clearly states that the applicant does not propose any works to mitigate the effects of the Nemo link project. Kent Wildlife Trust's response to XQ one. Article five suggests that there are potential measures that could be undertaken. Does the applicant consider that that any of the measures identified are feasible measures that could offset the residual effects of the proposed development in Bedwell Bay during construction? So this is not this is not are you doing them? I'm just asking, are any of those measures practicable?

00:49:09:09 - 00:49:19:14

Sara Shaikh for the applicant. Um, so if I could ask, um, Sarah Edwards to comment on that. Um, she is the marine lead air lead for the applicant.

00:49:23:10 - 00:49:27:07

Good morning, Sarah Edwards. Um, for the applicant, in terms.

00:49:27:09 - 00:49:27:24

Of.

00:49:27:26 - 00:50:15:13

The question regarding, um, I suppose mitigating for um, Nemo link, obviously, um, as you've already outlined, um, this is a very separate project, um, to Nemo link. Um, however, in terms of the work that

we're doing, um, based on our assessments and we've not identified, um, sort of any residual impacts other than those identified, um, for the saltmarsh habitat, which, um, the applicant has already committed and committed at the initial stage of project development to avoid impacts on that saltmarsh through using, um, treacherous technique to pass beneath the saltmarsh to avoid any direct impacts.

00:50:15:15 - 00:50:49:21

Um and that mitigation is we've included that mitigation within the reac and um as a commitment um, and we we have no options. Um, and have not considered any open cut trench, um, as part of the application. And that would not be used as a fallback option. Um, there are a number of a series of other measures included within the Reac and that have been identified to further reduce the potential for any direct impacts on that saltmarsh habitat.

00:50:49:24 - 00:51:33:18

Um, and they include the provision, um, to maintain a separation distance over minimum of 105m from the seaward edge of the saltmarsh, um for the HDD trenches technique exit pits. Um and also a 50 meter um separation distance for the working area. And we've also made a commitment to ensuring that there's no pedestrian access across the saltmarsh during the works, and there is no vehicle access and any the vehicle access that will be required to access the works area and will be agreed.

00:51:33:22 - 00:51:49:15

Um, uninformed by a saltmarsh habitat survey that will be completed pre-construction to inform those access routes to ensure that, again, there are no direct impacts on that saltmarsh habitat.

00:51:52:00 - 00:52:22:24

Thank you. And I'm aware of those mitigation measures. I suppose the point is that there will still be a residual impact from the works on the habitats disturbance to the saltmarsh areas, which are obviously sensitive for the designated sites and the qualifying features of those designated sites. So what I'm looking to understand is, are there any additional measures that are available to the applicant, given that you have a commitment to 10% net gain and improvements as part of the proposal, that would help to offset some of those wider residual effects.

00:52:26:28 - 00:53:00:08

So, Edwards, for the applicant, um. I will just come in that, um, in terms of the impact assessment work that we've done. Um, we've not identified that those residual impacts associated with the Nemo project have, um, resulted in any change to any of the conclusions of the impact assessment completed for the Sealink project in terms of it's not influenced. Um, the impacts that we've identified and have assessed and have concluded to not be significant.

00:53:00:10 - 00:53:10:19

So no specific additional mitigation in that respect has been identified to manage those potential, um, cumulative impacts from that perspective. Um.

00:53:11:08 - 00:53:20:21

So in terms of my original question about the feasibility of the measures put forward by Kent Wildlife Trust, are any of those feasible measures that could be employed.

00:53:23:13 - 00:53:27:09

Mr. Atkins position simply. You're just not considering those?

00:53:29:21 - 00:53:39:21

Yes. In terms of the current position we've applied, the mitigation that we think is appropriate for the Sealink project based on the impact assessment that we have completed.

00:53:41:17 - 00:53:42:15

Okay. Thank you.

00:53:44:14 - 00:53:48:06

Um, I noticed we have a hand up from Kent Wildlife Trust.

00:53:50:21 - 00:54:20:27

Hi. Yeah. Emma. What? Our planning and policy officer for Kent Wildlife Trust. Um, I just wanted to raise that. We have reviewed the marine licence, um, from the MMO, and the MMO have recommended. After reviewing the up to the year five monitoring reports of the saltmarsh, that there hasn't been recovery and that they have recommended further monitoring past five years and that, Um recovery actions are required.

00:54:20:29 - 00:54:38:05

So as they're a statutory body. I guess my question is can they enforce this? And a letter that National Grid wrote, um, in September 2023, um, stated that they disagreed with the memo's decision to request further monitoring.

00:54:38:07 - 00:54:59:09

And for um, I'm going to interrupt you. I know we are talking about Nemo link works, but what I'm not prepared to do is go into a discussion about the merits of separately, the Nemo link proposals and any discussion with the memo, so we'll stick to. Are there measures that the applicant might be able to assist with mitigating, uh, within Bagwell Bay if that?

00:54:59:11 - 00:55:12:00

Yeah, sure. I, I guess my my question then is um, as the MMO have recommended further mitigation measures for Nemo, um, whether the applicant will whether they can enforce those measures.

00:55:12:28 - 00:55:13:29

Okay. Thank you.

00:55:16:22 - 00:55:30:26

And do the council know that it's already commented? Does. Um, does Kent County Council arrived and does Kent County Council have any views on, uh, beggar Bay and mitigation proposals?

00:55:34:16 - 00:55:37:16

Like we're still without Kent County Council, so I'll move on.

00:55:41:00 - 00:55:59:05

Thanet District Council's local impact report raised concerns that the applicant's deemed marine licence Condition ten explicitly requires tarantulas landfall, but it does not have a terrestrial equivalent. Um explain why a terrestrial requirement equivalent condition ten should not be included as a DCO requirement.

00:56:19:26 - 00:56:26:02

I think we're going to have to take that one away. I'm not entirely clear about the question, to be honest with you. So.

00:56:28:09 - 00:56:51:00

What I'm what the question is effectively asking is you have a clear commitment within the marine license to only use a tarantula solution, but there is no terrestrial equivalent to only using terrestrial. So there's no land based provision as part of the DCO requirements that secures, um, a potential solution.

00:56:53:13 - 00:56:58:07

For the applicant. So we've understood the point you're making. I think we'll just take that away and, uh, respond.

00:56:58:09 - 00:56:58:24

Um, yeah.

00:56:58:26 - 00:57:02:02

Would it be possible to come back with an answer on Friday at the DCO session?

00:57:02:04 - 00:57:02:19

Indeed.

00:57:02:21 - 00:57:03:20

Okay. Thank you.

00:57:08:04 - 00:57:19:23

Uh, did any of the local authorities wish to comment just on that particular point about the securing the trenches. The trenches solution for as part of the DCO.

00:57:29:27 - 00:58:01:03

In that case, we'll move on to impacts on the intertidal area in Pequot Bay. Um, so I have a number of questions, some of which I'll return to under ornithology. Um, does the applicant have any monitoring data regarding the impact of previous works on the intertidal area following cable burial and its implications for benthic ecology or foraging behavior? So effectively, what is the outcome of those works and has it affected the intertidal area and the

00:58:02:23 - 00:58:03:25

fishing activity there?

00:58:04:26 - 00:58:46:03

Sarah Edwards for the applicant, um, in terms of um, monitoring data. So just in response to your question, the assessments that have been completed with regards to potential impacts on the intertidal mudflats, um, have been based on site visits and desk studies and informed by available public data. Um, and an intertidal survey was also completed. Um, that baseline um study and the intertidal um surveys did not identify any residual impacts, um, resulting from the previous Nemo project with regards specifically to the intertidal mudflat habitat.

00:58:46:12 - 00:59:10:23

Um, and the assessment is therefore based on the condition of the baseline and the intertidal mudflats. Um, at the time that we completed those assessments and the impacts that have been identified in terms of um or key receptors, um, have been identified as not significant. Um, on the grounds of the works that are proposed within that intertidal mudflat habitat.

00:59:16:12 - 00:59:23:04

Are you are you aware of any particular studies that were carried out to look at that specific issue following the previous project?

00:59:29:08 - 00:59:45:24

Sorry, Sarah Edwards, for the applicant. We're not aware of any specific monitoring studies that have been completed or any monitoring data that has been completed specifically relating to the intertidal mudflats. Obviously, we're aware of the situation with the saltmarsh.

00:59:57:29 - 01:00:17:07

Can I just ask whether Kent Wildlife Trust and if Natural England were present, I would be putting the question to them and the Environment Agency Uh, whether they have any evidence relating to changes in, uh, foraging behavior during or after the Nemo link or Thanet Offshore Wind Farm works within Pequot Bay.

01:00:21:04 - 01:00:22:07

Or on benthic ecology.

01:00:25:01 - 01:00:26:14

Uh Kent Wildlife Trust.

01:00:27:13 - 01:00:45:12

Yeah. And Wallace Kent, my life trust. Um, I just wanted to make aware. I'm not sure if the applicant knows that as part of the marine license for Nemo, there were three years of monitoring of the intertidal habitats. So, uh, your question to the applicant should be, um, that information should be made available in the marine license.

01:00:50:21 - 01:00:56:26

Thank you. Um, has the applicant had sight of that information?

01:01:02:20 - 01:01:14:04

Um, I think I will take an action to. I will put a question to national revenge as part of the action points around that particular point, asking whether that information can be supplied.

01:01:21:13 - 01:01:37:18

Provision B 70 of the Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments originally included a commitment to determining the final location, with the access route across the intertidal area based on an intertidal habitat survey. Can the applicant explain why this commitment has been revised? Simply consulting on a preferred route.

01:01:45:07 - 01:01:48:01

For the applicant. Apologies. Can you just repeat the question again?

01:01:48:05 - 01:02:09:03

So provision B 70 of the risk included a commitment to determining the final location and width of access for route across the intertidal area based on an entitled habitat survey, but now appears to be just revised to simply consulting on a preferred route with Natural England and Kent Wildlife Trust.

01:02:13:15 - 01:02:58:09

Edwards for the applicant. Yes. We made some updates to this. Um, specific. There are a couple of duplicated commitments within the Reac. Um, and at deadline three, we made some amendments, um, in response to those duplications, to, um, remove that duplication. Um, however, the the purpose of it was, um, that we actually included the specific requirement to consult with Kent Wildlife Trust and Natural England on, um, those plans, which I don't think that commitment had been included previously, although the wording of the Reac as it is, the wording of the commitment within the Reac as it is, has slightly changed.

01:02:58:14 - 01:03:09:04

Um, although the what we are proposing to achieve and do will still be to develop that plan in consultation with Natural England and Kent Wildlife Trust.

01:03:09:12 - 01:03:34:18

So I suppose the current wording is now once the specific route for construction vehicles to traverse the form of Kennebunkport has been identified, the Wildlife Trust will be identified and Natural England and the district council. So it seems as though it will be developed. And and then parties will be told about it rather than necessarily being engaged in the development of routes.

01:03:37:28 - 01:03:41:19

Yeah, I think we might need to take this one away and come back to you on that.

01:03:41:26 - 01:04:21:14

Sorry. Doctor James Riley, on behalf of the applicant, I can perhaps add some some clarity to that. Um, I think the intention was that there needs that they would be, uh, participated on the route. The route obviously has to be identified based upon the outcomes of the, uh, investigations that we've identified in, I think be 66, which is where there will be a ecological washing brief that will identify where the areas of key vegetation are, and that route will be identified based on that. And obviously

the the traffic and engineering needs that route would then be consulted upon with Natural England and Kent Wildlife Trust and Thunder district councils, and it will be consulted anybody's landowner.

01:04:21:24 - 01:04:53:19

Um, and I think the the addition was made in response to your question, uh, 106 where you asked whether Natural England cave or KW or District Council will be consulted on the access route, and we add that in, but we may have we may need to take another look at the wording, but the idea is that they would be involved. Yeah I appreciate adding the consultees. That's welcomed. Um, it was just that there was reference to an intertidal survey being carried out in the previous wording, which is no longer there.

01:04:53:21 - 01:05:05:18

Uh, D66 covers the hover port, but it doesn't cover the intertidal area. Yes, That's correct. I just wanted to understand the reasoning behind that. I see. I think that maybe it's possibly that's an accidental admission. In which case that will be looked at.

01:05:13:21 - 01:05:34:01

Natural England's Appendix J3, which was submitted the deadline IPA makes comments on the intertidal access route, including the need for a separate marine licence for this activity. I appreciate the applicant's only been receipt of these comments for a short while, but would they like to respond specifically around the license point or more broadly, around their approach to access in the intertidal area?

01:05:41:22 - 01:05:42:22

For the applicant?

01:05:44:23 - 01:06:26:08

Um, yes. We have only just had some of these comments. Um, with regards to the request for an additional marine licence for the access. Um, at this point, we don't feel that that is necessary based on, um, the works that I propose and that the access across the intertidal mudflats has always been included within, um, the proposed works at Pebble Bay. Um, and the assessments that have been completed have not identified any significant impacts associated with the use of those of the intertidal mudflats, um, to access the works area.

01:06:26:10 - 01:06:33:17

So for that reason, we would not consider that a separate marine licence would be required on that basis.

01:06:40:21 - 01:06:41:14

Thank you.

01:06:44:24 - 01:07:09:26

Um, in appendix I to its response to first written questions, the applicant has provided useful route information demonstrating that there is a relatively vegetation free route to the shoreline through the port. Can the applicant explain what with the proposed construction, access would actually be

required, given the potential for 40 tonne vehicles to be used within the site, as indicated by the construction method? Technical note.

01:07:09:28 - 01:07:14:15

So for the applicant, I think Mr. Reilly would be pleased to answer this.

01:07:14:20 - 01:07:51:20

I can start by answering it. I will need to bring in Mr. Holmwood or another colleague from the National Grid team to talk about vehicle widths. But certainly we did discuss this point when identifying the vegetation route. And it was identified that the route that is currently shown, where we've given ground level photographs in the aerial photograph as well, should be wide enough in order to accommodate those vehicles. This was discussed with the engineering team. Uh, the only addition to that may be that depending on seasonal growth, i.e. lateral growth of bushes, there may be a need to trim back some of those bushes, but there's certainly no need for vegetation clearance as such.

01:07:51:22 - 01:08:06:07

That's the information I received from the engineering teams involved in that. I don't know if anybody else up. Mr. Homewood is here, so can perhaps add further to that. Good morning. Andrew Homewood for the applicant. We've appointed the main works contractor for.

01:08:06:09 - 01:08:06:29

The HVDC.

01:08:07:01 - 01:08:08:02

Cable system.

01:08:08:05 - 01:08:09:27

And as.

01:08:09:29 - 01:08:13:07

Yet the, the types and and width and therefore.

01:08:13:09 - 01:08:24:07

Width of the vehicle have not yet been defined, but we would use the available width up to the limits of the width in determining the type and nature of the vehicle that can use the track.

01:08:26:01 - 01:08:45:11

The reason for asking the question is obviously there is a route shown in the photos, but all vehicles are pretty large. It's unclear whether they are able to be accommodated through that route. I also don't know whether there is fencing proposed on the access route. I would assume there would be to enclose the area. I wonder if you could comment on those two points.

01:08:45:27 - 01:08:54:29

Andrew home for the applicant propose we could take this on one away and provide more detail in writing. That's appropriate. Thank you.

01:09:01:13 - 01:09:34:16

The Examining authority has received a number of representations regarding the potential for the access route to break up the weakening of airport surface and spread contaminants that are currently encapsulated by the concrete, hard standing, specifically chiseled colliery spoil. And Mr. Stevens. Deadline three a usefully submitted some photos illustrating current wear on the surface. The applicant's responses to written representations suggest that such contamination would not give rise to significant effects, given that bog mats or track matting would be available.

01:09:35:01 - 01:09:45:25

Can the applicant confirm whether any more proactive measures could be taken to patch areas within the within the order limits as a longer term benefit, and to offset effects from the use of the hover port and the intertidal area.

01:09:54:04 - 01:09:59:10

Sorry, sir. I think Mr. Homewood would address that question, but I think he might benefit from just repeating the question.

01:09:59:16 - 01:10:00:03

Um.

01:10:00:11 - 01:10:16:08

I'll keep it brief. Effectively. Um, can you do anything proactive by way of repairing areas of the surface that are currently damaged? Um, it might be useful to show the photos in rep 3A-0 65 that Mr. Stephen submitted.

01:10:20:16 - 01:10:21:06

Yes.

01:10:22:11 - 01:10:53:04

Andrew. Homewood. Andrew. Homewood for the applicant. The applicant is not opposed to a condition survey and the principles of remediation. Um, noting the photos on the screen. Um, perhaps we could take that one away and consider suitable remediation measures that might be appropriate to, um, mitigate some of the effects and the way that we use the apron as access via the hover port to the mudflats.

01:10:55:02 - 01:11:28:09

Thank you. Sorry. Doctor James Riley, on behalf of the applicant, just 1.2. I understand that a number of the photos in there around the Manston Airport outfall on the apron, which is not an area that we would be traversing, I think we would obviously be looking to do what we need to do on the areas we will be going through. Uh, Mr.. I would have said it will be taken on advisement, but I'm not sure that we would be just covering the port generally to try and repair areas which would otherwise affect our works. Clearly, it's beyond the scope of the project to entirely repair the hover port.

01:11:28:11 - 01:11:43:26

I'm talking about sort of some proactive patching of areas of the hover port to provide a again, to, uh, to the Bagwell Bay site. Um, that was all. Thank you. And have a hand up, uh, save Mr. Marsh's.

01:11:52:01 - 01:11:52:27

McKenzie.

01:11:53:11 - 01:11:58:00

Mr. Marsh's, um, thank you for asking that question about the use.

01:11:58:02 - 01:11:59:24

Of the hoverboard. Obviously, with.

01:11:59:26 - 01:12:00:18

CR one.

01:12:00:20 - 01:12:01:15

We're very concerned.

01:12:01:17 - 01:12:22:23

About the extent of the draft order limits. It's never been clear where access would be to the construction sites for the four coffer dams. And if, as the applicant is suggesting, you don't need to use those sections that are breaking up, we are at a loss as to why you are extending the order limits to include it.

01:12:26:04 - 01:12:28:07

Thank you. With the applicant, like to respond?

01:12:31:01 - 01:12:34:24

I think sorry for the applicant. I think that's for Mr. Riley again.

01:12:35:12 - 01:13:04:22

Um, I think I think the answer is that the order limits have been set in order to allow the identification of the most suitable route with a certain amount of flexibility to work around areas where there has been degradation, we can avoid those particular areas. Obviously we would seek to avoid specific locations where it is, but once you get into the main apron, it enables one to sort of give us some flexibility in identifying the very specific location one chooses in that area. I think that's the basic point.

01:13:07:06 - 01:13:07:24

Thank you.

01:13:07:26 - 01:13:09:27

I have a hand up from Kent.

01:13:13:28 - 01:13:54:02

David Stevens, you just showed my photographs. Um, I just want to point out that those photographs, although one was taken by the outfall as identified, the photographs were across the the width of the apron. And the applicant is suggesting they're going to go from the airport using the apron. And it's clear that that is susceptible to breaking up. So it's I don't think it's sufficient to just repair the damage that's already there. 40 tonne vehicles doing up to 40 journeys a day are going to cause damage to that apron and therefore risk releasing the pollutants, the heavy metals.

01:13:54:10 - 01:14:09:08

I've also at this point mentioned, it's been suggested, it's anecdotal, that this is coronary spoil. Well, that is a fact. There were 300,000 tonnes of colliery spoil used as a base, and we know that that's gone. Yeah.

01:14:09:10 - 01:14:13:08

I'm aware of the points on the colliery spoil. I've taken that into account.

01:14:14:15 - 01:14:15:06

Thank you.

01:14:16:05 - 01:14:23:05

Thanks. Um, I don't I don't know if the applicant had anything further to add just in response to Mr. Stevens.

01:14:23:07 - 01:14:23:22

Uh, I.

01:14:23:24 - 01:14:59:08

Would just add that obviously the I am not a structural engineer, but there is a commitment GG06, which indicates we will undertake preconditioned surveys of all works areas to assess condition and compare them against any reinstatement works, and that would apply to the hotspot as much as anywhere else. So there would be a a pre-work survey undertaken. We would want to do that for our own purposes. And there are. As I understand it, there are structures, maybe not track mapping, but there are metal structures, sort of padding things you can put down, various things you can do to protect the, the, your vehicles and to protect the apron.

01:15:00:04 - 01:15:20:27

Thank you. And just touching on one of the earlier points, given the wide area of the hoverboards included within the proposed order limits, and the applicant stated use of the area only for access. Should the setting up of site compounds or parking, or wider uses be precluded at the form of a port in the DCO?

01:15:28:22 - 01:15:34:08

I think that's going to be a sour shake for the applicant. I think Mr. Homewood, perhaps supported by Mr. Riley.

01:15:34:26 - 01:16:01:01

Yes, we would just I think, um, it is not our plan to to use that area for compounds or other things. And that is explicit in our documentation. The compound is explicitly shown in a different location for, for that area, uh, off the hover port. Um, you know, we would certainly be willing to consider. So, so in practice, it's not part of our proposals, but we would be willing to consider having that as an explicit restriction. Yeah. We can go away and think about that.

01:16:07:29 - 01:16:09:29

Thank you. That's a hand from Emma.

01:16:12:27 - 01:16:13:13

Hi, Emma.

01:16:15:00 - 01:16:29:09

Um, I just wanted to take this opportunity to query the use of and vegetated nature of the access routes, um, for the hover ports. As we mentioned in our deadline three response, the hover port supports a range of rural plant species.

01:16:29:18 - 01:16:48:03

Miss Waller, I, I don't need to hear your previous points restated from unless you have a new point or want to expand on a specific point on the question that's raised. I am aware I've read that deadline three. We are going to ask some questions about the vegetation as we go through the agenda. So okay.

01:16:48:05 - 01:16:49:03

Yeah, yeah that's fine.

01:16:49:05 - 01:16:51:00

You picked up later. Yeah. Thank you.

01:16:51:06 - 01:16:51:21

Thank you.

01:16:56:28 - 01:17:03:05

The applicant's response to issue one explained that react provision B 66 contains precautionary working methods.

01:17:05:03 - 01:17:35:09

In fact, I think we're probably just about to pick up that point. Uh, precautionary working methods to ensure ecological interests are not affected during construction. It includes specific reference to pre-construction surveys for vegetation, but does not touch on reptiles. Noting that Kent Wildlife Trust has highlighted records of reptiles from the hover port should be 66. Also make provision for pre-construction reptile surveys. I'd like to hear from the applicant in the first instance, and then perhaps from Kent Wildlife Trust and KCC if they've arrived.

01:17:35:17 - 01:17:38:11

That's our respect for the applicant, Mr. Riley.

01:17:38:26 - 01:18:08:26

Yeah. Doctor James Riley, on behalf of the applicant. Uh, we did note your question about reptiles. We don't consider it's necessary to have a reptile survey, because the areas that you are proposing to traverse are not, uh, vegetated areas. Now, while there are certainly reptile populations around the whole court and suitable habitat, and reptiles will occasionally stray out into areas of tarmac to bask, they don't spend considerable time there. And certainly with vehicles approaching, they will move quickly out of the way, probably before anybody's ever seen or notice that they're there.

01:18:09:03 - 01:18:43:21

Uh, if we were tracking over areas of vegetation, uh, if we were tracking over rural areas, rural areas, things like that, that would be a different point. But what we have identified in our photographs in the, in the route shown is a route between the stands of vegetation. Uh, it starts with a, with a tarmac route, which, if you see the photographs, is pretty much intact and vegetated and then runs through into the concrete. Um, so that's why we've identified that we don't think it's required to do reptile surveys, because we don't think we'll be affecting the reptile populations or the habitat they use.

01:18:47:07 - 01:18:48:02

Matthew. Denny.

01:18:56:27 - 01:18:57:23

Sorry.

01:18:58:00 - 01:18:58:27

Yeah, sorry.

01:18:58:29 - 01:19:00:26

Um, uh, just putting my mic.

01:19:00:28 - 01:19:01:13

On.

01:19:01:15 - 01:19:18:05

Uh, just going to that point about reptiles. Um, have you considered that reptiles might be, um, hibernating or sheltering in cracks and crevices in the concrete areas? Uh, they don't just use vegetation.

01:19:21:14 - 01:19:21:29

Uh.

01:19:22:06 - 01:19:22:24

Doctor Ali.

01:19:24:19 - 01:20:01:25

Uh, I think this goes to the point of, uh, intact roots and the degree of the intact nature of the roots. If you look at the photographs we submitted the tarmac, there aren't significant cracks and crevices in there. Once you move on to the bigger concrete apron, there are some around, but it's a very sparsely

vegetated area. So the north part of the airport is probably where most of the best vegetation is for reptiles. You've got a lot of scrub growth and then scrubby grassland, things like that, as you go into the body of the big apron itself, where the photographs, for example, were shown of the concrete breakup, it's much more sparse, and it's much less likely the reptiles will be present in any significant way in that area.

01:20:04:13 - 01:20:40:29

Can can I just come back on that slightly in that? Um, I think it would be useful to know, uh, just just what the area is exactly before any tracking is done across it, because, uh, reptiles can stray well, can, uh, move quite a distance from vegetated areas, particularly during the winter, to find a suitable high Vernacular hibernation areas, and they tend to go down into deep crevices to find more constant, um, temperature areas.

01:20:41:02 - 01:21:16:15

And climatic areas. Um, and they can get something like a common lizard will go down a crack that might be less than 0.5 a centimeter across. So superficially it might look as if an area doesn't have those cracks. Um, until a detailed survey is done. So I think, uh, given that you don't actually know what reptiles and what size of population are present in this area, uh, I would, um, uh, just highlight the fact that some more detailed surveys might be required.

01:21:18:22 - 01:21:20:08

Would the applicant like to come back?

01:21:20:24 - 01:21:51:21

Uh, doctor James Riley, on behalf of the applicant. Um, so, reptile surveys you undertaken there for active reptile populations. Going back to the initial point about reptile surveys. So you survey them during the active season so they don't tell you anything about where they're hibernating. Um, with regard to hibernating reptiles in cracks, obviously, the nature of what we're proposing to do is not to damage the structure that we're driving over. If we thought that would happen, then for our own purposes, we'd use trackway and that kind of thing to spread the load. Um, so, you know, I don't think it's feasible.

01:21:51:24 - 01:22:29:00

A survey wouldn't tell you about reptiles that were hibernating in the old crack here and there. And I'm not at all convinced that driving over, uh, an area that has some cracks in it would harm any reptiles that might happen to be in it, particularly, as I say they are. It is quite an open area in that location. Uh, whereas there are numerous potential high vernacular in the more vegetated areas, which would seem more likely. So it I it feels to me unnecessary. Um, as I say, a structural survey would be undertaken. So if there was any indication that driving over areas would actually collapse sections, obviously that's not our expectation, then we would use trackway and other things like that, which would also protect anything that was in there.

01:22:29:02 - 01:22:33:27

But in any event, a reptile survey will only tell you where they are during the breeding season. It wouldn't tell you anything about how vernacular.

01:22:34:24 - 01:22:41:24

Okay. Thank you. Um, I think I'd like to move on unless there are any further comments from Kent Wildlife Trust.

01:22:50:00 - 01:22:51:11

Uh, no further comments from Kent.

01:22:52:25 - 01:22:53:13

Thank you.

01:22:53:24 - 01:23:21:15

Um, the applicants confirmed that, um, precautionary working methods would be adopted for invasive, non-native species on the course access, but that no wider measures to control invasive non-native species would be undertaken. Uh, given that there may be some limited pruning and works to vegetation, this would appear to be a relatively easy measure to offset effects or contribute to biodiversity net gain within the wider hover pools area. Can the applicant just expand on its reasons for not undertaking such work?

01:23:22:23 - 01:23:56:18

Doctor James Riley, on behalf of the applicant. I think all we were getting out there and maybe that we were at cross purposes, uh, we will obviously do what we need to to ensure we do not spread invasive species. And if there are areas, you know, adjacent to where we're working, where there might be something we can easily do to address invasive species there, we would look to that as well. I think we would. Going back to your point earlier about it's beyond our duty to sort of remediate the whole of the whole report. I think I would say the same with regard to invasive species. What we were saying was that, you know, we would not be taking it upon ourselves to remediate invasive species across the hoverboard.

01:23:56:22 - 01:24:13:15

Uh, we would do it where we are required to do it, because in order to comply with our duties and if there are areas that are immediately adjacent to, you know, our roots, then it may well be stuff that we can do there, but we would not want to commit to just remediating invasive species across the hub of port, I think.

01:24:14:09 - 01:24:19:24

Thank you. Um, did, um, Kent Wildlife Trust want to respond?

01:24:23:21 - 01:24:26:00

No further comments from Kent Wildlife Trust.

01:24:26:17 - 01:24:30:15

Thank you. Um, or from Thanet District Council?

01:24:34:24 - 01:25:02:08

Ellen Johnson, Thanet District Council. And we take away the points that are raised because I think we have some concerns over whether the matting to protect the slabs would provide structural support

to the slabs, as they're most likely to be undermined by voids. You know, when we're talking about excavators. So I think that's something that we need to go away and consider and maybe come back with written comments. The deadline for and the potential for structural surveys that may be required and perhaps those being incorporated into the Reac. Thank you.

01:25:02:23 - 01:25:04:06

That's very helpful. Thank you.

01:25:05:26 - 01:25:06:15

Uh, did.

01:25:07:00 - 01:25:09:12

The applicant want to comment on that point?

01:25:09:14 - 01:25:27:09

Um, the you know, as I say, go six does commit to preconditioned surveys of all works areas before we use them. Uh, I'm sure we would be willing to go away and consider having a specific measure for a precondition for a structural survey of the harbour port, if that was considered useful. It is highly likely to be something we would be doing anyway.

01:25:27:11 - 01:25:56:06

So yes. Yeah, we'll wait to see the response to the deadline for. And if we can see your comments then. Yeah, okay. Um, unless there were any other comments on the questions that I've raised in relation to the Kent landfill. Uh, we've been going for an hour and a half now. I think it's probably time for a break. Um, so unless there are other comments in the room or online. We'll adjourn for 15 minutes.

01:26:00:06 - 01:26:00:27

Thank you.

01:26:01:04 - 01:26:12:15

And as my colleagues have just reminded me, uh, if you are watching on the live stream, you will need to refresh your browser when you come back, as we have to pause the live stream for the purposes of the recording. Thank you.