



The Planning Act 2008

Application by National Grid Electricity Transmission for the Sea Link Project

East Suffolk Council's response to The Examining Authority's Supplementary agenda additional questions for Issue Specific Hearing 2 (ISH2) [EV6-003]

Deadline 4: 10th February 2026

Application: EN020026

East Suffolk Council: [REDACTED]

General

Questions for East Suffolk Council	East Suffolk Council Response
<p><u>ISH2.01.</u></p> <p><u>Planning and Infrastructure Act</u></p> <p><u>Applicant, local authorities and interested parties (IP)</u></p> <p><i>The Government’s Planning and Infrastructure Act received Royal Assent on Thursday 18 December 2025.</i></p> <p><i>The applicant, local authorities and all IPs are invited to submit comments on the new Act in relation to any implications for the examination of this application.</i></p>	<p>ESC has no specific comments to make regarding the Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025 at this time but reserves its right to comment at a later stage as may be necessary/appropriate during the examination.</p>
<p><u>ISH2.02.</u></p> <p><u>National Policy Statements</u></p> <p><u>Applicant, local authorities and IPs</u></p> <p><i>The following National Policy Statements (NPS) were designated on 6 January 2026: EN-1, EN-3, EN-5. Considering paragraph 1.6.3 of EN-1 (2026) whilst the revised NPS’s will only have effect in relation to</i></p>	<p>ESC has no specific comments to make at this time other than to comment that the recently designated NPSs, although of course being capable of being important and relevant considerations in the decision-making process for this Application, do not have effect in respect of the Sea Link Project due to the transitional provisions in paragraphs 1.6.2 and 1.6.3 of EN-1 which provides that they ‘<i>will therefore have effect only in relation to those applications for development consent accepted for examination after the final publication of those amendments</i>’ (i.e. only in respect of applications accepted after 6 January 2026). The January 2024 versions of the NPSs therefore have effect for the Sea Link Project. As such ESC, is not proposing</p>

<p><i>those applications for development consent accepted for examination after 6 January 2026 they are capable of being important and relevant considerations in the decision-making process for this application.</i></p> <p><i>Applicant: Review the application documents (in particular but not limited to ES part 1, chapter 2 Regulatory and Planning Context [APP-043]) in light of the newly designated NPSs and provide any updates and amendments as necessary.</i></p> <p><i>Local authorities and interested parties: Submit any comments in relation to any implications of the newly designated NPSs for the examination of this application.</i></p>	<p>to revise/update its Local Impact Report [REP1-128] as submitted to this examination, following designation of the NPSs. ESC, however, reserves its right to comment at a later stage on this matter as may be necessary/appropriate during the examination,</p>
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Landscape and visual

Questions for East Suffolk Council	East Suffolk Council Response
<p><u>ISH2.022.</u></p> <p><u>Advance mitigation planting</u></p> <p><u>Applicant/relevant planning authorities</u></p>	<p>ESC recommends that the wording of ‘<i>pre-commencement operations</i>’ within Article 2 [REP3-006] is amended as follows (additions/deletions shown underlined and in bold):</p> <p>‘<i>pre-commencement operations</i>’ means—</p> <p>(a) <i>operations consisting of engineering investigations and surveys;</i></p>

Requirement 6 of the draft Development Consent Order (dDCO) [REP3-006] does not secure advanced planting, as it only prevents the authorised development from commencing, so could not be enforced for advanced planting. It therefore needs to be secured separately in the dDCO. Could advance mitigation planting be added to pre-commencement operations in article 2, with a requirement that pre-commencement operations cannot be carried out until details of advance planting are approved with a timetable for their implementation? Suggest some wording.

- (b) environmental (including archaeological) investigations and monitoring;
- (c) surveys and monitoring investigations for the purpose of assessing ground conditions;
- (d) diversion and laying of services;
- (e) demolition of existing buildings;
- (f) site clearance;
- (g) environmental mitigation measures;
- (h) remediation in respect of any contamination or other adverse ground conditions;
- (i) set up works associated with the establishment of construction compounds;
- (j) temporary accesses;
- (k) erection of any temporary means of enclosure or temporary demarcation fencing marking out site boundaries; **and**
- (l) the temporary display of site notices or advertisements; **and**
- (m) **early planting of landscaping works**

ESC supports the ExA's suggestion that a requirement be included exclusively stating that 'pre-commencement operations' cannot be carried out until details of advance planting are approved with a timetable for their implementation. ESC awaits and will consider the Applicant's submitted draft wording in response to this ISH2.022 and will provide comments as necessary in response.

Design

Questions for East Suffolk Council	East Suffolk Council Response
<p><u>ISH2.028.</u></p> <p><u>Limit to deviation for Fromus Bridge</u></p> <p><u>Applicant/relevant planning authorities</u></p> <p><i>Provide suggested wording for adding this to article 5 of the dDCO.</i></p>	<p>ESC recommends that the wording of Article 5 [REP3-006] is amended to provide for the addition of the following wording within the ‘Table of Parameters’ at Paragraph (3)(b) –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work: ‘3A (a)’ - Type of structure: ‘Access bridge over River Fromus’ - Height: ‘[X]m above finished ground level’ <p>ESC, as advised by its Senior Design and Heritage Officer, is of the view that the lowest feasible option should be adopted which, it is understood, is a 4 meter soffit height above the Q95 flow level. ESC understands from the Environment Agency’s response to ExQ1 Question 1WE6. [REP3-104] that it is <i>‘willing to accept a 4m soffit height [above the Q95 flow level], subject to the inclusion of a monitoring and contingency plan’</i>. Therefore, subject to the inclusion of a monitoring and contingency plan being agreed between the Environment Agency and the Applicant, ESC hopes that a 4 metre soffit height above the Q95 flow level can be agreed.</p> <p>ESC’s above proposed drafting for Article 5 of the dDCO refers to the height measured from ‘finished ground level’ (for consistency), rather than existing ground level at this part of the site. This is required in order to account for any change in ground level heights during site preparation works. A height measured from the Q95 flow level would also not be enforceable, as the river flow level at the point of measurement is unlikely to be exactly the Q95 flow level, which is a calculated value. In addition, the proposed drafting for Article 5 of the dDCO will of</p>

course provide the maximum height for the bridge and as such must also take into account the height between the soffit and parapet (including guard railing and any mounted equipment).

Section 7.3 of the Design Approach Document – Suffolk [\[REP1A-029\]](#) includes a ‘Sketch Long Section across the bridge through the River Fromus’ for the ‘Compromise Option’ (i.e. the option with a 5 metre soffit height above the Q95 flow level). If a reduction in soffit height to 4 metres above the Q95 level is agreed with the Environment Agency, ESC requests that a scaled cross-sectional diagram illustrating all measurements for this option is prepared by the Applicant and submitted into the Examination, and added to the documents to be certified listed in Schedule 19 to the dDCO. This can then inform the height above finished ground level prescribed in the Table of Parameters at Article 5(3)(b) for Work. No. 3A(a).

This additional wording in Article 5 is required in order to provide ESC with certainty that the maximum height of the bridge crossing will represent the solution that results in the least heritage harm as discussed and considered during this Examination.

10th February 2026