



The Planning Inspectorate  
Temple Quay House  
Bristol  
BS1 6PN

**Our ref:** XA/2025/100491/02-L01  
**Your ref:** EN020026  
**Date:** 16 February 2026

Dear Sir/Madam

**Sea Link Issue Specific Hearing 2 supplementary questions**

We have reviewed the Supplementary questions for Issue Specific Hearing 2 (28 to 30 January 2026), and respond as follows.

Yours faithfully

**Morgan Haringman**  
**Planning Specialist – National Infrastructure Team**

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Number	Subject	Response by	Question/Clarification
Landscape and Visual			
ISH2.022.	Advance mitigation planting	Applicant/relevant planning authorities	Requirement 6 of the draft Development Consent Order (dDCO) [ <a href="#">REP3-006</a> ] 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.
<p>We are not clear as to whether advance mitigation planting would involve riparian planting, and whether this would be considered as advanced mitigation. Advanced mitigation planting is referred to in the 7.5.7.1 (B) Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan - Suffolk (Version 2, change request) (Clean) [<a href="#">CR1-045</a>] as 'advanced planting to provide early establishment of woodland planting' (section 5.1.4). We require clarification from the Applicant as to whether this would include riparian planting, as it may be relevant to our issue EA002 within our Relevant Representation [<a href="#">RR-1586</a>].</p> <p>We stated under EA002 in our Relevant Representation [<a href="#">RR-1586</a>] there was a lack of precautionary approach to temporary habitat loss and protected species. This issue was partially resolved in our comments on the response to our relevant representation [<a href="#">REP2-050</a>], however we stated that we required the 7.5.7.1 (B) Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan - Suffolk (Clean) [<a href="#">AS-059</a>] Section 5.2.3 to be updated to include riparian planting of mature emergent vegetation. This would ensure natural recolonisation and mitigate predation risks for water voles.</p> <p>Once we have received clarity as to whether advance mitigation planting involves mitigation planting, we would follow one of two scenarios:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Scenario 1</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ If riparian planting is not included within the advanced mitigation planting, then we feel this is outside of our remit and we have no comment to make.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Scenario 2</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ If riparian planting is included within the advanced mitigation planting, we will alter our position. If the riparian planting is considered within the advance mitigation planting and is placed under requirement 2 'pre commencement activities'</li> </ul> </li> </ul>			

this would take away our ability to ensure the mitigations proposed are appropriate at a highly sensitive WFD waterbody (the Fromus River). We would require the applicant to consult us (The Environment Agency) with their riparian planting plans and seek our approval.

The actions taken by the applicant within this corridor may require a Flood Risk Activity Permit and seek the appropriate license for approval.

#### Design

ISH2.028.	Limit to deviation for Fromus Bridge	Applicant/relevant planning authorities	Provide suggested wording for adding this to article 5 of the dDCO.
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We suggest the following wording:

5. (d) In respect to the work no.3a, specifically the bridge proposed over the river Fromus, deviate in regards to the following:
  - (i) the soffit level not extending below 10.49 metres above ordnance datum;
  - (ii) the deck width not extending beyond 6 metres
  - (iii) abutment set back from the River Fromus not retracting beyond 8 metres from the top of the bank.

This wording reflects current discussions on the River Fromus crossing, and a proposed requirement we wish to be input into Schedule 3 Requirements of the DCO. We are currently waiting on our legal department's review of the wording. We will then request that the finalized requirement wording is input into Schedule 3.

