

## The Great Grid Upgrade

Sea Link

# Sea Link

### Volume 7: Other Documents

Document 7.4.7: Draft Statement of Common Ground Between National Grid Electricity Transmission and Kent County Council.

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**Version**

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<b>Date</b>	<b>Version</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Description / Changes</b>
March 2025	A	DRAFT	Issued with DCO application
November 2025	B	DRAFT	Issued to PINS for Deadline 1
January 2026	C	DRAFT	Issued to PINS for Deadline 3
March 2026	D	DRAFT	Issued to PINS for Deadline 5

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Overview

- 1.1.1 This Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) has been prepared to support the application (“The Application”) for the Sea Link Project (“Proposed Project”) made by National Grid Electricity Transmission Ltd (“the Applicant”). The Application was submitted to the Secretary of State for a Development Consent Order (DCO) and accepted for examination on the 23 April 2025.
- 1.1.2 A Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) is an established means in the planning process of allowing all parties to identify and focus on specific issues that may need to be addressed during the Examination. It is prepared jointly between the Applicant and another party(s) and sets out matters of agreement between both parties, as well as matters where there is not an agreement. It also details matters that are under discussion.
- 1.1.3 The aim of a SoCG is to help the Examining Authority manage the Examination Phase of a DCO application. Understanding the status of the matters at hand will allow the Examining Authority to focus their questioning and provide greater predictability for all participants in Examination. A SoCG may be submitted prior to the start of or during Examination and then updated as necessary or as requested during the Examination Phase.

## 1.2 This Statement of Common Ground

- 1.2.1 This SoCG has been prepared between the Applicant and Kent County Council (KCC). It has been prepared in accordance with the guidance published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2024).
- 1.2.2 An early draft (version A) of the SoCG was prepared by the Applicant to submit with the Application, based on engagement with KCC throughout development of the Proposed Project. Since the submission of the Application, the Applicant has continued to work with KCC to resolve issues as the Proposed Project progresses through the Pre-Examination and Examination phases, with version A of the SoCG further shared with KCC during the Pre-Examination phase to enable them to review and update their position. A further iteration of the SoCG was sent to KCC, incorporating matters raised in KCC’s Principal Areas of Disagreement Summary Statement (PADSS) as well as issues discussed during ongoing thematic meetings, ahead of Deadline 1. As it was shared shortly before the deadline, no comments had been received from KCC as of 17 November, and their position therefore remained unchanged from the previous version A of **Application Document 7.4.7 Draft Statement of Common Ground Kent County Council [APP-328]**. KCC subsequently reviewed the SoCG and returned comments on the 18 December. The SoCG was therefore updated to reflect their current position and submitted as Version C at Deadline 3. The current draft of the SoCG (Version D) has been updated further following collaboration between the Applicant and KCC. It was shared with KCC on 26 February 2026 and they subsequently reviewed and updated their position where required and returned comments on 5 March 2026. This version of the SoCG therefore reflects both the Applicant’s and KCC’s latest position at Deadline 5.
- 1.2.3 This SoCG will be progressed during the Examination period to reach a final position between the Applicant and KCC and to clarify if any issues remain unresolved. This SoCG

will be revised and updated as appropriate and/or required by the Examining Authority at relevant examination deadlines.

- 1.2.4 For the purpose of this SoCG, the Applicant and KCC are jointly referred to as the “Parties”. When referencing KCC alone, they are referred to as “the Consultee”.

## 1.3 Role of Kent County Council in the DCO Process

1.3.1 KCC is a local authority for the purposes of section 42(1)(b) of the Planning Act 2008 as some of the land within the Order limits for the project is within its local authority area. Pursuant to Section 42 of the Planning Act 2008, the Applicant must consult local authorities if the project is in a local authority’s area.

1.3.2 The Planning Inspectorate sets out the role of local authorities in the DCO process in Advice Note 2: The role of local authorities in the development consent process (The Planning Inspectorate, 2015). The role and responsibilities of KCC, and local authorities in general, extend throughout the DCO process from pre-application to post decision as set out in the PINS Advice Note 2 and can include:

- Providing the local perspective at the pre-application stage, in addition to any views expressed directly to the developer by residents, groups and businesses.
- Preparing written representations, SoCGs and Local Impact Reports ready for examination.
- Attending and participating in hearings and/or accompanied site visits.
- Discharging many of the requirements associated with a DCO if consent is granted.
- Monitoring and enforcing many of the DCO provisions and requirements

## 1.4 Description of the Proposed Project

1.4.1 The Proposed Project is a proposal by the Applicant to reinforce the transmission network in the South East and East Anglia. The Proposed Project is required to accommodate additional power flows generated from renewable and low carbon generation, as well as accommodating additional new interconnection with mainland Europe.

1.4.2 The Applicant owns, builds and maintains the electricity transmission network in England and Wales. Under the Electricity Act 1989, the Applicant holds a transmission licence under which it is required to develop and maintain an efficient, coordinated, and economic electricity transmission system.

1.4.3 This would be achieved by reinforcing the network with a High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) Link between the proposed Friston substation in the Sizewell area of Suffolk and the existing Richborough to Canterbury 400kV overhead line close to Richborough in Kent.

1.4.4 The Applicant is also required, under Section 38 of the Electricity Act 1989, to comply with the provisions of Schedule 9 of the Act. Schedule 9 requires licence holders, in the formulation of proposals to transmit electricity, to:

1.4.5 Schedule 9(1)(a) ‘...have regard to the desirability of preserving natural beauty, of conserving flora, fauna and geological or physiographical features of special interest and of protecting sites, buildings and objects of architectural, historic or archaeological interest;’ and

- 1.4.6 Schedule 9(1)(b) ‘...do what [it] reasonably can to mitigate any effect which the proposals would have on the natural beauty of the countryside or on any such flora, fauna, features, sites, buildings or objects’.
- 1.4.7 The Proposed Project would comprise the following elements:

## The Suffolk Onshore Scheme

- A connection from the existing transmission network via Friston Substation, including the substation itself. Friston Substation already has development consent as part of other third-party projects. If Friston Substation has already been constructed under another consent, only a connection into the substation would be constructed as part of the Proposed Project.
- A high voltage alternating current (HVAC) underground cable of approximately 1.9 km in length between the proposed Friston Substation and a proposed converter station (below).
- A 2 GW high voltage direct current (HVDC) converter station (including permanent access from the B1121 and a new bridge over the River Fromus) up to 26 m high plus external equipment (such as lightning protection, safety rails for maintenance works, ventilation equipment, aerials, similar small scale operational plant, or other roof treatment) near Saxmundham.
- A HVDC underground cable connection of approximately 10 km in length between the proposed converter station near Saxmundham, and a transition joint bay (TJB) approximately 900 m inshore from a landfall point (below) where the cable transitions from onshore to offshore technology.
- A landfall on the Suffolk coast (between Aldeburgh and Thorpeness).

## The Offshore Scheme

- Approximately 122 km of subsea HVDC cable, running between the Suffolk landfall location (between Aldeburgh and Thorpeness), and the Kent landfall location at Pegwell Bay.

## The Kent Onshore Scheme

- A landfall point on the Kent coast at Pegwell Bay.
- A Transition Joint Bay (TJB) approximately 800 m inshore to transition from offshore HVDC cable to onshore HVDC cable, before continuing underground for approximately 1.7 km to a new converter station (below).
- A 2 GW HVDC converter station (including a new permanent access off the A256), up to 28 m high plus external equipment such as lightning protection, safety rails for maintenance works, ventilation equipment, aerials, and similar small scale operational plant near Minster. A new substation would be located immediately adjacent.
- Removal of approximately 2.2 km of existing HVAC overhead line, and installation of two sections of new HVAC overhead line, together totalling approximately 3.5 km, each connecting from the substation near Minster and the existing Richborough to Canterbury overhead line.

- 1.4.8 The Proposed Project also includes modifications to sections of existing overhead lines in Suffolk (only if Friston Substation is not built pursuant to another consent) and Kent, diversions of third-party assets, and land drainage from the construction and operational footprint. It also includes opportunities for environmental mitigation and compensation. The construction phase will involve various temporary construction activities including overhead line diversions, use of temporary towers or masts, working areas for construction equipment and machinery, site offices, parking spaces, storage, accesses, bellmouths, and haul roads, as well as watercourse crossings and the diversion of public rights of way (PROWs) and other ancillary operations.

## 1.5 Format of Document and Terminology

- 1.5.1 Section 2 of this SoCG summarises the engagement the Parties have had with regard to the Proposed Project.
- 1.5.2 Section 3 of this SoCG summarises the issues that are ‘agreed’ (green), ‘not agreed’ (red) or are ‘under discussion’ (orange). ‘Not agreed’ indicates a final position where the Parties have agreed to disagree, whilst ‘Agreed’ indicates where the issue has been resolved.
- 1.5.3 Abbreviations used within the SoCG are provided in Table 1.1 below.

**Table 1.1 Abbreviations**

<b>Abbreviation/Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
AILs	Abnormal Indivisible Loads
BTNO	Bramford to Twinstead Reinforcement
CA	County Archaeologist
CEMP	Construction Environmental Management Plan
CTMP	Construction Traffic Management Plan
DCO	Development Consent Order
DDC	Dover District Council
DMRB	Design Manual for Roads and Bridges
EA	Environment Agency
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
ES	Environmental Statement
FEED	Front-End Engineering Design

<b>Abbreviation/Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
FRA	Flood Risk Assessment
GI	Green Infrastructure
HDD	Horizontal Direct Drilling
HGV	Heavy Goods Vehicle
HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessment
HVAC	High Voltage Alternating Current
HVDC	High Voltage Direct Current
KCC	Kent County Council
LCA	Landscape Character Areas
LEMP	Landscape and Ecology Management Plan
LGV	Light Goods Vehicle
LLFA	Lead Local Flood Authority
LPA	Local Planning Authority
LVIA	Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NE	Natural England
NPS	National Policy Statement
OHL	Overhead Line
OWSI	Outline Onshore Overarching Written Scheme of Investigation
PCZ	Primary Consultation Zone
PEIR	Preliminary Environmental Information Report
PINS	Planning Inspectorate
PPA	Planning Performance Agreement
PRoW	Public Rights of Way

<b>Abbreviation/Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
PRoW MP	Public Rights of Way Management Plan
REAC	Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments
RSA	Road Safety Audi
SCZ	Secondary Consultation Zone
SoCC	Statement of Community Consultation
SoCG	Statement of Common Ground
SoS	Secretary of State
SPA	Special Protection Area
SPD	Supplementary Planning Document
SPG	Supplementary Planning Guidance
SRN	Strategic Road Network
SSSI	Sites of Special Scientific Interest
SuD	Sustainable Drainage System
TA	Transport Assessment
TAN	Transport Assessment Note
TDC	Thanet District Council
TJB	Transition Joint Bay
TTM	Temporary Traffic Management
VP	Vantage Point
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation

## 2. Record of Engagement

### 2.1 Summary of discussions

2.1.1 Table 2.1 summarises the consultation and engagement that has taken place between the Parties prior to submission of the DCO application.

**Table 2.1 Summary of engagement**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Discussion points</b>
10 November 2021	Thanet District Council (TDC), Dover District Council (DDC) & Kent County Council (KCC) Meeting	Need case, Sea Link project, consenting strategy, emerging preference, routing and siting update, consultation strategy
12 May 2022	DDC, KCC and National Grid Briefing meeting	Need case, Sea Link project, consenting strategy, emerging preference, routing and siting update, consultation strategy
09 June 2022	TDC, DDC, KCC and National Grid Meeting	Project and timeline, feedback on draft non-statutory consultation strategy, emerging preference update
11 July 2022	TDC, DDC, KCC and National Grid Meeting	Project and timeline, project update, non-statutory consultation strategy
11 August 2022	TDC, DDC, KCC and National Grid Meeting	Project and timeline, project update, non-statutory consultation, EIA scoping, survey access, ground investigation
08 September 2022	TDC, DDC, KCC and National Grid Meeting	Project and timeline, project update, non-statutory consultation, ground investigation locations
13 October 2022	TDC, DDC, KCC and National Grid Meeting	Project update and timeline, non-statutory consultation, survey access, ground investigation locations
14 December 2022	TDC, DDC, KCC and National Grid Meeting	Project update and timeline, non-statutory consultation, ground investigation
14 February 2023	TDC, DDC, KCC and National Grid Meeting	Project update and timeline, ground investigation works, approach to coordination (in accordance with Planning

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Discussion points</b>
		<i>Inspectorate (PINS) guidance), non-statutory consultation, site visits</i>
<i>14 March 2023</i>	<i>TDC, DDC, KCC and National Grid Meeting</i>	<i>Project update and timeline, planning performance agreement (PPA) and host authority engagement plan</i>
<i>12 April 2023</i>	<i>KCC and National Grid Transport Meeting</i>	<i>Transport meeting to review scope of work, encourage feedback on transport and access and to discuss reports for the PEIR and ES stages.</i>
<i>18 April 2023</i>	<i>TDC, DDC, KCC and National Grid Meeting</i>	<i>Project update and timeline, thematic meetings, PPA and host authority engagement plan</i>
<i>15 May 2023</i>	<i>KCC and National Grid Cultural Heritage Meeting</i>	<i>Virtual Cultural Heritage Thematic Group Meeting to provide an update relating to heritage issues and outline the proposed works including the geophysical survey.</i>
<i>13 June 2023</i>	<i>TDC, DDC, KCC and National Grid Meeting</i>	<i>Project update and timeline, landscape design, thematic meetings, PPA and host authority engagement plan, statement of community consultation</i>
<i>19 June 2023</i>	<i>KCC, TDC, DDC and National Grid - Socioeconomics, Recreation and Tourism Meeting</i>	<i>Scheme Overview, Socio-Economics, Recreation and Tourism Methodology, Baseline, Next Steps, Discussion</i>
<i>11 July 2023</i>	<i>TDC, DDC, KCC and National Grid - Meeting</i>	<i>Project update and timeline, PPA, host authority engagement plan and cost schedule, ground investigation programme, site notices</i>
<i>12 July 2023</i>	<i>KCC and National Grid - Transport Meeting</i>	<i>Transport meeting to review cumulative schemes to be considered by the PEIR</i>
<i>08 August 2023</i>	<i>TDC, DDC, KCC and National Grid - Meeting</i>	<i>Project update and timeline, PPA, host authority engagement plan and cost schedule, site notices, SoCC feedback</i>
<i>10 August 2023</i>	<i>KCC, TDC, DDC and National Grid - Socioeconomics, Recreations and Tourism Meeting</i>	<i>High-level project overview, scope, methodology, baseline sources, sensitive receptors</i>

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Discussion points</b>
12 September 2023	TDC, DDC, KCC and National Grid - Meeting	Project update and timeline, PPA progress, SoCC feedback
16 October 2023	TDC, DDC, KCC and National Grid – Health and Wellbeing	Engagement relating to the PEIR – covered a high-level project overview, scope, methodology, baseline sources, sensitive receptors.
15 December 2023	KCC Statutory Consultation Response Letter	This letter detailed KCC’s main comments and concerns over the Proposed Project in response to the 2023 Statutory Consultation response. The main comments and concerns were: concerns over the bellmouths on the A256 and further details on construction traffic, concerns over the PRowS and further detail on management plan, little information on minerals and waste safeguarding, SuDS, further work required in relation to heritage and ensure mitigation or compensation proposed is acceptable.
15 January 2024	TDC, DDC, KCC and National Grid - Meeting	Project update and timeline, statutory consultation, thematic meetings, PPA progress
05 February 2024	TDC, DDC, KCC and National Grid - Meeting	Project update and timeline, statutory consultation, terrestrial ecology thematic meeting, PPA progress
06 February 2024	KCC, DDC, TDC, EA and National Grid Meeting – Water Environment	Project update and timeline, engagement to date, FRA approach, converter station flood risk update
07 February 2024	TDC, DDC, KCC and National Grid Meeting – Air Quality	Project update and timeline, air quality assessment methodology and statutory consultation feedback responses.
13 February 2024	TDC, DDC, KCC and National Grid - Meeting	Project update and timeline, thematic meetings, PPA progress, statements of common ground (SoCG)
14 February 2024	National Grid, KCC, TDC and DDC – Geology and Hydrogeology Thematic Meeting	Project update and timeline, statutory consultation overview, geology and hydrogeology updates, thematic meetings, AOB and questions.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Discussion points</b>
19 February 2024	TDC, DDC, KCC and National Grid Meeting – Socioeconomics, Recreation and Tourism	Project update and timeline, socio-economic statutory consultation feedback and responses (PRoW, study area), discussion, next steps.
20 February 2024	KCC, DDC, TDC and National Grid Meeting – Landscape and Visual	Project update and timeline, interface with other disciplines, statutory consultation feedback, predicted significant effects on landscape character and visual amenity, design principles and landscape strategy, outline landscape and ecology management plan and questions / AOB
27 February 2024	KCC and National Grid Cultural Heritage	Virtual Thematic Group Meeting to discuss ongoing heritage works. Main focus of conversation associated with proposed evaluation trenching. Locations of trenches shared on screen, with follow up emails to finalise locations. Historic England have deferred to the County Archaeologist (CA) on the trial trenching design, which has been discussed with the KCC CA, with agreement to the approach being obtained.
February 2024	KCC and National Grid – Ecology Information Shared	The Kent Vantage Point (VP) Survey and collision risk assessment was shared with KCC for information only by National Grid,
04 March 2024	KCC, DDC, TDC and National Grid Meeting –Health and Wellbeing	Project update and timeline, health and wellbeing update and timeline, statutory consultation feedback (PRoW and construction traffic feedback), discussion, next steps and AOB
12 March 2024	TDC, DDC, KCC and National Grid Meeting	Project update and timeline, PPA progress, thematic updates, ongoing decision-making, community benefit
02 April 2024	KCC, DDC, TDC, EA and National Grid Meeting – Water Environment	Review of actions from last thematic meeting, groundwater monitoring and flood risk assessment at Kent converter station site, drainage design updates, construction phase dewatering and permitting requirements
16 April 2024	TDC, DDC, KCC, SE England Coast Path National Trail Officer and National Grid Meeting –	Project update and timeline, discussion relating to aspects of the LVIA, Approach to outline landscape and ecology management plan, Mitigation Design Concepts and questions / AOB

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Discussion points</b>
	<i>Landscape and Visual</i>	
<i>16 April 2024</i>	<i>KCC, TDC, DDC and National Grid Transport Meeting</i>	<i>Transport meeting to provide a project update, review statutory consultation (PEIR) feedback and the transport deliverables including the Outline PRow Management Plan</i>
<i>17 April 2024</i>	<i>TDC, DDC, KCC and National Grid Meeting</i>	<i>Project update and timeline, PPA progress, thematic updates, ongoing decision-making</i>
<i>April 2024</i>	<i>KCC and National Grid - Ecology Information Shared</i>	<i>The First Season (2022-2023) Breeding and Wintering bird reports for Kent was shared with KCC for information by National Grid,</i>
<i>02 May 2024</i>	<i>KCC, TDC, DDC and National Grid – Transport (PRow) Thematic Meeting</i>	<i>Outline PRow Management Plan Discussion, PRow Feedback/Considerations, AOB</i>
<i>14 May 2024</i>	<i>TDC, DDC, KCC and National Grid Meeting</i>	<i>Project update and timeline, PPA progress, thematic updates, ongoing decision-making</i>
<i>24 May 2024</i>	<i>KCC, TDC, DDC, NE and National Grid Terrestrial Ecology Thematic Meeting (Kent proposals)</i>	<i>Summary of terrestrial ecology survey and assessment work since last meeting/Confirmation of use of trenchless techniques, depth of drill and risk of frac out/Noise modelling results regarding disturbance of adjacent Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)/Vantage point surveys and collision risk assessment for new section of overhead line (OHL)/Proposals for offsetting loss of golden plover habitat/Biodiversity net gain opportunities/AOB</i>
<i>28 May 2024</i>	<i>TDC, DDC, KCC and National Grid Meeting – Hydrology Thematic Meeting</i>	<i>Previous Meeting Actions, Ecological Mitigation Land Areas, additional consents and licences to DCO, drainage updates, works within River Stour Floodplain.</i>
<i>May 2024</i>	<i>KCC and National Grid – Ecology Information Shared</i>	<i>A preliminary noise assessment (contour maps only) for Kent, but not part of the DCO Documentation, were shared with KCC for information only by National Grid.</i>
<i>04 June 2024</i>	<i>KCC and National Grid –</i>	<i>The Provisional Growth Rates, Kent Indicative Species Mix, and outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan</i>

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Discussion points</b>
	<i>Landscape and Visual Information shared (via email)</i>	<i>(LEMP) Draft Structure were shared with KCC for agreement by National Grid.</i>
<i>11 June 2024</i>	<i>TDC, DDC, KCC and National Grid Meeting</i>	<i>Project update and timeline, PPA progress, thematic updates, ongoing decision-making</i>
<i>18 June 2024</i>	<i>KCC, DDC, TDC and National Grid Meeting – Landscape and Visual</i>	<i>Project update and timeline, interface with other disciplines, statutory consultation feedback, predicted significant effects on landscape character and visual amenity, design principles and landscape strategy, outline landscape and ecology management plan and questions / AOB</i>
<i>19 June 2024</i>	<i>TDC, DDC, KCC and National Grid Meeting – Socioeconomics, Recreation and Tourism</i>	<i>Project update and timeline, socio-economic statutory consultation feedback and responses (PRoW, study area), discussion, next steps.</i>
<i>09 June 2024</i>	<i>TDC, DDC, KCC and National Grid Meeting</i>	<i>Project update and timeline, PPA progress, thematic updates, ongoing decision-making</i>
<i>03 July 2024</i>	<i>TDC, DDC, KCC and National Grid Meeting – Air Quality</i>	<i>Project update and timeline, proposed Air Quality Management Plan, proposed air quality monitoring locations during construction and unclosed statutory consultation topics.</i>
<i>23 July 2024</i>	<i>TDC, DDC, KCC and National Grid Meeting - Transport</i>	<i>Targeted consultation – design changes, additional PEI (Traffic and Transport), Core Working Hours, Public Rights of Way – PEIR Findings (Traffic and Transport), Emerging Design, Statutory Consultation Feedback – AOB.</i>
<i>July 2024</i>	<i>KCC and National Grid – Ecology Information Shared</i>	<i>A note on the creation of wet grassland for golden plover in Kent (now superseded and not a part of the DCO Application) was shared with KCC for information only by National Grid,</i>
<i>02 August 2024</i>	<i>KCC and National Grid – Landscape and Visual Information Shared.</i>	<i>National Grid shared the Photosheet VP01 template and the growth rates with KCC for agreement.</i>
<i>06 August 2024</i>	<i>KCC, TDC, DDC Natural England</i>	<i>Summary of terrestrial ecology survey and assessment work since last meeting / confirmation of use of trenchless</i>

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Discussion points</b>
	<i>(NE) and National Grid Terrestrial Ecology Thematic Meeting (Kent proposals)</i>	<p><i>techniques, depth of drill and risk of frac out / noise modelling results regarding disturbance of adjacent SSSI and SPA from Horizontal Direct Drilling (HDD) and associated works / temporary loss of woodlark and nightjar foraging habitat outside SPA / proposals for offsetting loss of skylark nesting habitat / proposals for creation/enhancement of acid grassland / AOB. In particular, the differences between Design Freeze 2 and Design Freeze 3 were discussed.</i></p> <p><i>A request was made to NE that management prescriptions be provided for Sandwich Bay to Hacklinge Marshes SSSI required for the site to meet favourable condition</i></p>
<i>13 August 2024</i>	<i>TDC, DDC, KCC and National Grid Meeting</i>	<i>Project update and timeline, PPA progress, thematic updates, ongoing decision-making</i>
<i>14 August 2024</i>	<i>TDC, DDC, KCC and National Grid Meeting – Socioeconomics Thematic Meeting</i>	<i>Targeted consultation, the annual Kent Open Championship in golf, discussion and AOB.</i>
<i>28 August 2024</i>	<i>KCC and National Grid – Landscape and Visual Information Shared</i>	<i>National Grid shared the Visual Appendix Structure Example – BTNO1 and 2 to KCC for comment and the Kent Landscape and Visual Value, outline LEMP Draft Structure, Sensitivity Ratings and the Sequential Cumulative Visual Assessment to KCC for agreement.</i>
<i>10 September 2024</i>	<i>TDC, DDC, KCC and National Grid Meeting</i>	<i>Project update and timeline, PPA progress, thematic updates, ongoing decision-making</i>
<i>17 September 2024</i>	<i>TDC, DDC, KCC and National Grid Meeting – Hydrology Thematic Meeting</i>	<i>Project update and progress on actions from previous meetings, update on Water Framework Directive (WFD) – comments from Environment Agency (EA) received and to be reviewed by National Grid – description of Project activities to occur on the floodplain of the River Stour, temporary crossing of the River Stour – key features of bridge design – discussion of River Fromus crossing and AOB/questions.</i>
<i>18 September 2024</i>	<i>KCC, DDC, TDC, NE and National Grid Terrestrial Ecology Thematic Meeting (Kent proposals)</i>	<i>Summary of entire outline ES Ecology Chapter impact assessment and mitigation proposals. Outcome of riparian mammals assessment. Discussion over the need to ensure recovery of the mudflats in the intertidal zone from the HDD connection works. Need to provide details of the type of culvert to be used to ensure no disruption of connectivity in ditches. Potential arable land enhancement areas for golden</i>

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Discussion points</b>
		<i>plover to offset loss of functionally linked land. Natural England agreed with the field clusters being considered and the broad mitigation strategy. Need to provide details of lighting impacts from the converter station in the ES chapter.</i>
08 October 2024	TDC, DDC, KCC and National Grid Meeting	Project update and timeline, PPA progress, thematic updates, ongoing decision-making
14 October 2024	KCC and National Grid – Landscape and Visual Information Shared	National Grid shared the Kent Indicative Species with KCC for agreement and shared the Draft Mitigation Design package with KCC for comment.
16 October 2024	KCC and National Grid – Air Quality Information Shared	National Grid shared the air quality assessment methodology with KCC to confirm and the construction monitoring locations to be agreed.
16 October 2024	KCC and National Grid – Landscape and Visual Information Shared	National Grid shared the Kent Table of Agreement with KCC for comment.
12 November 2024	TDC, DDC, KCC and National Grid Meeting	Project update and timeline, PPA progress, thematic updates, ongoing decision-making. Agenda included explanation and discussion of Cumulative Effects Assessment.
12 November 2024	KCC and National Grid – Cumulative Effects Information Shared	The Cumulative Effects Long List and Short List was shared with KCC by National Grid for comment and feedback, with comments requested to be provided within 3 days of the date the long and short lists were shared.
27 November 2024	KCC and National Grid – Socioeconomics, Recreation and Tourism Information Shared.	The PRow Technical Note on the approach to assessing the PRow was shared with KCC by National Grid for comment. A response was received by KCC which stated that there were no specific comments to be made on the methodology technical note.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Discussion points</b>
28 November 2024	KCC, Suffolk County Council (SCC), East Suffolk Council (ESC), HE and National Grid - Archaeology	<p>Virtual Thematic Group Meeting with Historic England, Suffolk County Archaeologist, and East Suffolk Council to discuss project updates. Updates included latest on the results of the evaluation trenching in Suffolk as well a brief overview of Kent.</p> <p>Gorse Hill was discussed, and it was noted that the results suggested the archaeological remains were of local/regional significance, and not national significance. It was also noted that no remains of national significance had been recorded in Suffolk to date, although some of the remains on the Ebbsfleet Peninsula in Kent were considered of national significance.</p> <p>Historic England asked if they would be able to review the DCO before submission and AECOM confirmed this would not be possible due to the limited time in the programme. Historic England also asked if it would be possible to review the 'DCO wording'. Historic England agreed to the scope of the geo-archaeological works in Kent.</p>
November 2024	KCC and National Grid – Ecology Information Shared	The Kent Vantage Point Survey and collision risk assessment and a summary of the impact assessment and proposed mitigation for Kent (not a part of the DCO documentation, but used as the basis for the Kent ES Chapters) was shared with KCC for information only by National Grid,
November 2024	KCC and National Grid – Ecology Information Shared	The draft Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) was shared with KCC for comment by National Grid,
09 December 2024	KCC and National Grid – Landscape and Visual Information Shared	National Grid shared the Kent Table of Agreement (2024 12 09) and the Draft Mitigation Design Package (2024 12 09) with KCC for comment.
10 December 2024	KCC, TDC, DDC, NE and National Grid Terrestrial Ecology Thematic Meeting (Kent proposals)	The approach to Biodiversity Net Gain was discussed in this meeting.
7 January 2025	TDC, DDC, KCC and National Grid– Landscape and Visual	Project update and timeline, discussion relating to table of agreement of issues, discussion relating to landscape mitigation plans, AOB.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Discussion points</b>
	<i>Thematic Meetings</i>	
<i>14 January 2025</i>	<i>TDC, DDC, KCC and National Grid Meeting</i>	<i>Project update and timeline, thematic updates, ongoing decision-making</i>
<i>21 January 2025</i>	<i>TDC, DDC, KCC and National Grid Meeting – Air Quality</i>	<i>Air quality thematic meeting to provide a project update, to discuss the assessment findings, and to agree the air quality monitoring locations proposed for the construction phase.</i>
<i>21 January 2025</i>	<i>KCC, DDC, TDC, NE and National Grid Terrestrial Ecology Thematic Meeting (Kent proposals)</i>	<i>Discussion of golden plover mitigation parcel, including the fact wintering bird surveys are being undertaken and have confirmed presence of golden plover, and that lighting only affects the eastern boundary. Confirmation that Natural England consider the updated collision risk assessment addresses their main concerns, with only some limited further comments. Confirmation Natural England have no specific comments on the type of deflector chosen for the new section of overhead line. Confirmation there will be a stand-by generator as part of operation of development. Confirmation there will be scrapes created along the River Stour as long-term enhancement within South Richborough Pasture Local Wildlife Site. Use of instant hedges for closing temporary gaps.</i>
<i>11 February 2025</i>	<i>TDC, DDC, KCC and National Grid Meeting</i>	<i>Project update and timeline, thematic updates, ongoing decision-making</i>
<i>11 March 2025</i>	<i>TDC, DDC, KCC and National Grid Meeting</i>	<i>Project update and timeline, thematic updates, ongoing decision-making</i>
<i>08 April 2025</i>	<i>TDC, DDC, KCC and National Grid Meeting</i>	<i>Project update and timeline, thematic updates, ongoing decision-making</i>
<i>19 May 2025</i>	<i>TDC, DDC, KCC and National Grid Meeting</i>	<i>Project update and timeline, thematic updates, ongoing decision-making</i>
<i>10 June 2025</i>	<i>TDC, DDC, KCC and National Grid Meeting</i>	<i>Project update and timeline, thematic updates, ongoing decision-making</i>
<i>8 July 2025</i>	<i>TDC, DDC, KCC and National Grid Meeting</i>	<i>Project update and timeline, thematic updates, ongoing decision-making</i>

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Discussion points</b>
11 July 2025	Cultural Heritage	A meeting with the County Archaeologist to provide an update.
21 July 2025	Landscape Thematic Meeting	A meeting to discuss the landscape related matters raised in KCC, DDC and TDC Relevant Representations,
6 August 2025	Ecology Thematic Meeting	A meeting to discuss the ecology related matters raised in KCC, DDC and TDC Relevant Representations,
12 August 2025	TDC, DDC, KCC and National Grid Meeting	Project update and timeline, thematic updates, ongoing decision-making
9 September 2025	TDC, DDC, KCC and National Grid Meeting	Project update and timeline, thematic updates, ongoing decision-making
14 October 2025	Ecology Thematic Meeting	A meeting to discuss the ecology related matters raised in KCC, DDC and TDC Principal Areas of Disagreement Summary Statements.
14 October 2025	TDC, DDC, KCC and National Grid Meeting	Project update and timeline, thematic updates, ongoing decision-making
18 November 2026	TDC, DDC, KCC and National Grid Meeting	Project update and timeline, thematic updates, ongoing decision-making.
9 December 2026	TDC, DDC, KCC and National Grid Meeting	Project update and timeline, thematic updates, ongoing decision-making.
13 January 2026	TDC, DDC, KCC and National Grid Meeting	Project update and timeline, thematic updates, ongoing decision-making.
15 January 2026	KCC and National Grid – Transport Meeting	Transport meeting to review and agree the approach for junction capacity modelling following the Examining Authority’s First Written Questions
20 January 2026	KCC and National Grid Meeting	A meeting to review the structure of the Statement of Common Ground as well as the outstanding matters. Potential thematic meetings were also discussed.
16 February 2026	KCC and National Grid Meeting	A meeting to review the outstanding ecology matters in the SoCG.

### 3. Areas of Discussion Between the Parties

#### 3.1 Policy, need, coordination and site selection

Table 3.1 Policy, need, coordination and site selection

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	KCC Current Position	The Applicant Current Position	Status
3.1.1	N/A	DCO consenting route	The Consultee agreed with the DCO consenting route for the Proposed Project.	On 31 March 2022, the Secretary of State (SoS) issued a direction under Section 35 of the Planning Act that the Sea Link Project is to be treated as a proposed application for which development consent is required. In making the direction, the SoS is of the view that the Project is nationally significant.	Agreed
3.1.2	N/A	National Policy Statements	The Consultee agreed that the Proposed Project would be determined in accordance with the National Policy Statements (NPSs) (EN-1, EN-3 and EN-5).	Section 104 of the Planning Act 2008 requires that the SoS decides the application in accordance with National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1) (NPS EN-1), National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (NPS EN-3), and National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (EN-5) (NPS EN-5).	Agreed
3.1.3	N/A	Local Development Plan	The Consultee has identified the Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2013-2030 (as amended by Early Partial Review), September 2020 and Kent Mineral Sites Plan 2013-2030, September 2020 as relevant policies.	While the assessment of the application for development consent for the Proposed Project should be made against the NPSs referred to above, the Development Plan for each Local Authority is likely to be an important and relevant consideration.	Agreed
3.1.4	N/A	Development Plan allocations	The Consultee agrees with National Grid’s conclusions that there are no KCC Development Plan Allocations that overlap with the Order Limits,	The Applicant has not identified any Development Plan Allocations from the Consultee that would overlap with the draft Order Limits, which has been confirmed by the Consultee.	Agreed
3.1.5	N/A	Need for the project	The Consultee agrees to the identified need of the Proposed Project as set out by National Grid.	The network in and between East Anglia and the south-east of England needs reinforcing for four main reasons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) the existing transmission network was not designed to transport electricity from where we increasingly now generate it (largely offshore)</li> <li>2) the growth in offshore wind, interconnectors and nuclear power means that more electricity will be generated in the years ahead than the current network is able to securely and reliably transport</li> <li>3) as a country, electricity demand is forecasted to at least double by 2050, increasing the amount of energy we need to transport to homes and businesses</li> <li>4) upgrading the existing network as it is today (such as through replacing cables to carry more power) will not be enough to carry the amount of future power whilst operating to required standards.</li> </ul>	Agreed

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	KCC Current Position	The Applicant Current Position	Status
				The Proposed Project is just one of several electricity network reinforcements that are needed to ensure the electricity transmission network is fit for the future.	
3.1.6	<p><b>Application Document 7.2 Strategic Options Back Check Report [APP-320]</b></p> <p><b>Application Document 8.3 Strategic Options Report (October 2023) [APP-370]</b></p>	Strategic Options	The Consultee agrees with the process, methodology and outcome of the strategic options appraisal ( <b>Application Document 7.2 Strategic Options Back Check Report [APP-320]</b> ).	The process, methodology and outcome of the strategic options appraisal presented in Strategic Option Report, version A, October 2023, included as part of Statutory Consultation, is agreed (see <b>Application Document 8.3 Strategic Options Report (October 2023) [APP-370]</b> ).	Agreed
3.1.7	<b>Application Document 8.2 Options Selection and Design Evolution Report (October 2023) [APP-369]</b>	Site selection	The Consultee agrees with the methodology and outcome of the site and route selection presented in the Option Selection and Design Evolution Report Version A, October 2023.	The methodology and outcome of the site and route selection presented in the Option Selection and Design Evolution Report, Version A, October 2023, included as part of Statutory Consultation, is agreed (see <b>Application Document 8.2 Options Selection and Design Evolution Report (October 2023) [APP-369]</b> ).	Agreed
3.1.8	<b>Application Document 3.1 (H) draft Development Consent Order</b> submitted at Deadline 5.	General	The Consultee requires confirmation that the evaluation of the design and site selection may have a bearing on siting of compounds, converter stations and substations. The Consultee is concerned that dropping areas reduces flexibility where compounds can go if needed to move.	The Applicant is content that there is sufficient flexibility within the Order Limits as now presented in <b>Application Document 3.1 (H) draft Development Consent Order</b> submitted at Deadline 5.	Agreed

## 3.2 Draft DCO

Table 3.2 Draft DCO

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	KCC Current Position	The Applicant Current Position	Status
3.2.1	<b>Application Document 3.1 (H) draft Development Consent Order</b> submitted at Deadline 5.	Art 2 (1) (interpretation)	The Consultee agrees with the interpretation of a watercourse as contained within the Part 1 Preliminary section of the draft DCO, this reflects the legal definition and is purposefully not specific as channel type, shape and size depends on the variables of the site. If there is a channel and water flows through it, it is likely to be an ordinary watercourse, the current definition serves to start conversations where definition is ambiguous to the landowner allowing us to ensure the appropriate response or arrange a site visit to further understand land and channels therein.	The Applicant notes the Consultee's position and agrees.	Agreed
3.2.2	<b>Application Document 3.1 (H) draft Development Consent Order</b> submitted at Deadline 5.	Art. 20 (discharge of water)	<p>There is an issue though with section 9 of chapter 19 of part 4 relating to the discharge of water with regards to the amount of time for a reply to be given to an application for consent to discharge to a watercourse being set at 28 days. The Land Drainage Act (1991) sets the time for response at 60 days, 28 days as proposed isn't enough time when demand is high for services given we (the Consultee's SuDS team) are such a small team. The Consultee would request that this be amended to 60 days reflecting the Land Drainage Act (1991).</p> <p>KCC have also confirmed in an email on 12<sup>th</sup> September that they would like to retain 60 days for determining ordinary watercourse consent.</p> <p>No longer relevant – decided at 12 Feb meeting with the Applicant's project team that this is an issue for the River Stour Internal Drainage Board (IDB), not KCC.</p>	There is precedent for deviating from the Land Drainage Act 1991 to include shorter timescales in DCOs. For example, the Bramford to Twinstead DCO states 35 days in article 19(9) and Yorkshire Green DCO varied the Land Drainage Act to insert 28 days. The timescale of 35 days has been retained here, reflecting the precedent set in the Bramford to Twinstead DCO.	No further comments to be given – deferred to River Stour Internal Drainage Board
3.2.3	<b>Application Document 3.1 (H) draft Development Consent Order,</b> submitted at Deadline 5.	Schedule 3 (requirements): Management Plans	<p>Whilst writing, the Consultee would also advise that whilst an EIA is referred to within the DCO and we assume that an Environmental Statement will be included therein which will contain a Flood Risk Assessment, the Consultee is concerned that no mention to Flood Risk is specifically given within the document or the requirement for Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) approval in relation there to.</p> <p>The Consultee raises the question about whether it would be possible for National Grid to include either within the body of the document itself, or as a standalone schedule, criteria in relation to flood risk and the requirement for any of the works referred to in schedule 1 to comply with the approved 'flood and water management strategy document.</p>	Requirement 6 states that a Flood Management Plan will be secured by requirement, requiring submission to and approval by the relevant authority. The Applicant can also confirm that a Flood Risk Assessment is appended to the Environmental Statement ( <b>Application Document 6.8 Flood Risk Assessment [APP-292]</b> ).	Agreed

### 3.3 Consultation

**Table 3.3 Consultation**

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	KCC Current Position	The Applicant Current Position	Status
3.3.1	N/A	Consultation Strategy	The Consultee agrees to the Consultation Strategy as set out by National Grid.	The Consultation Strategy has been prepared taking account of input from the Consultee. The final version was issued to the Councils on 20 October 2022. The approach and content are agreed to be adequate and represent a satisfactory approach to consultation.	Agreed
3.3.2	N/A	Consultation Zones	The Consultee agrees to the consultation zones as set out by National Grid.	Primary Consultation Zones (PCZ) and Secondary Consultation Zones (SCZ) identified for the purpose of non-statutory consultation are adequate and satisfactory	Agreed

### 3.4 Landscape and Visual

**Table 3.4 Landscape and Visual**

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	KCC Current Position	The Applicant Current Position	Status
3.4.1	<b>Application Document 6.2.3.1 Part 3 Kent Chapter 1 Landscape and Visual [APP-061]</b> and <b>Application Document 6.3.3.1.C ES Appendix 3.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment [APP-145]</b>	Landscape Character baseline	The Consultee raised no concerns on the basis of the landscape assessment as set out in the PEIR and acknowledged that the ES will provide further information, but the Consultee did confirm that they would be deferring comment to the District Councils.	The Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) were set out in the baseline section of the PEIR. The Statutory Consultation responses from the Consultee and the Kent LPAs required further detail of the key characteristics of the LCAs which have been included within the ES ( <b>Application Document 6.2.3.1 Part 3 Kent Chapter 1 Landscape and Visual [APP-061]</b> and <b>Application Document 6.3.3.1.B ES Appendix 3.1.B Landscape Baseline [APP-144]</b> ).	No further comments to be given – deferred to District Council
3.4.2	<b>Application Document 6.2.3.1 Part 3 Kent Chapter 1 Landscape and Visual [APP-061]</b>	Visual Amenity baseline	The Consultee’s role within these meetings has been to respond to PRow and where necessary, biodiversity matters and raised no concerns regarding the representative viewpoint selection.  The Consultee confirmed that they are deferring comment to the District Councils.	The representative viewpoints were set out in the baseline section of the PEIR and have been set out in the ES ( <b>Application Document 6.2.3.1 Part 3 Kent Chapter 1 Landscape and Visual [APP-061]</b> ).	No further comments to be given – Deferring to District Councils
3.4.3	<b>Application Document 6.2.3.1 Part 3 Kent Chapter 1 Landscape and Visual [APP-061]</b>	Assessment of effects	The Consultee confirmed that they are deferring comment to the District Councils.	The assessment of effects on landscape character and visual amenity were presented within the PEIR. The PEIR is a preliminary assessment and effects on landscape character and visual amenity has been further assessed with more detail within the ES chapter ( <b>Application Document 6.2.3.1 Part 3 Kent Chapter 1 Landscape &amp; Visual [APP-061]</b> ) in line with the methodology and professional judgement. This has also included an assessment of effects at operation year 15.	No further comments to be given – deferring to District Councils
3.4.4	<b>Application Document 6.2.3.1 Part 3 Kent Chapter 1 Landscape and Visual [APP-061]</b>	Study Area	The Consultee’s role within these meetings has been to respond to PRow and where necessary, biodiversity matters, and the Consultee has raised no concerns to the approach. The Consultee confirmed that they are deferring comment to the District Councils, but they should still be consulted with on this topic.	The Study Area was set out within the PEIR and is the same for the ES ( <b>Application Document 6.2.3.1 Part 3 Kent Chapter 1 Landscape and Visual [APP-061]</b> ).	No further comments to be given – deferring to District Councils.

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	KCC Current Position	The Applicant Current Position	Status
3.4.5	<b>Application Document 6.2.3.1 Part 3 Kent Chapter 1 Landscape and Visual [APP-061]</b>	Growth rates of mitigation planting and photomontages	<p>The Consultee's role within these meetings has been to respond to PRow and where necessary, biodiversity matters. There have been no concerns raised about the year 1 and year 15 photomontage approach and no further comments from the Consultee have been received.</p> <p>The Consultee confirmed that they are deferring comment on additional materials and information to the District Councils, but they should still be consulted with on this topic.</p>	The Applicant has discussed the growth rates of mitigation planting with the Consultee and the photomontages have been produced for the ES at year 1 and year 15 of operation.	No further comments to be given – deferred to District Councils
3.4.6	<b>Application Document 6.3.2.1.A ES Appendix 2.1.A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and Photomontage Methodology [APP-095]</b>	LVIA methodology	<p>The Consultee's role within these meetings has been to respond to PRow and where necessary, biodiversity matters, and the Consultee has not raised any further concerns on the LVIA methodology.</p> <p>The Consultee confirmed that they are deferring comment to the District Councils, but they should still be consulted with on this topic.</p>	The LVIA methodology was set out within the PEIR and is the same for the ES with minor amendments following the published GLVIA3 Clarifications Technical Guidance Note.	No further comments to be given – deferred to District Councils
3.4.7	<b>Application Document 6.3.2.1.A ES Appendix 2.1.A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and Photomontage Methodology [APP-095]</b>	Photomontage methodology	<p>The Consultee's role within these meetings has been to respond to PRow and where necessary, biodiversity matters, and no further concerns have been raised on the photomontage methodology.</p> <p>The Consultee confirmed that they are deferring comment to the District Councils, but they should still be consulted with on this topic.</p>	The Photomontage methodology was updated following the PEIR and is the same for the ES.	No further comments to be given – deferred to District Councils
3.4.8	<b>Application Document 7.11.2 Design Approach Document – Kent [REP1A-031] and Application Document 6.2.3.1 Part 3 Kent Chapter 1 Landscape and Visual [APP-061]</b>	Design principles and landscape strategy and mitigation plans	<p>The Consultee is aware of the ongoing design process and have expressed an interest to be involved. This has been covered in thematic meetings when discussing the proposed landscape strategy.</p> <p>The Consultee has confirmed this has now been agreed.</p>	The design principles are contained within <b>Application Document 7.12.2 (B) Design Principles – Kent [REP4-225]</b> which applies to the Kent Converter Station and Substation. Requirement 3 has been updated within <b>Application Document 3.1 (H) draft Development Consent Order</b> , submitted at Deadline 5 to reflect the addition of the substation and specifics around operational lighting. The outline landscape mitigation proposals are contained within Figure 1 of <b>Application Document 7.5.7.2 (C) Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan – Kent [REP4-067]</b> .	Agreed
3.4.9	<b>Application Document 7.5.7.2 (C) Outline Landscape and Ecological</b>	Outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan	The Consultee has confirmed this has now been agreed.	<b>Application Document 7.5.7.2 (C) Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan – Kent [REP4-067]</b> has been submitted with the DCO application. The latest version of this document should be referred to at	Agreed

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	KCC Current Position	The Applicant Current Position	Status
	Management Plan - Kent [REP4-067]			<b>Application Document 7.5.7.2 (C) Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan – Kent [REP4-067].</b>	
3.4.10	<b>Application Document 3.1 (H) draft Development Consent Order,</b> submitted at Deadline 5.	Indicative Species Mix	The Consultee has confirmed this has now been agreed.	The Applicant requires agreement from the Consultee on the indicative species mixes (detailed within <b>Application Document 7.5.7.2 (C) Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan – Kent [REP4-067]</b> ). This includes the proposed mix percentage distribution and range of heights to be used in the year 15 visualisations (where relevant) (detailed within <b>Application Document 6.3.3.1.A ES Appendix 3.1.A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and Photomontage Methodology [APP-143]</b> ). The species mixes include a variable distribution across the species to increase future resilience. The indicative species mix can be agreed at the detailed design stage as part of approval of the detailed LEMP under Requirement 6, Schedule 3 of the draft DCO ( <b>Application Document 3.1 (H) draft Development Consent Order</b> , submitted at Deadline 5).	Agreed
3.4.11	N/A	Photosheet template	The photosheet template for site photos and images was issued to the Consultee by National Grid on 2 August 2024, but the Consultee confirmed that they were deferring comments to the District Councils.	The photosheet template (which is not an application document but was shared for reference during discussions within the pre-application period within thematic meetings) was issued by the Applicant to the Consultee and requested comments on the template. However, the Consultee confirmed that comments would be deferred to the District Councils, so agreement from the Consultee is no longer required.	No further comments to be given – deferred to District Councils
3.4.12	N/A	Cumulative sequential visual assessment	The Consultee received the Sequential Cumulative Visual Assessment document from National Grid for review and comment on 28 August 2024. The Consultee confirmed to National Grid that they were deferring comment on the document to the District Councils.	The Sequential Cumulative Visual Assessment document (which is not an application document but was shared for reference during discussions within the pre-application period within thematic meetings) was issued by the Applicant to the Consultee and requested comments on the document. However, the Consultee confirmed that comments would be deferred to the District Councils, so agreement from the Consultee is no longer required.	No further comments to be given – deferred to District Councils
3.4.13	N/A	Landscape and Visual value judgements	The Consultee received the Kent L&V Value document from National Grid for review and comment. The Consultee confirmed to National Grid that they were deferring comment on the document to the District Councils.	The Kent L&V Value document (which is not an application document but was shared for reference during discussions within the pre-application period within thematic meetings) was issued by the Applicant to the Consultee and requested comments on the document. However, the Consultee confirmed that comments would be deferred to the District Councils, so agreement from the Consultee is no longer required.	No further comments to be given – deferred to District Councils
3.4.14	N/A	Landscape and visual sensitivity ratings	The Consultee received the Sensitivity Ratings document from National Grid for review and comment. The Consultee confirmed to National Grid that they were deferring comment on the document to the District Councils.	The Sensitivity Ratings document (which is not an application document but was shared for reference during discussions within the pre-application period within thematic meetings) was issued by the Applicant to the Consultee and requested comments on the document.	No further comments to be given – deferred to District Councils

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	KCC Current Position	The Applicant Current Position	Status
				However, the Consultee confirmed that comments would be deferred to the District Councils, so agreement from the Consultee is no longer required.	
3.4.15	N/A	Visual Appendix Structure Example	The Consultee received, on 28 August 2024, the Visual Appendix Structure Example - BTNO1 and 2 document from National Grid for review and comment. The Consultee confirmed to National Grid that they were deferring comment on the document to the District Councils.	The Visual Appendix Structure Example - BTNO1 and 2 document (which is not an application document but was shared for reference during discussions within the pre-application period within thematic meetings) was issued by the Applicant to the Consultee and requested comments on the document. However, the Consultee confirmed that comments would be deferred to the District Councils, so agreement from the Consultee is no longer required.	No further comments to be given – deferred to District Councils

### 3.5 Ecology and Biodiversity

Table 3.5 Ecology and Biodiversity

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	KCC Current Position	The Applicant Current Position	Status
3.5.1	<b>Application Document 6.2.3.2 (F) Part 3 Kent Chapter 2 Ecology &amp; Biodiversity</b> , submitted at Deadline 5.	HVDC cable crossing of Thanet Coast & Sandwich Bay Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar site	The use of trenchless solution for Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA is still under discussion with the Consultee and National Grid as the Consultee requires further information on the trenchless methodologies from National Grid.  The Consultee has confirmed they still need to understand which technique will be used, so this remains under discussion.	The trenchless solution has been confirmed as the approach to be taken by the Applicant as set out in <b>Application Document 6.2.1.4 (D) Part 1 Introduction Chapter 4 Description of the Proposed Project [REP1A-003]</b> . The main works contractor will confirm which specific trenchless technique will be implemented as and when required.	Under discussion
3.5.2	<b>Application Document 6.2.3.2 (F) Part 3 Kent Chapter 2 Ecology and Biodiversity</b> , submitted at Deadline 5.	Horizontal Direct Drilling (HDD)	This matter had been under discussion with the Consultee and National Grid as the Consultee required further information of the HDD from National Grid.  The Consultee has confirmed this has now been agreed.	The Applicant has provided further information on the location and impacts of the use of a jack up barge included in <b>Application Document 9.13 (C) Pegwell Bay Construction Method Technical Note [REP4-229]</b> .	Agreed
3.5.3	<b>Application Document 6.2.3.2 (F) Part 3 Kent Chapter 2 Ecology and Biodiversity</b> ,	Golden Plover Offsetting Land in Kent	The Consultee notes the strategy has been discussed with Natural England and agreed in principle with them. The Consultee notes Natural England have primacy on this issue since it is an HRA matter.	The Applicant confirmed that the golden plover mitigation area has been subject to wintering bird survey which has recorded use by golden plover. The Golden Plover offsetting has been set out in <b>Application Document 6.2.3.2 (F) Part 3 Kent Chapter 2 Ecology and Biodiversity</b> submitted at Deadline 5 and <b>Application</b>	Agreed

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	KCC Current Position	The Applicant Current Position	Status
	submitted at Deadline 5. <b>Application Document 6.6 (G) Habitats Regulations Assessment Report</b> submitted at Deadline 5.			<b>Document 6.6 (G) Habitats Regulations Assessment Report</b> submitted at Deadline 5 with the strategy being agreed with Natural England. This has been presented to the Consultee, who note the agreement from Natural England and confirm that Natural England have primacy on this issue.	
3.5.4	<b>Application Document 9.84 (B) Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments (REAC) [REP4-235].</b>	Collision risk from new overhead line	The Consultee agreed with the approach to collision risk from new overhead line and agreed with the conclusion made by Natural England.	The Applicant confirmed collision risk assessment has concluded no significant collision risk for birds and has been supported by 12 months of vantage point surveys of the line location, and carcass searches of the existing OHL. Mitigation has been included in the form of hanging bird diverters which have been set out in <b>Application Document 9.84 (B) Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments (REAC) [REP4-235]</b> . Collision risk assessment has been reviewed by Natural England who agree with its basic conclusion.	Agreed
3.5.5	<b>Application Document 6.2.3.2 (F) Part 3 Kent Chapter 2 Ecology &amp; Biodiversity</b> , submitted at Deadline 5.	Recovery of mudflats	The Consultee states that National Grid need to ensure recovery of the mudflats in the intertidal zone from the HDD connection works.	The Applicant have provided details on mudflat recovery in <b>Application Document 6.2.3.2 (F) Part 3 Kent Chapter 2 Ecology and Biodiversity</b> submitted at Deadline 5.	Agreed
3.5.6	<b>Application Document 9.84 (B) Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments (REAC) [REP4-235].</b>	Riparian mammal habitat continuity	The Consultee had stated that National Grid needed to provide details of the type of culvert to be used to ensure no disruption of connectivity in ditches. The Consultee has confirmed this has now been agreed.	The Applicant confirms that the type of culvert has been set out in the DCO and the REAC <b>Application Document 9.84 (B) Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments (REAC) [REP4-235]</b> . This has been designed to preserve the bed of the ditch and allow connectivity for riparian mammals. Where ditches retaining seasonal flows are crossed, culverts in waterbodies will either preserve the natural bed or be box culverts with inverts sunk a minimum of 300 mm below the hard bed of the watercourse and natural / existing bed material placed across the inside of the culvert, to maintain existing channel gradients and habitat for aquatic invertebrates, as well as to ensure continued passage for in channel species. Regular engagement has been undertaken with the Environment Agency, Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) and the Internal Drainage Board (IDB) on key design principles.	Agreed
3.5.7	<b>Application Document 6.2.3.2 (F) Part 3 Kent Chapter 2 Ecology</b>	Ecology - reptiles	The Consultee had previously raised the submission did not adequately demonstrate that reptile populations will not be impacted by the proposed development. More information was required to	The suitable habitat in Area A consists of the margins of an improved grassland field and, immediately south of this, the eastern extent of Abbey Farm Wetlands. The latter is	Agreed

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	and Biodiversity submitted at Deadline 5.		<p>enable them to be satisfied that appropriate consideration can be given to the impact on reptiles. For Area A there was insufficient information on the proposed mitigation to demonstrate it is achievable. KCC EAS acknowledged that the two-stage strimming technique described in paragraph 2.9.115 of the Environmental Statement is an appropriate method for reptile displacement. However, the concern remained that the strategy lacked site-specific detail and did not sufficiently demonstrate how overall impacts will be avoided, particularly for a site qualifying for the Key Reptile Site Register. To ensure the mitigation is appropriate and effective, KCC EAS requested that the following additional information is included within the full detailed LEMP and CEMP, with clear responsibilities, timelines, and enforcement mechanisms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Habitat suitability of adjacent areas: a clear assessment of the quality and carrying capacity of the adjacent habitats (e.g. stream corridor, woodland edge, rail corridor scrub) to receive displaced reptiles. This should include vegetation structure and diversity, availability of refugia and basking areas, connectivity to other suitable habitats</li> <li>Monitoring and management: details of a post-clearance monitoring programme to assess whether reptiles successfully relocate to adjacent habitats with population decline or growth, management measures if mitigation proves ineffective</li> <li>Timing and weather contingencies: clarification on how the timing of strimming (March or September) will be adjusted in response to weather conditions, which can significantly affect reptile activity and displacement success</li> <li>Ecological supervision by confirmation of the role and responsibilities of the Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) during habitat manipulation, including presence during all clearance activities, authority to stop works if risks to reptiles are identified</li> </ul> <p>The Consultee has confirmed this has now been agreed.</p>	<p>where the main reptile populations are concentrated. The only works proposed within Area A are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The erection of a pair of pylons in the field.</li> <li>The creation of an approximately 10 m wide temporary access through the hedgerow to the north-west into that arable set-aside field.</li> <li>The creation of an approximately 2 m wide temporary gap to allow a drainage pipe to connect through the hedge boundary of that arable set-aside field to Minster Stream.</li> </ul> <p>Therefore, all that is required in Area A is for reptiles to be cleared from the section of hedge/field margin where the 10 m wide entrance and the c. 2 m wide drainage connection is to be created. This will not affect habitat amount or connectivity for the reptile populations in Area A.</p> <p>The quoted 15 ha is a reference to habitat loss south of the River Stour (Area B), not Area A. Moreover, as discussed in <b>Application Document 6.2.3.2 (F) Part 3 Kent Chapter 2 Ecology and Biodiversity</b> submitted at Deadline 5 (paragraph 2.9.12) the habitat generally in Area B is structurally poor (short and open) and of low suitability for reptiles, except along the ditch corridors. Therefore, it is only in the locations where a 13 m wide culvert is to be installed on a ditch that there would be any loss of reptile habitat south of the River Stour. These are small and localised gaps distributed over a wide area and mammal ledges installed in each culvert would also enable passage of reptiles. It should therefore be noted that the 15 ha figure was not a reference to the area of habitat suitable for reptiles but to the amount of 'grazing marsh' south of the River Stour, the vast majority of which is unsuitable for reptiles.</p> <p>The habitat manipulation strategy proposed is an approach frequently taken in these situations i.e. a two-stage strimming approach as per paragraph 2.9.115 of <b>Application Document 6.2.3.2 Part 3 Kent Chapter 2 Ecology and Biodiversity [REP1-049]</b>: <i>'To avoid killing and injury a two-phase strimming displacement technique would be used in key areas that may harbour reptiles, as they would not be evenly present across the grazing marsh but are likely to be concentrated around ditch and wetland edges. This would be done in consultation with the Suitably Qualified Ecologist or Ecological Clerk of Works. The clearance would involve first reducing vegetation height to 150 mm using hand tools such as strimmers, before being finally cleared to ground level after reptiles have had the opportunity to leave. This clearance would be undertaken in either September or March of a given year.'</i> Given the</p>	

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				<p>small and localised areas of reptile habitat requiring clearance in Area A this is considered appropriate. Habitat areas will be restored as soon as the haul road and culverts are removed. Such habitat will become suitable for reptiles within 1-2 growing seasons following restoration. Given the very localised nature of land take in Area A and the unsuitability of habitat for reptiles except at field margins and on ditch corridors, the risk of reptiles entering the construction zone is considered low.</p> <p><b>Application Document 7.5.7.2 (C) Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan – Kent [REP4-068]</b> submitted at D4 has been updated to include outline information to address the points raised, which will be expanded upon for the final LEMP.</p>	
3.5.8			<p>The Consultee had previously raised concerns that for Area C there was insufficient information on the proposed mitigation to demonstrate it is achievable. KCC EAS acknowledged the Applicant’s clarification that reptiles will be directed toward adjacent habitats, including semi-natural broadleaved woodland and the stream corridor. KCC EAS also accepted that a two-stage strimming approach may be more proportionate than trapping and translocation, given the reported population density. KCC EAS were satisfied with the proposal to include the precise method of reptile exclusion within the full detailed Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP), to be agreed with the relevant planning authorities between the grant of the DCO and commencement of construction. However, KCC EAS remained concerned about the interim period before newly created habitats become ecologically functional. For a site of local importance with a good slow worm population, it would be expected as a minimum, that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjacent habitats are enhanced to support all three reptile species in the long term (at present we do not know if these habitats are suitable for the three species).</li> <li>• A clear timeline and contingency plan is provided to ensure reptiles are not left without viable habitat during the 1–2 year period before habitat creation matures.</li> <li>• A programme of post-construction monitoring is implemented to assess the effectiveness of the mitigation measures</li> </ul>	<p>The reference to adjacent habitat into which the reptiles will be cleared was not intended to be a reference to the arable land but to the Minster Stream corridor to the north, and the corridor of suitable habitat to the south on the boundary of Weatherlees Hill, which is then connected to the scrub, woodland and wetlands of Weatherlees Hill itself and the suitable scrub habitat that runs the entire length of the rail corridor.</p> <p>The reptile population of Area C is low relative to the size of the area (0.7ha) which makes a two-stage strimming approach more reasonable than trapping and translocation. However, the Applicant would suggest the precise method of reptile exclusion is a detail that can be included in the Detailed LEMP to be produced and agreed with the local planning authorities between grant of DCO and commencement of construction.</p> <p>There is extensive viable habitat to receive the excluded reptiles in the areas referenced above; although the population density of reptiles will increase in the short term until such time as the converter station and substation are constructed and the habitat creation is undertaken this will be a period of 1-2 years before the first habitat is created. In the long-term there will be an increase in the quantity of suitable reptile habitat in this area compared to the baseline.</p> <p><b>Application Document 7.5.7.2 (C) Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan – Kent [REP4-068]</b> submitted at D4 has been updated to include outline information to address the points raised, which will be expanded upon for the final LEMP.</p>	Agreed

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			<p>and habitat establishment, and to inform any necessary adaptive management.</p> <p>KCC EAS recommended that these measures be explicitly included within the full detailed LEMP to ensure ecological continuity and compliance with best practice guidance (e.g. Natural England's standing advice on reptiles and BS 42020: Biodiversity – Code of Practice for Planning and Development).</p> <p>KCC EAS were also satisfied that the scrub habitat along the Minster Stream is to be retained. However, given the proposed construction of a balancing pond, and converter station, it is anticipated the presence of heavy machinery on site. Therefore, KCC EAS advised that strong precautionary measures, such as protective fencing, be maintained throughout the construction phase to prevent harm to reptiles and other wildlife. This should clearly appear within the full detailed Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).</p> <p>The Consultee has confirmed this has now been agreed.</p>		
3.5.9			<p>The Consultee had previously raised concerns that for Area C there was insufficient information provided detailing why no reptile surveys were undertaken on the western site of the proposed converter within the existing scrub habitat.</p> <p>The Consultee has confirmed they agree with the Applicant's position.</p>	<p>This habitat will not be affected by the Proposed Project but will instead be retained. There will be a balancing pond east of this area of scrub but there will be no vegetation clearance. That is why this area was not subject to survey.</p>	Agreed
3.5.10			<p>The Consultee had previously raised concerns that for Area D there was insufficient information provided assessing the impact the proposal would have on the reptile population within this area.</p> <p>KCC EAS advised that this habitat area should be explicitly included within the proposed two stage reptile habitat manipulation strategy, and this should be clearly set out in the full detailed Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).</p> <p>Furthermore, KCC EAS expected the Applicant to demonstrate that appropriate habitat compensation, even if temporary, is provided to support the continued viability of the local slow worm and common lizard populations during the construction phase. This should include, as a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of temporary suitable habitat prior to the commencement of works,</li> </ul>	<p>Area D is the area east of the A229. In this location a 20 m wide gap will be created in the habitat to enable the cable trench and haul road to traverse the A229. Therefore, approximately 600 m<sup>2</sup> of suitable reptile habitat (approximately 0.7% of the total area of suitable habitat in this location) will be temporarily removed. It will all be reinstated once the cable corridor is backfilled. The utility diversion will not be located in habitat suitable for reptiles but in the arable field to the east of the belt of suitable reptile habitat.</p> <p><b>Application Document 7.5.7.2 (C) Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan – Kent [REP4-068]</b> submitted at D4 has been updated to include outline information to address the points raised, which will be expanded upon for the final LEMP.</p>	Agreed

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			<p>allowing time for it to establish and become ecologically functional.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhancement of adjacent habitats to increase their carrying capacity and connectivity.</li> <li>• Post-construction monitoring to assess habitat recovery and the effectiveness of mitigation measures.</li> </ul> <p>The Consultee has confirmed this has now been agreed.</p>		
3.5.11	<p><b>Application Document 6.2.3.2 (F) Part 3 Kent Chapter 2 Ecology and Biodiversity</b> submitted at Deadline 5.</p>	<p>Ecology – breeding birds</p>	<p>The Consultee had previously commented that there was insufficient land proposed for the mitigation requirements for farmland birds.</p> <p>22 territories for skylarks have been recorded and it would be anticipated that 22ha of land would be required to create 2 skylark plots per territory and currently only 10ha are proposed for mitigation which is inadequate. The land (including field margins and hedgerows) required for skylark mitigation would also support corn bunting (8), linnet (33), meadow pipit (80), grey partridge (2), yellowhammer (5) and nightingale (1).</p> <p>It was the view of KCC EAS that the additional information had not provided any scientific rationale/papers to support the additional information provided. For the seven territories lost there should be a total of 21 plots created. Two plots per hectare would require 10.5ha of land. This is already a suitable area of land and therefore they did not encourage doubling the number of plots per hectare without any rationale supported by research.</p> <p>KCC EAS highlighted that there was no evidence to suggest that increasing the number of plots within a smaller area is beneficial for skylark, 2 per hectare is regarded as the optimum density. Data exists to show that two plots per hectare in winter cereals can boost the number of skylark chicks by 50%. If 20% of winter cereals were managed with 2 skylark plots per hectare then the national decline of skylarks would be halted. There is no information on 4 skylark plots per hectare and therefore this approach was discouraged.</p>	<p>The Applicant believes this is a misunderstanding of the data. While 22 territories were recorded in the survey area in 2024, the survey area is much larger than the Order Limits. As per paragraph 2.9.72 of <b>Application Document 6.2.3.2 (F) Part 3 Kent Chapter 2 Ecology and Biodiversity</b> submitted at Deadline 5, a total of seven skylark territories were recorded within the Order Limits north of the River Stour, and only one skylark territory was recorded in the converter station field (the only arable habitat that will be permanently lost).</p> <p>The Applicant does not believe it is true that you can only accommodate 2 skylark plots per hectare of farmland. The government guidance on skylark plots says 'at least' 2 plots per hectare i.e. this is not a maximum but a minimum (<a href="https://www.gov.uk/find-funding-for-land-or-farms/ahw4-skylark-plots">https://www.gov.uk/find-funding-for-land-or-farms/ahw4-skylark-plots</a>); the plots do not provide nest sites, but provide access within fields for foraging, particularly later in the season when the crop becomes tall. The Applicant also does not believe the stipulation of 2 plots for each territory lost is based on any formal guidance or calculation and believes this can be considered more simply; the arable field that is being permanently lost is 12 ha and supports one skylark territory (although six others will be lost temporarily during construction). Therefore, planting spring cereals and delivering skylark plots at a rate of 4 per hectare in winter cereals on a 10 ha field for 40 to 80 years (depending on the lifetime of the converter station) is reasonable mitigation.</p> <p>Even if mitigating for all seven territories that would be temporarily lost, at 2 plots per territory this would be 14 plots (not 21 plots), which at 2 plots per hectare would be 7ha (not 10.5ha). The Applicant is delivering a 10ha field, so the area is more than adequate to address the temporary and permanent loss. While increasing the number of skylark plots may not increase the number of territories the field supports, the Applicant considers it would be beneficial for farmland birds and wildlife generally</p>	Agreed

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			The Consultee has confirmed they are now agreed with the Applicant's position.	to have more fallow areas within a winter wheat field, rather than fewer. It should also be remembered that skylark plots are only required at all when the crop in a given year is otherwise unsuitable.	
3.5.12	<b>Application Document 6.2.3.2 (F) Part 3 Kent Chapter 2 Ecology and Biodiversity</b> submitted at Deadline 5.	Ecology – breeding birds	The Consultee has confirmed they are now agreed with the Applicant's position.	The measures proposed for the mitigation land will fundamentally change how that land functions for birds. Therefore, a breeding bird survey now would give limited information regarding the extent to which the area can support breeding birds following the changes to farming practices. The Proposed Project is resulting in the loss of a 12 ha arable field that happens to be suitable for farmland birds but has no restriction on management such that it can be rendered unsuitable at any time. In contrast, the mitigation delivers a 10 ha field that is being managed specifically for farmland birds and being secured in favourable management for the lifetime of the converter station (40-80 years) which is not the case for the mitigation land at present.	Agreed
3.5.13	<b>Application Document 6.2.3.2 (F) Part 3 Kent Chapter 2 Ecology and Biodiversity</b> submitted at Deadline 5.	Ecology – breeding birds	The Consultee has confirmed they are now agreed with the Applicant's position.	Gulls have large foraging ranges and are very adaptable to a wide range of habitats; there is no shortage of suitable habitat around Minster Marshes, Ash Level and beyond. The loss of a single arable field will not have a significant impact. Moreover, there are no gull colonies identified near to the converter station field. The Applicant does not consider specific mitigation for loss of gull foraging habitat is required.	Agreed
3.5.14	<b>Application Document 6.2.3.2 (F) Part 3 Kent Chapter 2 Ecology and Biodiversity</b> , submitted at Deadline 5.	Ecology – breeding birds	The Consultee has confirmed they are now agreed with the Applicant's position.	Regarding operational disturbance of ornithology, paragraph 3.9.220 of the <b>Application Document 6.2.3.2 (D) Part 3 Kent Chapter 2 Ecology and Biodiversity [REP1-049]</b> states that ' <i>Operational noise levels have been modelled to inform this Environmental Statement and are mapped in Figure 5 Map of 60dB average LAmax contour at Kent within <b>Application Document 6.6 (E) Habitats Regulations Assessment Report</b> submitted at Deadline 3]. These have identified that the 60 dB LAmax contour already introduced in the assessment of construction effects [which has been agreed with Natural England and Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) as the threshold below which no disturbance will arise] would only extend approximately 10 m from the Minster Converter Station and Substation boundaries. There would also be little need for operational lighting at the proposed Minster Converter Station and Substation, with lighting limited to security lighting and task lighting as needed during any maintenance works. Lighting contour plans indicate that light levels at the Minster Converter Station and Substation would fall below 1 lux within approximately 13-15 m of the lighting fixtures. This is a sufficiently low light level that bird</i>	Agreed

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				<i>foraging and roosting around vegetation beyond the fenced areas will not be affected.'</i>	
3.5.15	<b>Application Document 6.2.3.2 (F) Part 3 Kent Chapter 2 Ecology and Biodiversity</b> , submitted at Deadline 5.	Ecology – breeding birds	It continues to be KCC EAS's view that breeding bird surveys are required on the proposed functionally linked land to fully understand the baseline and understand what mitigation can be implemented. KCC EAS are supportive that they have securable farmland sites is good but if the mitigation land cannot accommodate increased breeding populations then there is nowhere for the displaced/lost territories to disperse too.	It should be noted that the mitigation field for functionally-linked land is not currently farmed in a favourable way for golden plover or other farmland birds, including use of bird scarers.  Regarding breeding bird surveys, the Applicant remains of the view that a breeding bird survey would not provide useful baseline data for impact assessment (e.g. on carrying capacity) given the management of the land is being fundamentally changed as part of the Applicant's proposals. However, the Applicant will undertake such a survey to inform subsequent monitoring of the enhanced area as part of the suite of pre-construction surveys.	Under discussion
3.5.16	<b>Application Document 6.2.3.2 (F) Part 3 Kent Chapter 2 Ecology and Biodiversity</b> , submitted at Deadline 5.	Ecology – wintering birds	(N.b. "SPA/Ramsar" refers to "Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA and Ramsar" and "SSSI" refers to "Sandwich Bay to Hacklinge Marshes SSSI".) KCC had previously commented that the survey effort for wintering birds is overall adequate. There are two seasons' worth of data (2022/23 and 2023/24) with visits spaced out by one month (Oct-Mar) which consider high and low tide wintering bird assemblages, as well as nocturnal surveys which are spatially comprehensive with one exception (the proposed mitigation site). An area of the site west of the golf course ('Parcel 244') was found to support >1% of the SPA golden plover population (with a max count of 370) and therefore constitutes Functionally Linked Land (FLL). Further flocks of golden plover were observed in the fields north of the proposed Minster Converter Station. The intertidal zone of the SPA/Ramsar was also found (unsurprisingly) to be of national importance to wintering bird assemblages with 101 non-breeding species recorded across the site in total (63 intertidal, 83 inland).  The Consultee highlighted that Functionally Linked land must be "scrutinised in the same legal framework just as are the direct effects of acts carried out on the protected site itself" (paragraph 27 of the High Court judgement in RSPB and others v Secretary of State and London Ashford Airport Ltd [2014 EWHC 1523 Admin]).  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Insufficient information had been provided to demonstrate if the Mitigation for Functional Linked Land is appropriate. No surveys have been carried out on the</li> </ul>	The Applicant can confirm wintering bird surveys of the fields have identified presence of wintering waders in the area (including golden plover) but no significant use of the fields for roosting or foraging as they are currently farmed. It should be noted that functional linkage of the field to the Special Protection Area (SPA) would in any event not necessarily be negative since the proposals for the site involve entirely changing the way the land is farmed specifically geared to maximise suitability for golden plover.  As noted in the comments, the area measures 10 ha whereas the area strictly calculated to be needed for golden plover mitigation is approximately 3.8 ha. The field is therefore much larger than is required purely to address the impact on golden plovers. The Proposed Project is resulting in the loss of a 12 ha arable field that happens to be suitable for farmland birds but has no restriction on management such that it can be rendered unsuitable at any time. In contrast, the mitigation delivers a 10 ha field that will be managed specifically for farmland birds for decades. Moreover, the reference to excess carrying capacity does not take account of two things: firstly, the Applicant is proposing to fundamentally change how the land is farmed and managed (since it is not farmed particularly to benefit farmland birds at the moment) so baseline surveys are of limited use in defining 'carrying capacity', and secondly, the Applicant is guaranteeing favourable management for the lifetime of the converter station (40-80 years).  Prescriptions for how this land will be managed for golden plover and skylark are provided in Section 6.10 of the <b>Application Document 7.5.7.2 (C) Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan – Kent [REP4-067]</b> . These prescriptions have been discussed with Natural England and updated following their feedback. They have	Agreed

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			<p>mitigation land to understand current bird use and assess if it currently provides functionally linked land. These are required.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Insufficient information has been submitted to demonstrate if the mitigation site has sufficient carrying capacity for all the displaced breeding/non breeding sites and if it can provide all the functions required – we highlight that breeding Skylark and wintering golden plover have different habitat requirements.</li> <li>There is no certainty of what the impacts will be as it has not been demonstrated that tunnelling rather than open trenches will definitely be used. This must be demonstrated.</li> </ul> <p>The Consultee had previously commented that the Applicant advise that wintering bird surveys of "the fields" (presumably the compensation site) have identified "no significant use of the fields for roosting or foraging as they are currently farmed". KCC EAS take this to indicate the site is not Functionally Linked Land (FLL) but would appreciate concrete confirmation. This affects the framework through which the site is viewed.</p> <p>The argument is made that the 12ha of arable land to be lost to facilitate the development is of inherently low value and a 10ha compensation site "managed specifically for farmland birds" over 40-80 years is a net gain for these species. This sounds like a yes, but some doubt is cast by the response to the second point. Confirmation that the proposed compensation will effectively mitigate impacts to skylark and golden plover.</p> <p>KCC EAS also raised a concern that open trenching may occur and note the response "it would not be legally possible for open trenching to be used in this location without a material amendment to the DCO being obtained". This is noted and it is their view that it should not be an option for the amendment to be obtained.</p> <p>The Consultee has confirmed they are now agreed with the Applicant's position.</p>	<p>not raised any concerns over this in their Relevant Representation</p> <p>Key measures include retaining bare cultivated ground for as long as possible between October and December in the majority of years of a crop rotation, sowing spring crops by preference (particularly spring cereals) as these lead to suitably bare soils in the winter, which are favoured by golden plover and other wintering birds and will also result in habitat of suitable structure for farmland birds (particularly skylark) during the nesting season, retaining stubble until the end of November when spring cereals are sown to render it favourable for grain-eating birds and small mammals, controls on pesticide and fertiliser use, and periodically re-cultivating the soil during winter. These are considered to benefit both farmland breeding birds (including but not limited to skylark) and wintering farmland birds particularly golden plover.</p> <p>It should be noted that the mitigation fields are not currently farmed in a way that is favourable for farmland birds including skylark or golden plover, including due to the use of bird scarers.</p> <p>The Applicant can confirm that the farmland mitigation area is sufficiently large to support both wintering golden plover and a range of other farmland birds, including skylark. As KCC themselves acknowledge, we only require 3.8 ha for golden plover mitigation but are providing 10 ha of land. Permanent loss of skylark territories equals one territory and the mitigation land is more than large enough to accommodate a minimum of 1 skylark territory and the 3.8 ha required for golden plovers (since the golden plovers will only be present in winter and the skylark mainly in summer) and provide benefits for a wide range of farmland birds.</p> <p>The DCO only seeks consent for HDD (tunnelling) as a method for crossing the saltmarsh. Therefore, it would not be legally possible for open trenching to be used in this location without a material amendment to the DCO being obtained.</p>	
3.5.17	<b>Application Document 9.34.1 (B) Applicant's Detailed</b>	Compensation Site	KCC EAS previously stated: "Other consultees have queried whether [the compensation site's] location next to a business park and railway (as well as a	See Line 2.8.13 of the Applicant's Response to Kent Wildlife Trust in <b>Application Document 9.34.1 (B) Applicant's Detailed Responses to the Relevant Representations identified by the ExA [REP2-014]</b>	Agreed

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	Responses to the Relevant Representations identified by the ExA [REP2-014]		<p><i>potential solar farm to the south-west, see DDC 23/01363) is appropriate as this may indicate elevated levels of light/noise pollution"</i></p> <p>The Consultee has confirmed they are now agreed with the Applicant's position.</p>	regarding the suitability of the identified mitigation land for golden plover, including noise and lighting disturbance and proximity to Discovery Park and a proposed solar farm.	
3.5.18	Application Document 6.2.3.2 (F) Part 3 Kent Chapter 2 Ecology and Biodiversity, submitted at Deadline 5.	Ecology – riparian mammals	<p>The Consultee had previously commented that surveys have confirmed the presence of water voles, beavers and American mink with the site and detailed that it is possible that otter are present.</p> <p>They also commented that insufficient information had been provided demonstrating if all watercourses/waterbodies/habitat, including those within the proposed habitat enhancement areas for golden plover and skylark/along the River Stour have been surveyed for riparian mammals. If certain watercourses/waterbodies have not been surveyed no justification for the omission has been provided the reasoning for his omission and demonstrate that no adverse effects are anticipated. They noted that more information was required to demonstrate that these bodies/habitats have been surveyed, with justification for omission of certain waterbodies/watercourses.</p> <p>When KCC EAS commented previously and advised, it was unclear whether the watercourses were surveyed for riparian mammal presence. Information provided by the Applicant has confirmed that only ditches to be impacted by the works were surveyed. KCC EAS highlighted that it may have been useful to have an increased understanding of how water vole were using the whole site rather than just the ditches to be directly impacted however we accept that no further surveys are needed.</p> <p>The Consultee has confirmed they are now agreed with the Applicant's position.</p>	The Applicant can confirm that all watercourses where work is proposed within the Order Limits have been subject to riparian mammal survey. The ditches within the golden plover mitigation land have not been subject to riparian mammal survey as there are no proposals to undertake any works to these watercourses, or to bring the footprint of the farmed area closer to these watercourses than is currently the case. The proposals for the golden plover/skylark mitigation land are restricted to farming the land in a particular way (e.g. including skylark plots, reducing use of pesticides, omitting use of fertiliser).	Agreed
3.5.19	N/A	Ecology – riparian mammals	<p>KCC EAS had previously commented that they were reasonably content with the information put forward with regards to beavers. However, it was currently unclear whether habitat within the golden plover and skylark habitat enhancement area/River Stour improvement areas have been surveyed, or whether habitat changes proposed in these areas could have any adverse effects on beaver. Adverse impacts may be unlikely, but need to be clarified.</p> <p>The Consultee has confirmed they are now agreed with the Applicant's position.</p>	<p>The Applicant notes that KCC EAS is reasonably content with the information regarding beavers.</p> <p>The habitat in the River Stour Enhancement Areas was included in the beaver surveys and no evidence was found in those locations. The ditches within the golden plover mitigation land have not been subject to riparian mammal survey as there are no proposals to undertake any works to these watercourses, or to bring the footprint of the farmed area closer to these watercourses than is currently the case. The proposals for the golden plover/skylark mitigation land are restricted to farming the land in a particular way</p>	Agreed

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				(e.g. including skylark plots, reducing use of pesticides, omitting use of fertiliser).	
3.5.20	<b>Application Document 6.2.3.2 (F) Part 3 Kent Chapter 2 Ecology and Biodiversity</b> , submitted at Deadline 5.	Ecology – riparian mammals	<p>The Consultee had previously commented that there was no information provided on the relative population size of water voles across the survey area in line with the latest guidelines or why this was not carried out.</p> <p>The Consultee has confirmed they are now agreed with the Applicant’s position.</p>	<p>Water vole population assessment is not something included in presence/absence reports as standard, although it would be necessary for a mitigation licence application if such a licence were sought. Since the impact assessment and mitigation proposals are based on the lengths of ditch affected rather than water vole population estimates and are precautionary (assuming water voles could be present on the network in other locations – and thus greater numbers - than recorded), a population estimate would not affect the impact assessment in the ES. However, using guidance on water vole population assessment, the populations resolve as Low where there are records.</p> <p>The mink record was at reference grid reference 632967, 163235, and was a visual sighting of 5 black mustelids (concluded most likely to be American mink) seen on the field margin, which quickly disappeared into marginal vegetation. No other evidence or sightings were recorded during surveys.</p>	Agreed
3.5.21	<b>Application Document 6.2.3.2 (F) Part 3 Kent Chapter 2 Ecology and Biodiversity</b> , submitted at Deadline 5.	Ecology – riparian mammals	<p>The Consultee had previously commented there was insufficient information provided assessing the impact the American mink population will have on the proposed water vole mitigation and if the proposed compensation habitat will be suitable for colonisation by the local water vole population. Evidence indicates that: “In the vast majority of cases, populations [of water vole] can only exist if the habitat is correct and mink are absent. In cases where some coexistence between mink and water vole has been observed, this has been because the habitat was extremely extensive and not optimal for mink” (Strachan et al., 2011).</p> <p>KCC EAS subsequently advised that if the DCO is granted there will be a requirement for ongoing monitoring to be carried out and measures to address any increase in American mink population if identified during surveys.</p> <p>KCC EAS also suggested that plans for new water vole habitat include habitat elements known to reduce the effects of American mink predation such as maintaining good connections between the surrounding habitat and as much dense vegetative cover (including reedbeds) for water voles as</p>	<p>Regarding whether it is appropriate to deliver water vole mitigation where there is mink, a quote from Strachan has been provided by KCC in their Principal Areas of Disagreement Summary Statements (PADSS): <i>‘in cases where some coexistence between mink and water vole has been observed, this has been because the habitat was extremely extensive and not optimal for mink’</i>. This would apply to Minster Marshes and Ash Levels where the habitat available for riparian mammals is very extensive consisting of many kilometres of ditch. Moreover, since the water voles and mink already co-exist, and only one record of mink was made during surveys, it is not considered inappropriate to deliver the mitigation habitat in this location, particularly since a considerable increase in the amount of habitat will result, compared to the amount to be lost.</p> <p>The Applicant agrees that the water depth in the ponds will be managed to a height that can support the water vole population. Paragraph 5.2.11 of <b>Application Document 7.5.7.2 (C) Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan – Kent [REP4-067]</b> states <i>‘the attenuation ponds will be connected to the existing ditch network in Minster Marshes by pipes such that the invert level of the pipe can be set so as to retain some water permanently, and this will also facilitate water vole colonisation from elsewhere on the ditch network.’</i> The Applicant can confirm that the attenuation ponds will be</p>	Agreed

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			<p>possible to reduce their exposure to predators. This point can be addressed within the LEMP and a monitoring plan.</p> <p>Further, whilst there are increased pressures from construction activities on the local water vole population, it may also be sensible to consider adding a mink control programme to the proposed mitigation measures for the project, or a financial contribution to an existing mink control programme (if possible). The Applicant has detailed that this can be addressed as part of a LEMP however we advise that if a financial contribution is required that will have to be agreed as part of any Legal Agreement.</p> <p>The Consultee has confirmed they are now agreed with the Applicant's position.</p>	<p>connected to the ditches to the west, east or north (depending on pond) and these ditches do contain suitable habitat for water voles. There is no reason to believe water voles will not find the attenuation ponds. The precise shape of the balancing ponds and precise distance of the balancing ponds from the ditches to which they are connected is not set by the DCO and is a matter of detail that can be resolved as part of detailed LEMP preparation and detailed design prior to construction.</p> <p>Mink was not recorded in the area proposed for the new balancing ponds around the Converter Station and Substation.</p>	
3.5.22	<b>Application Document 6.2.3.2 (D) Part 3 Kent Chapter 2 Ecology and Biodiversity</b> , submitted at Deadline 5.	Ecology – riparian mammals	<p>The Consultee has previously commented that there was insufficient information been provided on the proposal to used Class Licence (CL31) for the water vole mitigation rather than an A11 licence.</p> <p>They previously requested confirmation that this licence is going to be suitable as an A11 licence may be more appropriate given the assumption that water voles are likely to make use of all suitable habitat to be affected by works, and/or if in the future, water voles are found across greater parts of the site. The applicant has detailed that which licence to apply for will be reviewed following updated surveys if the DCO is granted – the Consultee accepts this approach.</p>	<p>A water vole specialist with Class Licence 31 has been involved in the Proposed Project and it is considered that the works can be undertaken under a class licence based on the amount of vegetation removal on each watercourse where water vole burrows have been recorded within the works footprint. However, given the ability of water voles to redistribute annually, pre-construction update surveys for riparian mammals will be undertaken in line with paragraph 7.1.1 of the <b>Application Document 7.5.7.2 (C) Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan – Kent [REP4-067]</b>, and a watching brief applied for vegetation clearance on ditches as per measure B46 of <b>Application Document 9.83 (B) Code of Construction Practice [REP4-232]</b>. The appropriate licensing route will be kept under review based on those results and is not a fundamental matter for the DCO.</p>	Agreed
3.5.23	<b>Application Document 6.2.3.2 (F) Part 3 Kent Chapter 2 Ecology and Biodiversity</b> , submitted at Deadline 5.	Ecology – riparian mammals	<p>The Consultee had previously commented there was insufficient information provided on why further otter surveys were not carried out to confirm use of the site by otters.</p> <p>KCC EAS acknowledges this point and accept that no updated surveys on the development footprint are required at this stage.</p> <p>The Consultee has confirmed they are now agreed with the Applicant's position.</p>	<p>The field signs referenced were mammal runs in tall grass. As discussed in <b>Application Document 6.3.3.2.H ES Appendix 3.2.H Riparian Mammal Survey Report [APP-154]</b>, these signs could have been caused by otter, or by other mammals or by a large wading bird. Since they were not clear otter signs they were not mapped but were mentioned in the report for completeness. A complete otter survey was undertaken in line with guidance as acknowledged in KCC's review, and given the nature and ambiguity of the mammal runs, further survey would have no certainty of resolving the matter to species. Pre-construction update surveys will be undertaken in line with paragraph 7.1.1 of the <b>Application Document 7.5.7.2 (C) Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan – Kent [REP4-067]</b>.</p>	Agreed

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	KCC Current Position	The Applicant Current Position	Status
3.5.24	Application Document 6.3.2.2.D ES Appendix 2.2.D Riparian Mammals Survey Report [APP-102]	Ecology – riparian mammals	<p>KCC EAS previously stated that it is also unclear whether habitat within the golden plover and skylark habitat enhancement area/River Stour improvement areas have been surveyed, or whether habitat changes proposed in these areas could have any adverse effects on otter. Adverse impacts may be unlikely, but need to be clarified. KCC EAS advised that this point was not addressed.</p> <p>The Consultee has confirmed they are now agreed with the Applicant's position.</p>	<p>The habitat in the River Stour Enhancement Areas was included in <b>Application Document 6.3.2.2.D ES Appendix 2.2.D Riparian Mammals Survey Report [APP-102]</b> and no evidence was found in those locations. The ditches within the golden plover mitigation land have not been subject to riparian mammal survey as there are no proposals to undertake any works to these watercourses, or to bring the footprint of the farmed area closer to these watercourses than is currently the case. The proposals for the golden plover/skylark mitigation land are restricted to farming the land in a particular way (e.g. including skylark plots, reducing use of pesticides, omitting use of fertiliser).</p>	Agreed
3.5.25		Ecology – riparian mammals	<p>KCC EAS understand that the balancing ponds will be designed to be of value to riparian mammals by retaining an earth ledge and sloping bank above a shallow, permanent water level. The ledge is to be planted with emergent riparian vegetation. KCC EAS previously noted that the suitability of banks for burrowing has not been stated. The banks will need to have suitable substrate for water voles to burrow into. The updated information has confirmed that this was not specifically stated but confirmed that the ledge and bank of the water bodies would be earth to be suitable for water voles. KCC EAS are further concerned that the water depth may be suboptimal. It is generally recognised that optimal water depth would be over 1m deep (Strachan et al., 2011). KCC EAS are therefore concerned that some of the proposed habitat for water vole could be suboptimal. It continues to be the view that the created habitat be made optimal for water vole colonisation, especially given the known presence of American mink in the landscape (exact known locations not provided). KCC EAS accept that the water depth is a matter which can be managed within the detailed design and implementation of a suitable management plan if the DCO is granted. However there has to be an agreement at this stage that the water will always be managed to a height that can support the water vole population.</p> <p>The Consultee has confirmed they are now agreed with the Applicant's position.</p>	<p>The Applicant agrees that the water depth in the ponds will be managed to a height that can support the water vole population.</p>	Agreed
3.5.26	Application Document 7.5.7.2 (C) Outline Landscape and Ecological	Ecology – riparian mammals	<p>KCC EAS previously advised that the new ponds should also ensure that they are within sufficient proximity to nearby ditches to allow their natural colonisation. It is not exactly clear how close the ponds are proposed to be from nearby ditches (or the habitat suitability of those ditches), although</p>	<p>Paragraph 5.2.11 of <b>Application Document 7.5.7.2 (C) Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan – Kent [REP4-067]</b> states <i>'the attenuation ponds will be connected to the existing ditch network in Minster Marshes by pipes such that the invert level of the pipe can be set so as to retain some water permanently, and this will also</i></p>	Agreed

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	Management Plan – Kent [REP4-067]		plans do suggest a relative proximity. Water voles tend to prefer to stay within 5m of a watercourse or other waterbody (Strachan et al., 2011). In the absence of suitable habitat and sufficient cover between the adjacent ditches and the newly created habitat, water voles may struggle to naturally colonise the new habitat. This point has been confirmed. The Consultee has confirmed they are now agreed with the Applicant's position.	<i>facilitate water vole colonisation from elsewhere on the ditch network.</i> The Applicant can confirm that the attenuation ponds will be connected to the ditches to the west, east or north (depending on pond) and these ditches do contain suitable habitat for water voles. There is no reason to believe water voles will not find the attenuation ponds. The precise shape of the balancing ponds and precise distance of the balancing ponds from the ditches to which they are connected is not set by the DCO and is a matter of detail that can be resolved as part of detailed LEMP preparation and detailed design prior to construction.	
3.5.27	Application Document 6.2.3.2 (F) Part 3 Kent Chapter 2 Ecology and Biodiversity, submitted at Deadline 5.	Ecology - Bats	Bat assessment has been limited to roost assessment and assessment of habitats. The Consultee had previously commented that more information was required to justify the survey area as not all areas impacted by the proposal have been assessed.  KCC WAS now accept this point and no further information on bats are required at this point.	This is incorrect. Extensive bat activity surveys were also undertaken as documented in <b>Application Document 6.3.3.2.L ES Appendix 3.2.L Nighttime Bat Walkover and Static Detector Report [APP-158]</b> .  The Applicant can confirm that all trees proposed for removal have been surveyed and the bat activity survey also adequately covered the areas where works could affect features used for bat commuting and foraging. This was sufficient to judge the value of the Order Limits for bats. Areas within the Order Limits that were not subject to bat activity survey were locations that did not present suitable habitat, where there are existing tracks that will be used for access but not be subject to any development work, or in the golden plover/skylark mitigation area where no works are proposed to features that would be used by foraging or roosting bats.	Agreed
3.5.28	Application Document 6.12 (C) Biodiversity Net Gain Feasibility Report [REP1A-025]	Ecology - BNG	A BNG assessment has been submitted and detailed that the proposal will result in a loss of BNG for habitats, linear features and water course units.  The Consultee had previously commented that insufficient information had been provided detailing how the Applicant had reached these conclusions. The submitted information had not provided details of the condition assessments or how additionality has been taken into account. Habitat creation or enhancement cannot fully count towards a BNG if it is also required for protected species mitigation or mitigation for a designated site. What you can count towards a development's biodiversity net gain - GOV.UK. A metric had not been submitted to review as part of the BNG assessment therefore it is not understood what the trading rule impacts are. The submitted information had not confirmed that the habitat	<b>Application Document 6.12 Biodiversity Net Gain Feasibility Report [APP-297]</b> was updated in response to the Section 89(3) letter from PINS. The updated version which includes all the appendices is <b>Application Document 6.12 (C) Biodiversity Net Gain Feasibility Report [REP1A-025]</b> .  Condition assessment data for baseline habitats will be issued in due course.  Species specific mitigation and/or mitigation for designated sites has not been incorporated into the BNG Parameters Line and is therefore not included in the BNG Assessment.  As detailed within the <b>Application Document 6.12 Biodiversity Net Gain Feasibility [REP1A-025] (Section 2.1 and paragraph 2.3.3)</b> <i>"There is currently no guidance for BNG and NSIP's. As such this BNG assessment follows the BNG guidance created for TCPA where suitable. The</i>	Agreed

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			<p>creation required as part of the proposal will be implemented in Kent.</p> <p>The Consultee has confirmed they are now agreed with the Applicant's position.</p>	<p>following deviations from the SBM guidance have been made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trading rules have not been accounted for when undertaking this assessment. It is considered that this would result in an unwieldy BNG requirement and may result in the Proposed Project being constrained in delivering its BNG requirement. This is not to say that trading summaries are to be ignored when exploring options for BNG delivery, the trading rules summaries are to be used as a guide for habitats and/or distinctiveness levels that the Proposed Project aspires to deliver.”</li> </ul>	

### 3.6 Marine Ecology

Table 3.6 Marine Ecology

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	KCC Current Position	Applicant's Current Position	Status
3.6.1	<p><b>Application Document 6.2.4.2 (C) Part 4 Marine Chapter 2 Benthic Ecology [REP4-029]</b></p> <p><b>Application Document 9.13 (C) Pegwell Bay Construction Method Technical Note [REP4-229]</b></p>	Marine Ecology – benthic ecology	<p>The Consultee has previously commented they are not experts in Marine Ecology and they defer to the expertise of Natural England. However, they had reviewed the information and had the following matters to raise.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Insufficient information had been provided assessing the construction impacts on the intertidal and subtidal benthic habits and communities and therefore it is unclear if the proposal will result in an impact on those priority habitats.</li> </ul> <p>The Consultee has confirmed they are now agreed with the Applicant's position.</p>	<p>The Applicant has prepared <b>Application Document 9.13 (C) Pegwell Bay Construction Method Technical Note [REP4-229]</b> to provide a detailed description of construction activities at Pegwell Bay.</p> <p>In addition, the Applicant is consulting with Natural England, and responding to their relevant representations regarding the assessment of benthic features and updates have been made where required in <b>Application Document 6.2.4.2 (D) Part 4 Marine Chapter 2 Benthic Ecology [REP4-029]</b> as a result.</p>	Agreed
3.6.2	<b>Application Document 6.2.4.2 (D) Part 4 Marine Chapter 2 Benthic Ecology [REP4-029]</b>	Marine Ecology – benthic ecology	<p>The Consultee has previously commented there has been an underestimation of sensitivity and potential colony abundance of the blue mussel <i>Mytilus edulis</i> and ross worm <i>Sabellaria spinulosa</i>. Therefore, underestimating the impacts and mitigation requirements.</p> <p>The Consultee has confirmed they are now agreed with the Applicant's position.</p>	<p>Evidence from MarESA Tillin, Mainwaring, Tyler-Walters, Williams, &amp; Watson, 2024) has been reviewed and the sensitivity of mussel beds has been changed from low to medium sensitivity. This has been updated in Paragraph 2.9.10 of the updated <b>Application Document 6.2.4.2 (D) Part 4 Marine Chapter 2 Benthic Ecology [REP4-029]</b>.</p> <p>However, the assessment of effects on the mussel beds remains the same, i.e. minor and not significant. Despite the increase in the sensitivity rating, the effect is still assessed as minor due to the absence of <i>Mytilus</i> beds except at one location, and because the Offshore Scheme boundary does not go through any Annex 1 mussel bed that is a protected</p>	Agreed

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				<p>feature of a designated site. Routing and siting amendments to the Offshore Scheme were specifically made in order to avoid passing through Goodwin Sands Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ), a site which is designated for a range of habitats including mussel beds.</p> <p>The sensitivity rating for <i>Sabellaria spinulosa</i> has been similarly updated to medium. Some <i>Sabellaria</i> was found in the northern region of the Offshore Scheme. However, due to the absence of any <i>Sabellaria spinulosa</i> Annex 1 reef in the Offshore Scheme, including anywhere near the Goodwin Sands MCZ, the magnitude of impact and the resulting classification and significance of effects on this habitat, remain unchanged and not significant.</p>	
3.6.3	<p><b>Application Document 6.2.4.2 (C) Part 4 Marine Chapter 2 Benthic Ecology [REP1-053]</b></p> <p><b>Application Document 6.11 (D) Marine Conservation Zone Assessment,</b> submitted at Deadline 5.</p>	Marine Ecology – benthic ecology	<p>The Consultee had previously commented that the offshore section in Kent needs consideration for marine ecology for Thanet Coast MCZ, 1.2km north from the landfall site.</p> <p>The Consultee has confirmed they are now agreed with the Applicant's position.</p>	<p>The Thanet Coast MCZ and its protected features have been considered in detail in both <b>Application Document 6.2.4.2 (D) Part 4 Marine Chapter 2 Benthic Ecology [REP4-029]</b> and <b>Application Document 6.11 (D) Marine Conservation Zone Assessment</b>, submitted at Deadline 5. Due to the distance of the Thanet Coast MCZ from the Offshore Scheme Boundary, no direct temporary or long term habitat loss will occur. The potential for effects from increased suspended sediment concentration (SSC) and associated deposition has been considered in detail and due to the minimal depth of sediment deposition (0.5mm) is unlikely to affect the conservation objectives of the site.</p>	Agreed
3.6.4	<p><b>Application Document 6.2.4.2 (D) Part 4 Marine Chapter 2 Benthic Ecology [REP4-029]</b></p>	Marine Ecology – benthic ecology	<p>The Consultee had previously commented that the Kent benthic ecology for the application site has predominately sublittoral mixed and coarse sediments, infralittoral fine or muddy sand and mediterranean moderate energy circalittoral rock. As there is presence of dynamic mobile sediments, consideration is needed for any impacts of cable trenching/laying, protective measures such as rock armour, marine protection structures, temporary anchor moorings, scouring and accretion of sediments, smothering of habitats/species, or other changes, including to the hydrodynamics, that may affect the designated features of the protected areas noted above.</p> <p>The Consultee has confirmed they are now agreed with the Applicant's position.</p>	<p>The benthic environment at the Kent landfall has been considered in detail in both <b>Application Document 6.2.4.1 (F) Marine Chapter 1 Physical Environment</b>, submitted at Deadline 5 and <b>Application Document 6.2.4.2 (D) Part 4 Marine Chapter 2 Benthic Ecology [REP4-029]</b>.</p> <p>Cable laying, placement of protective measures, temporary anchoring, scouring and changes in hydrodynamics result in highly localised impacts which are either temporary habitat disturbance or permanent habitat loss and limited to within the Offshore Scheme Boundary. The Offshore Scheme does not overlap with any MCZs and therefore there is no direct impact to the designated features of the MCZs in the Study Area resulting from these construction activities.</p> <p>Increased SSC and associated deposition and smothering could occur across the Study Area and therefore within the MCZs. However, deposition in the Study Area is expected to be less than 0.5 mm on the seabed and is not expected to result in detectable changes in sediment bound contaminants above background levels.</p>	Agreed

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3.6.5	<p><b>Application Document 6.2.4.2 (D) Part 4 Marine Chapter 2 Benthic Ecology [REP4-029].</b></p> <p><b>Application Document 6.11 (D) Marine Conservation Zone Assessment,</b> submitted at Deadline 5.</p>	Marine Ecology – benthic ecology	<p>The Consultee has previously commented that the key consideration for the benthic fauna, and considered within the reports, is for blue mussel <i>Mytilus edulis</i> and ross worm <i>Sabellaria spinulosa</i>, which are part of the designated features for Goodwin sands and Thanet Coast MCZ and the current management approach for both species is 'recover to a favourable condition' for Goodwin Sands MCZ. Thanet Coast MCZ is 'maintain in a favourable condition' for blue mussels and to 'recover to a favourable condition' for ross worms.</p> <p>Reef worm and mussel bed formations (both UK Priority Habitats) were considered and grab sampling and video evidence was carried out, but it was difficult to find the locations of this sampling within the documentation. Both species were identified, with reef formations identified for Blue Mussel beds, Annex I habitat, reported as not overlapping with the Offshore scheme. Reef formations were not reported for the ross worm, with smaller populations noted. We highlight that in <b>Natural England's (NE) response Benthic Ecology, NE, 23/6/25</b> they have raised concerns regarding the MCZ assessment and the construction impacts on the intertidal and subtidal benthic habits and communities and there is a risk that priority habitats will be impacted. They have requested updated documents to consider all the potential pathways of effect.</p> <p>KCC EAS defer to the specialist knowledge and detailed advice provided by NE and agree with the recommendations provided. It is considered that the underestimation of sensitivity and potential colony abundance of the above species is a concern to fully understand and mitigate the impacts of the project, for the protected areas.</p> <p>The Consultee has confirmed they are now agreed with the Applicant's position.</p>	<p>In response to relevant representations from Natural England the baseline in <b>Application Document 6.2.4.2 (C) Part 4 Marine Chapter 2 Benthic Ecology [REP1-054]</b> was updated to provide greater clarity to the location of these sensitive habitats within the Offshore Scheme.</p> <p>Habitats within Goodwin Sands MCZ will be avoided by any cable installation and as such potential impacts are limited to the deposition of sediments disturbed during cable installation. This impact pathway has been considered in full in both <b>Application Document 6.2.4.2 (D) Part 4 Marine Chapter 2 Benthic Ecology [REP4-029]</b> and <b>Application Document 6.11 (D) Marine Conservation Zone Assessment</b>, submitted at Deadline 5. As the sandy sediments settle rapidly any deposition within the MCZ were predicted to be minor, at 0.5 mm depth, significantly lower than the thresholds for mussels and <i>Sabellaria</i> and thus impacts found to be minor, including after amending the sensitivity rating for both habitat types. In addition no <i>Sabellaria</i> reef or Annex 1 mussel beds were present in the Offshore Scheme.</p>	Agreed
3.6.6	<p><b>Application Document 6.2.4.2 (D) Part 4 Marine Chapter 2 Benthic Ecology [REP4-029]</b></p>	Marine Ecology – benthic ecology	<p>The Consultee has previously commented that this is not our area of expertise but KCC EAS highlight information has been provided regarding the impacts of the offshore cabling on sediments and changes to the seafloor. This has been assessed as a minor impact, but we consider that a regular monitoring programme for the seafloor along and adjacent to the cabling route should be in place, especially on the section adjacent to Goodwins Sands MCZ, to ensure there are no negative impacts to the condition status for blue mussel and ross worm communities and the MCZ overall. Measures are in place for depth of burial surveys (MPE05) and this could be an</p>	<p>Natural England have also requested that an In Principal Monitoring Plan is developed to monitor the impacts (temporal and spatial changes) on residual concerns in relation to protected habitats and those of conservation importance. A response to this Written Question was provided at Deadline 1 in <b>Application Document 9.73 Applicant's Responses to First Written Questions [REP3-069]</b>. A copy of that response is provided below.</p> <p>The Applicant understands the importance of an In-Principle Monitoring Plan (IPMP) for projects, such as Offshore Windfarms where significant evidence gaps or uncertainties</p>	Agreed

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	KCC Current Position	Applicant's Current Position	Status
			<p>additional action within the Offshore CEMP (Doc 7.5.2), carried out for the lifetime of operation and decommissioning.</p> <p>The Consultee has confirmed they are now agreed with the Applicant's position.</p>	<p>are present alongside features which are particularly sensitive to impacts of the development.</p> <p>As set out in Table 2.19 of <b>Application Document 6.2.4.2 (D) Part 4 Marine Chapter 2 Benthic Ecology [REP4-029]</b>, all impacts on benthic ecology were assessed as minor and not significant without the need for additional mitigation. Also, no significant data gaps or areas of uncertainty were identified. As such, given that no likely significant effects have been identified and there are no requirements for additional mitigation or any areas of uncertainty / data gaps, no specific offshore receptors have been identified that would require further monitoring. The Applicant therefore understands that an outline IPMP is not required for the Proposed Project at this stage. The Applicant is therefore not intending to prepare an outline IPMP as there are no defined requirements for monitoring upon which an outline IPMP would be based.</p> <p>The Applicant can confirm that pre-commencement surveys will be undertaken to inform routing for the marine cable burial, as included within the DML, and sensitive routeing and siting of infrastructure and temporary works is also a commitment (GM04) within <b>Application Document 9.84 (B) Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments (REAC) [REP4-235]</b>. The Applicant will engage further with Natural England to consider further the requirements for monitoring and an IPMP following the pre-commencement surveys if any habitats of principal importance are identified and there is potential for adverse effects on these habitats</p>	
3.6.7	<p><b>Application Document 6.2.4.4 (H) Part 4 Marine Chapter 4 Marine Mammals</b>, submitted at Deadline 5.</p>	<p>Marine Ecology – marine mammals</p>	<p>The Consultee has previously commented that marine mammals have been considered for the application. The key species that were considered for the offshore scheme are harbour and grey seal and harbour porpoise. The Kent Seal survey was conducted primarily within River Stour, with riverbank haul out areas with a predominance of harbour seals. A small number of grey seals are considered present outside the Stour and within the bay. The Southern North Sea SAC (SNS SAC) is designated for Harbour porpoise, it was noted greatest densities are likely to occur in Suffolk waters (Marine mammals Doc 6.2.4.4 ref 4.7.5). We recognise there may be a lower presence within the Kent scheme area but we consider the harbour porpoise should still be fully considered in the mitigation for the Kent scheme. NE have highlighted the survey timings were not optimum as the SAC is designated for winter, Oct – Mar presence.</p>	<p>Detailed responses to these comments, which were raised by Natural England in their Relevant Representations can be found in <b>Application Document 9.34.1 (B) Applicant's Comments on Relevant Representations [REP2-014]</b>.</p> <p>Application Document <b>6.2.4.4 (H) Part 4 Marine Chapter 4 Marine Mammals</b>, submitted at Deadline 5 was updated at Deadline 1 to include Winter SCANS density data for harbour porpoise, following a request by Natural England in Relevant Representation Ref-F2 to provide a worst-case assessment for harbour porpoise in the Southern North Sea SAC. Updated density estimates for harbour porpoise were carried through to the impact assessment and it did not change the overall outcomes of the assessment. Winter SCANS data were used to calculate the total number of harbour porpoise which may be present in the Effective Deterrent Range (EDR; disturbance zone) for the Sea Link route (1,146 individuals, which is less than 1% of the total number of harbour porpoise in the UK portion of North Sea Management Unit) and the total number which may be</p>	Agreed

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	KCC Current Position	Applicant's Current Position	Status
			The Consultee has confirmed they are now agreed with the Applicant's position.	<p>disturbed within the Southern North Sea SAC (581 individuals in an area less than 2% of the entire SAC).</p> <p>We are awaiting further comment from Natural England and JNCC on this point as the ExA have asked them to confirm if they agree with the conclusion.</p> <p>Harbour porpoise are included in mitigation commitments MM01 and MM02 in <b>Application Document 9.84 (B) Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments (REAC) [REP4-235]</b> which state adherence to JNCC (2025) guidelines regarding the minimisation of impacts from underwater sound generated from known project activities and JNCC (2020) guidance for assessing the significance of noise disturbance against conservation objectives of the Southern North Sea Special Area of Conservation (SAC). Adherence to these guidelines will be in place across the Offshore Scheme Boundary construction. However, most construction activities associated with the Kent portion of the Offshore Scheme will be occurring at low tide on intertidal habitat in Pegwell Bay when harbour porpoise will not be present.</p>	
3.6.8	<p><b>Application Document 6.2.4.4 (H) Part 4 Marine Chapter 4 Marine Mammals</b>, submitted at Deadline 5.</p> <p><b>Application Document 7.5.11 (C) Outline Marine Mammal Mitigation Plan [REP4-069]</b></p>	Marine Ecology – marine mammals	<p>The Consultee has previously commented that as noted above, NE queried some survey timings and JNCC has queried the narrow range of data sources, and therefore a presence for harbour porpoise and seasonal restrictions required for mitigation. In section 4.9.42 (Doc ref 6.2.4.4 Ver C) consideration has been given to the seasonal variation and works will avoid the winter period for the cable corridor SNS SAC. We note the Marine Mammal mitigation plan (Doc 7.5.11) has not yet been updated to reflect that timing requirement.</p> <p>The Consultee has confirmed they are now agreed with the Applicant's position.</p>	<p>As stated in <b>6.2.4.4 (H) Part 4 Marine Chapter 4 Marine Mammals</b>, submitted at Deadline 5, the construction works are anticipated to occur between April and October (inclusive) and therefore they are expected to avoid the winter period when harbour porpoise are present in higher numbers in the Southern North Sea SAC.</p> <p>However, a seasonal restriction is not required for mitigation due to the small number of harbour porpoise expected to be affected in the Southern North Sea and subsequent non-significant effects. In JNCC's most recent response to ExA Written Questions, received in January 2026, JNCC have stated that they do not require a seasonal restriction for the Southern North Sea SAC.</p> <p>As a result, this has not been included in <b>Application Document 7.5.11 (C) Outline Marine Mammal Mitigation Plan [REP4-069]</b> as it does not form part of the mitigation adopted for harbour porpoise.</p>	Agreed
3.6.9	<p><b>Application Document 6.2.4.4 (H) Part 4 Marine Chapter 4 Marine Mammals</b>, submitted at Deadline 5.</p> <p><b>Application Document 7.5.11</b></p>	Marine Ecology – marine mammals	The Consultee has previously commented that the offshore cabling trenching/levelling activities are noted (Table 1.2 Doc ref 7.5.11) as low intensity and no mitigation is stated as required. We disagree that no mitigation is required and would also expect this to state a competent marine mammal observer to be present on the cabling works vessels, or a nearby safety vessel, as a precautionary measure for harbour porpoise and any other	<p>The requirement for a Marine Mammal Observer (MMOb) to be onboard a vessel during geophysical activities is led by best practice measures outlined in the JNCC guidelines for minimising the risk of injury to marine mammals from geophysical surveys (JNCC, 2025) and JNCC guidelines for minimising the risk of injury to marine mammals from explosive use in the marine environment 2025.</p> <p>The primary role of MMOb's is to ensure that no marine mammals are observed within a specified area before a</p>	Agreed

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	KCC Current Position	Applicant's Current Position	Status
	(C) Outline Marine Mammal Mitigation Plan [REP4-069]		<p>marine mammals that may be in/passing through the works area.</p> <p>The Consultee has confirmed they are now agreed with the Applicant's position.</p>	<p>noisy activity begins, thus reducing the potential for injury to negligible levels from underwater sound. The JNCC guidance is provided for those activities and sound sources known to have the potential for injury such as geophysical and seismic sound sources, impact piling and UXO clearance, not cable installation activities like sandwave levelling, ploughing and jetting methods for cable burial.</p> <p>The Applicant is following the most up to date guidance in its proposed mitigation and use of MMObs. Of the Proposed Project activities which occur within the hearing range of marine mammals, the highest peak pressure is expected to come from any sub-bottom profiler works during pre-installation geophysical surveys. This sound source is impulsive in nature and is known to represent a higher risk of injury. For activities using sub-bottom profilers, the Applicant has committed to using the above best practice guidance in its control and management measures which includes an MMOB. Adherence to appropriate JNCC guidelines for geophysical sound sources (JNCC, 2017; JNCC, 2025) will minimise injurious impacts to marine mammals. Other activities, such as cable lay and associated tasks, have a much lower sound intensity and are non-impulsive in nature. Whilst these activities do occur for longer the sound source is not stationary and so the overall sound exposure duration for mobile species is expected to be very limited. Therefore, in adherence to the JNCC best practice guidance above, the use of a MMOB is not required for cable lay activities and associated tasks.</p>	

### 3.7 Cultural Heritage

Table 3.7 Cultural Heritage

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	KCC Current Position	The Applicant Current Position	Status
3.7.1	Application Document 6.3.3.3.D ES Appendix 3.3.D Geophysical Survey Report [APP-164]	Geophysical Survey scope	The Consultee approved the Geophysical Survey scope through Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI).	The Applicant has agreed this with the Consultee through discussions in early 2023, and via a WSI ( <b>Application Document 7.5.4.2 Outline Onshore Overarching Written Scheme of Investigation (OWSI) – Kent</b> , submitted at Deadline 5).	Agreed
3.7.2	Application Document 6.2.3.3 Part 3 Kent Chapter 3	Photomontage locations	The Consultee agrees to the photomontages and has not requested any beyond those that were requested by Historic England	The Applicant held discussions with the Consultee on site and via email in early 2023 where it was confirmed that the Consultee's Archaeologist (the County Archaeologist) did not	Agreed

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	KCC Current Position	The Applicant Current Position	Status
	Cultural Heritage [APP-063]			have any other requests for photomontages beyond those that were requested by Historic England.	
3.7.3	Application Document 6.2.3.3 Part 3 Kent Chapter 3 Cultural Heritage [APP-063]	Assessment of effects	The Consultee acknowledged and agreed the approach to the assessment of affects within their response to the PEIR.	The assessment of effects on Cultural Heritage were presented within the PEIR. The PEIR is a preliminary assessment, and effects have been further assessed with more detail presented within the ES chapter ( <b>Application Document 6.2.3.3 Part 3 Kent Chapter 3 Cultural Heritage [APP-063]</b> ) in line with the methodology and professional judgement.	Agreed
3.7.4	N/A	Location of Archaeological Evaluation Trenches	The Consultee agreed trench locations via email in March 2024.	The location of the first phase of archaeological evaluation trenches were discussed at the virtual thematic group meeting in February 2024 and agreed via email in early March 2024.	Agreed
3.7.5	Application Document 7.5.4.2 (D) Outline Onshore Overarching Written Scheme of Investigation (OWSI) – Kent, submitted at Deadline 5.	Archaeological Evaluation Trenching	The Consultee agreed/approved the WSI supplied by archaeological subcontractor in June 2024.	Works associated with undertaking the archaeological trenching was fully agreed by a WSI. This has been included in the DCO application as <b>Application Document 7.5.4.2 (C) Outline Onshore Overarching Written Scheme of Investigation (OWSI) – Kent</b> , submitted at Deadline 5.	Agreed
3.7.6	N/A	Geo-Archaeological Desk Based Assessment	The Consultee agreed scope of geo-archaeological desk-based assessment with archaeological subcontractor in September 2024.	The scope of a geo-archaeological assessment examining the Wantsum Channel was agreed with the Consultee and Historic England.	Agreed

### 3.8 Water Environment and Flood Risk

Table 3.8 Water Environment and Flood Risk

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	KCC Current Position	Applicant's Current Position	Status
3.8.1	N/A	Project responses to statutory consultation comments	The Consultee agreed that National Grid's responses to the statutory consultation comments were appropriate.	Comments from the statutory consultation relating to flood risk, land drainage and hydrology within the Kent scheme were presented with individual responses from the Applicant showing how these will be addressed going forward.	Agreed
3.8.2	Application Document 6.8 Flood Risk Assessment [APP-292]	Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) approach	The Consultee agreed that the proposed scope of the FRA is suitable.	The proposed scope of the FRA has been prepared to support the DCO application has been presented, covering the sources of flood risk that have been assessed, the policy and guidance that will be followed and the datasets that will be referenced to inform it and is found in <b>Application Document 6.8 Flood Risk Assessment [APP-292]</b> .	Agreed

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	KCC Current Position	Applicant's Current Position	Status
3.8.3	<b>Application Document 6.8 Flood Risk Assessment [APP-292]</b> and <b>Application Document 6.2.3.4 Part 3 Kent Chapter 4 Water Environment [APP-064]</b>	Groundwater flood risk at Kent converter station site	The Consultee agreed with the approach to groundwater monitoring and FRA for groundwater flood risk.	A project-specific groundwater monitoring at the converter site has been undertaken along with a FRA to gain a better understanding of groundwater flood risk on Site. This concluded that there was an overall low risk of groundwater emergence at the Site.	Agreed
3.8.4	<b>Application Document 6.8 Flood Risk Assessment [APP-292]</b>	Flood risk and surface water drainage	<p>The Consultee has previously commented that revised submissions on flood risk and surface water drainage were required. Submission of a revised Flood Risk Assessment that contains the following was required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A location plan</li> <li>• A site layout</li> <li>• A drainage proposal schematic or sketch</li> <li>• A clear description of key drainage features within the drainage scheme (e.g. attenuation volumes, flow control devices etc.)</li> <li>• Information to support any key assumptions (e.g. impermeable areas, infiltration rates etc.)</li> <li>• Supporting calculations to demonstrate the drainage system's operation and drainage model network schematic</li> <li>• Drainage strategy summary form (from our Drainage and Planning Policy Statement)</li> <li>• Consideration of key questions and / or local authority planning policy requirements.</li> </ul> <p>The Consultee has since commented that whilst 6.2.3.5 and 6.3.3.5.B go into detail with regards to the effects of the proposals on hydrogeological matters, the document 6.8 contains a specific section which considers groundwater flood risk which we have already considered as part of the Local Impact Report and so we are satisfied that it has been suitably considered and have no 'under discussion' requirements in relation to 6.2.3.5.</p> <p>The documents 6.2.3.5 and 6.3.3.5.B do include substantial comments with regards to contamination concerns and methodologies proposed to protect groundwater, etc but this would be outside our remit as LLFA and should be with the EA to comment on.</p>	<p>On the 1 September 2025, <b>Application Document 9.4 Supplementary Environmental Information – Flood Risk Assessment [AS-099]</b> was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate setting out a comparison and appraisal of the update to the Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning and setting out how the Proposed Project interacts with Flood Zone 3b.</p> <p>The requested location and site layout plans are provided as Appendix A of <b>Application Document 6.8 Flood Risk Assessment [APP-292]</b>.</p> <p>To address the further information requests, it is noted that the Applicant is aware that the National Standard for Sustainable Urban Drainage was published in June 2025. The Applicant has assessed the impacts of these recently updated standards and can confirm that the standards do not change any of the drainage principles or assumptions on which the ES is based. The Applicant is currently updating the Drainage Strategy in line with these revised standards and will share this document with the Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFAs) for review. The Drainage Strategy will include the information on key design assumptions, calculations and a clear description of key drainage features.</p>	Agreed

### 3.9 Geology and Hydrogeology

Table 3.9 Geology and Hydrogeology

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	KCC Current Position	The Applicant Current Position	Status
3.9.1	N/A	Minerals Safeguarding Area	<p>The Consultee’s response to Statutory Consultation indicated concern whether the Proposed Project is within a mineral safeguarding area.</p> <p>The Consultee agreed that a figure in the ES showing the protected geology, and the Proposed Project interacting would be adequate and agreed to the approach that National Grid would not be making further minerals assessment due to the Proposed Project being outside the Minerals Safeguarding Area.</p>	<p>The Applicant presented a slide showing a snip from the Minerals Plan indicating the sand beach gravel deposits are the strata that are protected by the minerals safeguarding areas are to the south of the Proposed Project. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not interact with minerals safeguarding area.</p> <p>The Applicant is not proposing any further minerals assessment within the ES.</p>	Agreed
3.9.2	<b>Application Document 6.2.3.5 Part 3 Kent Chapter 5 Geology and Hydrogeology [APP-065]</b>	Assessment methodology presented in the ES	The Consultee has reviewed the assessment methodology following the submission of the DCO application.	The Applicant has provided the final geology and hydrogeology assessment methodology set out in <b>Application Document 6.2.3.5 Part 3 Kent Chapter 5 Geology and Hydrogeology [APP-065]</b> .	Agreed
3.9.3	<b>Application Document 6.2.3.5 Part 3 Kent Chapter 5 Geology and Hydrogeology [APP-065]</b>	Mitigation presented in the ES and Outline Soil Management Plan	The Consultee has reviewed the proposed mitigation following the submission of the DCO application.	The Applicant has set out the proposed mitigation for geology and hydrogeology effects in <b>Application Document 6.2.3.5 Part 3 Kent Chapter 5 Geology and Hydrogeology [APP-065]</b> .	Agreed
3.9.4	<b>Application Document 6.2.3.5 Part 3 Kent Chapter 5 Geology and Hydrogeology [APP-065]</b>	Assessment conclusions presented in the ES	The Consultee has reviewed the assessment conclusions following the submission of the DCO application.	The Applicant has submitted the geology and hydrogeology assessment within <b>Application Document 6.2.3.5 Part 3 Kent Chapter 5 Geology and Hydrogeology [APP-065]</b> .	Agreed

### 3.10 Agriculture and Soils

**Table 3.10 Agriculture and Soils.**

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	KCC Current Position	Applicant's Current Position	Status
3.10.1	<b>Application Document 6.2.3.6 (B) Part 3 Kent Chapter 6 Agriculture and Soils [PDA-023]</b>	Assessment methodology presented in the ES	The Consultee will review the assessment methodology following the submission of the DCO application.	The Applicant has provided the agriculture and soils assessment methodology, set out in <b>Application Document 6.2.3.6 (B) Part 3 Kent Chapter 6 Agriculture and Soils [PDA-023]</b> .	Under discussion
3.10.2	<b>Application Document 6.2.3.6 (B) Part 3 Kent Chapter 6 Agriculture and Soils [PDA-023]</b> and <b>Application Document 7.5.10.2 Outline Soil Management Plan – Kent [APP-355]</b>	Mitigation presented in the ES and Outline Soil Management Plan	The Consultee will review the proposed mitigation following the submission of the DCO application.	The Applicant has set out the proposed mitigation for agriculture and soils effects in <b>Application Document 6.2.3.6 (B) Part 3 Kent Chapter 6 Agriculture and Soils [PDA-023]</b> and <b>Application Document 7.5.10.2 Outline Soil Management Plan – Kent [APP-355]</b> .	Under discussion
3.10.3	<b>Application Document 6.2.3.6 (B) Part 3 Kent Chapter 6 Agriculture and Soils. [PDA-023]</b>	Assessment conclusions presented in the ES	The Consultee will review the assessment conclusions following the submission of the DCO application.	The Applicant has provided the agriculture and soils assessment in <b>Application Document 6.2.3.6 (B) Part 3 Kent Chapter 6 Agriculture and Soils [PDA-023]</b> .	Under discussion

### 3.11 Traffic and Transport

Table 3.11 Traffic and Transport

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	KCC Current Position	The Applicant Current Position	Status
3.11.1	<b>Application Document 6.2.3.7 Part 3 Kent Chapter 7 Traffic and Transport [APP-067]</b>	Assessment Scenarios	The Consultee agrees that the construction phase is the area of focus and that the operation and maintenance phase of the works will have an inconsequential impact on the highway network and does not require any further assessment or comment. It is also acknowledged that if the site is decommissioned, this will have a lesser impact than the construction stage.	<b>Application Document 6.2.3.7 Part 3 Kent Chapter 7 Traffic and Transport [APP-067]</b> includes an assessment of the construction and decommissioning phases. An assessment of the operational and maintenance phase has been scoped out on the basis that vehicle movements associated with the operation of the site and maintenance requirements are anticipated to be infrequent and low.	Agreed
3.11.2	<b>Application Document 6.2.3.7 Part 3 Kent Chapter 7 Traffic and Transport [APP-067]</b>	Assessment Methodology	The Consultee considered the transport evidence submitted to be robust overall, however, there were several remaining queries which the Consultee requested consideration of by National Grid at the pre-application stage.	This is noted and the additional queries are reviewed within this SoCG further below.	Agreed
			The Consultee agrees with the proposed assessment year of 2029, which should be updated if the project schedule changes.	<b>Application Document 6.2.3.7 Part 3 Kent Chapter 7 Traffic and Transport [APP-067]</b> assesses the peak construction phase which now represents 2030 based on the current construction programme and the highest total annual forecast construction traffic movements.	Agreed
			The Consultee confirms that in addition to the network peaks, the shoulder peaks should be considered in the assessment, as well as the site Saturday PM peak.	<b>Application Document 6.2.3.7 Part 3 Kent Chapter 7 Traffic and Transport [APP-067]</b> includes an assessment of the weekday network peaks and development/ shoulder peaks, as well as the Saturday lunchtime peak.	Agreed
			The Consultee confirms that TEMPro v 7.2 is the appropriate (robust) version for deriving future traffic growth and will not request the use of TEMPro v 8 in this instance (which is heavily caveated due to COVID19).	Whilst this is noted, <b>Application Document 6.2.3.7 Part 3 Kent Chapter 7 Traffic and Transport [APP-067]</b> adopts the latest version of TEMPro (Version 8.1), utilising NTEM dataset v8.0 and the NRTP 2022 Core dataset to reflect local factors (Thanet) for the appropriate road types. The highest factors (all roads) have then been applied to the 2024 baseline flows to derive 2030 baseline traffic flows for the respective time periods. This results in higher factors being adopted (circa 7-8% growth) than the original factors within the PEIR (circa 4% growth).	Agreed
3.11.3	<b>Application Document 6.2.3.7 Part 3 Kent Chapter 7 Traffic and Transport [APP-067]</b>	Study Area/Traffic Counts	The Consultee agrees with the proposed traffic survey specification and study area for the collision review (as confirmed by email in June 2023). The PEIR baseline data, collision rates and receptor sensitivity levels (e.g. driver delay) should be updated in the ES.	Noted, the baseline data within <b>Application Document 6.2.3.7 Part 3 Kent Chapter 7 Traffic and Transport [APP-067]</b> is based on traffic surveys which were carried out in 2024 (based on the agreed specification) and collision data obtained from KCC Highways (based on the agreed study area). This information has been used to determine receptor sensitivity levels (e.g. Road Safety) where applicable.	Agreed

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	KCC Current Position	The Applicant Current Position	Status
3.11.4	<b>Application Document 6.2.3.7 Part 3 Kent Chapter 7 Traffic &amp; Transport [APP-067]</b>	Construction Vehicle Distribution and Assessment	<p>The Consultee confirms that the Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) distribution is reasonable following the updates made after the transport scoping meeting in April 2023. The HGV distribution should be revised using up-to-date information on points of origin (e.g. from the FEED team) if necessary.</p> <p>The Consultee confirms that the trip distribution for construction staff is accepted and considered robust to assume all will be travelling by motor vehicle.</p>	<p>The HGV distribution within <b>Application Document 6.2.3.7 Part 3 Kent Chapter 7 Traffic and Transport [APP-067]</b> reflects the Consultee's feedback in April 2023.</p> <p>The distribution of construction staff is based on a simple gravity model which has been developed based on 2021 Census data (representing the latest information currently available) for construction workers living within a 60-minute catchment area of the site. In view of the COVID-19 pandemic, this dataset has only been used to identify the districts where construction workers live rather than to estimate travel patterns. All staff have been assumed to travel by vehicle for robustness.</p>	Agreed
			<p>The Consultee requests that U-turning movements are considered at the Ebbsfleet Roundabout and the Sevenscore Roundabout to reflect the left in/left out nature of the proposed site access on the A256.</p> <p>The Consultee has not seen the relevant supporting evidence of construction traffic flows for these junctions, nor has there been any discussion around capacity assessment.</p>	<p>As requested, the distribution of construction vehicles within <b>Application Document 6.2.3.7 Part 3 Kent Chapter 7 Traffic and Transport [APP-067]</b> reflects the left in/left out nature of the proposed site access on the A256 dual carriageway and include u-turning movements at the Sevenscore roundabout for construction vehicles departing to the south and at the Ebbsfleet roundabout for construction vehicles arriving from the north. There are traffic flow diagrams showing proposed construction traffic flows including u-turning movements at these junctions (<b>Application Document 6.3.3.7.G ES Appendix 3.7.G Traffic Flow Diagrams [APP-181]</b>).</p> <p>No junction capacity modelling has previously been carried out given that construction traffic will largely avoid the network peak hours and that peak (assessed) levels will only be experienced for a short duration, with no significant effects expected with respect to driver delay. Nonetheless, the approach for the junction capacity assessments was discussed and agreed in a meeting with KCC on 15 January 2026, following the Examining Authority's First Written Questions. Junction capacity modelling will be carried out for the Minster, Sevenscore and Ebbsfleet roundabouts. The results will be presented in <b>Application Document 6.3.3.7.A (B) ES Appendix 3.7.A Transport Assessment Note</b> submitted at Deadline 5.</p>	Under discussion (noted that the further information is being provided at Deadline 5 for the Consultee to review)
			<p>The Consultee requests that the potential implications of the new construction compound on Sandwich Road is assessed.</p>	<p>Noted, this has been assessed within <b>Application Document 6.2.3.7 Part 3 Kent Chapter 7 Traffic and Transport [APP-067]</b>.</p>	Agreed

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	KCC Current Position	The Applicant Current Position	Status
3.11.5	<b>Application Document 6.2.3.7 Part 3 Kent Chapter 7 Traffic and Transport [APP-067]</b>	Construction Staff Assumptions	The Consultee notes that office based/supervisor and management staff are being assessed as single car occupancy rather than the 1.5 per vehicle for other staff. However, there is no indication of what number of staff fall into the aforementioned categories. For completeness, clarity should be provided on this point as this will determine daily trips for staff.	As set out within <b>Application Document 6.2.3.7 Part 3 Kent Chapter 7 Traffic and Transport [APP-067]</b> , there is expected to be a daily peak of 241 construction workers associated with the Kent Onshore Scheme in 2030 (which is a maximum daily figure) and 121 construction workers on the busiest day (2026) in terms of total daily construction vehicles (including LGVs and HGVs). All construction workers will travel to/from the Site at the start and end of the working day. An average vehicle occupancy factor of 1.5 construction workers per vehicle has been adopted for the site-based construction staff, which is considered to be reasonable, yet robust, given that all staff have been assumed to travel by vehicle (rather than other modes) and that a formal Car Share Scheme will be implemented to match potential car sharers.	Agreed
3.11.6	<b>Application Document 6.2.3.13 Part 3 Kent Chapter 13 Kent Onshore Scheme Inter-Project Cumulative Effects [APP-073]</b>	Cumulative Schemes	The Consultee acknowledges that cumulative schemes are subject to change. The allocated sites of Manston Green, Spitfire Green and Westwood Village should be considered. The Consultee notes that this may still be subject to change as planning applications obtain approval.	Other proposed developments that have the potential to overlap temporally with the Proposed Project have been identified and any potential inter-project cumulative effects resulting from the interaction between these other developments and the Proposed Project have been assessed within <b>Application Document 6.2.3.13 Part 3 Kent Chapter 13 Kent Onshore Scheme Inter-Project Cumulative Effects [APP-073]</b> . This includes consideration of more than 25 proposed developments on the short-list including Manston Airport, Spitfire Green and Westwood Village.	Agreed
3.11.7	<b>Application Document 7.5.1.2 Outline Construction Traffic Management and Travel Plan – Kent [APP-388]</b>  <b>Application Document 7.5.9.2 Outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan – Kent [APP-353]</b>	Deliverables – Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan	The Consultee requests that a CTMP should be prepared to consider working hours, arrival/departure times, vehicle routing, traffic management, site parking, measures to minimise impacts during network peaks, use of banksmen to facilitate safe delivery, wheel washing facilities and PRow considerations.	<b>Application Document 7.5.1.2 Outline Construction Traffic Management and Travel Plan – Kent [APP-388]</b> was prepared and supplied as part of Statutory Consultation for the Proposed Project. This has since been updated to reflect the feedback received and includes the information requested by the Consultee, including details on wheel washing facilities and road sweepers and the other measures set out by the Consultee. <b>Application Document 7.5.9.2 Outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan – Kent [APP-353]</b> has also been prepared in consultation with KCC to provide details on PRow diversions, closures and management during the construction, operation and decommissioning phases. Both management plans are secured by Requirement 6 of Schedule 3 of <b>Application Document 3.1 (H) draft DCO</b> submitted at Deadline 5. .	Agreed
3.11.8	<b>Application Document 6.3.3.7.A (B) ES Appendix 3.7.A Transport Assessment Note</b> submitted at Deadline 5.	Deliverables – Transport Assessment Note	The Consultee confirms that the TA can either be incorporated within the PEIR (and therefore ES), on the basis that the assessment methodologies follow TA guidelines, or that a separate standalone Transport Assessment Note (TAN) can be prepared.	<b>Application Document 6.3.3.7.A (B) ES Appendix 3.7.A Transport Assessment Note</b> submitted at Deadline 5. forms an appendix to <b>Application Document 6.2.3.7 Part 3 Kent Chapter 7 Traffic and Transport [APP-067]</b> and has been prepared to identify where the information that would typically form part of a standalone Transport Assessment (TA) can be found in other chapters and reports that have been prepared for the Kent Onshore Scheme. This approach is designed to reduce repetition between documents. The Transport Assessment Note (TAN) also includes further information where necessary,	Agreed

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				including in response to feedback received from National Highways. The TAN has been informed by consultation with the Consultee as the local highway authority, and National Highways which manages the Strategic Road Network (SRN).	
3.11.9	<b>Application Document 7.5.9.2 Outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan – Kent [APP-353]</b>	Deliverables – Outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan	<p>The Consultee has previously requested that a PRow Plan/ Management Scheme is prepared to examine potential impacts on affected routes, including any closures, diversions, timescales and management. The Consultee’s PRow Officer should be included in any discussion regarding the management of PRow such as information to be contained within the PRow Management Plan and/ or Outline CTMP. The PRow Management Scheme must not be considered outline; full details must be provided as required by the County Council for each PRow route affected across all the construction, operation and decommissioning phases. This document should be approved by the Consultee prior to DCO submission and referenced within this SoCG.</p> <p>The Consultee confirmed previously that the proposed scope of the Outline PRow Management Plan (as presented during the transport scoping meeting in April 2023) is broadly acceptable, although a number of matters remain under consideration (e.g. the assessment of impacted routes and development mitigation) which should be addressed prior to DCO Submission.</p> <p>The Consultee requested that all specific points of PRow management covering pre-construction, construction, operation, and any decommissioning must be agreed with and approved by the County Council prior to the Development Consent Order (DCO) application being submitted.</p> <p>Following review of the information submitted in the DCO, the Consultee has confirmed they are now agreed with the Applicant’s position.</p>	<p><b>Application Document 7.5.9.2 Outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan – Kent [APP-353]</b> has been prepared in consultation with the Consultee to provide details on PRow diversions, closures and management during the construction, operation and decommissioning phases. The principles of the document have been agreed prior to DCO submission.</p> <p>The proposed management measures within <b>Application Document 7.5.9.2 Outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan – Kent [APP-353]</b> seek to retain access to PRow during all phases of the Proposed Project, with temporary diversions only being proposed where these are required to bypass any temporary closures during the construction phase where necessary. No PRow are proposed to be permanently stopped up as a result of the Kent Onshore Scheme.</p> <p><b>Application Document 7.5.9.2 Outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan – Kent [APP-353]</b> will be developed further into a finalised document (Detailed PRowMP) by the appointed Contractor, ahead of the commencement of any construction activities. The PRowMP is secured by Requirement 6 of Schedule 3 of <b>Application Document 3.1 (H) draft DCO</b> submitted at Deadline 5..</p> <p>The Applicant will maintain a regular dialogue with the PRow officers at KCC throughout the construction period of the Proposed Project in order to ensure the objectives of the Detailed PRowMP are achieved.</p>	Agreed
			<p>The Consultee has previously requested that the Outline PRow MP should address opportunities for enhancements to and development of the PRow network as part of the project (such as a community/ legacy fund for PRow improvements).</p> <p>The Consultee has confirmed they are agreed with the Applicant’s position.</p>	<p>The Applicant supports the delivery of community benefits associated with transmission infrastructure (the Applicant already has established programmes which deliver this) and will investigate the potential to provide a contribution towards a community/ legacy fund for PRow improvements. For example, the Applicant operates a community grant programme which is available to nearby charities and not for profit organisations, when projects are in construction. However, community benefit is separate to compensation and mitigation. The former</p>	Agreed

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				Government consulted on community benefit options associated with transmission infrastructure and proposed the introduction of guidance in this regard. The Applicant supports this and believes it should be flexible, allowing community benefits to respond to local and regional needs. Whilst awaiting clarity on the government's position, the Applicant is working to understand local and regional aspirations and priorities in relation to community benefits. The Applicant welcomes the suggestions for delivering community benefits and will work with stakeholders and local communities to further inform this as the project progresses.	
			The Consultee advises that KCC PRoW is the highway authority for PRoW, not KCC Highways.	Noted, consultation has accordingly been undertaken with KCC PRoW Officers.	Agreed
3.11.10	<p><b>Application Document 6.2.3.7 Part 3 Kent Chapter 7 Traffic and Transport [APP-067]</b></p> <p><b>Application Document 7.5.9.2 Outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan – Kent [APP-353]</b></p>	PRoW and walking/ cycling network	The Consultee agrees with the PRoW scoped in for the assessment of the construction phase. Further information should be provided on where the PRoW network intersects or adjoins on and off-site access routes. The King Charles III Coast Path should be referred to as a National Trail rather than a promoted route.	<p><b>Application Document 6.2.3.7 Part 3 Kent Chapter 7 Traffic and Transport [APP-067]</b> identifies the PRoW (including Public Footpaths, Bridleways and Restricted Byways) and national/ regional walking and cycling routes (including the King Charles III England Coast Path) which pass through the Order Limits. <b>Application Document 6.2.3.7 Part 3 Kent Chapter 7 Traffic &amp; Transport [APP-067]</b> subsequently includes an assessment of those where potential impacts may arise as a result of the Proposed Project during the construction phase. The King Charles III Coast Path has been referred to as a National Trail (instead of a promoted route) as requested.</p> <p><b>Application Document 7.5.9.2 Outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan – Kent [APP-353]</b>, as secured by Requirement 6 of Schedule 3 of <b>Application Document 3.1 (H) draft DCO</b> submitted at Deadline 5, has been produced in order to mitigate the impacts of the Proposed Project on Public Rights of Way (PRoW) and the King Charles III England Coast Path (categorised as a national trail) in Kent. The Outline PRoWMP has considered available guidance, such as the PRoW Circular 1/09 and information on PRoW including the Kent County Council PRoW Map, which can be found online. Details of where the PRoW network intersects or adjoins any access routes are included within the document.</p>	Agreed
	<b>Application Document 2.7 (B) Access, Rights of Way and Public Rights of Navigation Plans – Kent [CR1-011]</b>		The Consultee requests that clear and legible figures showing PRoW are prepared to inform the DCO submission, as well as route plans showing interactions with level crossings and green routes.	The ES is supported by GIS figures including paragraph 6.4.3.7.4 Walking and Cycling Routes (including PRoW) in <b>Application Document 6.4.3.7 Part 3 Kent Chapter 7 Traffic and Transport [APP-067]</b> . The DCO submission is also informed by <b>Application Document 2.7 Access, Rights of Way and Public Rights of Navigation Plans – Kent [CR1-011]</b> which identifies these interactions.	Agreed
	<b>Application Document 7.5.1.2 Outline Construction Traffic</b>		The Consultee requests that the cycle route to west of A256 is considered as part of the proposals.	The existing pedestrian/cycle route which commences at the northern end of Jutes Lane and runs northwards to the west of (and parallel with) the A256 will be temporarily diverted during the construction phase (during cable trenching works only) and	Agreed

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	<p>Management and Travel Plan – Kent [APP-353]</p> <p>Application Document 2.7 (B) Access, Rights of Way and Public Rights of Navigation Plans – Kent [CR1-011]</p>			then locally diverted (realigned) to cross the permanent access road during the operational phase. Access to the pedestrian/cycle route will retained all times with the proposed diversions in place.	
	<p>Application Document 6.2.3.7 Part 3 Kent Chapter 7 Traffic and Transport [APP-067]</p> <p>Application Document 7.5.9.2 Outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan – Kent [APP-353]</p>		<p>The Consultee has previously expressed concern that the construction phase is across a significant timeframe (50 months) and will impact on the PRow network in the area.</p> <p>The Consultee has confirmed they are now agreed with the Applicant's position.</p>	Works have been planned to make use of the primary accesses as far as possible, minimising use of the secondary accesses to those activities that are strictly necessary. Using the secondary accesses for limited works helps keep overall construction activities down reducing impacts on PRow and the construction programme, it also derisks elements of the work. The secondary accesses chosen are already identified as maintenance accesses for NG infrastructure or 3rd party infrastructure that is being worked upon as part of this project.	Agreed
3.11.11	<p>Application Document 7.5.9.2 Outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan – Kent [APP-353]</p>	PRow Mitigation	<p>The Consultee advises that efforts should be made to minimise path closures and retain popular routes during the project. However, PRow must not be used as construction routes. Therefore, where temporary closures are required, convenient and safe diversion routes should be provided to reduce disruption to path users. Any PRow diversions/closures must be approved by the Consultee's PRow and Access Service, and these should be applied for at an early stage with details of timescales and project schedule. Robust information boards explaining temporary access restrictions should be considered for paths that will be closed for long periods.</p>	<p>The proposed management measures within <b>Application Document 7.5.9.2 Outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan – Kent [APP-353]</b>, as secured by Requirement 6 of Schedule 3 of <b>Application Document 3.1 (H) draft DCO</b> submitted at Deadline 5., seek to retain access to PRow during all phases of the Proposed Project, with temporary diversions only being proposed where these are required to bypass any temporary closures during the construction phase where necessary. No PRow are proposed to be permanently stopped up as a result of the Kent Onshore Scheme.</p> <p>All locations where a PRow would be impacted by the Proposed Project would have appropriate signage to advise the dates and hours affected. The Applicant would develop, through consultation with KCC PRow officers, a standard form of signage relating to temporary PRow closures and diversions which would be used across the Proposed Project.</p> <p><b>Application Document 7.5.9.2 Outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan – Kent [APP-353]</b> will be developed further into a finalised document (Detailed PRowWMP) by the appointed Contractor, ahead of the commencement of any construction activities. The Applicant will maintain a regular dialogue with the PRow officers at KCC throughout the construction period of the Proposed Project in order to ensure the objectives of the Detailed PRowWMP are achieved.</p>	Agreed

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			<p>The Consultee has previously requested that all routes affected by construction should be reinstated to an improved standard as mitigation.</p> <p>The Consultee has confirmed they are now agreed with the Applicant's position.</p>	<p>Prior to re-opening PRoW, the Contractor will remove all temporary works and reinstate any directly affected PRoW to the same standard as recorded prior to the commencement of construction. Should any PRoW be damaged during the construction phase by the Contractor, the Applicant will repair the damage and return it to a comparable (surface) condition. Any remediation will be discussed with landowners and PRoW officers before handover.</p>	Agreed
3.11.12	<p><b>Application Document 7.5.9.2 Outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan – Kent [APP-353]</b></p> <p><b>Application Document 6.2.3.7 Part 3 Kent Chapter 7 Traffic &amp; Transport [APP-067]</b></p> <p><b>Application Document 6.2.3.12 Part 3 Kent Chapter 12 Kent Onshore Scheme Intra-Project Cumulative Effects [APP-072]</b></p> <p><b>Application Document 6.2.3.10 (B) Part 3 Kent Chapter 10 Socio-Economics, Recreation and Tourism [REP1A-007]</b></p> <p><b>Application Document 6.2.3.11 (B) Part 3 Kent Chapter 11 Health &amp; Wellbeing [AS-003]</b></p>	Assessment of PRoW Diversions and Closures	<p>The Consultee requests further details/justification on the overall magnitude of effect of a PRoW diversion and/or closure, in terms of the categories and definitions used and what is considered long term and short term. Further clarification is also required as there cannot be a diversion of a route without a closure. In addition, “temporarily stopped up and diverted” should be used instead of just “stopped up” to demonstrate that a diversion route will be provided.</p>	<p><b>Application Document 7.5.9.2 Outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan – Kent [APP-353]</b>, as secured by Requirement 6 of Schedule 3 of <b>Application Document 3.1 (H) draft DCO</b> submitted at Deadline 5. has been prepared in consultation with KCC, which includes further details of PRoW diversions, closures and durations. A short-term temporary diversion has been classified as a period of six months or less, whereas a long-term temporary diversion has been classified as a period of between six months and the full construction period. It is acknowledged that there cannot be a PRoW diversion without a closure. Temporary diversions will be provided to bypass any temporary closures during the construction phase where necessary.</p>	Agreed
			<p>The Consultee has previously commented that they do not consider the levels of medium/low impact on PRoW across all criteria to be sufficient as this does not consider the potential impact of the project over the operational period. Further detail and clarity regarding any permanent diversions during the operational period of the project (e.g. for TE26 and EE42 regarding the Pylon Options) and the overall intentions including for the management of the PRoW network is required.</p> <p>The Consultee has confirmed they are now agreed with the Applicant's position.</p>	<p>The assessment of PRoW Diversions and Closures within <b>Application Document 6.2.3.7 Part 3 Kent Chapter 7 Traffic &amp; Transport [APP-067]</b> has been reviewed based on the feedback received from KCC. The traffic and transport assessment does not identify any significant impacts on PRoW in terms of diversions and closures, with the proposed embedded mitigation and control and management measures in place. No permanent PRoW diversions are proposed during the operational phase of the Proposed Project.</p>	Agreed
			<p>The Consultee has previously commented that they do not consider the assessment to account for all criteria – public health, socio-economic, tourism, access to greenspace. A separate assessment of PRoW should be carried out as its own topic.</p> <p>The Consultee has confirmed they are now agreed with the Applicant's position.</p>	<p>The Applicant acknowledges the concern raised by KCC. It is proposed to continue to assess PRoW, following established practice in Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). It is not conventional for an ES to have its own PRoW topic chapter. It is important for an EIA to remain focused on assessing the likelihood of significant environmental effects, and by introducing a PRoW chapter it would risk double-counting of effects already being reported elsewhere in the ES.</p> <p>It is considered that the structure of the ES allows for a full assessment of all potential impacts on PRoW where there is the potential for significant environmental effects. The potential impact of the Proposed Project on PRoW is assessed within various chapters of the ES, including <b>Application Document</b></p>	Agreed

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				<p><b>6.2.3.7 Part 3 Kent Chapter 7 Traffic &amp; Transport [APP-067], Application Document 6.2.3.1 Part 3 Kent Chapter 1 Landscape and Visual [APP-061], Application Document 6.2.3.10 (B) Part 3 Kent Chapter 10 Socio-Economics, Recreation and Tourism [REP1A-007], and Application Document 6.2.3.11(B) Part 3 Kent Chapter 11 Health and Wellbeing [AS-003].</b></p> <p>The concern that when considered individually, that an impact might be assessed as not significant, but if the impacts had been considered collectively for that receptor, could be significant has been addressed within <b>Application Document 6.2.3.12 Part 3 Kent Chapter 12 Kent Onshore Scheme Intra-Project Cumulative Effects [APP-072]</b>. This considers the combined effects on PRow and their users, that have been identified across the various topic chapters.</p> <p>Importantly, it is not felt that a separate PRow topic would result in any difference in the outcome of the assessment of overall impacts on PRow and the required mitigation identified in <b>Application Document 7.5.9.2 Outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan – Kent [APP-353]</b> as secured by Requirement 6 of Schedule 3 of <b>Application Document 3.1 (H) draft DCO</b> submitted at Deadline 5. , which provides details of PRow closures and diversions.</p>	
			The Consultee requests that the ES should recognise the amenity of PRow.	This is noted and addressed within <b>Application Document 6.2.3.10 Part 3 Kent Chapter 10 Socio-Economics, Recreation and Tourism [REP1A-007]</b> .	Agreed
3.11.13	<b>Application Document 6.2.3.7 Part 3 Kent Chapter 7 Traffic &amp; Transport [APP-067]</b>	Assessment of Non-Motorised User Amenity	The Consultee disagrees with the conclusion that the Proposed Project would result in an overall low impact on Non-Motorised User Amenity, given the evidence, experience, and overall impact of development in the area.	The assessment of Non-Motorised User Amenity within <b>Application Document 6.2.3.7 Part 3 Kent Chapter 7 Traffic &amp; Transport [APP-067]</b> has been reviewed based on the feedback received from KCC. The likely impact of the Proposed Project on Non-Motorised User Amenity for all receptors within the study area is considered to be not significant	Under discussion
3.11.14	<p><b>Application Document 7.5.1.1 Outline Construction Traffic Management and Travel Plan – Kent [APP-338]</b></p> <p><b>Application Document 6.2.3.7 Part 3 Kent Chapter 7 Traffic &amp; Transport [APP-067]</b></p> <p><b>Application Document 3.1 (H) draft DCO</b> submitted at Deadline 5.</p>	Sunday/Bank Holiday Working	The Consultee requests that increased levels of traffic on Sundays/ Bank Holidays need to be considered, ideally in the form of a separate traffic modelling scenario using this peak traffic as a baseline.	<p><b>Application Document 6.2.3.7 Part 3 Kent Chapter 7 Traffic &amp; Transport [APP-067]</b> and <b>Application Document 7.5.1.2 Construction Traffic Management and Travel Plan - Kent [APP-338]</b>, as secured by Requirement 6 of Schedule 3 of <b>Application Document 3.1 (H) draft DCO</b> submitted at Deadline 5. , set out the parameters for the assessment of extended working hours, and the management measures for the control of trips made during working hours.</p> <p>The Applicant has proposed core construction working hours of 07:00 to 19:00hrs Monday to Friday, and 07:00 to 17:00hrs on Saturdays, Sundays, and Bank Holidays. While this includes weekends and holidays, the application clarifies that construction activity is not expected to occur on every Sunday or Bank Holiday. Importantly, restrictions are in place to limit the type and scale of activity during these periods, including a cap</p>	Under discussion

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				<p>of 30 HGV movements per day on Sundays and Bank Holidays and limitations on percussive piling. These restrictions are further detailed in <b>Application Document 9.84 Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments (REAC)</b> submitted at Deadline 3.</p> <p>The Applicant has justified the inclusion of extended working hours as necessary to maintain programme flexibility and meet the Government's Clean Energy Action Plan targets. The inclusion of limiting HGV movements on Sundays and Bank Holidays is not intended to contradict the general restriction but rather to allow for essential, low-impact activities that support the overall delivery schedule. The Traffic and Transport assessments, including those in <b>Application Document 6.2.3.7 Part 3 Kent Chapter 7 Traffic and Transport [APP- 067]</b>, have considered these extended hours and associated vehicle movements. The assessments conclude that, with the proposed mitigation, no significant adverse effects are anticipated. Nonetheless, the Applicant has committed to ongoing dialogue with the Local Highway Authority to ensure that any concerns are addressed through detailed construction planning and coordination.</p> <p>In addition to the above, it is also expected that there will be up to 50% fewer LGV and staff vehicle movements on Sundays and Bank Holidays than the number of movements anticipated to be experienced on weekdays and Saturdays. The assessment of the Saturday lunchtime peak (12pm-1pm) is considered to offer a robust assessment of the weekend period when higher levels of construction vehicle movements are expected and so an additional assessment of Sundays/Bank Holidays is not considered to be required on this basis.</p>	
3.11.15	<p><b>Application Document 7.5.1.2 Outline Construction Traffic Management and Travel Plan – Kent [APP-338]</b></p> <p><b>Application Document 7.5.9.2 Outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan – Kent [APP-353]</b></p> <p><b>Application Document 3.1 (H) draft DCO</b> submitted at Deadline 5.</p>	Additional Engineering Matters	The Consultee requests that HGVs should avoid secondary access routes where possible, depending on likely vehicle types and volumes. Further details should be provided in respect of construction vehicles using secondary routes such as Marsh Farm Road, Hill Court Road, Cooper Street Drove, Richborough Road and Whitehouse Drove. Whilst it is anticipated that only Light Goods Vehicles (LGVs) will be used, this could still be vehicles of up to 3,500 kg using single track country lanes only wide enough for one vehicle, with very few passing places over considerable lengths. Some temporary passing places may be required dependent on the anticipated number of trips and vehicle types.	The Applicant is aware of the limited capacity of the secondary accesses, notably Jutes Lane, Tothill Street, High Street, Marsh Farm Road, A257, The Causeway (Ash Road) and Richborough Road. The flow of construction vehicles on these accesses have been limited with the number of HGVs to be <10 per day at the peak of the works. LGVs are largely vans and 4x4 vehicles for staff movements and again have been limited to a maximum of 25 per day at the peak. The works required to be undertaken using these accesses has also been limited and is considered necessary to undertake the works. Jutes Lane will only be used to undertake utility connection works which originate from Jutes Lane, Marsh Farm Road will be used to access the existing OHL for temporary diversion works. Condition surveys of all secondary accesses will be undertaken. This has been set out in the DCO in the following documents: <b>Application Document 7.5.1.2 Outline Construction Traffic Management and Travel Plan – Kent [APP-338]</b> and <b>Application Document 7.5.9.2</b>	Agreed

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	KCC Current Position	The Applicant Current Position	Status
				Outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan – Kent [APP-353].	
			The Consultee requests further details on Abnormal Indivisible Loads (AILs) including consultation on any Temporary Traffic Management (TTM) arrangements and the potential impact of AILs at the Ebbsfleet Roundabout	Details on the likely routes to be used by abnormal loads and the constraints along these routes are contained within <b>Application Document 7.5.1.2 Outline Construction Traffic Management and Travel Plan – Kent [APP-338]</b> , as secured by Requirement 6 of Schedule 3 of <b>Application Document 3.1 (H) draft DCO</b> submitted at Deadline 5. . It is expected that the contractor will review all access constraints in more detail at a later stage and carry out any additional assessments (including structural assessments) where necessary. Alternative routes or temporary works will also be used if necessary.	Under discussion
			The Consultee requires a Road Safety Audit to be carried out for each proposed access. The construction of K-BM02 must be Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) compliant and will be subject to the County Council’s technical approval and safety audit process.	The A256 junction has been designed to be fully compliant with DMRB. A Stage 1 RSA has been carried out and shared with KCC. A Designer’s Response to the RSA Stage 1 has been produced outlining the changes made in response to the RSA's comments. The proposed design/ layout of the A256 access has been revised to consider any recommendations where necessary.	Agreed
			The Consultee requests highway and PRoW condition surveys to be undertaken prior to commencement, post-completion and at suitable intervals, along with a commitment to repair any damage to the fabric of the Highway (including verge) or PRoW. Routine monitoring should be carried out for any impacted routes, with regular highway cleaning/ sweeping if necessary.	As set out in <b>Application Document 7.5.1.2 Outline Construction Traffic Management and Travel Plan – Kent [APP-338]</b> , road condition surveys will be carried out pre-construction, during construction, and post-construction, to identify any defects that arise to highways assets/verges during the construction phase of the Proposed Project for re-instatement. At this stage, it is proposed to carry out road condition surveys in the vicinity of the proposed access points on the A256, Ebbsfleet Lane, Ebbsfleet Lane North and Sandwich Road only. Further discussions will be held with KCC Highways to identify any additional locations where road condition surveys may be required within the Order Limits.	Agreed

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				<p>As set out in <b>Application Document 7.5.9.2 Outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan – Kent [APP-353]</b>, the Applicant will undertake pre-commencement condition surveys of all directly affected PRow prior to the commencement of construction. Prior to re-opening PRow, the Contractor will remove all temporary works and reinstate any directly affected PRow to the same standard as recorded prior to the commencement of construction. Should any PRow be damaged during the construction phase by the Contractor, the Applicant will repair the damage and return it to a comparable (surface) condition. Any remediation will be discussed with landowners and PRow officers before handover.</p> <p>Both management plans are secured by Requirement 6 of Schedule 3 of <b>Application Document 3.1 (H) draft DCO</b>, submitted at Deadline 5.</p>	
			<p>The Consultee has a technical approval process in place for any works by statutory undertakers that affect County Council structures and therefore would welcome engagement with National Grid to ensure proposals do not have any adverse effect on the structures. This includes consultation with the Consultee’s Asset Management Team for the A256 and Sustrans for the NCN15 Coastal Path.</p>	<p>The FEED engineering team has conducted additional consultation with KCC and has prepared a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) as part of this process. The MoU covers additional items relating to the protection of structures/ assets for example.</p> <p>The Applicant will maintain ongoing dialogue with the County Council throughout preparation of the DCO application, including thematic meetings with the Highways team where matters of concern around asset interfaces will be addressed.</p>	Under discussion
3.11.16	<p><b>Application Document 6.3.3.7.G ES Appendix 3.7.G Traffic Flow Diagrams [APP-181]</b></p> <p><b>Application Document 6.4.3.7 ES Figures Kent Traffic and Transport [APP-266]</b></p>	Highways and transportation	<p>Marsh Farm Road and Richborough Road/Whitehouse Drove are likely not suitable for the construction traffic proposed, and KCC has asked for these to be reviewed.</p> <p>KCC requests that a revised strategy/route for construction traffic to and from the site.</p>	<p>The only construction vehicles to use Marsh Farm Road will be associated with access K-BM04, to undertake temporary diversion works to the Over-Head Lines (OHL), including constructing a temporary structure, realigning conductors and building scaffold protection towers. Vegetation clearance and survey works will also be undertaken at this access. Construction traffic is only forecast to use Marsh Farm Road for a period of six weeks, with a maximum of 29 daily vehicles including seven HGVs. This represents 0.4% of total construction vehicle trips associated with the Kent Onshore Scheme. As shown on <b>Application Document 6.3.3.7.G ES Appendix 3.7.G Traffic Flow Diagrams [APP-181]</b>, no construction vehicles are expected to travel through Minster or along Marsh Farm Road during the peak construction phase. As shown on the HGV Routing Plan within <b>Application Document 6.4.3.7 ES Figures Kent Traffic and Transport [APP-266]</b>, the route through Minster and along Marsh Farm Road does not form a primary construction traffic route. Therefore, it is not forecast that these limited vehicle trips (both in quantity and in duration) will result in any impacts on Marsh Farm Road.</p> <p>The only construction vehicles to use Richborough Road/Whitehouse Drove will be associated with access K-BM05, to undertake piling and foundation works associated with</p>	Agreed

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	KCC Current Position	The Applicant Current Position	Status
				<p>the southern side of the proposed temporary bridge over the River Stour. Once the temporary bridge has been constructed, all works in this area would be accessed via the main site access (K-BM02) on the A256 Richborough Road. Construction traffic is only forecast to use Richborough Road/Whitehouse Drove for a period of one month, with a maximum of 17 daily vehicles including five HGVs. This represents 0.2% of total construction vehicle trips associated with the Kent Onshore Scheme. As shown on the HGV Routing Plan within <b>Application Document 6.4.3.7 ES Figures Kent Traffic and Transport [APP-266]</b>, the route through Minster does not form a primary construction traffic route. Therefore, it is not forecast that these limited vehicle trips (both in quantity and in duration) will result in any impacts on Richborough Road/Whitehouse Drove.</p> <p>In view of the above, the identified parts of the local highway network will only be used to access localised works and to enable the wider works to subsequently be accessed via the main site access (K-BM02) on the A256 Richborough Road. Therefore, it is not considered that a revised strategy or route for construction traffic is required.</p>	

### 3.12 Air Quality

**Table 3.12 Air Quality**

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	KCC Current Position	The Applicant Current Position	Status
3.12.1	<b>Application Document 6.2.3.8 Part 3 Kent Chapter 8 Air Quality [APP-068]</b>	Assessment methodology presented in the ES	The Consultee has confirmed they are deferring to the District Councils on this matter.	The Applicant has provided the air quality assessment methodology in <b>Application Document 6.2.3.8 Part 3 Kent Chapter 8 Air Quality [APP-068]</b> .	No comment to be given – Deferring to District Councils
3.12.2	<b>Application Document 6.2.3.8 Part 3 Kent Chapter 8 Air Quality [APP-068]</b>  <b>Application Document 7.5.6.2 (C) Outline Air Quality Management Plan – Kent</b> , submitted at Deadline 5.	Mitigation presented in the ES and Outline Air Quality Management Plan	The Consultee has confirmed they are deferring to the District Councils on this matter.	The Applicant has set out the proposed mitigation for air quality effects in <b>Application Document 6.2.3.8 Part 3 Kent Chapter 8 Air Quality [APP-068]</b> and <b>Application Document 7.5.6.2 (C) Outline Air Quality Management Plan – Kent</b> submitted at Deadline 5.	No comment to be given – Deferring to District Councils
3.12.3	<b>Application Document 6.2.3.8 Part 3 Kent Chapter 8 Air Quality [APP-068]</b>	Assessment conclusions presented in the ES	The Consultee has confirmed they are deferring to the District Councils on this matter.	The Applicant has provided the air quality assessment in <b>Application Document 6.2.3.8 Part 3 Kent Chapter 8 Air Quality [APP-068]</b> .	No comment to be given – Deferring to District Councils

### 3.13 Socioeconomics, Recreation and Tourism

**Table 3.13 Socioeconomics, Recreation and Tourism**

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	KCC Current Position	The Applicant Current Position	Status
3.13.1	<p><b>Application Document 7.5.9.2 Outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan – Kent [APP-068]</b></p> <p><b>Application Document 6.2.3.10 (B) Part 3 Kent Chapter 10 Socio-Economics, Recreation, and Tourism [REP1A-007]</b></p>	Public Rights of Way	<p>The Consultee has previously commented that the Consultee would not accept any permanent closures but expects there is much greater detail to come forward around this (e.g. PRow management plan). The Consultee also highlighted the national trail and — suggested that engagement should be had with the national trail officer at KCC.</p> <p>The Consultee has confirmed they are now agreed with the Applicant’s position.</p>	<p>The assessment of effects on PRow includes recreational routes and routes used for access. An outline PRow Management Plan (<b>Application Document 7.5.9.2 Outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan – Kent [APP-068]</b>) has been produced for the ES which include closures and diversions to PRow routes.</p> <p>Further details have been included in the assessment in ES Chapter 10 (<b>Application Document 6.2.3.10 (B) Part 3 Kent Chapter 10 Socio-Economics, Recreation, and Tourism [REP1A-007]</b>).</p>	Agreed
3.13.2	<p><b>Application Document 7.5.9.2 Outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan – Kent [APP-068]</b></p> <p><b>Application Document 6.2.3.10 (B) Part 3 Kent Chapter 10 Socio-Economics, Recreation, and Tourism [REP1A-007]</b></p>	Study Area	<p>The Consultee has noted National Grid’s comments regarding the 500 m PRow study area and are happy that National Grid have taken this on board. The Consultee provided an appendix to the statutory consultation response which set out the impact of the Proposed Project on recreational access and stated that it would be good for this to be taken into consideration. The Consultee notes this is set out within the PRow Management Plan and agree to this approach and will review this document following submission of the DCO Application.</p>	<p>The assessment of recreational routes and PRow recognises that some PRow will overlap/go beyond the 500 m study area boundary. Where this is the case, the assessment considers whether the Proposed Project impacts on the route beyond 500 m. Additionally, the PRow assessment includes consideration of PRow routes connected via cycling and pedestrian route networks which are impacted by the Proposed Project. The study area has been set out within the ES chapter (<b>Application Document 6.2.3.10 (B) Part 3 Kent Chapter 10 Socio-Economics, Recreation, and Tourism [REP1A-007]</b>) and the outline PRow Management Plan (<b>Application Document 7.5.9.2 Outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan – Kent [APP-068]</b>).</p>	Agreed
3.13.3	<p><b>Application Document 7.5.1.2 Outline Construction Traffic Management and Travel Plan</b></p>	Extended Working Hours.	<p>The Consultee raised concern over extended working hours. It is clear that it would lead to a shorter construction programme for the Proposed Project. However, the Consultee anticipates adverse impacts on National Trails and PRow – the Consultee would not support this.</p>	<p>The Applicant has set out the proposed construction core working hours within the CTMTP for Kent (<b>Application Document 7.5.1.2 Outline Construction Traffic Management and Travel Plan – Kent [APP-338]</b>). The CTMTP identifies exceptions to the core working hours for certain activities e.g. those necessary in an emergency where there is a risk to persons or property. It also identifies restrictions on percussive piling works and HGV deliveries during weekends and bank holidays.</p>	Under discussion

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	KCC Current Position	The Applicant Current Position	Status
	– Kent [APP-338]		<p>The Consultee notes the response from National Grid and will provide comments and/or agreement in due course.</p>	<p>This matter remains under discussion at this time.</p> <p>The Applicant has considered programme implications and risk for the Proposed Project, and has concluded that it can accommodate the exclusion of bank holidays from the core working hours at the substation site in Kent (except by agreement with the local planning authorities), without prejudicing its ability to accelerate the project in accordance with the NESO Clean Power 2030 objectives.</p> <p>Furthermore, and recognising the desirability of this outcome to stakeholders and communities, the Applicant is also able to agree that for the bank holiday Mondays that form part of a 'bank holiday weekend' (meaning Easter Monday, the early May bank holiday, the Spring bank holiday, and the summer bank holiday) the associated (preceding) Saturday and Sunday are also not worked. This is facilitated by the likely implications of the exclusion of the bank holiday Mondays on contractor shift patterns, and also reflects the fact that the Applicant does not anticipate working every weekend in all areas of the project at all times in any case. On this basis, the Applicant is comfortable reducing its flexibility in the manner proposed at the converter station sites, although further limitations would introduce unacceptable risks to the ability to programme and deliver the works in a sufficiently timely manner.</p> <p>This reduction in flexibility is proposed specifically at the substation site in Kent, because it is acknowledged that these are large static construction sites where work will be being undertaken for 4-5 years (as opposed to smaller single site works such as individual substations, or works with shorter construction periods). Notwithstanding this, the reducing in flexibility on bank holidays and the bank holiday weekends set out above is not for the purpose of mitigating effects (the ES identifies no impacts that would require this mitigation) but is proposed following a project-specific review in the context of ongoing discussions with stakeholders.</p> <p>The possibility of working on bank holidays is retained for those works which are likely to be more transient, for example the cable sections, where construction activity will be undertaken at each location for shorter periods of time in any case. The possibility of working on bank holidays is also retained for any railway works, where possessions may be dictated by third parties and where bank holiday work may be a necessity.</p> <p>Wording reflecting the above has been added to Requirement 7 (see Appendix C 'Revised dDCO Requirements')</p>	

### 3.14 Health and Wellbeing

Table 3.14 Health and Wellbeing

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	KCC Current Position	The Applicant Current Position	Status
3.14.1	<p><b>Application Document 7.5.1.2 Outline Construction Traffic Management and Travel Plan – Kent [APP-338]</b></p> <p><b>Application Document 6.2.3.11(B) Part 3 Kent Chapter 11 Health &amp; Wellbeing [AS-003].</b></p>	Project responses to statutory consultation comments	<p>The Consultee agree with the approach taken by National Grid to address comments from the statutory consultation and had no comments to make.</p> <p>The Consultee asked whether National Grid were covering comments from both Kent and Suffolk National Grid confirmed that this this feedback shared was specific to Kent. but Suffolk engagement was occurring in parallel. The National Grid team gave Kent LPAs a summary of what was covered in Suffolk meeting and there were no subsequent comments from the Consultee regarding this approach.</p>	The Applicant presented their response to the comments on health and wellbeing from the Consultee, where the primary concern was the impact on PRowS and the effect on the health and wellbeing of Kent residents. The mitigation on the impacts on construction traffic has been covered in the <b>Application Document 7.5.1.2 Outline Construction Traffic Management and Travel Plan – Kent [APP-338]</b> and further details of the health and wellbeing assessment methodology in <b>Application Document 6.2.3.11 (B) Part 3 Kent Chapter 11 Health &amp; Wellbeing [AS-003].</b>	Agreed
3.14.2	<p><b>Application Document 6.2.3.11 (B) Part 3 Kent Chapter 11 Health &amp; Wellbeing [AS-003]</b></p>	Study Area	The Consultee agrees to the study area as set out within the PEIR and had no comments to make.	The Study Area, which covered the extent of the Kent Onshore Scheme and includes wards such as Cliffsend & Pegwell and Little Stour & Ashtone, was set out within the PEIR and is the same for the ES, as indicated in <b>Application Document 6.2.3.11 Part 3 Kent Chapter 11 Health &amp; Wellbeing [AS-003].</b> This was also shown at the meeting in October 2023.	Agreed

### 3.15 Cumulative Effects

Table 3.15 Cumulative Effects

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	KCC Current Position	The Applicant Current Position	Status
3.15.1	N/A	Cumulative Schemes	The Consultee agrees the list of cumulative schemes included in the PEIR.	The list of cumulative schemes included in PEIR Volume 2 Part 1 Appendix 1.5 is agreed. The Council will advise the Applicant if additional schemes it believes should be considered in the assessment of cumulative effects come forward.	Agreed
3.15.2	<p><b>Application Document 6.3.1.5.B ES Appendix 1.5.B Inter-Project Cumulative Effects Long List [APP-092]</b></p> <p><b>Application Document 6.3.1.5.C ES Appendix 1.5.C Inter-Project Cumulative Effects Short List [APP-093]</b></p>	Cumulative Schemes – short list and long list	The Consultee has reviewed the short list and long list following submission of the DCO application and has some updates for inclusion in the list.	<p>The long list and short list are provided within <b>Application Document 6.3.1.5.B ES Appendix 1.5.B Inter-Project Cumulative Effects Long List [APP-092]</b> and <b>Application Document 6.3.1.5.C ES Appendix 1.5.C Inter-Project Cumulative Effects Short List [APP-093]</b>.</p> <p>The assessment can be updated during examination if developments come forward that would make the short list. The Applicant will review the proposed updates to the list from KCC. Any updated assessment (if required) would be provided at a suitable deadline in the examination timetable.</p>	Under discussion
3.15.3	<p><b>Application Document 6.2.3.12 Part 3 Kent Chapter 12 Kent Onshore Scheme Intra-Project Cumulative Effects [APP-072]</b></p> <p><b>Application Document 6.2.3.13 Part 3 Kent Chapter 13 Kent Onshore Scheme Inter-Project Cumulative Effects [APP-073]</b>, <b>Application Document 6.2.4.10 Part 4 Marine Chapter 10 Intra-Project Cumulative Effects [APP-083]</b>, <b>Application Document 6.2.4.11 (B) Part 4 Marine Chapter 11 Inter-Project Cumulative Effects [REP1A-011]</b>and <b>Application Document 6.2.5.2 Part 5 Combined Chapter 2 Project-wide (Combined) Effects of the</b></p>	Conclusions of the Cumulative Effects Assessments	<p>The Consultee is yet to agree with the conclusions set out in the Cumulative Effects Assessment (CEA).</p> <p>The Consultee will review these conclusions in due course, following submission of the DCO application.</p>	The Applicant has set out the conclusions of the Cumulative Effects assessment in <b>Application Document 6.2.3.12 Part 3 Kent Chapter 12 Kent Onshore Scheme Intra-Project Cumulative Effects [APP-072]</b> and <b>Application Document 6.2.3.13 Part 3 Kent Chapter 13 Kent Onshore Scheme Inter-Project Cumulative Effects [APP-073]</b> .	Under discussion

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	KCC Current Position	The Applicant Current Position	Status
	Proposed Project [APP-086]				

# 4. Approvals

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**Signed**

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**On Behalf of** National Grid

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**Name**

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**Position**

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**Date**

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**Signed**

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**On Behalf of** Kent County Council

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**Name**

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**Position**

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**Date**

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## 5. References

- Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. (2024). *Planning Act 2008: Examination stage for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects*. Retrieved from <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/planning-act-2008-examination-stage-for-nationally-significant-infrastructure-projects>
- The Planning Inspectorate. (2015). *Advice Note two: The role of local authorities in the development consent process*. Retrieved from [https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wp-content/ipc/uploads/projects/TR010019/TR010019-Advice-00006-2-Advice\\_note\\_2\\_The%20role%20of%20local%20authorities%20in%20the%20development%20consent%20process.pdf#:~:text=The%20Planning%20Act%202008%20](https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wp-content/ipc/uploads/projects/TR010019/TR010019-Advice-00006-2-Advice_note_2_The%20role%20of%20local%20authorities%20in%20the%20development%20consent%20process.pdf#:~:text=The%20Planning%20Act%202008%20).

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