



Hearing Transcript

Project:	Sea Link
Hearing:	Issue Specific Hearing 3 (ISH3) - Day 2 - Part 4
Date:	26 March 2026

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File Name: SEAL_26APR26_ISH3_PT4.mp3

File Length: 01:51:36

FULL TRANSCRIPT (with timecode)

00:00:06:20 - 00:00:29:14

Time is now three forty five, and the hearing is recommenced. Before we start off, just to say I said I would come back on the reference. The reference number I gave you is to a National Grid document, which I think was a response to comments. I haven't been able track down this specific point unless you've had more success in the break.

00:00:29:16 - 00:00:59:26

Those days at Suffolk County Council, we've had some more success there. So we made the suggestion in our local impact report. So it's rep one one thirty at para fifteen point fifty five, and we made it by reference to Bramford to Twinstead as you cited. Now we've just had a look at the examination report for Bramford to Twinstead. It seems that in that examination, the county council and the two district councils that weren't East Suffolk district council, it was Baber and Mid Suffolk.

00:01:00:01 - 00:01:26:13

And we worked on essentially a joint approach throughout the examination where we were recommending that that fifty decibel threshold. In the present context, we can't see that this is a submission that we've picked up at other deadlines, though I can't for certain say that we haven't. We'll take that away. We'll we'll need to confer with the district. But fundamentally, if they're satisfied, we'll fall in behind them on that point. And we'll provide an update in writing it.

00:01:26:15 - 00:01:33:07

Thank you. That's that's helpful. Mister Mackey, you had a hand up before the break, and would you like to?

00:01:39:08 - 00:01:42:02

Sorry. Could you possibly turn your microphone on?

00:01:46:24 - 00:02:23:25

The remaining items on the agenda are matters which our council feels strongly about, but they are not items upon which we can make a useful contribution which would assist you. For that reason, we were proposing to I'm if you'll forgive me, I'm going to leave you quite shortly. But as a result of the break, I've been tempted to listen to a bit about the air quality. So I was just going to ask you if you'll forgive me for leaving, but also say two other things. First, last evening, I was even less coherent than usual when mentioning the matter of the emergency services.

00:02:24:04 - 00:02:56:24

I think it was left that both the applicant and possibly the county council would come back with some reply to the submissions we have made in the past about the problems that Alder faces with his access to emergency services. And I just want a note to be made of the fact if it is not already, that they weren't gonna come back to us on that. So the other thing was simply since I'm leaving, perhaps it's

rather old fashioned these days. I don't know. I just wanted to thank you all very much indeed for putting up with me for the last two days.

00:02:56:26 - 00:02:57:11

Thanks.

00:02:57:13 - 00:03:04:18

Well, thank you, and apologies. Had I known that was your message, I wouldn't have kept you for the extra fifteen minutes. I do I do apologize.

00:03:04:27 - 00:03:09:07

Can I can I just check as well? Have you arranged the meeting with the applicant?

00:03:10:01 - 00:03:26:17

Madam, yes. We have arranged the meeting. It's taking place next Wednesday. I will try and I will let you know what's happened unless, of course, they were to accept our primary submission, which is that they abandoned the application. Thank you very much.

00:03:26:20 - 00:03:28:05

Thank you very much, mister Mackey.

00:03:32:19 - 00:03:39:22

Would the applicant just like to very briefly comment on the emergency services point, and then we'll move on to the the remainder of the noise agenda?

00:03:43:11 - 00:03:57:10

So I think we'll we'll just have to respond. I mean, it goes back to the mental health and access points, so we'll have to I mean, our assessment doesn't show there to be an issue with access in this respect, but we'll come back with a response.

00:04:03:22 - 00:04:07:24

Item ten point two is operational noise emissions from converter stations and substations.

00:04:09:29 - 00:04:28:01

I'd like to start with Minster Marshes. And a question is whether there's potential need for additional noise mitigation between the site and sandwich based Hackney Marshes site of special scientific interest. Would it be possible to bring up noise contour figure Rep five one two four?

00:04:57:04 - 00:05:04:10

Thank you. Can the applicant very briefly explain what red blobs are that comprise the primary sources of noise indicated in the figures?

00:05:06:11 - 00:05:10:06

David Gray for the applicant. Primarily transformers.

00:05:13:12 - 00:05:49:05

We've can you also confirm that the assessed arrangement takes into account generators that were we've obviously seen assessment from an air quality perspective around generators. Are those my understanding is they were within the space between the converse station and the substation. In the air quality assessment, I don't actually see them. And if those red blobs are transformers, where is the generator in that noise arrangement? David, great

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for the applicant. So this figure shows the normal operation of the convert station and substation. The use of generators is outside of normal operation.

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Okay. Thank you. I hadn't appreciated that point. In that case, would it be possible to see a figure with the backup generators operating as well, so if that could be supplied as an extra figure for deadline six?

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David, go for that. We can provide that.

00:06:22:02 - 00:06:23:03

Okay. Thank you.

00:06:27:15 - 00:07:01:03

It's sort of linked with that. Effectively, questions were around were the red blobs the generators? And if so, did they reflect the spacings that are required from an air quality perspective to minimize impacts on the SSSI from an air quality perspective? And so I think in responding to me with noise control plan, you need to have a conversation with your air quality teams to ensure that the air quality assessment and the noise assessments tie up in terms of the location of those facilities.

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David, great for

00:07:03:00 - 00:07:07:08

the applicant. If I can respond on that point, the there is

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if you'd bear with me a second.

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The I believe it's Figure four of the HRA

00:07:24:18 - 00:07:46:16

includes a figure that shows the maximum noise level from the operation of the convert station and substation. And that considers generators in that maximum level, which may be sufficient for your purposes. It's principally around switchgear, which is the worst case maximum level,

00:07:48:08 - 00:08:00:18

and generator will be quieter than that. So that figure essentially includes the worst case for maximum noise levels from the operation of the substation on the SSSI.

00:08:02:10 - 00:08:07:11

Okay. That's helpful. Thank you. I'll go so sorry. Figure four of the HRA?

00:08:07:28 - 00:08:09:01

That's correct. Yes.

00:08:09:03 - 00:08:10:10

Okay. I'll go back

00:08:10:12 - 00:08:15:14

and I check will we'll clarify the the figure, but I believe correct. that's And

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And if we could just bring that figure back up again momentarily.

00:08:22:27 - 00:08:53:27

There appears to be potentially sort of three to five decibel increase on the southern side of the converter station in the area adjacent to the SSSI and potentially levels in excess of fifty five decibels. Whilst I appreciate it's only a small incursion into the SSSI footprint, Is there a need for any additional screening or barriers on the southern boundary of the site to prevent noise spill into the SSSI?

00:09:01:06 - 00:09:35:26

Doctor James Riley on behalf of the applicant. I'm lead the ecological assessment, which is why I've just stepped up to help with that. So the the the fifty five decibels is the no effect level that we've agreed with Natural England. The disturbance level we've agreed is sixty decibels L_{Amax}, and that's the figure that was just referred to in the HRA. So the question is ensuring sorry, not question. So the need is to ensure that the at the triple s I boundary, the sixty decibel L_{Amax} threshold is not exceeded. And as has already been referred to, we've got modeling in that indicates that it would not be taking into account the worst case noise sources.

00:09:35:28 - 00:09:44:12

So no, there shouldn't be a need for any additional mitigation to achieve that parameter. So the fifty five decibel parameter is is not the assessment threshold for disturbance.

00:09:46:19 - 00:09:55:18

Sorry. My understanding, fifty five decibels is the threshold at which effects begin to occur, and there was an additional allowance of three to five decibels on top of that.

00:09:55:20 - 00:10:06:29

Yes. So so fifty five decibels. I think we do use this terminology in the in the report. Fifty five decibels is going to agree with natural England as the no effect level, if you like. So no no no disturbance level.

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Three a a change of less than three decibels is not perceptible as a change. So that takes you to fifty seven decibels,

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fifty eight decibels even. And then it was agreed with Natural England that being perceptible as a change is not the same as being disturbing. So we agreed a sixty decibel threshold. So so the the threshold we have used for potentially significant disturbance to the investigation is sixty decibels LA max.

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And sorry. And but that is particularly in relation to construction noise rather than operation. That's all noise. So even though it's a long term emission,

00:10:44:01 - 00:10:49:17

that doesn't Yes. That's correct. That is the threshold with respect to construction or operation. That is the threshold we've agreed.

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K. Thank you.

00:10:52:13 - 00:11:10:01

So it changed books and about half an hour. Just wanted to clarify a point with the generators and the transformers. If the generators are running longer than the test hour, the transformers won't be because the system will be off. So the generators only back up the essential systems on-site. Thank you.

00:11:18:09 - 00:11:22:24

And, David Gray, if the applicant's talking to clarify, it's it's figure five of the HRA.

00:11:26:21 - 00:11:27:06

Thank you.

00:11:31:20 - 00:11:34:05

Did sorry. I've got a hand up. EW.

00:11:37:18 - 00:12:14:10

Hi. Emma Waller for Kent Barbergh Trust. I just had a quick question. Has the applicant looked into the cumulative impact, like, noise assessment for the combined noise effect of the approved Weatherly's Hill Solar Farm, which is north of Weatherley's wastewater treatment plant adjacent to the proposed converter station and triple s I. So solar farm will be sandwiched between the converter station and triple s I. So have both projects been assessed in terms of impacts on the triplési together during both construction and operational phases?

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Thank you. Would the applicant like to respond?

00:12:19:24 - 00:12:35:27

Doctor James Riley, on behalf of the applicant, I I can provide an initial discussion on that. So the the the issue of combined effect or cumulative effect comes up where you get overlapping of the noise effects from one project and the noise effects from from another project.

00:12:37:13 - 00:13:15:22

The locations we're talking about, the converter station and what we're talking about the solar farm are some way separate from one another. So the actual effect area of the converter station, which if you look at the maps that you just referred to, the sixty decibel threshold is fairly localized around the converter station, particularly during operation. But also during construction, bearing in mind, we do have seasonal restrictions on construction as well. So there's that element as well to avoid certain parts of the breeding season, which of course have been discussed before. So provided that each project mitigates their own contribution, that potential for a cumulative effect would effectively be addressed because they both be reducing themselves to an acceptable level.

00:13:15:24 - 00:13:24:01

So we effectively address our impact cumulatively by ensuring that we do not exceed the assessment threshold that we've agreed with Natural England.

00:13:25:04 - 00:13:25:19

Thank you.

00:13:37:09 - 00:13:38:25

We'll move on to

00:13:40:25 - 00:14:19:08

looking at conversations in general in terms of operational noise. Recently carrying out an unaccompanied site inspection at Viking Link Converse Station, which appeared to be operating very quietly during the nighttime period. AS dash zero sixty six provided details of similar designs of conversations and substations and stated that Viking Link was required to achieve a twenty five decibel free field rating level. Given that such a low level was achieved for Viking Link, a similar converter station, can the applicant explain why it considers the level five decibels below background as requested by the councils is not achievable for the C Link converter stations?

00:14:21:05 - 00:15:00:28

David Grave for the applicant. So the Viking Link limit was a cumulative limit of thirty five million which was agreed with the local authority at for the Donington area of Lincolnshire. And that limit included several other projects. I believe they're wind farms. There's at least one wind farm as well as the converter station. So it was a cumulative thirty five dB limit. So that twenty five dB limit was set such that it was ten dB under so that it wouldn't affect the thirty five dB limit cumulatively.

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And so just to clarify that point, the other specific on Viking Link is that the distance to receptors is greater than at Saksmondim, so that they can essentially achieve a lower level via purely from distance. It's also noted that their assessment was also based on a FEED stage design. I'll refrain from saying indicative, but it was an early design stage as well similar to the C Link proposals.

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With regards to the five dB below background

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request by local authorities, we

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can't commit to that as

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a limit

00:15:51:22 - 00:15:55:03

principally for two reasons. Firstly, we don't think we can achieve it.

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And

00:15:56:09 - 00:16:22:22

secondly, it isn't required to be achieved from policy point of view. It's essentially a no effect level, whereas policy requires avoidance of significant effects and for adverse effects to be mitigated and minimized. So the way we framed our revised commitments for operational noise,

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the new commitment augments the previous commitment, but both serve a purpose. So the thirty four dB limit proposed reflects the lowest observed adverse effect level as defined with regards to various guidance documents, including World Health Organization yes, and eight hundred thousand thirty three with reference to BS1142, which with regards to absolute noise level in low noise environments.

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So achieving a level below the law therefore complies with both elements of the policy to avoid significant adverse effects and mitigate and minimize adverse effects. And so in itself, that commitment is above and beyond the requirements of policy. The second commitment relates to mitigating and minimizing in order to aim to achieve the requirements of the local authority local authorities, sorry.

00:17:38:16 - 00:17:59:25

So that is also very much over and above the requirements of policy to try and achieve their aims. we So have one commitment to satisfy policy requirements and one commitment to aim to achieve the requirements of local authority as far as possible above and beyond the requirements of policy.

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And note we've got a couple of hands up, but I'd like to hear from the local authorities in the first instance. So can I go to East Suffolk first?

00:18:18:15 - 00:18:24:05

So Mark Westman Smith for East Suffolk Council. Mr Kemp's going to respond to that.

00:18:24:19 - 00:18:29:13

Good afternoon, sir. Mark Kemp's principal environmental protection officer, East Suffolk Council.

00:18:31:01 - 00:19:13:04

So I guess just to probably go over what our requirements are in the first instance, the the the minus five dB on background is is what we what we request. It's not uncommon for local authorities to do so. This is based, primarily on BS four one four two being the the the low background noise level being indicative of a low impact, minus five dB on background taking account of things like uncertainty and such like With a with a project of this size, in a low background sound level area, we acknowledge that there are difficulties in in achieving that.

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And so, therefore, it's an aspirational

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target. However, what we do require is that an operational noise limit is proposed, clearly proposed. And and, obviously, thirty four dB has been bandied around, but it's the first time I've seen it proposed as an operational at least not even outside the react levels, which I've recently seen. What we need to know is that that is the lowest achievable rating level that this current design can reach.

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And that, of course, with policy in terms of low and so now the applicant has just stated it does accord with policy. With Scottish Power Renewables,

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EA one and and two. The the lower and sole was set in line with BS four and four two with greater than plus five dB being the low, greater than plus ten dB being the sole. LineLink, similarly, has committed to that. Not sure where this thirty four dB sits in terms of low and sole. I don't know what the low and sole has been set for for for for SeaLink. And so we need to be comfortable that it is it does actually satisfy policy.

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On top of that, if thirty four dB is the lowest that can be possibly achieved, that needs to be justified. We can't just accept that.

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We then need a commitment that that that's based on a generic design. Recent technical note that's been supplied by the applicant to us states that's based on a on a generic design. But detailed design, we require a firm commitment to to to go lower if possible.

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Other projects have done that. EA one and two undertook supply chain engagement during application examination stages to actually start refining their design as well as providing that commitment. It's not possible for the applicant to do that in this case for whatever reason, then we at least expect that commitment.

00:21:34:17 - 00:22:08:00

But that's basically basically our position. It outlines where five minus five dB on background comes from. I accept that it's an aspirational target, but we do need to get that that that noise level down as as low as reasonably possible. The use of eight two three three, for this situation, this situation is out of scope for eight two three three. Eight two three three is for when you're building something quiet next to something noisy, so a residential property next to a road or something, or whilst it's used to to indicate internal noise levels and things and and issues.

00:22:08:02 - 00:22:21:15

Thank you. That that point's already been made. I'm I'm aware of that point from the last hearing. If you don't have anything else to add on top of that, I'd like to hear from district council as well on their position.

00:22:22:11 - 00:22:23:05

Thank you.

00:22:23:27 - 00:22:57:19

Oh, sorry. Thank you. Yes. I I accept that even at thirty four, that's incredibly low and having a negligible impact on, in sunny anyway, the nearest receptor residential and score is over five hundred meters away. But I will sort of query one thing, which is in the operational Kent operational noise assessment table one point six. The assessment actually does show you can achieve five dB below. You've got a minus twelve dB rating daytime and a six minus six dB at night.

00:22:57:21 - 00:23:36:14

So if it's stated in the ES, I I I don't understand why it wouldn't be achievable in Kent anyway. And I think sorry. And just to say, in in the second round of questions, we did propose some limits to to be defined. I think it was twenty four and twenty four night and thirty day along with the frequency analysis between the LAeq and the l a and the LA and the LCEq, not to exceed ten dB to pull out any unusual frequencies.

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Thank you.

00:23:38:11 - 00:23:41:22

Thank you. Would the applicant like to respond?

00:23:42:14 - 00:23:54:10

Yes. David Gray for the applicant. Two points. So we, in principle, agree with the local authorities with regards to as low as reasonably possible. So that is why commitments

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NV07 and

00:23:59:29 - 00:24:11:03

NVO nine relate to a commitment for the design to be as low as reasonably possible and for for the developers to to take to take that on.

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The thirty four DB limit in terms of the sole is purely for policy. It's purely we will it's a backstop. We will achieve policy requirements. The other requirements are to seek to achieve what the local authority are asking for as far as can practically be done. On the point regarding

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Kent and the fact that the operational noise levels were indicating that they may be achieved, the assessment does indicate that that the five dB below background may be achieved based on that design.

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Given the stage of the design, we just require flexibility in the design for all the constraints that may affect things like the layout. We've already mentioned things like the generators needing to move because of

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the chip less and things like that. So maybe all the non acoustic constraints that affect the design of the comfort stations and the substations that mean that the noise levels are different in some way to what has been modeled. But

00:25:32:06 - 00:25:52:09

and as such, the the the the are set such that policy is is met. And within the constraints that are set on the developer, the noise levels are as low as as reasonably practical considering the non acoustic constraints that they'll need to consider that weren't obviously considered in the feed stage design that's been modeled.

00:25:53:27 - 00:26:27:27

Thank you. Are within the response to deadline five, we've obviously had comments from both East Suffolk Council and Thanet District Council suggesting operational noise controls as part of the DCO. I am of the view that given the importance of this matter to the local communities, a DCO requirement may be the best way to go. Given that you're already due to have a tripartite meeting around the construction noise requirement.

00:26:28:02 - 00:26:34:06

I think the same might go for an operational noise requirement. From my reading,

00:26:36:18 - 00:26:55:25

I had identified potentially East Suffolk Council's control as a potential control. But I think we have that tripartite meeting and come back to us ideally at deadline six to respond on a joint solution, if that's possible.

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David Greff, the applicant. Deadline seven may be more feasible just around the Easter holidays, but as soon as we can.

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I think the problem with Deadline seven is it doesn't give any opportunity for any comeback if there is a need to have a further round of comment or review of that. So it's an urgent need, effectively.

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Yes, sir. We appreciate that. So we'll certainly aim for deadline six in the next two weeks.

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Thank you.

00:27:37:11 - 00:28:05:09

Obviously, barring that, we will make an executive decision based on the the material in front of us. Ideally, would prefer it's come from yourselves as a group. Thank you. I know Mr. Thornlie Taylor has a hand up. He's been waiting patiently. Mr. Taylor, just before you start, just to ensure that you're not repeating your written statements, which have been responded to, so I I would hope this is a new point. Thank you.

00:28:05:11 - 00:28:37:12

It is indeed, sir. But on behalf of CEs, we do welcome the prospect of requirements in the DCO rather than a re hack. That's a point I made at ISH two. I'd make a a a number of points. First of all, we must remind ourselves that this is one of the quietest environments in the United Kingdom. Over sixty years, I've been measuring background noise levels, and sixteen dBA, which is the lowest I ninety that's to be found in the environmental statement, is as low as I have ever measured.

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And the only other time I've measured nearly as low as that was also in East Anglia. And so we are faced with a very special acoustical case. Having a requirement in the DCO would be an excellent development, but it's very important that it's drafted to cover the points that need to be covered. We've already referred to the fact that we should be talking about cumulative noise levels from all developments, whether or not it looks at this stage as if they would contribute significantly.

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But if there are noise limits in a requirement, they must be for they must be cumulative ones. And the words that were drafted and in answer to two n b one, the the applicant offered some words to go into the REAC that not quite complete, just because of the absence of reference to cumulative noise levels, but also when referring to British standard four one four two l a r t, you need to set out that t is fifteen minutes, and that's not in the words that were offered for addition to the REAC.

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The

00:29:53:12 - 00:30:27:01

question of application of BS four one four two is not as straightforward as it might seem because it is not a precise standard. Two experts can read the same document and without making any errors can come up with different answers. Not there are two particular aspects to that. One is that when you do have widely varying background noise levels ranging from sixteen up to twenty something or even thirty something, it offers suggestions as to how you get a single number out of that big range.

00:30:27:03 - 00:30:55:26

A lot of people pick one of the suggestions and run with it and doing a statistical analysis of the 1990s, but that's only one of their offerings. And also, there can be disputes over context and also the matter of the tonal character correction. It is highly desirable that the drafting of the requirement in the DCO is as precise as possible, that it has specific numbers in it where that is possible.

00:30:59:04 - 00:31:11:12

There are some other noise points to be made, which are not explicitly in the wording of the agenda item, and I refer to the question of DBC and DBA that we talked about at the end of ISH two.

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We are coming back to low frequency noise at the end part of the agenda.

00:31:17:05 - 00:31:22:18

Good. Excellent. So if I may come back at that point. So those are the points that we make at this stage.

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Thank you. I think those points noted. And

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just in relation to the two n v one points about the fifteen minutes time interval, is that something that could be taken into account in the react?

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David Gray for the applicant. Yes, absolutely. The T is essentially continuous because it would be seen to be steady noise. So fifteen minutes would be appropriate.

00:31:52:06 - 00:31:53:03

Yeah. Thank you.

00:32:06:18 - 00:32:11:07

Sorry. I just wanted to talk briefly about oh, sorry. Mister Stevens, you had a hand up.

00:32:12:13 - 00:32:35:12

Yes. Very briefly. Just responding to the point that Emma Wallavaid from Kent Wildlife Trust and the response. It's my understanding if you've got two distinct sound sources that overlap, that can be constructive as well as destructive interference, and therefore, you can get a much louder sound if you have constructive interference. So I don't know if that's taken been into account. Thank you.

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Thank you. That point's noted.

00:32:40:04 - 00:33:11:18

So we'll move on to Friston substation. React provision NV twelve now secures a rating level of five decibels below background noise levels for Friston substations at any noise sensitive receptor when assessed at a position one meter from the facade of the receptor, in brackets, free field equivalent. Can the applicant confirm the background noise levels that would be relied on to achieve this? Is it a reference to the thirty one dB LA ninety referenced in table one point one of the operational noise information informative?

00:33:13:06 - 00:33:25:04

David Gray for the applicant. We can certainly clarify that point. The intention would be to use the Scottish Power baseline, which is the data that was used in that appendix.

00:33:31:09 - 00:33:41:21

Yeah. Thank you. And just to clarify for my own purposes, isn't one meter still a facade level rather than a free field level? Sorry, I'm just

00:33:42:10 - 00:33:55:24

Yeah. So in terms of the prediction, you predict the free field level at the facade position rather than it being a facade measurement.

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So it's essentially saying the free field level at reception location.

00:34:08:24 - 00:34:09:09

Thank you.

00:34:20:07 - 00:34:48:00

Obviously, we've talked about local concerns regarding operational noise and the need to secure requirements in relation to convert stations. I am leaning as well towards securing requirements in relation to the substation. And I note that Suffolk County Council had a model of importing the SPR requirements into the draft DCO, which was set out in their rep five thousand one eighty one. I'm hoping that reference is correct.

00:34:50:00 - 00:34:57:14

I don't know if the applicant has had an opportunity to look at that as a possible model for an operational noise control.

00:34:59:16 - 00:35:14:06

Just to clarify, we're talking about Frist and substation. Frist and substation. Yes. It's a slightly technical point, but I'll try and make it as straightforward as possible. Obviously, Scottish Power substations are separate,

00:35:15:27 - 00:35:27:13

aren't part of our application, whereas the National Grid substation at Friston is part of the Scottish Power application. So

00:35:29:27 - 00:35:36:16

their limits include the cumulative effect of all three substations that are part of their application.

00:35:40:05 - 00:35:43:23

The slight nuance there is that the National Grid substation doesn't include

00:35:44:03 - 00:36:08:22

I appreciate the point there. My understanding was the mechanism proposed by Suffolk County Council to get is around the situation that you're not in control of the other two substations and effectively imposes the requirement onto the SeaLink project. So it sort of effectively transposes the requirements as if you were applying the SPR

00:36:10:13 - 00:36:14:22

requirement. Okay. Yeah. No. I think I understand.

00:36:14:25 - 00:36:29:15

Yeah. David, great for the applicant. say I'd it's a slightly technical point. So it doesn't work the way County that Council have proposed it because it cumulatively if

00:36:32:07 - 00:36:57:22

Frist and Assumption were at that threshold at that limit, which it wouldn't be because there's no operational plan during normal operation, cumulatively it would then exceed Scottish Power's limit. So our the limits we've proposed were essentially ten dB under the Scottish Power limits such that as a backstop essentially. So that

00:36:59:22 - 00:37:14:29

the addition of Friston with the Scottish Power substations, the cumulative level of those two limits wouldn't exceed the Scottish Power limits cumulatively for the three. So it's essentially coming under sufficiently that

00:37:16:26 - 00:37:22:12

we wouldn't add such that cumulatively their limits would be exceeded if that

00:37:22:17 - 00:37:24:24

Yeah. I appreciate what you mean.

00:37:24:26 - 00:37:27:03

Yeah. Which is in the spirit of what

00:37:28:23 - 00:37:35:05

their limits were given that the National Grid substation didn't have any operational plans. Yeah.

00:37:35:29 - 00:38:01:12

Okay. Mr. Burton. You, sir. James Burton for CEAS. Sorry to come in now. I wanted to come in earlier. Just just to make sure that, if nothing else, the applicant has understood that at the moment, and I've looked at the latest draft DCO and the rear, but at the moment, the latest draft DCO, certainly as I read it, does not in any way secure any operational noise control.

00:38:01:14 - 00:38:05:00

I'm I'm aware of that, and that's why we're having this discussion at the moment. Thank you.

00:38:05:02 - 00:38:05:17

Excuse

00:38:07:19 - 00:38:08:04

me.

00:38:21:19 - 00:38:23:02

If the

00:38:25:05 - 00:38:35:10

the Suffolk County Council model doesn't work, is there an alternative form of wording that the applicant is prepared to propose as a DCO requirement to secure that level?

00:38:35:27 - 00:39:08:23

David, go for the applicant. I think the simplest option is to simply have limits ten dB below the limit stated in the in the switch power application, which is essentially mathematically the same as what what we've said with regards to being five dB below. We referenced five dB below, so it lined up with East of the Council's request to be five dB below. But on reflection, it may it may be clearer just to put the put the value in.

00:39:10:09 - 00:39:14:02

But as as a requirement rather than as a re anchor provision?

00:39:17:05 - 00:39:25:15

You're filing for the applicant. So we've we've obviously proposed it as a React commitment, n o seven well, n o nine is the specific one, I think, for Preston substation.

00:39:28:01 - 00:39:45:26

That's that is secured. So contrary to mister Burton, it is it is secured via the DCO and the the fact that React's secured, and it is a limit. So we hear what you say, sir, about whether it should be a requirement. We can take that away, but our current control approach is is through the through the React.

00:39:49:00 - 00:39:51:17

I think given, again,

00:39:53:02 - 00:40:11:17

strength of feeling in terms of local concerns around the controls, I think a clear control on the face of the order would be the optimal way forward. So again, given you're having a tripartite meeting, can you wrap that up as a matter? So there'll be three different requirements to look at in the course of that meeting.

00:40:14:15 - 00:40:16:08

Sorry, I didn't see which of you

00:40:16:29 - 00:40:59:23

Mr. Marney? You. Sorry. Michael Marney from Princeton Parish Council. I have to say I've had great difficulty following the logic of National Grid in relation to how the requirement would work. And, obviously, I agree with the comments endorsed in relation to the REAC. I mean, even in terms of how the it is currently expressed in the REAC, like, it's NV twelve. If there is a separate requirement in the C Link DCO, the question I think then still arises about how that requirement interacts with requirement twenty seven in the e a two DCO, whereby all three substations it's but ultimately, it's one site.

00:40:59:26 - 00:41:37:08

All three substations are calculated together, the e a two e a two substation, e a one n, and National Grid. In terms of discussions in the examination for those two projects, the the it proceeded on the basis that the National Grid substation would not make any noise at all in normal operation. Therefore, it was put in there, but really the noise that would be coming out of that site would solely relate to the Scottish Power substation. So whilst I welcome the move along a journey to having a requirement for National Grid substation, I think history is is important here.

00:41:38:16 - 00:42:17:18

So and I the other thing that's slightly concerned me, and I appreciate the attention to detail in relation to a transformer appearing in the National Grid substation because that's not been mentioned before, and I've not studied this plan before. I have now following your question. But it also says, well as the transformer listed as in the equipment, there's also a number of other air insulated switchgear components there. And in this examination, the noise coming from the National Grid substation has been predicated on its a a GIS substation.

00:42:17:20 - 00:42:54:03

So the question is, what is AIS equipment doing in the GIS substation? And the low noise supposedly coming from the GIS substation was based on gas insulators, which, again, not making much noise. So we now put this AIS up and AIS equipment as well. So all of this becoming is a bit of an unholy mix between does the National Grid substation make a noise or not? If so, what is the limit? And then how if there is a separate limit in the ceiling DCO, how does that interact with requirement twenty seven in the a two DCO? I we're getting a lot I'm just getting very confused as to what the situation is.

00:42:54:05 - 00:42:54:20

Thank you.

00:42:54:22 - 00:43:01:16

No. Those those points are appreciated and occupy a lot of my thinking time at the moment. Would the applicant like to respond?

00:43:02:00 - 00:43:35:21

James Buckley on behalf of the applicant. Yes. Technically, is AIS equipment within substation, but there is in every GIS substation. So cable ceiling ends, surge arresters, earthen poles are generally AIS. On a lot of GIS substations, they don't make any noise. The RCVT or VT is a voltage transformer. It's a very small bit of equipment that sends telematics to back to the systems we use and will not make any noise. It's not a transformer like the large two seven five k v to four hundred transformers.

00:43:35:23 - 00:44:09:10

So it's and we've answered that in the e x q threes, but they don't make noise. Although they do say transformer transforms what it measures around the cable into a signal and sends that back into the system. But, yeah, AIS is is is silent effectively and apart from a small which you get off the other headlines anyway. In terms of the noise of that designed substation, it is the same noise that has been submitted as part of the SPR operational noise plan.

00:44:09:12 - 00:44:42:00

So we have that design already that has been submitted part of the SPR DCO requirements in the RDD process. So that has already been assessed in terms of the noise that this this the Princeton substation, Killam Lane substation will make in comparison with the two SPR substations, which is now currently going through the discharge process with Scottish Power. So that's why we are confident that the noise requirement we put forward in the REAC achieves both what we need and still maintains what Scottish Power needs.

00:44:47:23 - 00:45:12:17

Thank you very much, doctor Hunt. James Burton for SEAS. Sir, we're we're very concerned based on what mister Flanagan said few minutes a ago that the applicant has not itself understood or certainly is making a submission to you that is not in fact matched by its draft DCO. And this is a point that applies not only to noise, but anything else that you would wish to control regarding

00:45:12:21 - 00:45:13:06

Can we

00:45:13:08 - 00:45:13:23

just stick

00:45:13:25 - 00:45:14:14

to noise?

00:45:14:17 - 00:45:51:04

The the conversation noise. Yes. So the way that the DCO is presented as finding the React into the DCO and making what's in the REAC a requirement in that incorporation manner is not worded in a way that is apt to cover operational impacts. And I know, sir, you you you have this point, but, clearly, the applicant does not. So requirement five of schedule three, which is on electronic page one zero two, the draft DCA, is is the is the requirement, and it's not an operational requirement and nor indeed is six.

00:45:51:07 - 00:45:56:20

I have I have picked up that point. There is a point to the agenda tomorrow to discuss I that particular

00:45:57:16 - 00:46:02:01

was concerned. Mr. Flanagan's belief it did, but it doesn't. Thank you, sir.

00:46:03:09 - 00:46:06:22

I don't propose to talk about that now because we will pick it up tomorrow.

00:46:13:11 - 00:46:33:27

I haven't heard from East Suffolk Council regarding substation and the potential to secure the the noise controls via requirement. I understand that's what is desired by the councils. Do you want to add anything else to the discussion at this point in time?

00:46:38:18 - 00:46:50:03

Mark Wissensmith for East Suffolk Council. No, sir, you understand our position, and we're happy to take that up in the proposed tripartite meeting. Thank you.

00:46:51:00 - 00:46:51:17

You.

00:46:54:06 - 00:47:21:13

Unless there are any further comments on Friston substation, I'd like to move on then to the final item in this agenda, which is on low frequency noise. Now I appreciate that Cees are likely to respond at the following deadline on the low frequency noise assessment, but in the interest of expediency and given the late stage in the examination, I'd like to ask Mr. Thorny Taylor for his initial comments on the low frequency noise assessment, if he has any. Thank

00:47:21:15 - 00:47:59:24

you, sir. At the towards the end of the noise section of ISH two, I mentioned that a way of evaluating the need to consider that low frequency noise and give special consideration to it is to calculate $d b c$ minus $d b a$. And if that number is large, then it's necessary to look in more detail at low frequency noise effects. The applicant seems to have misunderstood that, and what we have is an assessment of noise with comparing DBC from the development with DBC ambient and background, which is something different.

00:48:00:08 - 00:48:36:17

I realized that if I sit down with two documents side by side, I can subtract the DVCs from the DBA and get there in the end, but that isn't really the approach that we were looking for. And what was, I

think, requested by the XA was just to prepare a table of DBC minus DBA figures to see if, in any case, that difference was large enough for there to be a need to take special into special consideration low frequency noise at those locations.

00:48:39:20 - 00:48:41:13

Thank you. Would the applicant like to respond?

00:48:43:06 - 00:48:45:21

Certainly. David Gray for the applicant. So

00:48:47:26 - 00:49:08:18

again, it might just get slightly technical, and I'll try and curb that. So DBCDBA comparison has a place, but it is a relatively crude screening exercise screening tool to determine in the absence of better data,

00:49:10:16 - 00:49:41:11

the spectral content of an of a broadband DBA level. So broadband DBA level, which we which we're not talking about, a broadband DBA level essentially reflects what we hear as humans. The a weighting is an equal weighting curve that mirrors human hearing sensitivity. So if if you only had a DB a level, it gives you no information about the the frequency content of that sound.

00:49:41:13 - 00:50:25:02

So if you were then wanting to mitigate that sound, you may underestimate the mitigation if you only consider that it's a DBA level if that sound contains low frequencies because low frequencies are more difficult to attenuate, that that is accepted. So d b comparison with DBC. So DBC simply is a different filter. It's nothing to do with perception or what we hear. It simply includes low frequencies in the filter so that if you compare DBC with DBA, if DBA roughly equals DBC, you know that the sound you're dealing with is predominantly mid to high frequencies.

00:50:25:05 - 00:50:28:08

If dBc is greater than dBA

00:50:29:29 - 00:51:03:01

and we we we we tend to say ten dB is sort of the threshold. But I I I think so kind of at any level, the higher it is, the more low frequency content you have. So so given limited data about a sound, you can use a comparison of d b c and d b a to determine the spectral content roughly of that sound. And and that's useful to know because if you then have low frequencies, you can then adjust your mitigation strategy accordingly to to target those low frequencies.

00:51:03:08 - 00:51:39:04

So I've I've said repeatedly in the absence of better data. So it's it's very crude if you're only dealing with broadband levels. We're not. We have the data. We know what transformers sound like. We know their acoustic characteristics. So in Nashville, we'd have some three hundred substations, approximately one thousand transformers around the country at sites as quiet, if not quiet, than this with receptors as close, if not close, say in fact, it's quite a sizable distance compared to some substations at this location and conversation.

00:51:41:24 - 00:52:03:19

So, essentially, we we we know what we're doing with with transformers, and we know the acoustic characteristics of them. And we know that they generate low frequency sound at a hundred hertz. Noting that hundred hertz isn't particularly low frequency. It's it's it's it's a low frequency, but not a very low frequency. So we understand the noise

00:52:05:12 - 00:52:35:20

characteristics of transformers. We don't need to do a crude screening exercise to determine whether it's low frequency. We know we're actively saying it's a transformer. It generates low frequency noise. We use worst case assumptions in the assessment. So we assume all the energy is at a hundred hertz. In reality, it isn't. In reality, that level is is lower than the first, and that energy is distributed to the higher frequencies that are easier to attenuate. So by assuming all the energy is at a hundred hertz, that's a worst case assumption.

00:52:35:29 - 00:52:47:28

Now the key point and and to be fair to to mister Thornley Taylor, the the key point in doing this is to determine if you're dealing with low frequencies and so that you can tackle the mitigation accordingly.

00:52:49:14 - 00:53:23:11

We know we're dealing with low frequencies with transformers, and the mitigation tackles that accordingly. So in the ES, we talk about a twenty dB enclosure, for example. What that means potentially to be fair, isn't clear in the ES. When we talk about twenty dB enclosure, we mean it's twenty dB reduction at a hundred hertz. So we've got two and that's a worst case assumption for a standard natural grid enclosure. So what we have is two worst case assumptions on top of each other.

00:53:23:13 - 00:53:53:21

So we have a higher level of one hundred hertz sound level, then reality is lower. And we have the lowest attenuation level at one hundred hertz. So in reality, that level is is lower. That because the energy is at higher frequencies in reality and because an enclosure that provides twenty dB attenuation at one hundred hertz will provide more attenuation at higher frequencies, the overall reduction from the enclosure is greater than twenty dB. So

00:53:56:11 - 00:54:08:09

these are worst case assumptions stacked on worst case assumptions, and this is the standard way that we assess transformers in National Grid, operational noise from transformers, because it provides worst case answers. It's standard methodology.

00:54:10:18 - 00:54:19:29

And, essentially, we we we know what we're dealing with with low frequencies, and our mitigation takes account of that. And it it doesn't require

00:54:22:19 - 00:54:31:01

we'll look and say crude, but I can't think of a better word, screen exercise to to tell us that. We we know, and we tackle it accordingly with with the mitigation.

00:54:34:02 - 00:54:37:13

Thank you. Would mister Taylor like to come back at all?

00:54:39:19 - 00:55:33:22

Thank you, sir. The issue really is determination of the tonal character correction that comes out of b s four one four two. And funnily enough, after you've put an enclosure on transformer, its hundred hertz pure tone becomes more prominent than it was before you enclosed it because as it's just been explained, you'll be attenuating higher frequencies in the system more than you will be attenuating at a hundred hertz. So what I'm most anxious about is that the need to apply what the maximum is the six dB addition to the physical measured noise level for tonal character in a transformer is properly assessed, and there isn't dispute controversy, lack of clarity, and so on that leads to some other number being applied.

00:55:33:24 - 00:56:02:11

Because if the words that we currently see in the proposed additions to the REAC aren't moved into a requirement in the DCO, as I was saying earlier, it is critical that there's absolutely precise meaning involved. And one of the solutions is to assume now that transformers are terminal and to take that six dB penalty into the system and take it off the thirty four and make it twenty eight. That's the the fail safe way of approaching.

00:56:05:08 - 00:56:06:26

Thank you, mister Thorny Taylor.

00:56:09:05 - 00:56:40:18

David Grace with the applicant. So the thirty four limit is a is is a is a rating limit, so it would include that penalty. So the absolute level would be lower proportionate to the to thirty four to take account of that penalty. And I would agree with Mr. Fonley Taylor that clarity on how that internal penalty is derived can be added to the wording. ESOFA Council have included wording around the reference method from BS one for two.

00:56:40:20 - 00:56:43:08

I think that would suffice.

00:56:43:10 - 00:57:19:16

Yes. I noted the tonal point within within the the requirement. So that's I think that would be satisfactory from my point of view. I had one last question for mister Thornlie Taylor. At ISH two, sees touch on the potential for constructive interference to be priced to six decibels rather than three decibel increase in noise levels. While I appreciate the hypothetical risk, can you refer me to any actual examples or case studies where this has been an issue at converter or substation sites, and what mitigation was required?

00:57:20:15 - 00:57:23:28

To actual sites that are built and operating

00:57:24:07 - 00:57:24:22

Yes.

00:57:24:24 - 00:57:58:13

Is your question. No, sir. It arose in the case of Princeton because of the proximity of more than one unit, but I can't tell you a site where you can go and hear the effect. But it's it's a fundamental part of acoustics. It's a fundamental mathematical feature of the acoustics of two sources of the same frequency. But the the answer to your question is I I can't give you a specific project where you can find out what has actually happened.

00:57:59:12 - 00:58:08:07

Thank you. That's helpful to understand. And that was all I had on noise and vibration. Unless there are any further comments, Mr. Burton?

00:58:08:21 - 00:58:15:10

It's just a suggestion, sir, and it partly relates to what happened, as I understand it, at the SVR examination.

00:58:17:10 - 00:58:28:02

Would it be helpful to the panel if Mr. Thorny Taylor was at this tripartite noise discussion? Is that something I should be trying to encourage Cs to facilitate?

00:58:29:01 - 00:58:43:07

I think the councils, as the discharging authorities and having responsibility for noise, are pretty well able to deal with those matters themselves, and they're sufficiently professional to do that. So I thank you for the offer, but I don't think it's necessary.

00:58:46:25 - 00:58:50:22

We'll move on to item eleven, air quality then.

00:58:52:13 - 00:58:55:21

Yesterday's traffic and transport session made clear that

00:59:00:06 - 00:59:02:06

apologies. Just give a moment to change.

00:59:27:29 - 01:00:01:17

We'll start with the item eleven point one on cumulative emissions assessment. Yesterday's traffic and transport session made clear that traffic modeling for Suffolk remains a matter of disagreement. Can I just confirm whether East Suffolk Council or Thanet District Council considers there's any likelihood that revised traffic modeling would affect the data used to underpin the cumulative emissions assessment or impact the conclusions of significance that they have in relation to vehicle emissions? And I'll start with the East Suffolk Council and then go to Danit.

01:00:17:14 - 01:00:18:13

East Suffolk Council?

01:00:20:02 - 01:00:41:11

Mark Westman Smith for East Suffolk Council. I think we'll have to look at any further modeling to make a judgment on that because conceptually, yes, that's possible. But I think our position is we're comfortable with where matters lie in terms of air quality and emissions from traffic and don't have any

01:00:43:04 - 01:00:46:17

major concerns on that or concerns we're putting to you. So

01:00:48:03 - 01:00:56:03

I think you can take it that we are content with where things lie at the moment, but we'll have to just, you know, check that continues to be the case in light of any further modeling.

01:00:56:10 - 01:00:59:26

Okay. Thank you. That's helpful. And then Planet District Council?

01:01:07:18 - 01:01:15:21

Good afternoon, Henry Johnson Panic Council. We've got nothing further to add. I can't I can't give any further guidance on that, I'm afraid. Thank you.

01:01:16:16 - 01:01:19:20

Okay. Thank you. And does the applicant want to comment?

01:01:20:02 - 01:01:33:03

Thank you. So Hugh, I'll go to the applicant. Very briefly, we say that the the junction modeling does not and cannot affect the emissions assessment. Hannah Dennett, the air quality expert, could perhaps very briefly explain why that would be useful.

01:01:34:25 - 01:02:03:25

Hannah Dennett speaking on behalf of the applicant. Yeah. The additional junction capacity modeling that assesses junction operation focusing on queuing and delay at peak time, It identifies whether junctions operate within capacity but does not alter daily traffic flows, and that is what we use in the assessment, twenty four hour ADT. So this additional modeling undertaken by the traffic and transport team does not affect the air quality assessment.

01:02:04:07 - 01:02:06:05

Okay. Thank you. That's helpful.

01:02:10:17 - 01:02:33:13

Would it be possible to provide an explanation in layman's terms as to how the AADT data presented in the Cumulative Vehicle Emissions Assessment relates to the peak traffic data that we see in the traffic and transport technical notes? What I'm really trying to understand is where the base data set is effectively that reports into both the air quality assessment and then the transport assessment, how those two things relate.

01:02:38:16 - 01:02:57:04

We use twenty four hour ADT, and we use the cumulative flows provided by traffic and transport. And that was based on the peak peak hour, and it's included its worst case flows.

01:02:59:06 - 01:03:04:15

Not sure that so sorry. Would you mind clarifying exactly what you've required?

01:03:07:29 - 01:03:21:09

He had some comments from East Suffolk Council that's quite difficult to read across between the traffic and transport assessment and the presentation of traffic data, and then the air quality assessment and and the the traffic data used in the air quality assessment.

01:03:24:22 - 01:03:46:16

Hannah Dennis speaking on behalf of the applicant. Thank you for clarifying. Yeah. So the data that we use in air quality modeling is day different to the data used in traffic and transport assessments. But I can confirm that the data we use is is from is from the same forecast, and we were it's consistent with the transport modeling.

01:03:49:27 - 01:04:02:21

Sorry. Is there a is there a base dataset that is present within the application materials that both sets of data are extracted from? Is can you signpost me to a specific set of data?

01:04:07:27 - 01:04:13:18

I'll Hannah Dennett speaking on behalf of the applicant. I'll I'll get back to you just to clarify that point. Thank you.

01:04:13:20 - 01:04:14:12

Okay. Thank you.

01:04:22:05 - 01:04:38:26

Suffolk County Council in Rep five one seven eight noted that the construction traffic management plan allows for diversion of light construction traffic through Saksmundum. Can the applicant confirm whether there's a need to screen any of the Saxmundom road links for the purposes of air quality assessment? And if not, should they be?

01:04:55:23 - 01:05:04:25

You're trying to give the Atkins? So the the references to potential diversion through Saksmandum, sorry, could I ask you just to clarify briefly?

01:05:08:04 - 01:05:11:02

Right. Apologies. Rep five one seven eight,

01:05:13:27 - 01:05:20:02

it referenced the construction traffic management plan allowing for diversion of, like, construction traffic through South London.

01:05:24:11 - 01:05:36:09

Keith Lanigan for the applicant. I think rather than try and answer on the hoof and give you half an answer, if we can we'll take it away, either come back first thing tomorrow morning or if not in writing, if that's satisfactory.

01:05:36:11 - 01:05:37:27

That's fine. Thank you. Thank you.

01:05:42:02 - 01:05:50:00

Did Suffolk County Council want to comment on that matter at all? Or are you just happy to defer to the

01:05:50:12 - 01:05:52:14

We're happy. Yeah. We're happy to defer to you, Suffolk.

01:05:52:16 - 01:05:59:08

Yeah. Do East Suffolk have any issues with diversion of traffic through Saksmandom from an air quality perspective?

01:06:09:11 - 01:06:26:16

Mark Westman Smith through Suffolk Council. I think we will have to come back on that one as well, if that's okay. I've got Rebecca Brooks with me, but she hasn't seen that proposal at the moment, so we will have to come back.

01:06:27:12 - 01:06:32:20

Thank you. Yes. If you could. Is it something that you'd be able to come back before the close of the hearings?

01:06:34:27 - 01:06:40:25

I don't see why we wouldn't be able to, but we will endeavor to do that and come back to you first thing in the morning.

01:06:40:27 - 01:06:41:21

Okay. Thank you.

01:06:49:08 - 01:07:17:07

If we move on, Cliffs End Parish Council's post issue specific hearing to note rep four dash one zero seven raised concerns that National Grid proposed transporting substantial volumes of heavy construction materials via Ramsgate port and the A299 Royal Harbour approach tunnel. This was also mentioned in the hearing yesterday. Is this correct? And if so, should the construction vehicle air quality assessment have taken this link into account?

01:07:26:21 - 01:07:43:25

Anna Denis speaking on behalf of the applicant. I can confirm that we screened all of the links within the traffic and transport study area, and all links that did exceed the IAQM and EPUT criteria weren't included in the detailed assessment.

01:07:44:09 - 01:07:50:11

And is that particular link within the study area? Because I have a feeling it it sort of fell out of your study area potentially.

01:07:58:14 - 01:08:18:11

Yeah. So while that is yeah. We don't have data for that. It's actually the roads leading off that link were well below criteria, and therefore, it would it would also fall below that criteria. The IAQM EPUB criteria, I should point out.

01:08:25:17 - 01:08:32:08

And do you have any evidence to that you could supply just to demonstrate how below below the threshold that is?

01:08:32:10 - 01:08:35:21

Yes. Yeah. Yeah. So that that's we can provide that. That's no problem.

01:08:45:23 - 01:09:10:21

If we move on to eleven point two, operational generator impacts. Before we start on this item, I want to thank the applicant for their air quality technical note and the updated air quality technical note, which again has helped progress this item. So that's been useful. Thank you. Can Fanate District Council confirm whether it's satisfied that the REAC provision AQ eleven sufficiently secures the location of the generators

01:09:12:07 - 01:09:15:10

within the Converse Station site.

01:09:23:03 - 01:09:38:28

Lynch Johnson with Atlantic District Council. I apologize. My colleague has had to leave the hearing this afternoon, so he isn't available to answer the question. And I'm not in a position to be able to assist you, unfortunately. What I'll do is I'll put the question to her in writing, if that's okay. And we'll see if we can come back to you by the close of the hearing.

01:09:40:00 - 01:09:41:21

That'd be really helpful. Thank you.

01:09:42:03 - 01:09:42:27

Thank you.

01:09:44:24 - 01:09:49:23

And just to note that I've put a similar question to Natural England as a as a written question. Would you like to come

01:09:49:25 - 01:09:50:10

in, please?

01:09:50:12 - 01:10:06:00

Hugh Fang of the applicant. I can happily update the examination that we've had to express confirmation both from Natural England and from Thanet District Council that they are content with a q eleven. Hopefully, that will be come to you separately via Natural England, but that's what we've had back.

01:10:09:00 - 01:10:13:19

Sorry. Can I just clarify? Was that before the updated technical note was provided?

01:10:21:03 - 01:10:29:07

Anna, Dennis speaking on behalf of the applicant. I can confirm that it's on the updated assessment, and we received confirmation this week from those natural Perfect. Okay. Thank you.

01:10:35:15 - 01:11:09:23

My next question was around eutrophication impacts. So paragraph 5.2.9 of MPS EM one requires consideration of potential eutrophication impacts. The applicant's original air quality assessment ruled out effects due to eutrophication, but the applicant's revised operational air quality technical note obviously identifies some high NOx levels within proximity to some Instant Marshes. So my question is, whether the applicant can explain what the likely impacts are and whether additional mitigation is required for nutrient loading acidification effects on the local ditch network adjacent to the site.

01:11:11:25 - 01:11:35:26

Hannah Dennett speaking on behalf of the applicant. I can confirm that we have considered a nitrogen deposition, which can result in eutrophication. So that was, as you pointed out, it was considered in the updated operational backup generator emissions assessment. On on the basis of that, we've also considered the other areas, other ecological sites, and we've

01:11:38:15 - 01:11:50:13

we have deemed that the effects would not be significant in terms of eutrophication. Well, specifically, nitrogen deposition, which obviously results in eutrophication. So yes, we have considered it.

01:11:51:07 - 01:12:26:01

Sorry, Doctor James Ryle, in behalf of the applicant, I can just amplify that slightly. So Minster Marshes isn't actually an ecological designation, so it doesn't fall within the boundaries of normal air quality guidance assessment. It's a general geographic area. However, that said, if we think about the ditch network at Minster Marshes and into that matter ash level, which is a designation, so ash level local wildlife site on the opposite side of the Stour is designated for ditch invertebrates and and and vegetation. Eutrophication is primarily matter with regard to terrestrial habitats.

01:12:26:10 - 01:12:57:14

And with regard to freshwater habitats, eutrophics are I'll say that again. Eutrophication driven by nitrogen deposition is primarily a and therefore NOx is primarily a factor for terrestrial habitats. So when you move into freshwater environment, you basically have two growth limiting nutrients. One is nitrogen and one is phosphorus. In the freshwater environment, in most lowland freshwater systems, certainly a ditch system like Minster Marsh's RAS level, it is phosphorus that is the primary growth limiting nutrient. So so and that doesn't come from atmosphere.

01:12:58:03 - 01:13:05:14

So it is that which is the is the relevant factor. The the the so it's it's technically, basically, it's not relevant to the air quality assessment.

01:13:16:21 - 01:13:22:02

And do Thanet District Council or Kent County Council, if they're still online, have any comments on that point?

01:13:29:28 - 01:13:33:14

Hello, John. Dannock, district council. Have nothing to add at this point. Thank you.

01:13:34:22 - 01:13:36:22

Thank you. And do we have Kent County Council?

01:13:41:03 - 01:13:44:21

No. Okay. We'll move on. Thank you for that.

01:13:48:26 - 01:14:20:21

The next item was cumulative impacts of operational generator emissions with SPR proposals on Grovewood in Suffolk. So Section A7 of the AQ technical note ruled out impacts on Grovewood from backup generator emissions from the Friston and Kilmain substation on the that one basis percent criteria would not be exceeded at distances beyond one hundred and twenty meters from the generators. Can the applicant explain whether there are any generators associated with the SPR sites that cumulatively could then exceed that threshold at the relevant distances?

01:14:22:02 - 01:14:30:19

Anna Dennett speaking on behalf of the applicant. I can confirm that there are no operational generators included in the SPR substations at DCO stage.

01:14:41:07 - 01:14:42:23

Sorry. Mister Mani, did you want to

01:14:43:00 - 01:14:49:07

Yeah. I I think I would just like to like to clarify that point because there are there have certainly been generators on-site

01:14:50:04 - 01:14:53:05

recently. We're talking about operational generators here rather

01:14:53:07 - 01:15:05:10

than construction generators. Sure. Not leaving aside construction. I'll need to check this behind. There might be generator or perhaps the applicant can check this Scottish Power. I think there might be generators on the at the SPR substations.

01:15:05:16 - 01:15:08:12

Yeah. Is that something you can clarify?

01:15:08:14 - 01:15:27:02

James Booker, on behalf of the applicant, I reached out to Scottish Power on this point, and they have confirmed that within their DCO, there is no operational generators on the e a two or e a one site. The temporary generators on-site for construction should be gone by the middle of this year before we start construction.

01:15:29:09 - 01:15:30:05

Thank you.

01:15:38:23 - 01:16:04:26

Sorry. The last item I had under air quality was around it's eleven point three air quality mitigation measures. So, sees raised issues with the lack of enforceability in mitigation documents, in their relevant reps and in rep two dash one two one. Does the discharging authority, does, East Suffolk Council have any comments on the airline air quality management plan or its enforceability?

01:16:24:25 - 01:16:31:06

Mark Westmeadsmith, he's suffered counsel. No. On on that, we are content.

01:16:34:08 - 01:16:34:23

Thank you.

01:16:37:19 - 01:16:51:09

The other point I wanted to cover was water suppression. Does the applicant have any further updates regarding the water supply strategy for dust suppression in addition to its statements made in rep two-thirteen?

01:16:53:12 - 01:17:24:27

James booked on behalf of the applicant. We'll be applying a hierarchy of mitigation to reduce dust, blanket stockpiles. If it becomes necessary, reuse water on-site. And then if necessary, use water for dust suppression from off-site. We have got ongoing conversations with the utility providers for Friston, and that connection will be up and running later this year. And we believe there's capacity for the Saksmondon site, and the same in Kent.

01:17:24:29 - 01:17:34:05

We're in conversations with Southern Water around getting the supply to site within a few months of being on-site so that we have a a water supply for all purposes.

01:17:37:20 - 01:17:58:25

Sorry. So this this is specifically around construction suppression. If it's within a few months of starting works, presumably, a lot of the dusty works of vegetation clearance and dust emissions will already have happened at that point in time. So it would need to be from the start of construction rather than at a point into the construction process would be my understanding. Sorry.

01:17:58:27 - 01:18:17:00

The the mains water connection will come in a few months in. Before that, we will reuse on-site water. So site from the drainage systems, the subsystems that we put in as part of the temporary construction, and we'll use bounds of water that we would bring in from local points to create the suppression.

01:18:17:07 - 01:18:32:29

And it was that point specifically that I was interested in. Is there any further update on where that supply of water would originate from? Are you having to tank that from a substantial distance? Are there local sources that are available? My understanding is quite limited in terms of capacity in

01:18:33:01 - 01:18:53:02

the in the region. Booked on behalf of African. We haven't gone into that detail in terms of our contractors reaching out to the supply chain yet of where that water can come from. What I can confirm is that speaking with Scottish Power, they have secured a supply for their site to tanker and water for that purpose.

01:18:57:06 - 01:19:19:06

Sorry. Can you say the last point again? So in conversations with SBR and how they're dealing with this, the a a a two site, they have secured a supply locally, and they are tankering in the relevant water to be then stored on-site and used by the bouncers. So they've obviously engaged the supply chain at which we will also engage at the appropriate point.

01:19:19:28 - 01:19:23:21

Thank you. And did East Suffolk Council have any comments to add?

01:19:28:06 - 01:20:00:12

Mark Westman Smith for East Suffolk Council. I mean, this is an issue of concern, and we would like a greater understanding of how the applicant seeks to secure sufficient water supply in the context of multiple DCOs in the area. And the fact that SBR may have secured a supply isn't an answer where water supply is relatively scarce in the area.

01:20:00:14 - 01:20:24:08

And Seizwell, of course, that's got different water supply requirements, but is having to act in a number of novel ways to ensure that it does have sufficient water. So there is a general scarcity, and we don't yet have confidence that the applicant will be able to secure a sufficient supply and are seeking

01:20:26:14 - 01:20:38:14

further justification that they will be able to do so. And from what mister Buckley has just said, it appears that they're not yet in a position to do that because they haven't been out into the market to see

01:20:40:07 - 01:20:51:03

the realities of that market, and they may find that it's actually pretty constrained. And we're a little bit concerned that they haven't done that yet. Thank you.

01:20:52:02 - 01:20:55:08

Thank you. Did the applicant have anything further to add?

01:20:56:14 - 01:21:23:25

James Brooks on behalf of the applicant. Just a small point up till now for all the ground investigation works and the works we've carried out on-site, which required water, we have managed to secure water locally through contacts with local landowners and and people like that. So we have a a method of securing water in in small quantities, but we will look at how we we'll take that way and look at how we can show people that we we have secured the appropriate amount of water for the for the site.

01:21:25:04 - 01:21:30:05

So just just to be clear in terms of what you'll be able to provide to me by way of assurance?

01:21:31:19 - 01:22:05:17

James Booker. I'm of that. And I will go and talk to the team, and we'll talk to the supply chain to see how we can get assurance that there is available water. I will also talk to our contacts at the water author water suppliers in the area on speed of supply. So, like I said, we already have on order the supply for Friston, and that'll be installed to the the boundary of the site in the next couple of months. And I'll I'll look at that in terms of early order of that for the availability for the Saxmandan site as well with that supply.

01:22:05:19 - 01:22:11:05

So I'll get back to you by deadline six with some some idea of what we can support.

01:22:12:06 - 01:22:13:22

That'll be helpful. Thank you.

01:22:15:20 - 01:22:23:10

I didn't have any further questions on air quality. I note there is one hand up online. I think that's in Suffolk.

01:22:25:26 - 01:22:57:02

Yes. Charlotte Fox on behalf of Benel and Stamfield Parish Council. Just to confirm what East Suffolk Council have just said, there is a genuine shortage of water supply here, mainly as a result of construction at Sizwell Sea. We've had all sorts of issues. In August two thousand and twenty four, there was a big issue with Sizwell wanting to tanker water from Sternfields with our very, very constrained rural network.

01:22:57:04 - 01:23:18:20

And in fact, that didn't proceed because Sizwell c agreed that it wasn't a satisfactory measure. What I can also say is that size we'll see are struggling so hard to find water that they are accessing I don't know what you call them.

01:23:21:24 - 01:23:57:14

No. No. They're they're they're accessing pipes, and and it has led to a really big problem with water quality in Benel Stirmfield and Saxmunden because so much water has been taken out of the aquifers that dirt has been washed into the water supply. So we we have had last year, we had weeks where the

water in Benel Stamfield and Saxmondon was truly discolored, and we were told to run our taps for hours and hours.

01:23:57:16 - 01:24:07:08

And it's it's a genuine problem that I I don't think can go without having a satisfactory solution to it.

01:24:08:02 - 01:24:10:10

Thank you for that context. That's helpful.

01:24:19:15 - 01:24:21:01

Suffolk County Council.

01:24:21:13 - 01:25:03:17

I was saying Suffolk County Council. Thank you, sir. Just one very brief point on air quality before we move on that we picked up in our rep five two zero four, which was our response to EXQ two. We obviously don't have the technical expertise that the district counts have on air quality, but we asked and would ask again through you for some assurance that the monitoring measures that the applicant has committed to through the outline air quality management plans have reflected the bringing within the order limits of the White Arch residential park as a result of the change request, because those monitoring stations were previously agreed.

01:25:03:24 - 01:25:18:21

But it it it may be that that they are it is automatically reflected, could but we just seek some assurance that residents at the residential park will be that the impacts on them from the any air quality effect would be monitored.

01:25:18:23 - 01:25:32:17

Thank you. So I've I've observed there is a question in EX q three around final comments on the outlined air quality management plan, which would give the opportunity to make comments there. But is the applicant able to make a quick response now?

01:25:39:07 - 01:25:49:14

Hannah Bennett speaking on behalf of the applicant. I can confirm that we've included an additional two monitoring locations. I'll just double check where they are.

01:25:54:24 - 01:25:59:18

It is in the two locations mentioned in in that response. I will just double check.

01:26:26:29 - 01:26:47:23

Queue planning of the applicant perhaps. As I understand, the position is that the two additional air quality monitoring locations, they are being included in the outline air quality management plan to be issued at deadline six, White Arch Residential Park in Schotts Meadow. So yes, it's in train. That's helpful. Thank you.

01:26:49:01 - 01:27:20:20

Sorry. Zachary Fondham, First Half Accounting Council. Just a very brief point of clarification from the applicant because I know that in the original environmental statement, the air quality study area is based on distance from the order limits. And then with the change request, obviously, that brings White Arch to be now within the order limit close to the order limits, whereas before, it wouldn't have been in the study area. So just to double check for peace of mind, has White Dodge been assessed for likely significant effects from an air quality perspective? I guess where can we find out? What are the results of that assessment? Can

01:27:23:12 - 01:27:24:20

the applicant respond, please?

01:27:26:10 - 01:27:33:02

Anna Dennis speaking on behalf of the applicant. I can confirm that they were considered in the change request in the assessment.

01:27:36:03 - 01:27:48:21

Zachary Fonda, South of County Council. I just note that there wasn't actually any further assessment undertaken with the addendum to the environment. Was just checking whether it has actually been assessed with receptors from because it would now be in your study area.

01:27:49:10 - 01:28:01:05

Sorry. I will interrupt. You do have to ask the questions through me. So apologies. It's just a process point. Can you just confirm exactly what assessment has been done?

01:28:05:15 - 01:28:37:25

We screen sorry. Hannah Dennett speaking on behalf of the applicant. Yeah. We screened the traffic data. We checked that the flows as a result of the changes, and they were still below the IACM and EPUC criteria. So for that reason, we didn't need to do detailed modeling of those receptors, including the residential park. The dust assessment that whilst it wasn't included in the original assessment, we did we've reflected how to look at the assessment and the mitigation measures of high risk sites.

01:28:37:27 - 01:28:46:14

So we can't actually do more for in terms of measures that are already based on a high risk site. So in terms of construction, that's that was already incorporated.

01:28:48:02 - 01:28:57:29

And on the basis comments, of we have included the two monitoring locations just to check that mitigation measures that we have proposed are working effectively.

01:29:01:17 - 01:29:05:24

Thank you. We have a hand up in Suffolk.

01:29:08:28 - 01:29:41:10

Robin Robin Sanders, East of East of Suffolk Community Energy's partnership. Can I just briefly go back to the tankering and water? I'm fully aware of issues that had because I had to deal with quite a lot of this last year, with Suffolk County Council's representative at that time. The tankering for

Seiswell had to come from Martellsham, Heath, and also from Natton, Leavington area. Those were the closest sources for tankers to bring in water for dust suppression.

01:29:41:12 - 01:29:58:17

That was purely for dust suppression. And as far as I'm aware, that is where they have to still go. There are no other closer sources that they were permitted to use. That clearly means that there'll be additional traffic that's possibly not in the traffic assessment if that has not been considered.

01:29:59:19 - 01:30:13:26

Thank you. The applicant has stated that this included water tankers in its traffic assessment, so I think that has been covered, unless the applicant would like to differ. Yep. Thank you. Useful context. And we have a hand from TC.

01:30:17:25 - 01:30:35:10

Helen Johnson with Fannick District Council. Just wanted to confirm before you wrapped up. I didn't mean to interrupt this item. Just to say that our environmental health officer has come back to say that she's content with the human aspect of the a q eleven, the question you asked a little bit earlier on. Thank you.

01:30:35:12 - 01:30:59:11

Thank you. That's helpful. Unless there are any further points on air quality, I propose to finish that topic. I have a short session on renal pathology. I'd like to crack on through that now and hopefully get that finished before the close of the session today. So if the applicant would like to bring the appropriate people

01:30:59:14 - 01:31:00:17

move around. Yeah. Thank you.

01:31:16:10 - 01:31:25:18

Mr. Marney? Yes. Just say that myself and Mary Shipman are leaving now. We'd just like to thank you for your efforts over the past few days. Thank you very much. Thank you.

01:32:08:23 - 01:32:10:01

Africa ready. Yep.

01:32:10:03 - 01:32:11:05

We are ready. Thank you, sir.

01:32:11:07 - 01:32:32:29

Okay. Thank you. So I only have a small number of points that I wanted to raise on this particular agenda item, and all focused on the OutStims, Estuary, and Red Throats Diver. So item twelve point one was an update on the Red Throated Diver Displacement Assessment. So can the applicant provide an update with progress on the Red Throated Diver Displacement Assessment?

01:32:33:16 - 01:33:14:24

Sorry, I appreciate for the applicant. Yes. So we can do that. So as you know, the Natural England asked us to use a specific method for providing a quantitative assessment of the displacement for the red throated diver based on a paper by Reach et al in twenty thirteen. But the applicant chased National England several times to provide this paper. They didn't provide it. They said there was a copyright issue. Then they said they'd provide us with a summary of it. That didn't happen either. However, we have managed to source it ourselves, So we are undertaking that assessment, and we will update the marine ornithology chapter and the HRA for deadline six.

01:33:16:05 - 01:33:26:21

That's good to know. Thank you. Can you give me any indication of sort of initial findings from that assessment or any any sort of progress made to date on the assessment?

01:33:26:23 - 01:33:29:23

Yes. For that, I'm gonna turn to mister Gates, if he can help.

01:33:31:06 - 01:34:13:11

Neil Gates, behalf of the applicant. Yes. So I think just two points on that. The first point is that, the the displacement assessment is essentially for, the the only activity which is excluded from the current restriction, the cable installations, that's the pre gray pre lay Grapnel run. So, yes, we're undertaking that assessment. Initial analysis suggests that based on Natural England's method of looking at the number of bird days lost, we're looking at something below point one percent of the overall bird days that are available within the season, within the Amsterdam's s three SPA.

01:34:13:13 - 01:34:25:19

So that's a very small number of bird days lost, and that supports our clues our conclusions essentially that there's no adverse effects on integrity of the of the European site.

01:34:27:14 - 01:34:33:06

But the full details will obviously be be provided in the updated reports. Deadline six.

01:34:34:29 - 01:34:56:03

That's really helpful. Thank you. And in terms of and I'm gonna skip around the agenda a little bit here. In terms of the implications of operations and emergency repairs, if you have two months of vessel activity during the wintering period, is that something that can also be considered as part of the assessment?

01:35:00:00 - 01:35:34:03

Neil Gates on behalf of the applicant. I think just to set a little bit of context on that. So following on from various requests from Natural England, we've included within seasonal restrictions routine monitoring surveying. So we're just left with the emergency repairs essentially. And I can pass on to colleagues to sort of look more at detail around the HRA regulations on that. But, essentially, we don't have any specific descriptions of repairs.

01:35:34:05 - 01:35:42:29

We don't know what the extent of those will be. We don't know where they will be. So it's very hard to provide a a robust scientifically based assessment on that.

01:35:44:05 - 01:35:51:11

Yeah. Doctor James Riley on behalf of the applicant. So to to to add some context to that and and the relevance of that point.

01:35:53:03 - 01:36:27:25

So what Mr. Gace has just said is that essentially any need for emergency repairs and their possible interaction with the Outer Thames S3 SPA is fundamentally a hypothetical issue. Cable repairs may never be required at all. If they are required, approximately half the offshore cable is outside the SPA. Any damage to the cable will be most likely to be in the shipping channels, which are not areas used by Red Throated Diver due to existing disturbance. Even if repair was ever needed inside the SPA, the site is only sensitive part of the year, November to March. And not all activities within the SPA will necessarily result in significant disturbance, I.

01:36:27:27 - 01:36:34:19

E, significant disturbance that is continuing or sustained, which is a widely used definition of significant disturbance.

01:36:36:10 - 01:37:06:07

So therefore, even if any repair requirement did arise, there's a strong possibility this will be outside the SPA, or even if within the SPA, will be outside the sensitive season, or it would fall below the threshold of significant disturbance. That's all relevant because case law and the case in question, and we can give you the full reference to how this is the bogus case from two thousand and nine paragraph thirty seven. The judge in there, the high court in their ruling, one of the things they said was that a must essentially consider real rather than hypothetical risks.

01:37:08:04 - 01:37:41:21

And I would posit that this is extremely hypothetical as to the interaction or the possible interaction between any emergency repair for this cable how it and might interact with red throated divers. The final thing I'd say is that as a strategy undertaken, National Grid are a competent authority under HapTash regulations when it comes to maintenance repair of their own assets that applies on land and all their assets. And there would therefore need to be a requirement for some form of engagement with Natural England if a repair event was ever likely to affect the SPA.

01:37:41:23 - 01:37:46:22

So so there is a regulatory mechanism that that that would exist if that ever arose.

01:37:50:13 - 01:38:13:28

It is a hypothetical risk, but it is not a a non zero risk. That clearly, as part of the assessment you provided me with, there is the risk of cable break, and that has been something that's been discussed within the assessments. So there is the potential for vessel movements within the SPA, and there is potential for that to be within the overwintering period. And I suppose it's this

01:38:15:21 - 01:38:40:14

I I appreciate the situation that you're outlining to me, but equally, in having to make a recommendation to the secretary of state, there's a potential risk of us having to make a

recommendation that enables an activity that could have an adverse impact on red throated diver, however small that may be. So I just need to be clear about

01:38:42:21 - 01:39:12:27

if that situation arose, what then it means in terms of the habitats regulation assessment in terms of subsequent stages, so assessments of alternatives and potential derogation and compensation. It may be helped by the assessment work that's being done in terms of displacement if that could demonstrate that in a hypothetical scenario that the few vessels that you outlined, it would not be sufficient to displace enough birds for it to be an adverse effect on integrity.

01:39:14:08 - 01:39:18:17

And I have obviously put some questions in Natural England around

01:39:21:16 - 01:39:25:16

this this point because I'm looking for for input for them as well.

01:39:25:18 - 01:40:11:18

I I would doctor Anjali, on behalf of applicant, I will hand over to my colleagues if they want to come in on anything. I I being frank, I think you're asking us to construct an extremely hypothetical scenario that that may well be complete nonsense when it comes to it. I mean, we don't know where any brake may be, how large any brake may be, how long it may take to repair that brake. Will it be two days? Or you alluded to two months earlier. I that. I don't see how we can I think the regulatory control is the fact that, as I said, National Grid are a competent authority on the HAPS regulation? So they have, just as with anything they're doing with repairing or restringing overhead lines, anything they do that is part of committed development rights, there is a legal mechanism that still requires that to be to be dealt with and undertaken.

01:40:11:25 - 01:40:12:10

It was

01:40:12:12 - 01:40:51:02

clear from the last hearing that if a break happens, it has to be repaired very urgently. It doesn't necessarily allow time for processes that relate to habitat regulations or consideration effects on the designated species, particularly. So I suppose I'm I I appreciate that it's a very low risk, but it's there is a risk. And it's what happens in that situation where it does occur. If you flip it around and say that that effect will actually happen at at some point in time, what what would be the steps that would happen to avoid an adverse effects on integrity for the protected species? So the red throated diver particularly.

01:40:51:04 - 01:41:11:12

Could you perhaps work it that way, outline what would have to happen at that point in time? So rather than say it's this type of break sorry. Just assuming there was some kind of cable break that needed repairing, what steps would National Grid Grid have to follow, and how would that avoid an adverse effects on integrity?

01:41:13:26 - 01:41:35:28

Yep. Here we go. It's on behalf of the applicant. Yeah. I think we we can take that away. We haven't included various measures which Natural England have asked for in the updated red froated dive protocols specifically around, operation and maintenance and emergency repairs, but we will also take away the the calculation essentially at looking at potential lost bird days and put that in some sort of context.

01:41:37:25 - 01:41:38:19

Thank you.

01:41:43:13 - 01:41:50:04

Does the applicant have any comments on Natural England's recommendation that North Falls is included in the in combination assessment?

01:41:52:16 - 01:41:56:28

And is that something that's been factored into your birthdays lost?

01:42:00:02 - 01:42:23:25

Okay. Some part of the applicants so North Falls is included within the cumulative assessment. We'll pick up directly with natural England to ask exactly what their concern is around that. I believe it was around the the the export cable. But, again, once we've done the the calculations for the pre leg wrap, we'll compare that with the likely sort of temporal and spatial overlap of their export cables.

01:42:25:01 - 01:42:42:12

Can you just explain to me what the the steps are in terms of from from today, effectively, you'll have the the red threaded diver displacement assessment. When will that be completed? And then are you meeting with Natural England? Or what what are the steps between now and deadline six, for example?

01:42:43:23 - 01:43:11:05

You'll get some half of the applicant. So, yes, we've we've got the method. We're undertaking the calculations, and we'll present that in the updated marine on morphology chapter in HRA at deadline six. We're trying to agree a meeting with Natural England's marine on morphology specialists just to discuss the results of that and close out any of the remaining comments that they have on that on those matters.

01:43:12:02 - 01:43:13:29

Do you have any provisional dates at the moment?

01:43:15:21 - 01:43:23:06

No. We got some half the applicants. They have come back to us with a number of dates, we're just confirming those. But they're looking over the next couple of weeks.

01:43:28:05 - 01:43:28:20

Thank you.

01:43:32:08 - 01:43:53:23

Item twelve point two on the agenda. In terms of the seasonal restriction for all activities, including pre leg grappling run, in your responses to the question whether vessel movements associated with pre leg grappling run would give rise to an adverse effect on integrity for red throated diver, The applicants explained that such movements would be seven days at most, and that was in your response to one and call sixty one

01:43:56:05 - 01:44:11:11

based on fourteen days total and fifty percent in the out of ten's history, if I've got my numbers right. In light of this very short period, can you explain why pre leg wrap and run cannot be excluded from the wintering period as well? When I looked at the program,

01:44:15:12 - 01:44:30:14

the it seems to be that if even if you worked on a slow cable lay of half kilometer per day or a hundred and twenty two days per year, you still had available time within that window to include seven days of pre lay ground or run.

01:44:31:25 - 01:44:54:19

Okay. It's for the applicants. I'll pass over to my colleague, mister Holmwood, to discuss in more detail on that. But, essentially, I think because we are restricting all installation activities to a period which excludes November to March, that does leave it very tight in terms of timing for other activities. But I'll pass over to mister Holmwood for them.

01:44:56:12 - 01:45:27:28

Andrew Holmead for the applicant. So PLGR is an early activity in a sequence of activities that lead up to cable installation. The applicant's objective is to ensure that installation of the section of the cable, that route cable route that passed through the AltaTEMs, SPA are completed within the October the April to October window. So that's our objective is to complete the cable lay with PLGRs and early activity within that season, within that restricted period.

01:45:28:03 - 01:46:00:07

It is a short period of time, fifty percent of of fourteen days. However, that still helps us derisk the program in a very congested construction sequence in that restricted period. So it does it does derisk the the program, and we are we are looking for all opportunities to to derisk that program and keep the works to a single season. We're also being led by the sides, as already explained by my colleague Neil in terms of the impact

01:46:00:26 - 01:46:13:17

of that activity. So at the moment, your program is based on two seasons of cable laying was my understanding in the description of proposed development. So you're now saying that you're looking to do it all within one season?

01:46:14:08 - 01:46:34:04

Yes. Of course. The program is developing as we go along the in in either in either period. In the case of a two season installation, there's the risk of exceeding that period for that given campaign, and therefore, the same principles apply,

01:46:35:21 - 01:46:37:18

in this case, the second campaign.

01:46:47:09 - 01:46:47:24

K.

01:46:50:28 - 01:47:03:26

Item twelve point three, the application of two kilometer buffer for vessel displacement. Can the applicant comment on the application of two kilometer buffer having received National England's comments on the potential for displacement by vessels in this area.

01:47:03:28 - 01:47:30:19

Yes. So I appreciate for the applicant. So yes, the applicant has considered this and is prepared to include a two kilometer buffer around the Outer Thames Esprit SPA as requested within the seasonal restriction. And the protocol REAC and schedule sixteen part two requirement eleven of the draft DCO will be updated at deadline six to reflect this.

01:47:37:01 - 01:47:37:18

Thank you.

01:48:02:25 - 01:48:37:18

The reason I'm pausing is because, obviously, we we sort of dotted around the agenda, and I've covered some of the later items I wanted to earlier. I think the only the only thing that was really left for me to say was that I appreciate your position that there's no need for a derogation, and the risks are very low and hypothetical. But I have to remind you that paragraph five point four point two seven of MPS e n one requires an applicant to share information regarding a derogation as soon as reasonably practical, where an SNCB gives an indication that derogation is necessary.

01:48:38:00 - 01:49:19:17

So in the event that National England doesn't withdraw its comments regarding the potential for adverse effects on integrity, I may be required to assume that derogation is required for the purposes of my recommendation report. In the absence of that information and relevant compensation measures, I'd be obliged to recommend a refusal to the Secretary of State, and the Secretary of State would be unlikely to have the necessary information to make a determination, including in relation to critical national priority. So it's just to say that is see, the current position with Natural England's current position, and I just wanted to to flag that and why it's of concern to me and why I need to get this matter bottomed out,

01:49:21:00 - 01:49:24:23

So, yes, so this is on the pre lay grapnel and the emergency repairs point.

01:49:24:25 - 01:49:25:10

Yep.

01:49:25:12 - 01:49:41:18

So on the pre lay grapple, I'll be corrected if I'm wrong, I understand if Natural England don't agree after all our efforts, we will simply have to accept the seasonal restriction. So that will be the end of that point. Insofar as the emergency repairs are concerned, we'll come back to you on how to formulate that.

01:49:43:03 - 01:49:50:19

I mean, obviously, if you are meeting with Natural England, if Natural England accepts your position and are prepared to amend their

01:49:50:21 - 01:49:51:06

Yeah.

01:49:52:02 - 01:50:18:10

Their commentary in the risk and issues log, then, we can take that as evidence that there's a satisfactory position and there's no need for that derogation. Just to be clear, I would also highlight, and this goes beyond the theme for non ontology, that there are a number of areas where Natural England are making that type of comment where we might have to think about the need for derogation. So it's just to flag that's a big concern for us in terms of writing our recommendation.

01:50:18:12 - 01:50:22:29

Yes. Thank you for flagging that, and we will go through those points and address them.

01:50:24:27 - 01:50:36:22

Sorry. Just to add that, Neil Gates, for the applicant, I think we are providing the information and measures which Natural England have asked for. So we're hopeful that that will resolve all of those issues. Yeah.

01:50:36:24 - 01:50:37:28

That's good to hear.

01:50:39:14 - 01:50:46:27

Those were all the matters I had on that particular agenda item. Are there any other comments or questions?

01:50:50:22 - 01:50:55:04

Nothing in the room and nothing online

01:50:56:27 - 01:50:59:06

as we speak. So in which case,

01:51:02:27 - 01:51:30:17

I'd like to remind everyone that parties should provide any post hearing documents on or before deadline six on Monday, the thirteenth of April. And the recording of this hearing will be placed on the inspectorate's website as soon as practical following the hearing. Before we adjourn, I'd like to thank all of today's participants for their time and assistance. The time is now five thirty six, and this issue specific hearing for proposed ceiling project is adjourned until ten AM tomorrow.

