



THE PLANNING ACT 2008

THE INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING (EXAMINATION PROCEDURE) RULES  
2010

Sea Link Energy Cable

**Appendix C7 to the Natural England Deadline 7 Submission  
Natural England's DCO Advice**

For:

The construction and operation of Sea Link Energy Cable

Planning Inspectorate Reference EN020026

29<sup>th</sup> April 2026

## **Appendix C7 Sea Link Deadline 7 DCO**

In formulating these comments, the following documents have been considered.

### **Sea Link Deadline 6 Submission Documents**

- **[REP6-004]** PD-024 The Examining Authority's (ExA) Consultation draft Development Consent Order Schedule of ExA recommended amendments to the Applicant's DCO submitted at Deadline 6
- **[REP6-005]** 3.1 Draft Development Consent Order Version I Tracked Changes
- **[REP6-130]** 9.7 (G) Applicant's Schedule of Changes to the draft Development Consent order (tracked changes)
- **[REP6-135]** 9.84 (D) Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments (REAC) (Tracked Changes)

## 2. Detailed comments:

**Table 1: Natural England's Advice on the DCO [REP6-004]**

| <b>Document reviewed: [REP6-004] PD-024 The Examining Authority's (ExA) Consultation draft Development Consent Order Schedule of ExA recommended amendments to the Applicant's DCO submitted at Deadline 6</b> |                |   |  |
|--|----------------|---|--|
| <b>NE Ref</b>  | <b>Section</b> | <b>Key Concern and/or Update</b>  | <b>Natural England's Advice to Resolve Issue</b>   |
| 1  | Point 18       | Natural England notes and supports the proposed amendment to requirement 16. However, we advise that all references to Natural England within the DCO should be amended to the relevant Statutory Nature Conservation Body. This is to future proof the DCO against any change of name or transfer of duty.   | Amendments need to be applied to all references to Natural England to state the relevant Statutory Nature Conservation Body (SNCB).                              |
| 2  | Point 19       | <p>We note that this requirement contains details on monitoring and mitigation relevant to our remit. Therefore, we advise that the condition be amended to include a requirement to also consult the relevant SNCB.</p> <p>Also, we advise that requirement 18 may be more appropriately situated within the dML as this seems to fit within the MMO's remit to enforce. However, we will defer to the MMO on this matter.</p> | Consider inclusion of the need to consult the relevant SNCB and moving the requirement to the dML.   |
| 3  | Point 22       | Natural England notes and welcomes the change to increase the time for the discharge of requirements.   | N/A  |
| 4  | Point 24       | <p>Natural England for the most part supports the changes proposed here. However, with regard to condition 4 (1) (iii) we advise the wording be amended to make it clear that a micro siting plan informed by pre-construction baseline surveys is needed to micro site around features of archaeological or ecological importance.</p> <p>Suggested wording:</p>   | <p>Consider amendment to the condition wording as proposed.</p> <p>The adoption of the proposed wording would resolve issue C10 of our Risks and Issues Log.</p> |

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|   |                 | (iii) the proposed detailed location and route of offshore cables, including a micro siting plan (informed by pre-construction surveys) which details avoidance of features of archaeological or ecological importance where necessary together with timings.  |  |
| 5 | Point 26        | Natural England supports the wording included here and notes it is a reflection of the wording included at Requirement 16. However, as per our comment above, reference to Natural England should be amended to the relevant SNCB.<br><br>Also we note in the Applicant's DCO version I they have include a requirement for 105m buffer for trenchless techniques and a 50m buffer from the temporary works area. We support the inclusion of the 105m buffer. | Amend references to Natural England to the Relevant SNCB.<br><br>Consider the inclusion of the 105m buffer between Saltmarsh and the trenchless landfall techniques. |
| 6 | Point 27        | Natural England supports the updated wording here and the securing of the 2km buffer within the seasonal restriction and notes this wording would resolve issue C13 on our Risks and Issues logs. We note within the Applicant's DCO Version I the 2km buffer has not been appropriately secured and would strongly request the adoption of the ExA wording.   | Until the Applicant adopts the ExA condition (as written) this matter remains unresolved.  |
| 7 | Point 29 and 31 | Natural England fully supports the proposed monitoring conditions and notes this would resolve issue C11 of our Risks and Issues Log.  | Until the Applicant adopts the ExA condition (as written) this matter remains unresolved.  |
| 8 | Point 30        | Natural England fully supports the proposed condition requiring a benthic mitigation plan.   | Until the Applicant adopts the ExA condition (as written) this matter remains unresolved.  |

**Table 2: Natural England's advice on the DCO REP6-005**

| Document reviewed: [REP6-005] 3.1 Draft Development Consent Order Version I Tracked Changes |                          |   |  |
|---|--------------------------|---|--|
| NE Ref  | Section                  | Key Concern and/or Update   | Natural England's Advice to Resolve Issue                          |
| 1   | Requirement 18<br>Pg 100 | Natural England notes and supports the inclusion of the requirement for a marine and contingency plan regarding the | Consider amendment to include consultation with the relevant SNCB. |

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|   |   | River Stour Channel. However, we would request 18 (2) be amended to include consultation with the Relevant SNCB as these works and plans include works which may impact upon designated sites and therefore fall within our remit as well.   |  |
| 2 | Schedule 16<br>Part 2 Condition<br>4 Pg 213 | <p>Natural England notes and welcomes the inclusion of a need to submit a final Monitoring Plan. However, we note that no monitoring conditions have been included. As advised on in comment on the ExA Schedule of changes we support the proposed monitoring conditions.</p> <p>We note and support the inclusion of the Red Throated Diver Protocol within this condition.</p> <p>We note and support the inclusion of a landfall method statement.</p> | Natural England appreciates the changes made and consider they do progress some way towards resolution. However, we advise that condition 4 as proposed by the ExA would be our strong preference as detailed in our comments above. |

**Table 3: Natural England's advice on the DCO [REP6-135]**

| <b>Document reviewed: [REP6-135] 9.84 (D) Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments (REAC) (Tracked Changes)</b> |                |  |  |
|--|----------------|--|--|
| <b>NE Ref</b>  | <b>Section</b> | <b>Key Concern and/or Update</b>   | <b>Natural England's Advice to Resolve Issue</b>   |
| 1  | Table 3.4      | Natural England notes that the offshore commitments now link to Schedule 16 Part 2 Condition 4 (1) (b) and consider this a more appropriate condition. However, our other comments on the REAC within previous deadlines remain unchanged. | See our Risks and Issues log response [REP5-222] at Deadline 5 and [REP6-258] at Deadline 6. |