



Norfolk County Council

Response to ExQ1

Norwich to Tilbury

(EN020027)

Deadline 3 – 10 April 2026



Application by National Grid Electricity Transmission for the Norwich to Tilbury project

The Examining Authority's written questions and requests for information (ExQ1): Issued on 20 March 2026

Responses are due by deadline 3: Friday 10 April 2026

The following table sets out the Examining Authority's (ExA's) written questions and requests for information - ExQ1. If necessary, the examination timetable enables the ExA to issue a further round of written questions in due course. If this is done, the further round of questions will be referred to as ExQ2.

Questions are set out using an issues-based framework derived from the initial assessment of principal issues provided as **annex C** to the [Rule 6 letter](#) dated 13 January 2026. Additional topics have been added which may have arisen from representations, and to assist in the ExA's assessment of the application against relevant policies.

There are a large number of written questions, many of which are lengthy and/ or detailed. The scale of the proposed development is significant both in nature and geographically, and it encompasses 13 different local authority areas. The ExA would like to stress to the applicant and all interested parties (IPs) that the ExA need comprehensive answers to its written questions at this stage because the examination period is limited to a maximum of 6 months, and time in the hearing sessions planned for the weeks commencing 27 April and

22 June will be limited. Such hearings will be focused to those issues which the ExA seek oral contributions, so as to assist in its understanding of the application and to inform its recommendation to the Secretary of State. There will not be sufficient time within those hearings to cover the wide range of issues encountered in the ExA's review of the application documents and relating to submissions from IPs.

All parties are reminded that the examination is a primarily written process.



Due to the period of time between deadline 2 (12 March 2026) and the issuing of these questions, it has not been possible for the ExA to fully evaluate all the information submitted at that deadline. Unless otherwise stated, the questions relate to submissions received up to deadline 1 only. It is therefore possible that deadline 2 submissions may have already provided the information requested. If that is the case, then there is no need for a party to re-submit the information. Therefore, in response to the question, please signpost where the information can be found by specific reference within a document identified through its Examination Library reference.

Column 2 of the table indicates which IPs and other persons each question is directed to. The ExA would be grateful if all persons named could answer all questions directed to them, providing a substantive response, or indicating that the question is not relevant to them for a reason. This does not prevent an answer being provided to a question by a person to whom it is not directed, should the question be relevant to their interests.

When the table states '**all local authorities**' this refers to the following: Norfolk County Council (CC), Suffolk CC, Essex CC, South Norfolk District Council (DC), Mid Suffolk DC, Babergh DC, Tendring DC, Colchester City Council, Braintree DC, Chelmsford City Council, Brentwood Borough Council (BC), Basildon BC and Thurrock Council.

Each question has a unique reference number which starts with a suffix for the topic then has an issue number and a question number. For example, the first question on air quality issues is identified as AQ 1.1. When you are answering a question, please start your answer by quoting the unique reference number.

You should respond to the questions by using the **Have your say** function on the [project page of the National Infrastructure website](#) and selecting 'Responses to Examining Authority's First Written Questions (ExQ1)' when asked.

If you are responding to a small number of questions, you can submit your answers by choosing 'Make a comment' and entering your answers in the 'Your comments' box. If you are answering a larger number of questions you should download a copy of the



Microsoft Word version of the document, enter your answers and save the document using an appropriate file name. You can then submit the completed document by selecting 'Upload files'.

Microsoft Word version: Examining Authority's Written Questions 1 (ExQ1)

Abbreviations used:

Abbreviation Description		Abbreviation Description	
AC	Alternative Current	CIEEM	Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management
AI	Artificial Intelligence	CNP	Critical National Priority
AIL	Abnormal Indivisible Load	CoCP	Code of Construction Practice
AIS	Air Insulated Switchgear	CPRSS	Corridor and Preliminary Routeing Siting Study
ALBA	Ardleigh/ Little Bromley Area	CSE	Cable Sealing End
ALC	Agricultural Land Classification	CSNP	Centralised Strategic Network Plan
AMS	Archaeological Mitigation Strategy	CTMP	Construction Traffic Management Plan
AP	Affected Person	CWS	County Wildlife Site



BAT	Best Available Technique	DASSI	Design Approach for Site Specific Infrastructure
BATNEEC	Best Available Technique Not Entailing Excessive Cost	DC	District Council
BC	Borough Council	DCO	Development Consent Order
BESS	Battery Energy Storage System	DESNZ	Department for Energy Security and Net Zero
BMV	Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land	DHGV	Dunton Hills Garden Village
BNG	Biodiversity Net Gain	DMP	Dust Management Plan
BoR	Book of Reference	DPD	Development Plan Document
CA	Compulsory Acquisition	EACN	East Anglia Connection Node
CAA	Civil Aviation Authority	ECoW	Ecological Clerk of Works
CC	County Council	EIA Regulations	The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017

Abbreviation Description		Abbreviation Description	
EM	Explanatory Memorandum	km	Kilometres
EMF	Electric and Magnetic Fields	LEMP	Landscape and Ecological Management Plan
ES	Environmental Statement	LIR	Local Impact Report



ETDP	Electricity Transmission Design Principles	LLFA	Lead Local Flood Authorities
ExA	Examining Authority	LoD	Limits of Deviation
ExQ1	Examining Authority's First Written Questions	LONI	Letter of No Impediment
GIS	Gas Insulated Switchgear	LRT	Land Rights Tracker
FRA	Flood Risk Assessment	LSOA	Lower Layer Super Output Area
ha	Hectares	LWS	Local Wildlife Sites
HGV	Heavy Goods Vehicle	m	Metres
HLC	Historic Landscape Characterisations	MW	Megawatts
HMMP	Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan	NDHA	Non-Designated Heritage Assets
HoTs	Heads of Terms	NE	Natural England
HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessment	NERC Act	Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006
IAPI	Initial Assessment of Principal Issues	NESO	National Energy System Operator
ICNIRP	International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection	NL	National Landscape
IMD	Index of Multiple Deprivation	NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
INNS	Invasive Non-Native Species	NPS	National Policy Statement
IP	Interested Party/ Parties	NSIP	Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project



ISH1	Issue Specific Hearing 1	NSR	Noise Sensitive Receptors
Abbreviation Description		Abbreviation Description	
OFH	Open Floor Hearing	SPD	Supplementary Planning Document
OHL	Overhead Line	SSEP	Strategic Spatial Energy Plan
PA2008	Planning Act 2008	SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
PAR	Primary Access Route	TA	Transport Assessment
PC	Parish Council	TP	Temporary Possession
PRoW	Public Right(s) of Way	TPO	Tree Preservation Order
RAG	Red/ Amber/ Green	TTRO	Temporary Traffic Regulation Order
RR	Relevant Representation	USI	Unaccompanied Site Inspection
RVAA	Residential Visual Amenity Assessment	VP	Viewpoint
SAC	Special Area of Conservation	VRA	Visual Receptor Area
SOBR	Strategic Options Backcheck and Review	WR	Written Representation
SoCG	Statement of Common Ground	WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation
SoR	Statement of Reasons	ZOI	Zone of Influence

The Examination Library



References in these questions set out in square brackets (for example [APP-010]) are to documents catalogued in the Examination Library. The Examination Library can be obtained from the following link: [Norwich to Tilbury Examination Library](#)

It will be updated as the examination progresses.

Citation of questions

Questions in this table should be cited as follows:

Question reference: issue reference: question number, for example GEN 1.1 – refers to the first question in this table.

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ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
GEN General and cross-topic questions		
GEN 1.3	All local authorities in particular: Norfolk CC Essex CC Colchester CC Tendring DC Basildon BC Thurrock Council Parish councils: Swainsthorpe Newton Flotman Hintlesham and Chattisham Copdock and Washbrook	<p>National and local planning policy compliance tracker</p> <p>Since the policy compliance document submitted with the application [APP-086] was produced (1 April 2025) a number of local and national planning policies have been updated or newly issued. This includes the energy suite of National Policy Statements (NPS) EN-1, EN-3 and EN-5 (Updated National Policy Statements). The transition provisions set out in section 1.6 of NPS EN-1 (December 2025) apply to the application as it was accepted prior to publication of the revised policy. The updated NPS are capable of being important and relevant considerations in the decision-making process.</p> <p>The applicant submitted a policy compliance tracker [REP1-133] at deadline 1. It includes an assessment of the updated NPS alongside those which are designated, and a number of new insertions including the consultation draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), local plan policies and neighbourhood plan policies.</p> <p>The listed relevant planning authorities and Parish Councils (PC) who have a newly adopted or emerging local plan and neighbourhood plan are invited to confirm that the policy compliance tracker is an accurate representation of their newly designated and/ or emerging policies and provide any additional comments relating to the applicant's regard to those policies.</p> <p>All relevant planning authorities are invited to make comment on the content of the compliance tracker. If you have already dealt with changes to policy in your local impact report (LIR) there is no need to provide a response.</p>
		<p>NCC response</p> <p>NCC's LIR [REP1-173] already refers only to the "new" Norfolk Minerals and Waste Local Plan which has been adopted since May 2025. NCC is satisfied that the applicant has complied with the policies of Norfolk Minerals and Waste Local Plan.</p>
GEN 1.4	All local authorities	<p>Development plan documents and supplementary planning documents</p> <p>All local authorities are asked to review the listed development plan documents (DPD) and supplementary planning documents (SPD) (including masterplans) as currently set out in the planning statement [APP-085] (paragraph 2.5.12) and provide any updates, setting out which have been adopted, updated, or are emerging since production of the planning statement.</p>
		<p>NCC response</p> <p>As noted in our answer to GEN 1.3, the Norfolk Minerals and Waste Local Plan was adopted in May 2025. As a result the following DPDs are no longer part of the local development framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Norfolk County Council, Norfolk Minerals and Waste Development Framework: Core Strategy and Minerals and Waste Development Management Policies Development Plan Document 2010-2026 (adopted 2011) • Norfolk County Council Community and Environmental Services, Norfolk Minerals and Waste Development Framework: Minerals Site Specific Allocations Development Plan Document (adopted 2013, amendments adopted 2017) • Norfolk County Council Environment, Transport and Development Department, Norfolk Minerals and Waste Development Framework: Waste Site Specific Allocations Development Plan Document (adopted 2013) <p>There are no other updates to listed DPD documents for which NCC is responsible. NCC defers to South Norfolk District Council in relation to DPDs and SPDs for which that council is responsible.</p>
GEN 1.5	The applicant Norfolk CC Suffolk CC Ipswich BC Colchester CC Thurrock Council	<p>Local government reorganisation</p> <p>Local elections are to take place in a number of the host local authorities on 7 May 2026, and many will be undergoing local government reorganisation and/ or devolution.</p> <p>The listed local authorities are asked to set out:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) any implications for their continuing involvement in the examination and how a consistent approach to their responses can be assured

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
		<p>b) any implications for their role as a discharging authority post-consent, and whether any changes to the draft Development Consent Order (DCO) would be necessary</p> <p>The applicant: explain any changes to its ongoing dialogue with the affected local authorities and how it intends to deal with any changes in the draft DCO.</p>
		<p>NCC response</p> <p>NCC's constitutional and delegation arrangements are that our relevant representation [RR-2753] has been approved by councillors. The same decision directed officers to "make further submissions and representations to the examination of the Norwich to Tilbury project as required by the examination timetable and consistent with the position set out in the relevant representation as authorised". Officers are therefore authorised to take a consistent approach throughout the examination, including the pre-election period for the upcoming local elections. This situation will automatically persist after the election, unless a contrary further decision is taken.</p> <p>As regards local government reorganisation, Norfolk County Council and the Norfolk lower-tier authorities will be abolished and replaced with three unitary authorities. This will not happen in time to affect the examination of this project. Shadow authorities will be elected in May 2027 and the new authorities will be operational from April 2028.</p> <p>For post-consent matters, NCC understands that the applicant intends to begin discharging requirements soon after any consent is granted. It is NCC's view therefore that the DCO must be drafted on the basis of the current local government arrangements but in a way which makes succession of functions as seamless as possible. For example, defining councils by reference to existing statutory roles rather than by name will make it more likely that responsibilities will be transferred automatically as part of transition arrangements.</p>
<p>GEN 1.6</p>	<p>All local authorities MOD Natural England Environment Agency Any IPs who wish to make comment</p>	<p>Critical national priority</p> <p>The planning statement [APP-085] references the need for the proposed development in the context of the urgent need for renewable energy generation within the UK, and in doing so, it refers to the presumption specifically in relation to critical national priority (CNP) infrastructure. Paragraph 4.2.7 of NPS EN-1 (2023) makes it clear that the CNP policy does not create an additional or cumulative need case or weighting for each type of energy infrastructure. The policy applies following the normal consideration of the need case, the impacts of the project, and the application of the mitigation hierarchy. It will be given consideration by the ExA when making its recommendation to the Secretary of State, who will apply the CNP policy in its decision making specifically in reference to any residual impacts that have been identified.</p> <p>NPS EN-1 paragraph 4.1.7 notes that for projects which qualify as CNP Infrastructure, it is likely that the need case will outweigh the residual effects in all but the most exceptional cases. Paragraphs 7.2.7 to 7.2.28 of the planning statement [APP-085] sets out a summary of the potential residual impacts (non Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) impacts) which may remain after the mitigation hierarchy has been applied. These relate to the relevant exceptions listed in the CNP policy at NPS EN-1 paragraph 4.2.15: human health and public safety, defence, irreplaceable habitats, the achievement of Net Zero, and flood risk.</p> <p>Paragraph 4.2.17 of NPS EN-1 sets out that the Secretary of State will also take as a starting point that CNP infrastructure will meet a number of policy tests including in relation to green belt, sites of special scientific interest (SSSI), nationally designated landscapes and heritage assets.</p> <p>IPs are invited to review the applicant's consideration of CNP in the planning statement [APP-085] (in particular paragraphs 7.2.52 to 7.2.257) and the policy compliance tracker [REP1-133] (tables 1.4 and 1.5), and state if they agree with its approach, including in respect of the updated NPS published in December 2025 (which the ExA considers to be an important and relevant consideration in decision making)</p> <p>In particular the ExA requests all local authorities and the listed statutory consultees to provide comment on the policy tests on matters of human health and public safety, defence, irreplaceable habitats, flood risk, green belt, sites of special scientific interest, nationally designated landscapes and heritage assets, as well as the HRA.</p>
		<p>NCC response</p> <p><u>Flood risk</u></p> <p>Paragraphs 10.4 to 10.7 of our LIR [REP1-173] set out NCC's interpretation of CNP policy as it relates to flood risk. In summary, CNP policy applies in the context of justifying an increase in flood risk against benefits; it does not justify deviation from mandatory technical requirements of policy. The flood risk section (5.8) of NPS EN-1 sets requirements which are not related to the balancing exercise, in particular those set out in paragraph 5.8.36, but also generally under the "Applicant's assessment" crossheading. The paragraph 5.8.36 requirements are that the SoS should be satisfied that where relevant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the application is supported by an appropriate FRA • the Sequential Test has been applied and satisfied as part of site selection • a sequential approach has been applied at the site level to minimise risk by directing the most vulnerable uses to areas of lowest flood risk

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the proposal is in line with any relevant national and local flood risk management strategy • SuDS (as required in [paragraph 5.8.37] on National Standards) have been used unless there is clear evidence that their use would be inappropriate • in flood risk areas the project is designed and constructed to remain safe and operational during its lifetime, without increasing flood risk elsewhere (subject to the exceptions set out in paragraph 5.8.42) • the project includes safe access and escape routes where required, as part of an agreed emergency plan, and that any residual risk can be safely managed over the lifetime of the development • land that is likely to be needed for present or future flood risk management infrastructure has been appropriately safeguarded from development to the extent that development would not prevent or hinder its construction, operation or maintenance <p>EN-1 is clear that an exception to CNP policy applies in cases where a project would present an unacceptable risk to flood risk. CNP also does not override the requirement in paragraph 5.8.40 that where a flood risk management authority (like the LLFA) continues to object to the grant of development consent, the Secretary of State would need to be satisfied that “all reasonable steps have been taken by the applicant and the authority to try and resolve the concerns” before consent can be granted.</p> <p>As it stands, NCC as the lead local flood authority has serious concerns about the flood risk assessment (“FRA”), which are detailed in our relevant representation and our LIR. The drainage strategy submitted at deadline 1 [REP1-072] is wholly insufficient at providing evidence in the ES’s conclusions as to residual impacts. NCC cannot at this stage agree that the project would avoid increasing flood risk on-site or elsewhere, or that the residual impacts on flood risk would present an acceptable risk.</p> <p><u>Irreplaceable habitats</u> The CNP exception for irreplaceable habitat is framed in the same terms, i.e. that the CNP presumption does not apply where residual impacts present an unacceptable risk to or unacceptable interference with irreplaceable habitats.</p> <p>The normal policy requirement for irreplaceable habitats is that: <i>“The Secretary of State should not grant development consent for any development that would result in the loss or deterioration of any irreplaceable habitats, including ancient woodland, and ancient and veteran trees unless there are wholly exceptional reasons [footnote 192: For example where the public benefits (including need) of the nationally significant energy infrastructure would clearly outweigh the loss or deterioration of the habitat.] and a suitable compensation strategy exists.”</i> (paragraph 5.4.53 of EN-1, emphasis added).</p> <p>Leaving to one side the exception, the presumption is that CNP infrastructure is to be treated as if it has met any test which requires a clear outweighing of harm, exceptionality or very special circumstances (found in paragraphs 4.2.16 and 4.2.17 of EN-1). The CNP presumption does not affect the element of paragraph 5.4.53 which requires the provision of a suitable compensation strategy. The CNP presumption also does not affect the assessment and mitigation requirements of paragraphs 5.4.17 and 5.4.32 of EN-1, which include that applicants should “include measures to mitigate fully the direct and indirect effects of development on ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees or other irreplaceable habitats during both construction and operational phases”.</p> <p>The applicant’s policy compliance tracker notes against paragraph 5.4.53 (or 5.4.55 in the updated EN-1) that “All ancient woodland is set out within Table A8.1.6 of ES Appendix 8.1: Habitat Report and presented in ES Figure A8.1.3: Ancient Woodland Locations [both within AS-028]”, however NCC note that this the applicant’s assessment is incomplete because it does not include the ancient wood pasture at Meadow Wood. Further information on this wood pasture can be found at paragraphs 6.14 to 6.18 and 6.24 of NCC’s LIR and in Norfolk Wildlife Trust’s written representation [REP1-257].</p> <p><u>Other CNP exceptions</u> NCC has no specific comment to make on the other CNP exception subjects.</p>

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
GEN 1.11	The applicant South Norfolk Council Norfolk CC	<p>Norwich Main substation (Work No.1)</p> <p>The ExA noted on Unaccompanied Site Inspection (USI) 1 [EV1-002] that construction works relating to the extension of Norwich Main substation are well advanced.</p> <p>It is unclear where Work No.1 (b) to (e) are proposed within the existing substation and their illustrative design is not provided as it is for all other substations on the 'Design and layout plans subs and cables' [APP-041].</p> <p>The applicant is asked to clarify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Have any of the proposed works listed under Work No.1 already taken place? b) Explain what current works are completed, under construction and are yet to be implemented at and around Norwich Main (South Norfolk Council and Norfolk CC are also invited to comment). c) Clarify whether there will be any overlap with the completion of the construction of Hornsea 3 offshore wind farm grid connection and associated works including mitigation areas.
		<p>NCC response</p> <p>NCC defers to South Norfolk District Council, which as the discharging authority for Hornsea Three requirements and the relevant local planning authority for the purposes of part 8 (enforcement) of the Planning Act 2008 will have better visibility than NCC of the present state of Hornsea Three substation works.</p>
GEN 1.17	All local authorities	<p>Local impact reports – cumulative developments and the interrelationship report</p> <p>The LIRs from each local authority include details of other developments in their area to varying degrees of detail.</p> <p>Each local authority is asked to review ES chapter 17 (cumulative effects) appendix 17.2 (long list and short list of other developments) [APP-283] and figure 17.2 [APP-286], and confirm if the details provided by the applicant are accurate. Only those developments rated green in tables A17.2.2 to A17.2.14 (short listed developments) need to be checked.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All local authorities are asked to provide an update where relevant, which should include the current status of the application (whether and when consent has been granted and implemented). If any other major developments in your local authority area are not included, please provide details including planning reference, description, location, relevant dates, and current status (or development plan allocation details). <p>Additionally a report on interrelationship with other infrastructure projects was submitted by the applicant at deadline 1 [REP1-134].</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All local authorities are also asked to review the non-NSIP projects listed in section 3.3 and table 6.1 of the report and confirm if the application reference details are correct and that the applicant's summary of interactions between each project is reasonable, together with any other comments you wish to make on the report. • Include both the name of the organisation as well as the location/ name of the development which the SoCG relates to (if relevant), such as the location/ name of the solar farm or housing proposal. • State whether the organisation is a statutory consultee, an Affected Person (AP), and whether they are a non-IP. • Number each of the SoCG in the table consecutively 1 to 96. • Include all examination library references. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The next versions of the overview document and SoCGs are expected at deadline 4. Notwithstanding this, the ExA requests an 'at a glance' summary table to include the above additions to the overview document to be submitted at deadline 3.
		<p>NCC response</p> <p><u>Table A17.2.2 of [APP-286]</u></p> <p>NCC1 FUL/2020/0078 No update – approved at time of submission</p> <p>No further relevant developments need to be added to the shortlist.</p> <p><u>Section 3.3 of [REP1-134]</u></p>

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:									
		<p>These projects are energy projects below the NSIP threshold. NCC therefore defers to South Norfolk District Council which, as the district planning authority, decides applications for this type of project.</p> <p><u>Table 6.1 of [REP1-134]</u></p> <p>These projects are energy projects below the NSIP threshold. NCC therefore defers to South Norfolk District Council which, as the district planning authority, decides applications for this type of project.</p>									
GEN 1.19	<p>The applicant Norfolk County Council Suffolk County Council Essex County Council</p>	<p>Statements of Common Ground - 2</p> <p>The SoCG overview document [REP1-008] indicates that a SoCG with the Fire and Rescue Service for each county are not being produced, given that they have not responded to statutory consultation, however, may be captured as part of the County Councils' SoCG. No RRs have been submitted by the Fire and Rescue Services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each of the County Councils are asked to clarify whether they have any comments on the proposed development in respect of their Fire and Rescue Service. • The applicant is asked to include such matters in the next version of the SoCG. 									
		<p>NCC response</p> <p>NCC can confirm that Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service have no comments to make. NCC does not wish to speak for other local authorities, but our understanding is that unlike in Norfolk and Suffolk, in Essex there is a Fire and Rescue Authority which is separate from Essex County Council.</p>									
GEN 1.21	<p>The applicant All local authorities</p>	<p>Legal Agreements</p> <p>A number of the LIRs refer to the need for legal agreements in order to secure a range of mitigation and compensation measures and packages in each local authority area.</p> <p>The applicant is asked to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a summary document/ tracker of all requests for agreements with local authorities including the type of agreement, what it relates to and how each would meet the relevant tests. Justify its intended use of unilateral undertakings in the instances where a bilateral (section 106) agreement would be preferable. Consider whether one local authority's request for a certain agreement would also be appropriate for the same to be applied in any (or all) of the other local authority areas. <p>All local authorities are invited to provide a list of and their understanding of the current status of any agreements which it has requested, together with a timescale for completion of any agreements which require sign off by the local authority.</p>									
		<p>NCC response</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="816 1633 2881 1906"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="816 1633 1359 1675">Agreement</th> <th data-bbox="1359 1633 2190 1675">Status</th> <th data-bbox="2190 1633 2881 1675">Timescale</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="816 1675 1359 1759">Framework Highways Agreement</td> <td data-bbox="1359 1675 2190 1759">Applicant has provided a draft for NCC and other highways authorities to review.</td> <td data-bbox="2190 1675 2881 1759">Agreement by D7</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="816 1759 1359 1906">Planning obligations</td> <td data-bbox="1359 1759 2190 1906">NCC is working with other affected local authorities to present the applicant with proposals for planning obligations covering: Waveney Valley compensation; replacement tree planting; and biodiversity net gain.</td> <td data-bbox="2190 1759 2881 1906">Agreement by D7</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Agreement	Status	Timescale	Framework Highways Agreement	Applicant has provided a draft for NCC and other highways authorities to review.	Agreement by D7	Planning obligations	NCC is working with other affected local authorities to present the applicant with proposals for planning obligations covering: Waveney Valley compensation; replacement tree planting; and biodiversity net gain.	Agreement by D7
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<p>DES Design, parameters and other details of the proposed development</p>											

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
DES 1.9	The applicant All local authorities	<p>Lighting of new and upgraded substations</p> <p>The ExA notes the rural context of the proposed EACN substation and notes that there is limited detail in relation to operational lighting in relation to this and other upgraded substations in the Design Approach for Site Specific Infrastructure (DASSI) [APP-354].</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide additional detail in terms of the height and type of any lighting installations and light contour plans. • Provide a night-time assessment of the effects of operational lighting on landscape character or visual amenity, and potential effects on ecology. <p>If the applicant considers that an assessment is not required, provide a detailed explanation of your reasoning.</p> <p>Has consideration been given to allowing relevant planning authorities to approve details of operational lighting schemes? If not, why not?</p> <p>Affected Local Authorities may also like to comment.</p>
		<p>NCC response</p> <p>NCC is not affected by the EACN substation.</p>
DES 1.14	South Norfolk DC Norfolk CC	<p>Effectiveness of mitigation - Norwich</p> <p>Are the relevant local authorities (South Norfolk DC and Norfolk CC) satisfied that the applicant's approach to mitigating the adverse effects of the Norwich Main substation extension in the wider landscape would be effective. If not, what further design opportunities should the applicant explore in order to achieve the best possible design outcome?</p> <p>In responding to this question, you may also wish to consider other matters that could potentially influence design.</p> <p>Other IPs are also invited to respond to this question, if they wish to contribute to this topic.</p>
		<p>NCC response</p> <p>NCC defer to South Norfolk District Council, which is leading on landscape impacts at Norwich Main.</p>
ALT Alternatives		
ALT 1.2	All local authorities	<p>Approach to options appraisal</p> <p>The local authorities are invited to review section 3.3 of ES chapter 3 [APP-127] and appendices 3.1 [APP-128] and 3.2 [APP-129] in respect of the applicant's approach to options appraisal, including the hierarchical assessment. They should provide comments where they disagree with any part of the approach (not the individual options considered; the approach only). This could form part of the SoCG.</p>
		<p>NCC response</p> <p>NCC confirms that it has reviewed the Strategic Options Backcheck and Review (SOBR) 2024, Appendix B, and the August 2025 update, alongside the applicant's alternatives assessments within ES Chapter 3 and the Design Development Report.</p> <p>These documents identify a series of environmental, technical and socio economic constraints associated with Offshore Option 1, including the requirement for a long offshore HVDC cable route, associated marine ecological considerations, and challenges relating to landfall and converter station siting at Tilbury amidst wider Freeport and port related development pressures.</p> <p>While NCC recognises these strategic level constraints, it also notes that the appraisal of Offshore 1 remains relatively high level, particularly when compared to the scale and permanence of the impacts that the proposed onshore overhead line would generate within Norfolk, including major residual landscape effects.</p>

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
ALT 1.7	Norfolk CC Suffolk CC South Norfolk Council Mid Suffolk Council Natural England The applicant	<p>Waveney Valley alternative</p> <p>Reasonable alternatives considered in ES chapter 3 [APP-127] as part of the 2024 (table 3.16 p.89-90) and 2025 (table 3.17 p.106) preferred draft alignments set out the applicant’s reasoning for rejection of the use of an underground cable through the Waveney Valley instead of an OHL and pylons. This includes the presence of sensitive peat habitats and paleoenvironmental remains, and hydrological impacts on Wortham Ling SSSI.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The local authorities are asked to provide comment, as these issues do not appear to have been covered in their LIRs. • Natural England is asked to comment on the applicant’s ecological considerations in its reasoning for rejection of the Waveney Valley (underground) alternative as set out in ES chapter 3. This should include comment on whether potential effects on peaty soils would constitute irreplaceable habitat loss. • The applicant is asked to signpost the ExA to any pre-application consultation responses on such matters which led to its rejection of the Waveney Valley alternative.
		<p>NCC response</p> <p>NCC’s position is not to deny that the Waveney Valley alternative would cause environmental issues. Instead, NCC’s view is that the rejection of the WVA makes it essential that other mitigation or compensation approaches are pursued, as set out in paragraphs 11.27 and 11.28 of our LIR [REP1-173]:</p> <p>11.27. NCC is deeply disappointed that the use of underground cables through the Waveney Valley cannot be achieved without environmentally disruptive, technically uncertain or disproportionately costly techniques. It is NCC’s strong view that the absence of an underground alternative for the Waveney Valley leaves a hole in the project’s mitigation for landscape and visual effects which urgently needs to be filled. The assessed major and significant residual effects are of such magnitude that the applicant had, during the statutory consultation, seriously considered undergrounding outside a designated area to be an appropriate response.</p> <p>11.28. NPS EN-1 is clear at paragraph 4.2.11 that ‘Applicants must apply the mitigation hierarchy and demonstrate that it has been applied [...] Applicants should demonstrate that all residual impacts are those that cannot be avoided, reduced or mitigated’. The failure to find a feasible undergrounding option to avoid impacts does not absolve the applicant from the need to consider ways in which those impacts can be reduced, mitigated or compensated for.</p>
ALT 1.9	All local authorities	<p>Limits of Deviation (LoD)</p> <p>A number of the local authorities’ LIRs refer to the limits of deviation and the potential for the OHLs and pylons to move closer to sensitive receptors and listed buildings.</p> <p>Paragraph 3.2.28 of ES chapter 3 [APP-127] refers to the limits of deviation, noting that they retain flexibility to allow for necessary adjustment during detailed design and construction phases. It is stated that minor variations in specific pylon positioning or precise alignment within these limits are not treated as separate alternatives, as the assessment considers a worst-case scenario within the established parameters.</p> <p>The local authorities are invited to comment on this paragraph.</p>
		<p>NCC response</p> <p>NCC has reviewed paragraph 3.2.28 of ES Chapter 3 [APP-127], which states that:</p> <p>“As an NSIP, the DCO provides flexibility through Limits of Deviation (LoD)... minor variations in specific pylon positioning or precise alignment within these limits are not treated as separate alternatives, as the assessment considers a worst case scenario within the established parameters.”</p> <p>NCC’s concern, raised at paragraphs 6.11 to 6.18 of our LIR [REP1-173], in relation to the limits of deviation is that there is considerable variation to the amount of harm done to, for example, veteran trees and ancient woodlands within the lateral limits. For example, a number of alternatives are in fact discussed by the applicant in relation to the crossing of the Tas Valley in section 4.4 of the design development report [APP-122]. The decision-making between alternatives within the LoD is obscure. Despite the acknowledgement in the design development report that the options trade off harms against particular veteran trees, there is no explicit evaluation of these harms in a readily comparable way.</p>
AQ Air quality and emissions		
ExQ1	Question to:	Question:

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
AQ 1.4	All local authorities	<p>Air Quality - Development Plan documents and adopted standards/ expectations related to air quality that exceed Government targets? ES Chapter 7 at paragraph 7.2.19 lists the names of the key regional and local plan documents relevant to each individual county and local authority area. Each local authority is asked whether their development plan documents contain any standards or expectations related to air quality that exceed government targets? If so the ExA would ask for the relevant authority to confirm what those standards are and what formal consultation/ adoption processes those air quality standards/ expectations have been subject to.</p>
		<p>NCC response NCC's Minerals and Waste Local Plan does not contain its standards or expectations related to air quality, though it briefly references the national Planning Practice Guidance in relation to guidance on when an air quality assessment should be carried out and what information should be included. This is specifically in relation to applications for minerals and waste planning applications and the policy is of limited relevance to this case.</p>
DCO Draft Development Consent Order		
Articles		
DCO 1.A2	The applicant Local Authorities Relevant statutory undertaker Other relevant determining body	<p>Articles (general) - 2 Throughout the articles contained in the draft DCO [APP-056] the applicant has specified time periods within which a response is required from a determining body. That time period tends to be 28 days. A number of the local authorities have raised concerns in regard to the time period specified, but there does not appear to be a consensus as to an appropriate alternative time period. The ExA is also concerned as to such a short period being imposed, especially where a deemed consent is triggered where a determining body has failed to respond in the period specified.</p> <p>Applicant: Explain how you have reached the time period chosen (generally 28 days), including an explanation of your understanding of any processes the relevant determining bodies have to/ or are required go through. For example, your understanding of: any application validation period; any minimum consultation periods required with statutory or other bodies; any report writing periods; any committee or delegated cycles; and any decision issuing periods that may apply.</p> <p>All local authorities, relevant statutory undertaker and or other relevant determining body: provide a summary of any processes you are required to go through, including any time period in the number of days required to undertake that process. For example, any application validation process; any minimum consultation periods required with statutory or other bodies; any report writing periods; any committee or delegated cycles relevant; and any decision issuing periods that may apply.</p>
		<p>NCC response NCC request a period of 56 days. This aligns with the 8 week statutory time limits for applications made under a planning condition under The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015, though it is important to note that there is no equivalent enactment which applies to discharges of requirements for DCOs made under the Planning Act 2008 as each individual DCO makes its own provision.</p> <p>Fifty-six days would allow time for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • up to 5 days from receipt to issue consultations and up to 10 days from receipt to consider whether to request further information; • up to 21 days for consultees to respond to the discharging authority, as per standard development management timescales; • up to 19 days to consider consultee responses, conduct site visits, resolve issues with the applicant and, where relevant, coordinate with other discharging authorities; • up to 7 days to produce a decision report; • up to 7 days to seek senior officer sign-off according to delegations. <p>NCC would note that because the discharge of DCO requirements is not standardised in the same way as the discharge of planning conditions under the town and country planning regime, different authorities will have different requirements according to their own governance and delegation arrangements.</p>

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
DCO 1.A7	The applicant All local authorities APs and IPs	<p>Article 2 (Interpretation) (order land)</p> <p>The definition of 'Order land' is not sufficiently clear to ensure that land not required/ intended to be subject to CA or TP is appropriately excluded from articles pursuant to CA (articles 24 and 25) and TP (articles 27, 28 and 29). The consequence of the definition being unclear could result in allowing for the acquisition or temporary use of such land unintentionally.</p> <p>Should 'Class 8' (Uncoloured (White) Land), as set out in the SoR [APP-059] at Table 5.1 (Powers related to land acquisition and use being sought by the Project) be specifically defined and excluded in these articles or through the definition of 'Order land'?</p>
		<p>NCC response</p> <p>NCC has no comment on the definition of 'Order land'.</p>
DCO 1.A10	The applicant All local authorities	<p>Article 2 (Interpretation) (Relevant Planning Authority)</p> <p>Norfolk CC in its RR [RR-2753] and its LIR [REP1-173], as well as a number of other local authorities have raised concern over the definition of 'Relevant Planning Authority'. As the proposed development is a long linear scheme there will be multiple authorities involved. A number of requirements proposed use the phrase 'No stage of the authorised development may be commenced until... has been submitted to and approved by the relevant planning authority'. The ExA seeks greater clarity from both the applicant and all local authorities on the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> What constitutes a 'stage' of the authorised development. The ExA in asking this question notes the 'Works' are defined in schedule 1 and the proposed development has been divided into Sections A to H, covering a geographical split. It also notes image 4.1 of [APP-130] provides an indicative construction programme for the various sub-elements and there are different stages of the proposed development (the definition of have construction, operation and (potentially) decommissioning). Would these adequately cover the definition of a 'stage'? Which local authorities would be the relevant planning authorities for a particular stage, bearing in mind the length and size of the proposed development at that stage? For example what happens if more than one authority (such as a County Council and a Local Authority) is involved in discharging a requirement/ plan/ scheme for a particular stage and they disagree that the submission is adequate to allow for the development to commence? Consider a requirement for a 'stages plan' to be submitted in writing prior to commencement, for the written approval of the relevant determining body (similar to the provisions set out on the Brechfa Forest Connection Project DCO, the Brechfa Forest West Wind Farm DCO and the Richborough connection Project DCO), to approve the staging plan prior to commencement of works. <p>The ExA invites suggestions as to any alternative wording and/ or solutions that would address the ExA's concerns in regard to the above-mentioned matters.</p>
		<p>NCC response</p> <p>NCC's concerns mentioned in the question remain as they have not been addressed in the changes to the DCO submitted by the applicant at Deadline 2.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> NCC agrees with the ExA that it is not presently clear exactly what the requirement stages are. To some extent, it is acceptable for this to be left open-ended so that the applicant can pursue a strategy for discharging requirements that suits the needs of the delivery phase of the project. Notwithstanding this, NCC also agree that some clarification from the applicant would be welcome as to whether stages are intended to be temporal or geographical splits. NCC considers that requirements should be drafted in such a way that there can only be one body understood to be the discharging authority for a given submission. NCC has already raised concerns about the ambiguity of the term "relevant planning authority", though it should be noted that "relevant" is not the ambiguous part of the term. This is because, for example, "relevant planning authority" means in any given provision of this Order, the local planning authority for the area to which the provision relates and any successor in function. For NCC the implication of this is that provisions apply severally to different areas. Where a discharge application is submitted to one or more area-based discharging authorities, that discharging authority only discharges the application insofar as it relates to their area. If a requirements stage is drawn in a way that would cover multiple areas, then different decisions by the respective authorities would mean that the development could commence only in the areas for which the requirement has been discharge. NCC understands this to be the purpose of requirement 3, but we are interested in the practical difference between this and the Brechna Forest Connection Project DCO

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
DCO 1.A16	The applicant Relevant local authorities	<p>Article 5 (Limits of deviation) - 2</p> <p>Provide an update with regards to the potential for pylons TB140 to TB142 (inclusive) and TB238 to TB243 (inclusive) and whether an 18 metre vertical limit of deviation will be required, should a change from low height pylons to standard height pylons be required. The explanatory memorandum (EM) [APP-057] suggests the change will be known following consultation feedback and engagement with statutory stakeholders. Please provide an indication of when that consultation and engagement concludes and when a decision on these pylons being low height or standard height pylons will be finalised.</p> <p>In addition, the following wording has been used multiple times in this article "... to such extent the undertaker considers necessary or convenient", with two of those instances also including the word 'downwards'. In terms of precision and enforceability, the ExA raises concerns with the applicant in regard to the wording used and ask it be reviewed and amended, as may be necessary.</p> <p>In regard to the above concerns, the local authorities are invited to submit their views on this matter and request they submit alternative wording for consideration, should they wish.</p>
		<p>NCC response</p> <p>The named pylons are outside of Norfolk, so NCC defers to the local authorities in whose areas these pylons would fall.</p> <p>NCC assumes the intent of the provisions allowing downwards vertical deviation to be that there is effectively no limit to the downwards vertical deviation of pylons, because downwards vertical deviation tends towards lesser landscape and visual effects and because there is a practical floor for engineering reasons.</p> <p>If this is the case, the function of the wording is essentially for the avoidance of doubt only. It does not need to be particularly precise or enforceable because in practice there is no degree of downwards vertical deviation against which enforcement action is envisaged to be taken.</p> <p>NCC can see how this approach might be acceptable, but only if it can be confirmed that the direction of the deviation is in all cases away from the worst-case environmental impact. NCC would appreciate if the applicant could indicate where in the ES or other application documents this is set out.</p> <p>This is less obviously the case where the deviation is not specifically downwards, for example in the case of 5(1)(c) which provides that the undertaker may: "<i>in respect of the overhead conductors and fibre-optic earth wires deviate vertically to such extent as the undertaker considers necessary or convenient</i>".</p>
DCO 1.A19	All local authorities statutory undertakers	<p>Article 11 (Street Works); Article 12 (Application of the Permit Schemes); Article 13 (Application of the 1991 Act)</p> <p>The ExA notes the explanation provided by the applicant in its EM [APP-057] with regard to these articles but seeks whether the relevant Street/ Highway Authorities and/ or any statutory undertakers have any further comments, as relevant to these articles beyond the submissions in their RRs, WRs, LIRs and Deadline 1 submissions. In responding to this question, a relevant street/ highways authority or statutory undertaker should list any relevant examination library reference and paragraph numbering of their former submissions that responded to these articles.</p>
		<p>NCC response</p> <p>Norfolk County Council has provided commentary on Article 11 in our relevant representation [RR-2753] (at paragraphs 3.2 to 3.5) and proposed changes in our LIR [REP1-174] at pages 37 and 38. The requirement for permitting should accord with the Norfolk Permit Scheme, under NRSWA 1991 and TMA 2004, with permits submitted via the government's Street Manager website.</p>
DCO 1.A35	The applicant All local authorities	<p>Article 48 (Defence to proceedings in respect of statutory nuisance)</p> <p>The DASSI [APP-354] is noted, however, the ExA is concerned with regard to this article in the absence of any finalised design of the proposed substations, especially in the light of ES chapter 14 (noise and vibration). The ExA seeks certainty that the resultant noise impacts arising from the substations will be adequately mitigated within the design of those substations.</p> <p>Explain how that certainty can be provided in the absence of any finalised design of the substations.</p> <p>All local authorities are also invited to provide their views in relation to article 48.</p>

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
		<p>NCC response</p> <p>Norfolk County Council defers to South Norfolk District Council for matters regarding noise.</p>
DCO 1.A42	All local authorities, highway authorities and statutory undertakers	<p>Article 58 (Application, disapplication and modification of legislative provisions)</p> <p>The ExA would ask for comments in regard to the disapplication and modification of certain public general legislation (See provisions set out in article 58(1) and the public general legislation listed at schedule 17 of the draft DCO), especially in regard to the Highways Act 1980 and the Land Drainage Act 1991.</p>
		<p>NCC response</p> <p>The LLFA have taken legal advice on the proposed protective provisions to replace the disapplication of the Land Drainage Act 1991. The LLFA has a number of suggestions for suitable amendment to the draft protective provision for drainage and flood authorities. Our amendments are based on our previous experiences and are consistent with those applied to other NSIP schemes within Norfolk where a similar approach has been taken. These amendments provide clarification and consistency to our approach as an LLFA on the application of these provisions.</p> <p>NCC highways are looking to agree a protective provisions along with Suffolk County Council, Essex County Council and Thurrock Council.</p>
Schedules		
DCO 1.S5	The applicant All local authorities	<p>Schedule 3 – Requirement 1 (Interpretation) – Terms “discharging authority” and “start-up and close down activities”</p> <p>a) “discharging authority”: There are multiple examples throughout the draft DCO where terms such as ‘discharging authority’; ‘relevant planning authority’ and ‘relevant highways authority’ appear to be used interchangeably. This could lead to confusion and would ask the applicant and relevant local authorities for their views on this matter, including any suggestions, alternative wording or definitions within the interpretations section, that would prevent any such confusion.</p> <p>b) “start-up and close down activities”: Reference is made to the safety checking of plant and machinery, under (g), whilst reference to ‘safety checks’ is listed in (c). Are they not the same thing? Clarify and amend as necessary.</p>
		<p>NCC response</p> <p>a) In principle, NCC is content with the use of different terms which sometimes relate to the same organisation because each of these terms has a separate meaning and there are instances where they are not interchangeable. This is a consequence of there being a mix of institutional arrangements across local government in the project area.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. However, there are instances in the draft DCO where terms have been used in a way that does cause confusion precisely because these roles are not always consistent. For example, in paragraph 3 (fees) of schedule 4 (discharge of requirements), “relevant authority” and “relevant planning authority” are used apparently interchangeably, despite the fact that a third term, “discharging authority”, would seem to be more suitable because its definition in schedule 3 matches the context in which “relevant authority” is used. 2. Requirement four as presently drafted includes a reference to ‘other discharging authorit[ies] as may be appropriate to the relevant plan concerned’. Paragraph 1 (interpretation) of schedule 3 (requirements) defines “discharging authority” to mean the body responsible for giving any consent, agreement or approval required by a requirement in the order. In the case of requirement 4, this is no assistance because it becomes a circular reference. 3. NCC proposes an amendment to requirement four in our LIR [REP1-173] at pages 48 to 50 which would resolve this ambiguity by specifying that it is the relevant district planning authority who must approve all the management plans and specifying consultees by their roles. <p>b) This part of the question does not appear to be relevant for NCC.</p>

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
DCO 1.S7	The applicant All local authorities	<p>Schedule 3 – Requirement 3 (stages of the authorised development) requirement 3(1) specifies “...written notice setting out the anticipated programme for the carrying out of pre-commencement operations must be given to the relevant planning authority no less than seven days prior to the date on which those pre-commencement operations are first carried out...” The ExA would ask all local authorities, as well as any relevant discharging authorities whether seven days is an adequate period for such written notice and whether such written notice should be approved in writing by the relevant planning authority/ discharging authority?</p> <p>In addition to the above, should requirement 3(5) refer to sub-paragraph (2) and/ or (3)?</p>
		<p>NCC response</p> <p>In NCC’s view, the programme for the project is essentially a matter for the applicant. The purpose of requirement 3 is not that local authorities should exercise control over the timing of stages of the development or pre-commencement works (except to the extent that certain works may not take place until requirements have been fulfilled), instead requirement 3 serves to define and structure the programme of works so that other requirements can sensibly apply to “stages” rather than to the project as a whole.</p>
DCO 1.S8	The applicant All local authorities	<p>Schedule 3 – Requirement 5 (archaeology)</p> <p>Braintree DC in its LIR [REP1-148] (section 10.9) has recommended changes to requirement 5, whilst Chelmsford City Council, Colchester City Council, and Essex CC in their LIR (LIRs [REP1-153]; LIR [REP1-156] and [REP1-161] respectively) all recommended amendments to the wording of requirement 5 and the inclusion of a new sub-paragraph.</p> <p>Additionally, Norfolk CC in its LIR [REP1-173] recommends amending the wording of requirement 5(1) and (4) and article 23 (Removal of human remains) so notification is required to be made to the relevant County/ Local Authority. In their joint LIR [REP1-178] Suffolk CC, Mid Suffolk DC and Babergh DC have recommended amendments to article 23 and to requirement 5 of the draft DCO.</p> <p>Historic England in its WR [REP1-191] has proposed an amendment to requirement 5 of the draft DCO and H04 of the outline CoCP to refer to consultation with Historic England.</p> <p>All local authorities, as well as the applicant, are invited to comment on all of these proposed changes (amendment to article 23 and schedule 3, requirement 5 of the draft DCO and to H04 of the outline CoCP).</p> <p>In addition, the applicant is requested to provide, for discussion purposes, a new draft of requirement 5 that, as far as possible, takes into account all of these requested changes and also is requested to provide a commentary on whether any of these proposed amendments sought by the various organisations would be incompatible with each other.</p>
		<p>NCC response</p> <p>NCC agrees with the proposed revised condition wording suggested by Suffolk County Council. At present in Norfolk and Suffolk archaeological planning advice is provided at county level. We will await consultation on new draft requirement wording for the archaeological requirements, drafted by the applicant and taking into account the comments of all the local authorities.</p>
DCO 1.S19	The applicant All local authorities All discharging authorities	<p>Schedule 4 – (Discharge of requirements) - 1</p> <p>The government published its response to the Nuclear Regulatory Review 2025 on 13 March 2025, in its document ‘Building our nuclear nation: government response to the Nuclear Regulatory Review 2025’. The ExA draws attention to: i) it is seeking to accelerate “...efforts to ensure the planning system more effectively enables both low-carbon energy projects and infrastructure as a whole...”; and ii) its response to Recommendation 30, where it indicates this includes “...establishing a new unit within DESNZ to coordinate post-consent discharge functions for nuclear power and electricity network projects.”</p> <p>In the light of the above document and a clear statements from the government regarding its intention in related to post-consent discharge, the applicant and discharging authorities are asked to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Provide comments on the above publication in respect of post-consent discharge functions. b) Consider if the current drafting of schedule 4 in the draft DCO [APP-056] is an appropriate approach to the post-consent discharge of requirements, or whether schedule 4 of the draft DCO [APP-056] should take a similar approach to that set out in schedule 2, Part 2 of The A122 (Lower Thames Crossing) Development Consent Order 2025?

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
		<p>NCC response</p> <p>a) NCC is aware of the nuclear regulatory review and the government's acceptance of its recommendations. NCC notes that no details or guidance has yet been published on how the approach to post-consent discharges will be implemented. NCC also notes that there is no suggestion that this approach is to be mandatory. That is to say, an applicant might prefer to name another appropriate body or person as the discharging authority for requirements. Energy NSIPs are different from road network NSIPs in that the vast majority of road network NSIPs are promoted by a single government agency (National Highways) which has a longstanding arrangement to use the secretary of state for transport as their discharging authority. The energy sector has a more diverse set of applicants who may wish to do things differently to suit the circumstances of their own project.</p> <p>b) NCC does not think that the draft DCO should be redrafted to take a similar approach to that in The A122 (Lower Thames Crossing) Development Consent Order 2025 ("the LTC DCO"). As far as NCC is aware, the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero has not yet set up such a unit within the Infrastructure Planning Delivery team. NCC also understands that the applicant intends to engage with discharging authorities on discharge of requirement applications in advance of consent being granted. In NCC's view, it would be better for programme certainty for the applicant to be able to continue to engage with the bodies which they are currently expecting to be responsible for discharging requirements.</p> <p>Notwithstanding the overall arrangements, NCC does agree with some elements of the approach to discharge of requirements taken for the LTC DCO. For example, in the LTC DCO, the maximum period for discharge is 8 weeks as opposed to 28 days in the Norwich to Tilbury draft DCO. NCC also considers that there is merit in the requirement at paragraph 24 of Schedule 2 in the LTC DCO for the applicant to maintain a register of requirements.</p>
HE Historic environment		
HE 1.12	All local authorities Historic England	<p>Heritage visualisations - 1</p> <p>A range of heritage visualisations are provided [APP-350] and [APP-351].</p> <p>All local authorities and Historic England are asked to confirm:</p> <p>a) Agreement with the viewpoints chosen to reflect any potential impacts on heritage assets.</p> <p>b) In your opinion are additional visualisations required, and if so from which assets and where should the visualisations be taken from?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HE11 Church of St James, Marks Tey. Unclear why viewpoint not from north side of Church. • HE14 White Notley. Query over whether viewpoint is the most appropriate from the Conservation Area. • HE21 Elm Farmhouse. Viewpoint does not appear to show effect on setting. VP including the heritage asset would be more useful. • HE22 Tacolneston. Query over whether viewpoint is the most appropriate from the Conservation Area. • HE24 Church of St Mary's Washbrook. Query over whether viewpoint is the most appropriate from the heritage asset. • HE25 Ardleigh. Query over whether viewpoint is the most appropriate from the Conservation Area. • HE26 Fordstreet. Query over whether viewpoint is the most appropriate from the Conservation Area. • HE33 Mellis. Query over whether viewpoint is the most appropriate from the Conservation Area. • HE34 Finningham. Query over whether viewpoint is the most appropriate from the Conservation Area. Is there a view to the east rather than to the south east? • HE35 Creting Hall. View from inside garden with substantial screening; viewpoint from footpaths nearby could better show effect on setting.
		<p>NCC response</p> <p>NCC defers on built heritage matters to South Norfolk District Council</p>
LUS Land use and soils, green infrastructure		

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
LUS 1.2	The applicant Natural England Pylons East Anglia Limited All local authorities	Best and most versatile agricultural land (BMV) and soils - 1 It would appear from Paragraph 6.4.7 of the ES that detailed Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) survey was undertaken on approximately 1,011 ha (representing 54% of the proposed survey areas within the Order Limits). Predictive ALC grading was then carried out where it was not possible to undertake a detailed ALC survey. Given the coverage of actual survey work how much confidence can be placed on the applicants response on acid soils in document 8.4.6 page 22 that 'the detailed surveys did not identify the presence of jarosite in the soil and in locations where desk-based information suggested a potential for acid sulphate soils some of the soils were found to be moderately calcareous. There is no evidence to indicate the presence of actual or potential sulphate soils within the surveyed areas'. As being a representative conclusion that can be applied across the whole Order Limits as they are not all 'surveyed areas'.
		NCC response NCC defers to South Norfolk District Council on soil matters.
LUS 1.4	Natural England All local authorities Pylons East Anglia Limited	BMV and soils - 3 To what extent are the mitigation measures proposed by the applicant in the outline CoCP (measures GH02 and GH08) sufficiently robust to address issues should acid sulphate soils be encountered during construction.
		NCC response NCC defers to South Norfolk District Council on soil matters.
LV Landscape and visual		
LV 1.14	All local authorities	ES Appendix 13.5 National Landscape assessment study - 2 The study [APP-235] concludes that: "In conclusion, the Project would result in significant adverse effects on the special qualities of the Dedham Vale National Landscape during construction. However, during operation (and maintenance) the adverse effects on the special qualities of the National Landscape are judged to be minor and not significant (adverse)" (paragraph 13.3.8) The local authorities are asked whether they agree with this conclusion and provide reasoning if you do not.
		NCC response The Dedham Vale National Landscape does not fall within Norfolk. NCC therefore defers to local authorities in whose area the national landscape does fall.
LV1.22	All local authorities	Landscape visualisations – 1 The local authorities are asked whether: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You agree with the viewpoints in the visualisations [APP-343] to [APP-349] chosen to reflect any potential impacts on landscape. In your opinion are additional visualisations required, and if so from which assets and where should the visualisations be taken from? 2.23 Road south of Elm Pollard, west of Wickham Skeith. Viewpoint from underneath pylons of very limited use to show effect landscape. 2.40 A1120, Forward Green. Only wireframe provided when seems to indicate that the pylons may be visible. 3.21 Barn Lane, Little Bromley. Query over whether the best available viewpoint. Large hedge/trees and image quite dark. 4.08 Fordham. Only wireframe provided when seems to indicate that the pylons would be clearly visible. 4.17 Lodge Lane, Colchester. Only wireframe provided when seems to indicate that the pylons would be clearly visible. 4.23 Great Tey Road. Only baseline photographs provided, no visualisations. 5.03 Rivenhall Place, Silver End. Only baseline photographs provided, no visualisations. 5.10 PRoW near Coggeshall Hall. Only baseline photographs provided, no visualisations, appears to be very close to pylons. 5.15 Essex Way near Troy's Hall. Only baseline photographs provided, no visualisations. 6.07 A414 south of Writtle. Only wireframe provided when seems to indicate that the pylons may be visible. 6.09 The Causeway, Edney Common. Viewpoint does not appear very chosen, with large hedge at close quarters. 6.10 St Peter's Way, east of Milgreen Common. Only wireframe provided when seems to indicate that the pylons may be visible.

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6.20 PRow, Chignal St James. View to south west has hedge/bush at very close quarters. • 7.01 Ingatestone Road, Buttsbury. Location of viewpoint from church parking area not the best siting. • 7.02 Old Church Lane, Mountnessing Hall. Would a viewpoint from a PRow behind the Hall & Church provide a more useful view encompassing heritage assets? • 7.12 Ingatestone Road near White Tyrells. Only wireframe provided when seems to indicate that the pylons would be very clearly visible.
		<p>NCC response</p> <p>Norfolk County Council has no comment on the viewpoints chosen.</p>
LV 1.27	Norfolk CC	<p>Norfolk CC LIR</p> <p>In your LIR [REP1-173] you note several concerns/outstanding objections to landscape and visual matters. Regarding the applicants D1 and D2 responses are you satisfied with the responses received to the questions you raised in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paragraph 11.2 (aftercare period for reinstatement planting and detailed monitoring)? • Paragraph 11.2 (additional compensation and landscape led restoration projects within the Waveney Valley)? • Paragraph 10.8 (construction near water courses)? • Paragraph 10.9 (insufficient definition of temporary construction works)? <p>If not, please indicate in full areas that you still consider require addressing.</p>
		<p>NCC response</p> <p>With regard to paragraph 11.2, we are not satisfied by the applicant's D1 and D2 responses. In the applicant's comments on the LIRs [REP2-030] between paragraphs 3.13.11 to 3.13.16 the applicant maintains that a 5-year aftercare period for replacement trees is appropriate. The applicant doesn't engage with NCC's concerns that the substantial and widespread landscape and visual impacts of this project are of such magnitude that they justify a longer period to ensure the success of mitigation planting. We note the applicant's comments about the adaptive nature of the aftercare commitment and we suggest that the detailed monitoring approach we are advocating would be suitable within an adaptive approach.</p> <p>NCC maintains its position on the need for additional compensation and landscape led restoration projects within the Waveney Valley. The applicant notes in paragraph 3.5.17 of their comments on the LIRs that there is not an expectation for <u>all</u> residual effects to be compensated for. NCC agrees that not all residual effects can be compensated, but as explained fully in our LIR [REP1-173], the NPS does require application of the mitigation hierarchy, which includes compensation. NCC submit that the great sensitivity of the Waveney Valley and the widespread and substantial impact on it by the project requires a more thoughtful and proactive application of the mitigation hierarchy than is currently the case. As a reminder, because there is no embedded mitigation in the form of undergrounding, no additional mitigation beyond standard measures are proposed (see section 13.6 of ES Chapter 13 [APP-226]).</p> <p>The LLFA are not currently satisfied with the responses received regarding paragraphs 10.8 and 10.9. Norfolk LLFA has recently been provided with a Drainage Strategy by the applicant that contains some incomplete and erroneous information. This combined with the incomplete information in Chapter 4 and 12 of the Environmental Statement leaves the LLFA insufficient information to determine whether the temporary construction works including the supporting surface water drainage will result in an increase in flood risk from the proposed development or whether there is sufficient mitigation and management measures in place near watercourses. Further information is required from the applicant and detailed comments and feedback on the drainage strategy provided to the applicant.</p>

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
	All local authorities	<p>Paragraph 13.5.13 of ES Appendix 13.6 [APP-236] states that National Grid has committed to a 3:1 tree replacement ratio for individual trees and small groups of trees. It further notes that you would prioritise such replanting within the Order limits, although offsite provision may be required.</p> <p>The outline LEMP [AS-046] states (paragraph 9.3.6) that discussion is ongoing with landowners and third parties regarding the provision of offsite tree planting and that an offsite planting delivery scheme will be provided to the relevant Local Planning Authorities for their information, which provides details of the offsite provision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant - What constraints are there to replanting within the Order limits and under what circumstances may the need for offsite provision be triggered? • All local authorities – Is the provision of an offsite planting delivery scheme document acceptable to you? Do you have any comments on what it should contain and/or when it should be provided to be most useful to you? How could such details be secured?
		<p>NCC response</p> <p>Tree planting should be guided by current national guidance including the UK Forestry Standard (UKFS) .</p> <p>Planting must be in accordance with Norfolk’s Tree Planting and Resilience Strategy and inline with Norfolk’s LNRS .</p> <p>Any planting adjacent to highways (including public rights of way) must not create a physical or visual obstruction and not be within 15ft of the centre of the carriageway without NCC Highways approval.</p> <p>Replanting offsite would be triggered should there be no viable planting options onsite in line with the above planting guidance.</p> <p>Provision of offsite planting can be considered acceptable if carried out with legal agreement with landowners and accompanied with a robust programme of maintenance and monitoring to both achieve and demonstrate successful establishment of trees planted. To mitigate issues of planting not becoming established it is recommended that mechanisms and funding are in place to enable replanting (potentially at alternative locations should failure be attributed to site conditions).</p>
MW Minerals and Waste		
MW 1.1	Norfolk CC Suffolk CC Essex CC Thurrock Council	<p>Minerals safeguarding - 1</p> <p>Taking account of the impact of the project on existing and proposed mineral sites, do you consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the proposed development has sufficiently taken account of the need to safeguard mineral resources • the proposed development complies with your current and/ or emerging plans. If not, what further mitigation measures do you consider are required.
		<p>NCC response</p> <p>Norfolk County Council, as the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority for Norfolk, considers that the proposed development has sufficiently taken account of the need to safeguard mineral resources in Norfolk and is in general compliance with the adopted Norfolk Minerals and Waste Local Plan (May 2025). The applicant and the Mineral Planning Authority have had a proactive and constructive dialogue throughout the preparation of the project regarding mineral and waste safeguarding issues.</p>
NV Noise and vibration		

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
NV 1.5	The applicant Relevant local authorities	<p>Use of use of triple Araucaria conductors or alternative technology</p> <p>Throughout ES Chapter 14 [APP-256] reference is made to the use of triple Araucaria conductors (or alternative technology that performs to the same or better standard in relation to noise on standard lattice pylons).</p> <p>In the event of alternative technology being used, as opposed to the use of the use of triple Araucaria conductors on part or all of the route, should a mechanism be included to ensure that alternative technology is of the same or better standard in relation to noise on standard lattice pylons. In the event a mechanism should be used, what form should the mechanism take (ie should it be a requirement within the DCO), should there be a need to agree to the alternative technology and should there be a discharging and appeal authority?</p> <p>In addition to the above, the ExA notes ES Chapter 7 paragraph 7.9.4 Refers to pylons TB140 to TB142 (inclusive) to the south of River Chelmer being low height pylons. However, this paragraph also refers to feedback that was received during consultation in 2025 and certain technical details being refined. This paragraph states " as a result, flexibility has been retained to allow for the installation of standard lattice pylons in this area instead." However, the ExA notes ES Chapter 14 (Noise and vibration) states a low noise conductor system will be used. Can the applicant confirm, should the design change in relation to pylons TB140 to TB142 (inclusive) to standard lattice pylons, or any other form of pylon, be necessary the low noise conductor system will be used as part of those pylons?</p>
		<p>NCC response</p> <p>Norfolk County Council defers on matters relating to noise and vibration to South Norfolk District Council.</p>
NV 1.7	The applicant Relevant local authorities	<p>Compaction activities and potential for damage due to construction vibration</p> <p>ES Chapter 14 [APP-256] paragraph 14.7.27 to 14.7.30 (inclusive) indicates there are five structures or buildings where there is potential for damage due to construction vibration from potential compaction activities. It also indicates: i) the identified locations will be reviewed by the main contractor in their specific detailed assessments, prior to the start of work with mitigation measures put in place, where required, to avoid potential significant effects; and ii) will review all works locations to determine whether any other buildings or structures may be affected by vibration from construction activities. However, no further details are provided.</p> <p>The ExA is concerned in regard to the absence of the further details in regard to both i) and ii) above and seeks the views of both the applicant and Relevant County/ Local Authorities in this regard. Should there be a formal mechanism requiring the further details and mitigation to be submitted and approved. What form should such a mechanism take (ie should it be a requirement within the DCO)? Should there be a need to agree the additional mitigation measures to avoid potential significant effects.</p>
		<p>NCC response</p> <p>Norfolk County Council defers on matters relating to noise and vibration to South Norfolk District Council.</p>
NV 1.13	The applicant All local authorities	<p>EACN and Tilbury North Substations operational noise assessment</p> <p>ES Appendix 14.3 (EACN Substation Operational Noise Assessment) [APP-259] and ES Appendix 14.4 (Tilbury North Substation Operational Noise Assessment) [APP-260]. The ExA is concerned with the reference to 'reasonably practicable' (also referred to as Best Available Technique Not Entailing Excessive Cost (BATNEEC)) in both documents. This is due to 'reasonably practicable' and BATNEEC including an element of cost within the assessment. The ExA considers any mitigation used must achieve the outcome intended, as set out in tables a 14.3.8 and 14.4.8 respectively, and Best Available Technique (BAT), not BATNEEC, should be employed and secured within the DCO.</p> <p>The ExA seeks the views of both the applicant and local authorities in this regard. Should there be a formal mechanism requiring BAT? What form should such a mechanism take (ie should it be a requirement within the DCO) and, if so, who should the details be submitted to and who is responsible for discharging those conditions?</p>
		<p>NCC response</p> <p>Norfolk County Council defers matters on relating to noise and vibration to South Norfolk District Council.</p>

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
PRoW 1.1	Norfolk CC Suffolk CC Essex CC Thurrock Council	PRoW general - 1 Please provide a schedule of proposed amendments to the outline PRoW Management Plan, highlighting matters that you consider are not acceptable and require amending and what you consider those amendments should be.
		NCC response NCC highways have no proposed amendments for the outline PRoW Management Plan.
PRoW 1.2	Norfolk CC Suffolk CC Essex CC Thurrock Council	PRoW general - 2 ES Chapter 16 [APP-039] paragraph 16.4.15 details the PRoW user surveys carried out. Confirm that these baseline surveys are accepted and if not, why not.
		NCC response NCC highways accept the baseline surveys.
SET Socio-economics, tourism and recreation		
SET 1.5	The applicant Relevant local authorities	Mitigation measures - 2 The ExA notes the use of the term 'where practicable' in relation to proposed mitigation and is concerned as to the vagueness of this term. Applicant - justify the use of this term in each instance or amend the proposed mitigations accordingly. Relevant County and Local Authorities – The ExA seeks your views in regard to the use of this term and your suggestions in regard to any alternative forms of wording.
		NCC response NCC would be keen to understand why the applicant wishes to qualify mitigation measures in this way. NCC is familiar with the need for flexibility where measures are difficult to achieve, but in our experience a more appropriate way to enable this is to create a change management process (for example through the discharge of requirements or other post-consent mechanism) to ensure suitable scrutiny and that adjustments to the approach do not result in worse effects than assessed. In the case of PRoWs (see paragraph 15.6.6 of ES Chapter 15 [APP-265]), NCC has made clear that closures, alterations or diversions must be subject to the consent of the street authority and also that alternative routes must be open and in place before closures. See the proposed amendments to article 16 in Table 4-A of NCC's LIR [REP1-173] .
TT Traffic and transport		
TT 1.20	National Highways Suffolk CC Essex CC Norfolk CC Thurrock Council Suffolk Constabulary Essex Police	Cumulative impacts Are there any specific impacts from other projects which you consider could cause additional impacts and risk to the proposed development and do you consider these have these been addressed adequately by the applicant?

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
		<p>NCC response</p> <p>NCC highways officers have had discussions with the applicant with regards to cumulative traffic impacts with other major schemes or NSIPs in the area. NCC feel that the applicant has addressed this adequately.</p>
TT 1.28	National Highways Suffolk CC Essex CC Norfolk CC Thurrock Council	<p>Walking, cycling and horse-riding – 1</p> <p>Please confirm if you consider there are any outstanding parts of your highway network that require a Walking, Cycling and Horse-riding assessment review. If so, please list these and give the status of discussions with the applicant regarding this.</p>
		<p>NCC response</p> <p>The applicant has made appropriate assessment of the local network with regards to Walking, Cycling and Horse-riding. Please refer to PRow general 1 and 2 for any other comments.</p>
TT 1.36	National Highways Suffolk CC Essex CC Norfolk CC Thurrock Council	<p>Outline construction traffic management plan - 2</p> <p>For the avoidance of doubt, please detail any matters in the outline CTMP [APP-309] which you consider requires amending and your proposed amendment. This could be in the form of a schedule or tracked changed version of the outline CTMP.</p>
		<p>NCC response</p> <p>Norfolk County Council highways have reviewed the outline CTMP and have the following comments to make:</p> <p>2.3.1 and 2.3.2</p> <p>As per the highway team’s response to the DCO documentation, the scheme working hours should be Monday-Friday 07:00 – 19:00 and Saturdays 07:00 – 13:00 only. No working on Sundays or Bank holidays subject to operations outside core working hours.</p> <p>2.3.6</p> <p>As per comment for 2.3.1 and 2.3.2.</p> <p>2.3.7</p> <p>Diss access strategy still has not been confirmed with NCC highways. The proposed traffic numbers for off-peak HGV numbers through Diss are still a concern. Applicant should be submitting more information for NCC highways to access.</p> <p>5.4.13</p> <p>Norfolk County Council’s peak hours should start at 07:30.</p> <p>5.4.23</p> <p>Semi-permanent signage (over 18 months) – posts will be required, which will need permits etc.</p> <p>5.7.11</p>

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
		<p>The highway team still haven't confirmed that a split between Diss and Thetford is acceptable. The highway team would be content for LGVs to travel on the A1066, as RG56 will be a satellite compound and most peak traffic flows will be off-peak.</p> <p>Table 5.9 Proposed Junction Capacity Mitigation Measures</p> <p>Sites 6 to 15 all refer to accessing via Diss, this route has not been confirmed.</p> <p>4.</p> <p>The Highway Authority would add that any works, whether inside or outside the order limits, require permitting under NRSWA/TMA.</p>
TT 1.38	National Highways Suffolk CC Essex CC Norfolk CC Thurrock Council	<p>Statements of common ground</p> <p>In the SoCG with National Highways [REP1-048] a number of statements suggest that you are awaiting further information following requests to allow you to further consider the applicant submission. Please can you state if this additional information is now available to you and if not, what timescales you require to ensure an adequate response to any outstanding matters or concerns. Please can all local highway authorities address this same question.</p>
		<p>NCC response</p> <p>NCC highways are still waiting for more information from the application regarding Diss Access Strategy.</p>