

NORWICH TO TILBURY

EN020027

Post-Hearing Submission for Issue Specific Hearing 2

Suffolk County Council [REDACTED]

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Glossary of Acronyms

<i>CSEC</i>	<i>Cable Sealing End Compounds</i>
<i>(d)DCO</i>	<i>(draft) Development Consent Order</i>
<i>DESNZ</i>	<i>Department for Energy Security and Net Zero</i>
<i>ES</i>	<i>Environmental Statement</i>
<i>ExA</i>	<i>Examining Authority</i>
<i>ExQ1</i>	<i>Examining Authority’s First Written Questions</i>
<i>GAAC</i>	<i>General Aviation Awareness Council</i>
<i>HDD</i>	<i>Horizontal Directional Drilling</i>
<i>ISH</i>	<i>Issue Specific Hearing</i>
<i>NSIP</i>	<i>Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project</i>

PPA *Planning Performance Agreement*

“BDC” refers to Babergh District Council; “MSDC” refers to Mid Suffolk District Council; “BMSDC” refers to BDC and MSDC jointly; “SCC” refers to Suffolk County Council; and “the Councils” refers to BDC, MSDC, and SCC jointly.

Purpose of this Submission

The document has been prepared by Suffolk County Council to provide a written summary of the representations made by the Councils at the Issue Specific Hearing held across 28 April, 29 April and 1 May 2026. Examination Library references are used throughout to assist readers.

Written Summary of Representations made at Issue Specific Hearing 2 (“ISH2”)

Day 1 (Tuesday 28 April 2026)		
Item	Title of Matter and SCC's Written Summary of Representation	References
1	Welcome, Examining Authority (ExA) introductions and arrangements for the hearing	
	<p>Suffolk County Council were represented by the following team in person:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Michael Bedford KC, Barrister, Cornerstone Barristers - Callum Etherton, Senior Planning Officer, Suffolk County Council - Graham Gunby, National Infrastructure Planning Manager, Suffolk County Council <p>Attending colleagues were supported by the following team virtually:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emyr Thomas, Partner and Parliamentary Agent, Sharpe-Pritchard - Matthew Baker, Senior Archaeological Officer, Suffolk County Council - Kate Batt, Senior Archaeological Officer, Suffolk County Council - Tim Outlaw, Ecologist, Suffolk County Council - Sam Bye, PROW and Green Access Planning Manager, Suffolk County Council - Isolde Cutting, Senior Landscape Officer, Suffolk County Council 	
2	Purpose of the issue specific hearing and ExA opening remarks	
3	Introduction of participants	

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4 Noise and Vibration		
Note: Construction hours to be discussed, where necessary, under the DCO heading below (second bullet point, item ii (Schedules 3... of the draft DCO))		
4.1	including discussions on:	
4.1.a	Piling	
4.1.b	Primary Access Route 30 – Bentley Road and the magnitude of impact on noise sensitive receptors (both noise and vibration impacts), especially Jasmine Cottage, and mitigation	
4.2	Any other noise and vibration related issues	
SCC defers to BMSDC in respect of matters related to noise and vibration.		
5 Aviation Safety		
5.1	Including discussion on:	
5.1.a	Policy matters (including the differences between licensed and unlicensed aerodromes and critical national priority implications)	
5.1.b	Wattisham Station	
Located in Suffolk.		

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5.1.c	Tibenham Aerodrome	
5.1.d	Priory Farm	
5.1.e	Raydon Winds [sic]	
	Located in Suffolk.	
5.1.f	Chase Farm	
5.2	Any other aviation related issues	
SCC defers to the General Aviation Awareness Council (“ GAAC ”) and the relevant operator(s) for matters in respect of Aviation Safety.		
6	The DCO	
The ExA will be examining the following broad headings:		
6.1	Articles and Schedules of the draft DCO	
6.1.a	The applicant will be asked to provide a very brief overview of each part of the draft DCO	
6.1.b	The ExA may ask questions in respect of DCO powers, seeking responses where appropriate from the applicant, the local authorities and other interested parties	
<p>SCC shares the Examining Authority’s (“ExA”) concern that it is unnecessary to have both a deemed consent arrangement (after 25 business days) and also an imposition on the authorities of not “unreasonably withholding or delaying” consent. SCC considers this combination is not needed, and therefore it should not be included in several provisions. SCC also explained it also adds uncertainty and an element of imprecision.</p> <p>In the Sea Link examination, on 17 April 2026, that panel issued its schedule of recommended changes to the development consent order for that</p>		

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	<p>project ([PD-024] in the Sea Link Examination Library), which is also a project being promoted by National Grid. There are several similarities in the drafting of the various provisions, and they too had effectively the same duplication of approach of both deemed consent and “not unreasonably withheld or delayed”, being included in several provisions. The Sea Link panel's view was that that should not be maintained, and their recommendation in terms of their schedule of changes is to remove this clause (see Item no. 2 in [PD-024]). SCC agrees with the Sea Link ExA and, for the same reasons, considers these words should be deleted from the instant Order. So, SCC would say the combination wording is not justified for the instant application.</p> <p>SCC can certainly see a circumstance where, if the period for approval is sufficient, then having a deemed consent at the end of that period is appropriate; accompanying that with “unreasonably withheld or delayed” is unreasonable. In response to the Applicant’s point that the deeming provision and “unreasonably withheld or delayed” is used in the Bramford to Twinstead DCO, SCC would echo that the practical experience of discharge of consent on Bramford of Twinstead can serve as a case study, which has thus far not been an entirely happy story in terms of the way that things have worked. So, while it can be quoted as a precedent because it's contained in a made order, SCC considers that if one is going to refer to it as a precedent, one ought to take into account what I might call the lived experience of that made order (contained in AP10 below).</p> <p>In addition to then points made in the ISH, SCC would emphasise –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At Deadline 6 of the Sea Link DCO examination, the ExA submitted its <i>Schedule of ExA’s recommended amendments to the applicant’s dDCO [PD-024]</i>. The ExA has recommended the deletion of the words “unreasonably withheld or delayed” in each of these provisions for the following reasons – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “The ExA considers that the inclusion of “which shall not be or must not be unreasonably withheld or delayed” (or a variation of such words) would add ambiguity rather than clarity. • SCC will be receiving considerable numbers of requests for approval and will ensure that they are dealt with as quickly as possible. With the deeming provisions included there is no need to also say that the approvals must not be “unreasonably withheld or delayed”. • SCC request that “unreasonably withheld or delayed” is omitted from the following articles: 11(2) (street works), 14(4) (power to alter layout, etc. of streets), 15(2)(a) and (b) (permanent stopping up of streets and public rights of way), 16(2), 16(5)(b) (temporary closure of streets and public rights of way), 17(1)(b) (access to works), 20(3), 20(4)(a) (discharge of water), 49(2) (traffic regulation), 55(1) (procedure regarding 	

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	certain approvals etc.).	
6.2	Schedules 3 and 4 of the draft DCO – (Schedule 3 – Requirements and Schedule 4 (Discharge of requirements))	
6.2.a	The applicant will be asked to provide an overview of the requirements and the discharge process	
6.2.b	The ExA may ask questions, seeking responses where appropriate from the applicant, the local authorities and any other interested parties who have registered to speak	
	<p><i>Discharge or Requirements process (time limits)</i></p> <p>SCC are agnostic on approaching time limits as defined as either calendar days or business days (but leaning towards the Applicant’s proposal of moving to business days in the drafting of this DCO). If business days are used, it then does impact when you are drawing comparisons to other orders. Referring back to Sea Link (promoted by National Grid, also as CNP infrastructure, and also subject to a desire to see it in place by 2030 – so with the same time pressures as Norwich to Tilbury) then the Examining Authority in that case have been persuaded by the Local Authorities’ position of moving to a 56-days (or 40 business days) decision period for the discharge of requirements (see Item No. 1 of [PD-024] in the Sea Link Examination Library). SCC therefore promotes 40 business days as its preferred timeframe for the discharge of requirements.</p> <p>SCC did not imply that the National Grid on the Sea Link Examination had agreed to the 56-days timeframe for the discharge of requirements, rather that the ExA’s schedule of change to the dDCO had proposed such an amendment.</p> <p>SCC will provide a lived experience of the discharge of requirements for the Bramford to Twinstead Order (contained in AP10 below), beyond what was provided in answer to ExQ1 DCO1.A2 of SCC’s Response to the Examining Authorities’ First Written Questions (“ExQ1”) [REP3-086], and further detail of our understanding of the situation in regard to the Sea Link Examination (contained in AP10 below).</p> <p>In addition to the points made in the ISH, SCC would emphasise –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While SCC will ensure that any application for consent will be dealt with as quickly as possible, it will be remembered that SCC will be receiving a considerable number of requests for approval across several nationally significant infrastructure projects which have already 	

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Item	Title of Matter and SCC's Written Summary of Representation	References
	<p>been consented¹. A 25 business days decision-making period in this context is unrealistic and potentially detrimental to the effective consideration of applications.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Given the volume of work which will arise from the number of NSIPs being delivered in Suffolk, SCC considers 25 business days is too short and requests that it is replaced with 56 days, or 40 business days. SCC also considers that this period should be paused if the highway authority considers that additional information is reasonably required to make a decision. SCC requests that 25 business days is also replaced with 56 days in the following provisions: 14(5) (power to alter layout, etc. of streets); 16(8) (temporary closure of streets and public rights of way); 17(2) (access to works); 20(9) (discharge of water); 22(8) (authority to survey and investigate land), 49(10) (traffic regulation) and 50(5) (felling or lopping). A similar point applies in respect of paragraph 1(1) (applications made under requirements) of Schedule 4 (discharge of requirements), which is mentioned below. <p><u>The Sea Link draft DCO</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the Sea Link draft DCO [REP6-005], the applicant (National Grid Electricity Transmission) has included a 35-day period for each of the provisions mentioned above and SCC has sought the extension of that period to 56 days. At Deadline 6 of the Sea Link DCO examination, the ExA submitted its <i>Schedule of ExA's recommended amendments to the applicant's dDCO</i>. The ExA has recommended the replacement of 35 days in each of these provisions to 56 days for the following reasons – <p style="padding-left: 40px;">“The ExA considers that given the volume of NSIPs within the local authority areas and the need to allow for consultation and proper scrutiny, that a 56-day period is reasonable and appropriate”.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SCC agrees with the ExA and, for the same reasons, considers the same deadline should be included in the instant Order. If business days 	

¹ For example: East Anglia ONE North Offshore Wind Farm Order 2022 (SI 2022/432), East Anglia TWO Offshore Wind Farm Order 2022 (SI 2022/433), Sizewell C (Nuclear Generating Station) Order 2022 (SI 2022/853), Sunnica Energy Farm Order 2024 (SI 2024/802), and National Grid (Bramford to Twinstead Reinforcement) Order 2024 (SI 2024 / 958). Forthcoming DCO applications for which SCC will be a host authority include National Grid Electricity Transmission's Sea Link application and National Grid Interconnector Holdings Limited's LionLink Interconnector application.

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	<p>are used, this would equate to 40 business days.</p> <p>Article 2 (Maintain)</p> <p>SCC has commented on the Applicant's response to ExQ1 DCO1.A7 in its <i>Comments on Deadline 3 Submissions</i>. The Council recognises the term is not intended to include any matters that would fall outside the scope of the Environmental Statement and SCC welcomes that safeguard.</p> <p>Street Works</p> <p>If a separate agreement is concluded, then it is likely that the terms of that agreement would provide the reassurance that the Local Highway Authorities are seeking in respect of street works. As this has yet to be concluded and past experience indicates that these side agreements do often get concluded before the close of the Examination, it is possible that negotiations will continue post-examination. Therefore, SCC suggests that the drafting is approached on the basis that there is no such agreement. There are also concerns regarding time limits in representations.</p> <p>Further, there is a question of whether there should be explicit reference to where consents are given the power to impose conditions on those consent – SCC consider this necessary, the Applicant considers that this is implied.</p> <p>Regarding attaching conditions in addition to the points made in the ISH, SCC would emphasise –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Article 16(5)(b) ((temporary closure of streets and public rights of way) refers to the street authority's ability to attach <u>reasonable conditions</u> to a certain consent. Other provisions which state conditions may be added to a consent include articles 20(3) (discharge of water) and 42(3)(a) (crown rights); however, other provisions which provide for consent are silent as to whether conditions can be added. Since there is no restriction on the imposition of conditions, SCC considers that can be added; however, for consistency and the avoidance of doubt, SCC considers each provision which provides for the grant of consent or approval should state explicitly that conditions may be attached to such consent or approval e.g. the following articles: 11(2) (street works), 14(4) (power to alter layout, etc. of streets), 16(2) (temporary closure of streets and public rights of way), 17(1)(b) (access to works), 22(5) (authority to survey and investigate the land), 49(2) (traffic regulation), and 50(4) (felling or lopping). In its response to the relevant representations [REP2-023] the Applicant does not consider this is necessary because article 55(3) "is clear that where such consent, agreement or approval is granted under the DCO, it will be subject to the same appeal procedure as the 	

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	<p>requirements including where a condition to which the undertaker objects is included”.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SCC does not consider the position is clearcut. Article 55(3) of the draft Order [REP3-004] says – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Subject to paragraph (4) the procedure set out in paragraphs 3, 4 and 5 of Schedule 4 (discharge of requirements) has effect in relation to any other consent, agreement or approval required under this Order where such consent, agreement or approval is granted subject to any condition to which the undertaker objects, or is refused or is withheld”. • Article 55(3) applies paragraphs 3, 4 and 5 of Schedule 4 to a consent when it is granted subject to a condition. It does not state that a condition can be applied to any consent; indeed, nothing in the draft Order says that. Instead, we are left with a situation where some provisions allow conditions to be attached and others are silent in that respect. For clarity, SCC maintains its position: each provision which provides for the grant of consent or approval should state explicitly that conditions may be attached to such consent or approval <p>Article 58 (Application, disapplication and modification of legislative provisions)</p> <p>SCC does not agree with the disapplication of Highways Act 1980 provisions – i.e. sections 141, 169 and 171 – included in article 58. It is hoped these matters of dispute can be adequately resolved; however, this is subject to whether a Highways Agreement is concluded.</p> <p>In addition to the points made in the ISH, SCC would emphasise –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regarding the Highways Act 1980 – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Section 141: SCC does not agree with the disapplication of this provision because section 141 is an important tool in aiding road safety by preventing trees being planted in such a way that would (i) interfere with visibility / sight lines (ii) obstruct the highway corridor and (iii) interfere with highways assets. In the event of unlawful planting, section 141 provides a straightforward enforcement regime, requiring removal of the unlawfully planted trees within 21 days. ○ Section 169: SCC does not agree with the disapplication of this provision because it sets out a clear licensing and safety control regime for scaffolding. In particular, SCC values the ability to impose conditions on any licence which ensures scaffolding is erected safely. ○ Section 171: SCC does not agree with the disapplication of this provision because it provides a straightforward regime for controlling the temporary deposit of materials, rubbish, etc. or other things in the street. • SCC would be concerned if any of these provisions were disapplied because doing so would risk compromising the safe operation of 	

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	<p>highways in SCC's area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parliament would not have introduced these provisions if it did not consider they were necessary and SCC objects to their disapplication which is unjustified and largely unprecedented in DCOs. For example, paragraph 3.62 of the Explanatory Memorandum [REP3-007] (which concerns article 58 (application, disapplication and modification of legislative provisions)) refers to three precedents: National Grid (Bramford to Twinstead Reinforcement) Order 2024 (SI 2024/958), A303 (Amesbury to Berwick Down) Development Consent Order 2023 (SI 2023/834), and Southampton to London Pipeline Development Consent Order 2020 (SI 2020/1099). None of these seeks to disapply any provision of the Highways Act 1980. <p>Article 14 (Powers to alter layouts)</p> <p>SCC maintains its concern with this article. Where a permanent alteration is made to the highway or street network, it then becomes the responsibility of the highway authority or the street authority to maintain that arrangement post-construction. Therefore, this article imposes an obligation on a public body without their say so, which will likely have cost implications. Again, it is hoped this concern can be addressed appropriately in a highways side agreement.</p> <p>Article 23 (removal of human remains)</p> <p>In addition to SCC's commentary in representations, SCC has commented on the Applicant's response to ExQ1 DCO1.A28 in its Deadline 4 submission. The point of principle is that SCC does not think that there is a justified need for this and it does run the risk of inconsistencies with the proper protection of archaeological remains. The Council notes that the same debate was played out in the Sea Link Examination, and the Examining Authority's Schedule of Changes to the DCO recommended the removal of the equivalent article from that DCO for the reason that there are no known burial grounds on the route of the works and therefore it should be regulated under the archaeological regime rather than this particular article (see Item No. 3 of [PD-024] in the Sea Link Examination Library). SCC considers that the same applies to Norwich to Tilbury so far as it affects archaeological remains within Suffolk.</p> <p>In addition to the points made in the ISH, SCC would emphasise –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the Sea Link draft DCO [REP6-005], the applicant (National Grid Electricity Transmission) included a "removal of human remains" at article 23. At Deadline 6 of the Sea Link DCO examination, the ExA submitted its <i>Schedule of ExA's recommended amendments to the</i> 	

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	<p><i>applicant's dDCO [PD-024]</i> and recommended the deletion of the “removal of human remains” article from that draft Order for the following reasons –</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">“There are no known burial grounds within the order limits so the ExA considers this article to be unnecessary. Any archaeological human remains should be dealt with in accordance with the archaeological written scheme of investigation”.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At deadline 7, the Sea Link applicant removed article 23 (removal of human remains) from the draft Order [REP7-003]. SCC considers the same approach should be followed here. <p>Article 34(1)</p> <p>The article contains a period of 7 years for the exercise of compulsory purchase powers, whereas the general practice has been a period of 5 years. The Applicant has repeatedly stated the priority to make progress with this project and so SCC does not understand why there needs to be an extended period of 7 years from making an order. This has the effect of creating uncertainty and, in some cases, blight on the areas of land that are subject to these potential powers. Whilst the Council absolutely accepts that there needs to be a period, it should not be any longer than is necessary and there has not been adequate explanation as to why a 7 year period is necessary.</p> <p>SCC has commented on the Applicant’s response to ExQ1 DCO1.A32 in its Comments on Deadline 3 Submissions [REP3-086].</p> <p>The Applicant has given an explanation by reference to two of the offshore wind farms where the Secretary of State did accept a 7 year period but those were in circumstances where there was a genuine uncertainty regarding whether they could proceed or not as they were subject to the bidding rounds of Contracts for Difference. This does not apply to an electricity transmission project, such as this project, and therefore SCC does not see those circumstances as comparable nor a persuasive precedent and the Council awaits an adequate explanation.</p> <p>In addition to the points made in the ISH, SCC would emphasise –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In its reply to SCC’s LIR [REP2-030], the applicant says: “The Statement of Reasons (document reference 4.1) provides further details on compulsory acquisition and time limits”; however, in relation to article 34(1), the Statement of Reasons [REP2-009] merely states: “Article 34 (Time limit for exercise of authority to acquire land compulsorily): The time period stated is after the end of the period of seven years beginning with the day on which the Order comes into force”. (paragraph 4.3.8). 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regarding the cited precedents, the Secretary of State’s decision letter in respect of the East Anglia One North Offshore Wind Farm Order dated 31 March 2022 includes, at paragraph 26.7 the following text in respect of the inclusion in that Order of a seven-year period for the use of compulsory acquisition powers – <p style="margin-left: 40px;">“The Applicant seeks to vary the statutory time period for the use of compulsory acquisition powers from five to seven years [ER 29.2.11]. The Applicant justified this on the basis that uncertainties relating to Contract for Difference rounds meant that a realistic timetable would be based on allocation round 5 rather than the forthcoming allocation round 4, and that the intention to initially take temporary possession and then seek permanent rights based on the final location of the infrastructure supported a seven year period whilst not contradicting the pressing need argument for additional renewable energy infrastructure [ER 29.5.52 et seq.]. The ExA was satisfied with the Applicant’s proposed approach and concluded that the seven year period in Article 19 was satisfactory [ER 29.5.19]. On 9 February 2022 the Secretary of State announced that CfD rounds will be in future be conducted on an annual basis. The Secretary of State has considered the Applicant’s position in light of this request and concludes that despite the change to the timing of future CfD round it is appropriate to grant a seven year period, in particular noting the Applicant’s intended approach to minimising the amount of land that will be compulsorily acquired”.</p> • The Secretary of State’s decision letter dated 31 March 2022 for the East Anglia Two Offshore Wind Farm Order includes identical text at paragraph 26.7. • It is clear from paragraphs 26.7 of the decision letters that there were two project-related reasons which justified the extension of the standard 5-year period to 7 years for the East Anglia ONE North and East Anglia TWO projects (i.e. the uncertainty related to the Contract for Difference rounds – which has since been dealt with – and the applicants’ approach to first taking temporary possession of land and then seeking permanent rights based on the final location of the infrastructure). • The instant Explanatory Memorandum [REP2-006] says the extended time period “will enable National Grid to construct pursuant to temporary use powers and then exercise the powers of compulsory acquisition after construction”. It is not clear from the EM (or, indeed, any other document) why five years is not enough time to allow this to happen, particularly given the applicant’s aim to deliver the project by the end of 2030, which would suggest that compulsory acquisition powers would need to exercised before the expiration of seven years. • An example of a recently made DCO which includes a provision similar to that requested by SCC is the Gatwick Airport (Northern Runway 	

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	<p>Project) Development Consent Order 2025 (SI 2025/1054) which includes, at article 18(8) (traffic regulations) –</p> <p>Article 50 (felling or lopping)</p> <p>SCC has a concern regarding the interaction with important hedgerows, which are subject to the Hedgerows Regulations 1997. The Council considers that more needs to be done to justify the inclusion of important hedgerows within this power, without further protections.</p> <p>Schedule 17</p> <p>SCC disagrees with the Applicant’s approach to the disapplication of section 23 of the Land Drainage Act 1991 and does not consent to the disapplication.</p> <p>In addition to the points made in the ISH, SCC would emphasise –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Order proposes to disapply section 23 of the Land Drainage Act 1991 and replace it with protective provisions. • SCC’s consent is required before section 23 of the Land Drainage Act 1991 can be disapplied. No such consent has been granted and the protective provisions have not been agreed. • The protective provisions reduce SCC’s deadline for determining applications from up to 62 days to 28 days. That reduction in time is unacceptable, unreasonable and cannot be agreed. <p>Definition of ‘relevant county planning authority’</p> <p>SCC responded to ExQ1 GEN1.5 [REP3-086] regarding the implications on Local Government Reorganisation for the discharge of requirements, raising the problem of where you have an individual highway or street which presently sits wholly within one authority but may sit within two authorities in the future whether the drafting that the Applicant is proposing will be apposite. It may be necessary for the particular works affecting that street or highway to secure consents from the two authorities, as opposed to one. SCC would be interested in the Applicant’s response, which it would be helpful to have separate from any changes to the process for the discharge of requirements consequent on the Fingleton Review.</p> <p>Schedule 4 on the Fingleton Review Recommendation 30</p>	

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Item	Title of Matter and SCC's Written Summary of Representation	References
	<p>At this stage of the Examination, SCC considers that the new matter of the Department of Energy Security and Net Zero (“DESNZ”) unit being considered a discharging authority should be deferred. SCC considers that more information on the unit and its remit will be forthcoming during the Examination.</p> <p>SCC will maintain dialogue with the Applicant on this matter but makes the initial point that it is not content with the approach taken by the applicant on the Sea Link Examination. The Council supports the initial view expressed the ExA on Day 2 of ISH2 in regard to seeking to avoid the Examination being presented with two alternative drafting options by the Applicant (with or without the DESNZ unit in place) but defers its position on the detailed drafting until after it has engaged in further dialogue with the Applicant.</p> <p>Definition of ‘stage’</p> <p>The Applicant has provided material to the Local Authorities for consideration regarding the discharge of requirements process, SCC has not yet had sufficient time to review the proposed approach in detail but will provide a response to the response prior to Deadline 5. Within this documentation, the Applicant has proposed a joint project management resource to be shared by all local authorities to coordinate the discharge of requirements. SCC firmly rejects this proposal. SCC has considerable experience in the discharge of requirements and has significant concerns that this would delay or frustrate the established processes across all discharging authorities. SCC will be discharging requirements on numerous consented nationally significant infrastructure projects, unique arrangements that amend the process (particularly those that do so in minor ways) create uncertainty and increase the potential for human errors.</p> <p>Discharge of Requirements</p> <p>SCC will continue dialogue, but the Council does not consider that the mechanism proposed by the Applicant will resolve the matter of the limited timeframe in which to determine the applications (currently proposed as 25 business days).</p> <p>Side Agreements</p> <p>There is ongoing dialogue regarding securing section 106 agreements, however, it is the preference of the Council that these are bilateral agreements. The rationale being that the mechanics for drafting and imposing matters is easier to achieve in a bilateral agreement, however, SCC does not suggest that these matters are incapable of being secured through a unilateral agreement if that is the ultimate position.</p>	

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Item	Title of Matter and SCC's Written Summary of Representation	References
6.3	Article 60 and Schedule 19 of the draft DCO – Certification of plans	
6.3.a	Review of the plans and documents to be certified	
6.4	Consents, licences and other agreements	
6.4.a	The applicant will be asked to provide an overview of consents, licences and other agreements that would be required in order to undertake the proposed development o to provide an update of progress and timescales for completion of such consents, licences and other agreements	
6.4.b	The ExA may ask questions, including whether any planning obligations/ planning performance agreements/ side agreements/ other types of obligation/ agreement are proposed and any indicative timescales for finalising such documents	
ADJOURNED		

Day 2 (Wednesday 29 April 2026)		
Item	Title of Matter and SCC's Written Summary of Representation	References
7	Welcome, ExA introductions, opening remarks and resumption of the hearing	
	<p>Suffolk County Council were represented by the following team in person:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Michael Bedford KC, Barrister, Cornerstone Barristers - Callum Etherton, Senior Planning Officer, Suffolk County Council - Graham Gunby, National Infrastructure Planning Manager, Suffolk County Council <p>Attending colleagues were supported by the following team virtually:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tim Outlaw, Ecologist, Suffolk County Council - Isolde Cutting, Senior Landscape Officer, Suffolk County Council - Matthew Baker, Senior Archaeological Officer, Suffolk County Council - Kate Batt, Senior Archaeological Officer, Suffolk County Council - Jonathan Gear, Project Lead (Public Health), Suffolk County Council 	
	8 Landscape and Visual Effects	
	<p>Discussion of the areas of 8.3 may also include consideration of heritage assets within such areas.</p>	
8.1	Methodology	
	<p>SCC (Landscape) considers that the methodology, particularly regarding landscape value, underplays the value of the Suffolk Landscapes the scheme is traversing. The assessment fails to recognise that non-designated areas can still be of value and valued. It further fails to recognise that some areas, such as the Waveney Valley, used to be designated as Special Landscape Areas, for their value to wildlife and landscape, before this</p>	

policy was removed from the Local Plans post-2014.

Further details on methodology and the presentation of the assessment can be found in the LIR [REP1-178] and its Annex C [REP1-178].

8.2 Landscape and visual effects – general issues, including limits of deviation

Value of Suffolk’s Landscapes

The scheme, if consented, will result in widespread adverse landscape and visual effects, including in very rural locations where to date high-voltage powerlines have not been a significant part of the fabric of the landscape or existing elements within views, such as in the Waveney Valley (see Viewpoints 1.22 [APP-343]), Wortham Ling (see Viewpoint 2.01 [APP-343]), Palgrave (see Viewpoint 2.03 [APP-344]), Mellis Common (see Viewpoint 2.05 [APP-344]), Wickham Skeith (see Viewpoint 2.23 [APP-344]), near Mendlesham Green (see Viewpoint 2.41 [APP-345]), near Wenham Cable Sealing End Compounds (“CSEC”) (see Viewpoint 3.25 [APP-346]).

For many areas landscape and visual effects have been assessed as significant and long-term/permanent. (Given that the value of some stretches of landscape may be greater than assessed – see comment above at 8.1 - additional areas may fall into this category).

Compensation

SCC does not agree with the Applicant that compensation can only be required, when, without it, the project would need to be refused consent on policy grounds, although in many cases the absence of proportionate compensation would justify a refusal of consent. SCC considers that compensation is required, where it is possible for it to be provided and it is proportionate to expect it to be provided to make the development acceptable in planning terms.

SCC does not, as the Applicant implied during ISH2, request that all residual effects must be compensated. Compensation by its very nature cannot not alter the residual effects; SCC does therefore not consider it possible to compensate for each residual effect, and also for some residual effects there may be no meaningful compensation, but rather that all residual effects need to be weighed-in when deciding on proportionate requirements for compensation. SCC considers that this should include non-significant residual effects as these can, in accumulation, become significant, and in any event need to be included in an overall planning balance.

SCC considers that there is a distinction between circumstances where compensation may be appropriate and the policy tests for the imposition of a requirement, albeit that the two matters will often overlap.

Dealing first with the issue of compensation, SCC is using this term in the sense in which it is used in EN-1 as a component part of the mitigation hierarchy (as defined in the glossary for EN-1). This refers to a measure, referable to the adverse impacts of a proposal, which seeks to protect the

environment or biodiversity, but which is only applicable after available steps have been taken to avoid, reduce, or mitigate the adverse impacts in question. Compensation does not remove or alter the adverse impact, but it may be capable of offsetting it, often by enhancing some related aspect of the environment. Because compensatory measures do not remove or alter the adverse impact, compensation sits at the bottom of the mitigation hierarchy, but it is nonetheless an integral part of it. There is nothing in EN-1 stating that compensation is only part of the mitigation hierarchy for some environmental impacts (and not for others).

EN-1 expects applicants to apply the mitigation hierarchy (para 4.2.10 and para 4.2.11). Para 4.2.11 identifies that residual impacts are those which cannot be avoided, reduced or mitigated, and para 4.2.12 then expects those residual impacts to be “compensated for as far as possible”. This clearly does not set out an absolutist position that compensation is automatically required for all residual impacts, but sets out a more nuanced position of expecting compensation for residual impacts as far as that is possible. In some cases, compensation will not be possible because there is no meaningful form of offsetting that could be said to be preferable to the residual impact. In other cases, compensation will not be possible because it would not be proportionate to the residual impact. What is possible, and the extent to which any compensation is possible, will be case-specific and a matter for planning judgment.

The CNP policy presumption (as explained in para 4.2.15 of EN-1) applies once the Secretary of State is “satisfied that the applicant’s assessment demonstrates that the requirements set out above have been met”: see para 4.2.14. The “requirements set out above” include the expectation in para 4.2.12 that residual impacts are “compensated for as far as possible”. Only once the mitigation hierarchy has been fully and properly applied does the advice in para 4.2.15 on the way in which (non-HRA or non-MCZ) residual impacts are unlikely to provide reason for a refusal of consent come into play.

Turning to the tests for requirements, para 4.1.16 of EN-1 indicates that they should only be imposed where they are “necessary” (and meet other tests). What is “necessary” is generally taken to cover what is necessary to make a development acceptable in planning terms, which is invariably a matter for a case-specific planning judgment. A compensatory measure may need to be secured by a requirement but that will not always be the case. A package of mitigation measures meeting the mitigation hierarchy may need to be secured by a requirement but in any event the mitigation measures (including any offsetting/compensation that is possible and proportionate) would be necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms.

At ISH2 (on Day 2) the Applicant drew attention to the findings of the Examining Authority for the Bramford to Twinstead DCO and suggested that SCC’s requests in the case of the Norwich to Tilbury project for compensatory measures for residual landscape impacts were arguments that had been rejected in that earlier case. SCC first makes the obvious point that each case is decided on its own merits. Second, the Bramford to Twinstead ExA were not setting out some statement of principle but were merely making a particular planning judgment on the facts of that case.

This is clear from their conclusions at para 3.9.197 of their report that *“The ExA does not believe that a compensation scheme of the sort promoted by the local authorities and the Partnership would be a proportionate response to the residual effects in this case, and notes that the Proposed Development in itself will bring some significant benefits to the landscape and views...”* (emphasis added). SCC has already made the point that it does not suggest that there is a requirement for all residual impacts *“automatically”* to be the subject of compensatory measures (which was a point that the ExA did not accept at para 3.9.196).

In its earlier submissions and representations, SCC has set out its concerns that the proposal will have an accumulation of adverse impacts on the Suffolk landscape(s) through which the route traverses and that there are limits to what can be achieved to directly mitigate those impacts. SCC has made suggestions that there are locations where the Applicant could and should consider localised re-routing to minimise those impacts and clearly this would be a higher preference under the mitigation hierarchy. However, if the route is retained as proposed, SCC considers that the residual impacts are (collectively) of a scale and magnitude that compensatory or offsetting measures should be proposed as a proportionate response to those residual impacts. The form of compensatory measures that SCC considers would be both proportionate and reasonably related to the residual impacts would be measures for landscape restoration or landscape enhancements in the localities that are impacted by the residual landscape effects of the proposal. There may be scope, in some locations, to achieve such measures on land within the Order Limits and so under the Applicant’s control and in other cases off-site measures may be appropriate, to which the Applicant would be expected to contribute by making compensatory payments to a landscape restoration/enhancement fund which could deliver such measures.

SCC will continue to engage with the Applicant in this matter.

Limits of Deviation

SCC has an issue with the methodology that the Applicant has used to assess the impact within the parameters of the Limits of Deviation, as articulated in SCC’s response to ExQ1 ALT1.9 [REP3-086]. SCC holds the view that adverse effects could potentially be made worse through deviation from the assessed location, as set out in its post hearing submissions to ISH1 [REP1-177]. The Council provided an example of the site near Roydon Hall in Suffolk, where the heritage impact was assessed to be of medium impact however SCC does not consider this as realistically justifiable as a planning judgment (if the Applicant has done as asserted, i.e. assuming that the pylons could be anywhere within the parameters of the Limits of Deviation). Therefore, the Council requests visualisations that show the worst-case scenario within the parameters of the Limits of Deviation, it is the understanding of the Council that the visualisations at present show the pylons on the centreline of the Limits of Deviation.

SCC then considers that there may be a professional disagreement regarding the planning judgment if the effects remain within the same broad assessment category this would not alter the findings of the assessment. It could however alter the lived reality of close-proximity visual receptors (see examples provided in the LIR [REP1-178], paragraph 13.118). At present, SCC is not convinced that the exercise was adequately undertaken

to display the worst-case impacts.

Further, SCC considers that the gradings used for the Environmental Impact Assessments are broad-brush and the matters are coarse-grained (granular). Even if the label of the degree of impact would not change, SCC considers that the actual harm experienced could be greater if a pylon were to be moved nearer a sensitive receptor. Therefore, the Council proposes that there should be more control in regard to micro-siting within the Limits of Deviation, this offers an important opportunity to minimise adverse effects but also carries the risk of exacerbating these effects.

SCC has agreed to select some examples, where this could happen, so that the Applicant can provide a detailed assessment for the potential variation in effects for the selected receptors. However, SCC agrees with the Applicant that it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to fully assess the variation in effects resulting from the application of the Limits of Deviation along the entire route, especially as the effects can remain in the same assessment category.

Deviation from the route alignment, as submitted, would, as the Applicant indicated, only become relevant and necessary, if certain, currently unforeseen, obstacles arise. In such a case, SCC would be happy to work with the Applicant to agree the required deviation, while safeguarding local receptors. This leads SCC to the conclusion that any deviations from approved tower locations should be required to be agreed with the relevant local planning authority. This is to give the local planning authority confidence that worsening of effects (compared with those approved under the DCO with the assumption of a reasonable worst-case scenario) can be avoided.

8.3 Consideration of the following specific areas:

8.3.a Waveney Valley

SCC has set out its consideration for the Waveney Valley in detail in its LIR [REP1-178], its Annex B and C [REP1-178], supported by Appendix 22 [REP1-179].

SCC is disappointed by the position statement by the Applicant in its Comments on Local Impact Reports [REP2-030] with regards to a comprehensive compensation package for the Waveney Valley, after moving away from undergrounding through this area on the grounds of technical difficulties. The fact that undergrounding had been carefully considered demonstrates that the Applicant had previously acknowledged the value and sensitivity of this landscape. It is therefore very disappointing that the Applicant now falls back on the position that the consideration for undergrounding was merely a precautionary exercise and that, since there is no formal landscape designation, no further mitigation than that proposed is required. SCC has demonstrated that the Waveney Valley is a valued landscape in Appendix 20 and Annex B to its LIR [REP1-178] and [REP1-179].

With regards to the effects on St. Remigius Church, SCC notes that the church yard provides views across the Waveney Valley. Photos from a joint site visit of Norfolk and Suffolk Officers, carried out on 7 October 2026 are included below.



Figure 1 - St Remigius Churchyard looking south-east



Figure 2 - St Remigius Churchyard looking south-west

While St Remigius Church is located within Norfolk, SCC considers that a photomontage visualisation should have been provided from this highly sensitive location. Viewpoints 1.15 c and d provide a view across the Waveney Valley from A1066 High Road near the church, but the sensitivity was reduced to medium to account for road users. The effects are still considered to be moderate-major at year 15, which remains significant. However, it is expected that had the viewpoint been located within the churchyard the effect would have been long-term/ permanently major adverse.

In accordance with EN1 (5.10.12) SCC is not seeking to refuse consent on the basis that the Waveney Valley is a valued landscape. However, as stated in EN-1, the Applicant is expected to apply the mitigation hierarchy to all adverse impacts (see paras 4.2.10 to 4.2.12) and SCC considers that particular attention should be paid and points out that EN -1 does not state that mitigation and compensation does not need to go as far as it reasonably can in non-designated areas. SCC also draws attention to para 5.10.6 of EN-1, which requires that projects are designed carefully, taking account of potential landscape impacts and providing reasonable mitigation where possible and appropriate. SCC considers that 'mitigation' in this context includes all steps of the mitigation hierarchy, including compensation where possible.

8.3.b Burstall and Bramford

SCC has set out its consideration for the Bramford/Burstall area in detail in its LIR [REP1-178] and its Annex C [REP1-178].

To summarise, SCC considers that a landscape masterplan is required for this area that sets out that, through positive place making, the cumulative landscape and visual impacts resulting from several energy infrastructure projects, can be compensated within and outside of the DCO order limits. A starting point would be hedgerow and field boundary restoration, wherever possible, within the order limits.

SCC does not accept that Bramford and Burstall cannot be provided with an Environmental Area, because there is insufficient room. SCC, on the contrary, is of the view that the multitude of developments happening in this area expressly demonstrates the need for a landscape-scale mitigation approach, which is co-ordinated and future-oriented, with regards to how these developments can be successfully integrated into the landscape, and how residual effects will be compensated.

The area around Bramford and Burstall serves as an example for the difference in views between SCC and the Applicant with regards to how the National Policy Statements EN-1 and EN-5 should be applied. For landscape and visual matters SCC has set out its position in Chapter 13 Landscape and Visual in its LIR [REP1-178]. In summary, SCC considers, in line with EN-1 that “*projects need to be designed carefully, taking account of the potential impact on the landscape. Having regard to siting, operational and other relevant constraints the aim should be to minimise harm to the landscape, providing reasonable mitigation where possible and appropriate.*” (NPS EN-1, paragraph 5.10.6)

In this context SCC notes that the Applicant proposes to widen the junction from the B1113 into Bullen Lane, as well as to establish a works area to the north of Bullen Lane. Figure A13.6.1 Landscape and Visual Arboriculture Impacts Plan, Sheet 149 [REP1-065] shows a group of trees in this location to be removed. SCC queries why this is required, as previous projects managed without this, and this seems to go against the principle to minimise vegetation loss. In particular, the works area, if temporary, requires further justification, as to why it cannot be located outside the vegetated area. The loss of this vegetation, together with the road widening is expected to have considerable adverse effects on the visual amenity within the public realm and an urbanising effect.

SCC is concerned that, as the Applicant is already submitting access designs for areas such as these (without indicating in these designs the vegetation that would be lost), there is insufficient consultation with other service areas, such as Ecology and Landscape, and no negotiation of how worst-case scenario effects can be avoided or reduced. Bullen Lane is an example, but SCC is concerned that this is not a singular case. Should the access designs be approved as part of the DCO, there will be little room for micro-siting or changes to reduce vegetation losses at detailed design stage. SCC proposes to provide further comments regarding the potential wider impacts of the Applicant’s approach for Deadline 5.

8.3.c Dedham Vale National Landscape (including the duty to seek to further the purposes)

SCC has set out its consideration for the Dedham Vale National Landscape in detail in its LIR [REP1-178] and its Annex C [REP1-178].

SCC welcomes the proposal to underground through the Dedham Vale National Landscape but is mindful that this would still result in adverse impacts, some of which would be significant (impacts and effects of CSECs, no tree planting over cables). SCC has asked that additional Horizontal Directional Drilling (“**HDD**”) should be considered to avoid sensitive landscape features.

SCC queries whether joint bays and link pillars could be mitigated with planting.

Regarding the duty to seek to further the purposes, SCC considers that while undergrounding reduces the long-term/permanent adverse impacts and effects, there would be residual harm which requires compensation. Therefore, the reduction of harm cannot be considered sufficient in seeking to enhance the National Landscape.

Mellis Common

SCC has set out its consideration for Mellis Common in its LIR [**REP1-178**] and would like to engage further with the Applicant to reduce the assessed impacts and effects through changes to the design.

Gipping Valley

SCC has set out its consideration for the Gipping Valley in its LIR [**REP1-178**].

The area that the proposed alignment would cross is another former Special Landscape Area. SCC considers that the harm on this landscape and its visual receptors could have been further reduced, if the alignment would have been placed west of Creting Hall (Grade II * Listed), into an area which is undergoing significant developmental changes, rather than through the more intact and sensitive landscape it is currently proposed to cross. SCC and BMSDC have requested this alignment change at stage and it is disappointing that this has not been taken on board by the Applicant.

8.3.d Ardleigh and Little Bromley

Not located in Suffolk.

8.3.e Colne Valley

Not located in Suffolk.

8.3.f Great and Little Waltham

Not located in Suffolk.

8.3.g Ingatestone and Buttbury
Not located in Suffolk.
8.4 Cumulative effects
<p>SCC considers that the following areas experience cumulative effects with other projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Gislingham/Burgate (EcoPower) ii. Gipping Valley/ Stowmarket (132kV overhead lines, Gateway 14) iii. Bramford/Burtsall (Bramford substation, Bramford to Twinstead, 132kV overhead lines)
8.5 Mitigation
<p>SCC has set out its consideration for Mitigation in detail in its LIR [REP1-178] and in its comments on submissions received at Deadline 1 [REP2-040]. SCC welcomes the Applicant's commitment to replace any tree that requires removal with three new trees. However, SCC does not consider that the Applicant has fully explored the requested alignment changes (as identified in SCC's Post Hearing Submission, Item 5.1 [REP1-177]), which SCC considers would have provided further embedded mitigation. The Applicant has further neither fully explored the potential of mitigation/provided landscape and visual mitigation planting beyond the CSECs areas and reinstatement planting nor considered placemaking around Bramford/Burstall. SCC therefore considers that the Application Hierarchy has not been fully applied, both in terms of landscape and visual mitigation planting and landscape compensation for residual impact and effects.</p> <p>Regarding OLEMP [REP3-030] paragraph 10.1.1, SCC (Landscape) considers that all elements that are counted as part of BNG mitigation, will need to be maintained and monitored for 30 years. Hedges and watercourses that are returned to the landowner after five years, cannot be included in the metric for BNG.</p>
8.6 Any other landscape and visual matters
<i>Ancient Woodland Technical Note Parts 1-2 [REP3-058 – REP3-059]</i>
<p>The Technical Note identifies 28 new ancient woodland areas within 200 m of the Order Limits, seven of which are located within the Order Limits, based on the updated Ancient Woodland Inventory. Three of the newly identified woodlands within Suffolk are located within the Order Limits</p>

(Lodgefield Row; Bushey Grove; Wenham Grove).	
9	Historic Environment
This item of the agenda will focus on above ground assets.	
9.1	Methodology, including levels of harm and vibration effects
9.2	Historic Environment – general issues, including limits of deviation and approach to non-designated heritage assets (NDHA)
9.3	Specific heritage assets, including NDHA, within the following local authority areas: (assets within the areas specified in 8.3 may have already been considered within that agenda item and if so will not be repeated)
9.3.a	South Norfolk
9.3.b	Babergh/Mid Suffolk
SCC defers to Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils.	
9.3.c	Tendring
9.3.d	Colchester
9.3.e	Braintree
9.3.f	Chelmsford
9.3.g	Brentwood
9.3.h	Thurrock

9.4	Mitigation
9.5	Any other historic environment issues
<p>SCC defers to BMSDC in respect of matters related to Historic Environment below ground assets.</p> <p>SCC requests an update from the Applicant, for when Requirement 5 (Archaeology) drafting will be updated to reflect the amendments proposed by from Local Planning Authority Archaeological Advisors (as stated in the LIR and at Deadline 3).</p>	
ADJOURNED	

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10	Welcome, ExA introductions, opening remarks and resumption of the hearing
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Suffolk County Council were represented by the following team in person:

- Michael Bedford KC, Barrister, Cornerstone Barristers
- Callum Etherton, Senior Planning Officer, Suffolk County Council
- Graham Gunby, National Infrastructure Planning Manager, Suffolk County Council
- Steve Merry, NSIP Highway Manager, Suffolk County Council
- Julia Cox, Principal Highways Engineer (NSIPs), Suffolk County Council
- Ashley Medhurst, Highways Engineer (NSIPs), Suffolk County Council
- Andrew Woodin, PROW Development and Improvement Manager, Suffolk County Council

Attending colleagues were supported by the following team virtually:

- Tim Outlaw, Ecologist, Suffolk County Council
- Isolde Cutting, Senior Landscape Officer, Suffolk County Council
- Jonathan Gear, Project Lead (Public Health), Suffolk County Council
- Rosie Welch, Project Lead for Place Making, Natural Environment and Climate (Public Health), Suffolk County Council

11	Traffic and Transport
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11.1	Baseline, modelling and future monitoring
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Item	Title of Matter and SCC's Written Summary of Representation
<p>11.1.a</p>	<p>Status of modelling and assessments, including review of matters not agreed with highway authorities</p> <p>SCC is reviewing junction the modelling provided by the Applicant and will respond at a later deadline (estimate mid to late May).</p>
<p>11.1.b</p>	<p>Outstanding information requested by highway authorities</p> <p>Currently SCC has not requested any additional information but may do so if required as matters are raised through the examination.</p>
<p>11.1.c</p>	<p>How monitoring of junction performance will be undertaken and what intervention looks like</p> <p>Would need real time traffic surveys. From experience from other NSIPs in delivery can only consider fixed points such as peak years and can be complicated by delays in program or changes in local network distribution. Intervention could be via a commitment for a contingency fund (as SZC Deed of Obligation) or agreement albeit there is a significant risk that mitigation occurs after the impact.</p> <p>Subject to detail applicants' proposals to monitor and if necessary, implement mitigation would be welcome</p>
<p>11.1.d</p>	<p>Walking, cycling and horse-riding assessments</p> <p>SCC content that use of the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment guidance on the environmental assessment of road traffic to assess the impacts during the construction phase is appropriate rather than GG142 Walking, Cycling and Horse Riding that is more relevant to the operational long-term impacts such as new highways.</p>
<p>11.2</p>	<p>Cumulative impact</p>
<p>11.2.a</p>	<p>Cumulative impact with other projects</p> <p>The only current NSIP affecting central Suffolk has been the Progress Power project which is completed.</p> <p>Within Babergh District and extreme south of Mid Suffolk it is considered that there may be an overlap between the Bramford to Twinstead project and N2T. However, with the exception of work at Bramford Substation and use of the A1071 the access routes differ and a cumulative impact unlikely. It is noted that the applicant does not consider any cumulative transport impacts will be significant.</p>

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East Pye Solar Development is likely to add traffic to major routes such as the A140 and A143 as will EcoPower but little information is available for the latter as a planning application has not been submitted .

11.2.b Coordination and mitigation

Noted that the applicant considers that few if any of the developments considered for inter-cumulative impacts are considered to interact in terms of traffic.

NSIP

The main area where co-ordination between NSIPs (and TCPA energy projects) that has been identified are:

- i. ALL access to Bramford Substation via Sproughton
- ii. HGV access to Bramford Substation via Claydon
- iii. A140 / A143 as conduit for East Pye Solar Development
- iv. A140 corridor if EcoPower comes forward.

In both cases a co-ordinated approach to assessments for these movements would be an advantage to both undertakers, albeit Bramford to Twinstead has been consented and the CTMPs discharged.

The proposed mitigation at the junction of the B1113 Lorraine Way and Bullen Lane is welcome and would be of benefit as a permanent feature improving access for ALLs to Bramford Substation. There are matters of detailed design such as drainage to be agreed and the selection of a temporary compound at another location would reduce the environmental impacts on the wooded fringe north of Bullen Lane.

TCPA

DC/21/02671 Land North Of The A1071, Ipswich (Wolsey Grange) – Taylor Wimpey UK Ltd. This development is associated with improvements to the A1071 between the A1214 and A1071/B1113 junction (Beagle) south of Sproughton. These are to replace the current roundabout with a four-way signalised junction. Whilst discussions with the developer are progressing the design has not yet been finalised or technically approved by the highway authority.

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Item	Title of Matter and SCC's Written Summary of Representation
11.3	Abnormal indivisible load (AIL)
11.3.a	<p>Overview of AIL strategy from applicant including timescales</p> <p>SCC welcomes the approach the applicant has made in regard towards assessing routes for AIL movements. Discussions are ongoing with the main concern being the availability of LHA resources to support this due to the numerous commitments for other consented NSIPs.</p> <p>A developers forum across the local highway authorities (and police forces?) that includes liaison on AIL movements would be welcome to SCC.</p>
11.3.b	<p>Update on the status of AIL route planning and assessment</p> <p>Noted in table CTMP 5.1 that access to Bramford Substation H10-A2 is via A1156. For special order movements the route used is typically Ipswich west bank – A137 – A14 – A1214 – A1071 – B1113 not A1156 although the latter may be acceptable for moving cable drums.</p>
11.3.c	<p>Update on AILs escort proposals</p>
11.3.d	<p>Cumulative impact with other developments and proposed developments</p>
11.4	The outline traffic management plan
11.4.a	<p>Travel plans</p> <p>SCC noted AP46 to clarify references to PARs in travel plan table 2.1, which do not match ES Figure 6.16 [AS-020] references.</p>
11.4.b	<p>Measures to reduce and monitor number of Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGV) and whether a cap on the number of HGVs is required</p> <p>SCC's position is that if the applicant is satisfied that the assessment is robust there should be no objection to placing caps on HGV movements. Otherwise, the LHAs concerns that delays may result in a compressed delivery program which may result in vehicle movements exceeding those assessed. This has happened on two projects (SPR, BTWO) where the applicant requested increases in the final CTMP. In SCC's experience with SPR and SZC caps on HGVs have given the authority and local community comfort in the assessments provided during examination albeit</p>

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recognising these constraints these places on the undertaker.

SCC notes that CTMP 6.8.5 allows the applicant to engage with the LHA to make non-material changes to the CTMP which would be a suitable mechanism for discussion if the applicant considered any caps to need modification.

The offer of mitigation whilst welcome may result in action being taken after the impact is felt.

Whilst it is accepted that the ExA did not concur with SCC's position during the Bramford to Twinstead that HGV caps were not appropriate, but SCCs view is that they are a useful tool to ensure commitment to the assessed traffic volumes and has been implemented for other NSIPs (SPR EA1N, EA2, SZC).

The nature of the road network in rural communities such as Suffolk mean that alternative routes are few and where incidents occur SCC would expect the applicant to take measures to reduce HGV movements in case of major incident rather than rely on diversion routes (CTMP 5.4.20 to 22). An example would be when the A14 is closed.

11.4.c Maintenance of highways during construction and reinstatement on completion

The dDCO protective provisions include recovery of extraordinary expense. However, in section 13 this is to be recovered at the end of each phase. Recovery needs to be more flexible with recovery as soon as practical after the cost is incurred as some stages of the project may take several years to deliver and the LHA needs to comply with its Highways Act s41 duties. SCC consider that this can be resolved in FHA/PP discussions.

11.4.d Non-primary access routes

SCC noted that pre-commencement activities are managed by CTMP (1.8) but that this includes temporary accesses. Clarification required that these are not temporary accesses for access to haul roads or crossings of the public highway associated with use of the haul road. See table 5.2 that implies cross overs are considered temporary works and can be access by routes other than primary access routes. SCC queries what volume of construction traffic and will mitigation be in place before use.

11.4.e Extent of non-definitive commitments and how the ExA and highway authorities can be assured certain commitments will be

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delivered

SCC considers that it would be helpful to agree the area and heads of terms for the CTNMP pre and post construction surveys at DCO stage to avoid latter disagreement and to give comfort to the public this is being considered.

11.4.f Traffic Regulation Orders (temporary and permanent)

SCC is concerned that temporary parking restrictions could impact residents and businesses and that appropriate consolation / communication needs to be undertaken at this stage so that those affected are made aware and can voice objection if necessary.

Examples would be:

- i. The proposed temporary restrictions in Schedule 13 part 1 B1113 Bramford Road / B1113 High Street Between points TRC-001 and TR-C-002 as shown on Section C, Sheet 2. No waiting restriction 7:00am to 7:00pm Monday to Sunday. There is little if any alternative parking for residents and restricting parking has been contentions, for example during use of the road as a diversion for planned works on the A14.
- ii. The permanent 50mph speed limit on Bottle Bridge Road / Wenham Road in Schedule 13 part 4 the extent of which would not appear to be compliant with local or national speed limit policy.
- iii. The restriction of vehicular access (Schedule 13 part 2) should be used sparingly for A class and many B class roads as there are limited alternative diversion routes in rural areas of Suffolk eg A143 Old Bury Road, Palgrave.

11.5 Mitigation

11.5.a proposals at junctions and links

The limited improvements on Suffolk roads are considered reasonable although in practice vegetation removal may be more widespread than shown on the plans. The applicant will need to ensure they have the necessary powers to trim vegetation belonging to landowners adjacent to the public highway.

11.5.b proposals for mitigation on Primary Access Routes

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	<p>No comment.</p> <p>11.5.c the proposed drivers information pack</p> <p>SCC considers that there needs to be enforcement of any significant non-compliance with this as it only seems to form advice rather than a contractual obligation.</p> <p>SCC considers that the drivers information pack should be shared with LHA.</p> <p>In the CTMP (2.3.6), it is noted that HGV drivers are expected to make use of an appropriate lorry park, services or other designated overnight parking locations although these are limited in East Anglia and can create other issues, for example as experience with use of laybys on the A12.</p> <p>11.5.d the outline code of construction practice</p> <p>SCC notes that the CTMP (3.1.2) states that appointed Main Works Contractor(s) are responsible for developing and adopting the CTMP, National Grid is held responsible for any breach of compliance with the CTMP. It is not unreasonable to expect a quarterly report on the key transport parameters.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. HGV numbers and distribution ii. Exceedance of assessed volumes (or caps) iii. Non-compliance with routing or timing iv. Compliance with key mitigation eg avoidance of school start / finish (Stowupland) or shift times v. Worker numbers vi. Car share ratios
11.6	Any other traffic and transport issues
	SCC does not consider that 7 day working and the associated traffic is unacceptable in terms of impact on local communities due to the scale

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	and duration of this project and in Babergh cumulative impact with Bramford to Twinstead.
12	Public Rights of Way (PRoW)
12.1	Applicant to outline mitigation, measures to reduce time and length of diversions and communication of impacts on PRoWs
	SCC has no comment on this matter.
12.2	Opportunity for PRoW authorities to detail remaining concerns
	<p>SCC (PROW) echoes SCC (Landscape) comments regarding PROW and visual and amenity impacts on the PROWs and any mitigation/offsetting. SCC has been in discussions on diversion routes, and their suitability and RSAs if needed to ensure that diversion routes are safe. All bridleways and byways will need special attention with regards to construction works nearby to ensure they are a safe environment for horses to approach and pass through and for visual amenity/impact. Everything that is clearly visible from a PROW should be reviewed with regards to visual and noise impact.</p> <p>All of the diversion routes are short and covered in the emerging PROWMP with regards to suitability, they have been road safety audited and SCC have requested changes to the lengths of diversions, which we are accepting of. The diversion routes will be of at least the same standard.</p> <p>The Waveney Valley along the Angles Way (which is a long-distance footpath) will have a significant impact upon it from a visual amenity and effect the user experience inline comments.</p>
13	Any other matters
14	Review of actions arising and close

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Item 4 (Noise and Vibration)

AP2 Use of term ‘where practicable’

All local authorities: Provide a response to the Applicant’s response to ExQ1 NV1.6 and follow up to hearing discussion regarding use of the term ‘where practicable’ and whether commitment NV23 in the outline code of construction practice (CoCP) would be adequate.

SCC defers to Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils.

Item 6 (Draft Development Consent Order)

AP10 Discharge Period

Local authorities to provide additional justification for their request, including reasons for continuing to request additional days for discharge (with reference to experiences relating to Sea Link and Bramford to Twinstead). Provide a response to the suggestion of a validation checklist being secured in the DCO.

The Council supports the suggestion of a validation checklist being secured in the DCO.

SCC recognises that the Sea Link examination closed on 5 May 2026. In the Sea Link examination, on 17 April 2026, that panel issued its schedule of recommended changes to the development consent order for that project ([PD-024] in the Sea Link Examination Library), which is also a project being promoted by National Grid. Item 22 of [PD-024] refers to the timeframe for discharging authorities to discharge requirements, the ExA recommended that the dDCO be amended from 35 to 56 calendars. The reason provided by the ExA states: *“The ExA considers that given the volume of NSIPs within the local authority areas and the need to allow for consultation and proper scrutiny, that a 56 day period is reasonable and appropriate.”* The Council considers that the same applies to this project, although the Council proposes 40 business days to reflect drafting by the Applicant in relation to this dDCO.

SCC provided detailed commentary related to its process and the challenges with the short timeframes for the discharge of requirements in its response to ExQ1 DCO1.A2 [REP3-086], the below does not repeat this content.

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For the discharge of requirements for The Bramford to Twinstead Order, SCC has experienced significant challenges in meeting the 35 calendar days discharge timeframe (and the 7 calendar days for requesting Further Information). The following outlines the critical issues that have frequently delayed the discharge of requirements and placed undue pressure on the Council for the Bramford to Twinstead project.

Regularly, the submitted documents for discharge reference or cross-reference to other plans that have yet to be submitted or shared with the discharging authority. Despite requests to review plans in parallel, this has not been adopted. The Applicant has rigidly complied with the DCO and submitted only what is specified in the relevant Requirement, in practice this has delayed the process and reduced understanding of the content of the submissions. This then incentivises the Planning Officer to consult all specialist services, regardless of the content of the submitted discharge document, despite the inefficiencies. For instance, when the Applicant submitted Access Designs for discharge by the Local Highway Authority, there was a discrepancy between the vegetation removal stated in the Access Design Plan (Requirement 11(1) of that Order) and the vegetation removal specified for that access in Vegetation Removal and Retention Plan (Requirement 8 of that Order). That discrepancy was picked up by the Landscape Officer. Without that specialist input and knowledge of other submitted discharge documents, Suffolk could have lost veteran trees for the installation of a temporary access (where the removal was not necessary to improve safety of the access). In this instance, SCC were fortunate that the Vegetation Removal and Retention Plan was submitted at a similar time as the Access Design. Regularly, however, this has not been the experience. The Council considers that an extended timeframe (of 40 business days) for the discharge of requirements would enable officers to further scrutinise discharge documents and to compare these with the information previously in submitted discharge documents (where referenced).

Additionally, The Bramford to Twinstead Order specifies that once submitted there is a period of 7 calendar days for the discharging authority to request 'Further Information' (this is currently proposed to be 5 business days within the Norwich to Tilbury dDCO). Due to the narrow 35 calendar day discharge timeframe, this must occur concurrently with the consultation with relevant specialists (21 calendar days). Ideally, the Planning Officer would use this Further Information period to validate that the submitted discharge document meets the expectations and criteria of the discharging authority (treating this period as a pseudo-validation of the application). In practice, this has led to circumstances where the Applicant has submitted discharge documents without complete information for the Planning Officer to satisfy themselves that they can make a determination but only with recognition following the close of the Further Information window. The Applicant has then rigidly complied with the DCO and refused to provide the requested information, the Council has then had to issue a refusal of the relevant discharge of requirement

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thereby resulting in the Applicant re-submitting the application with the requested information albeit with a substantial delay than would have occurred if the information had been provided with the first submission. SCC therefore considers that the current drafting restricts scrutiny of the submitted discharge documents. The Council proposes that the validation checklist should be secured within the DCO and/or that the Further Information request period is extended to at least 10 business days.

AP11 ExQ1 DCO1.A6 and 'maintain'

Local authorities to comment on the applicant's position in its response to the question.

SCC has commented on the Applicant's response to ExQ1 DCO1.A6 in its Comments on Deadline 3 Submissions.

AP13 Article 23 Removal of human remains

Suffolk County Council to provide comments on the applicants response to ExQ1 DCO 1.A28.

SCC has commented on the Applicant's response to ExQ1 DCO1.A28 in its Comments on Deadline 3 Submissions.

AP16 Schedule 3 - Requirements 1 (Interpretations)

Local authorities to comment on the applicants response to ExQ1 DCO 1.S5 regarding the discharging authority and the revised wording, including in relation to local government reform as set out in the Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill 2025. Both the applicant and local authorities to provide further comments on the definition of 'stage'

SCC has commented on the Applicant's response to ExQ1 DCO1.S5 in its Comments on Deadline 3 Submissions.

AP17 Schedule 3 – Requirement 5 (Archaeology)

Local authorities to provide comments on the applicant's answer to ExQ1 DCO 1.S8 and the document now provided [AS-090].

SCC has commented on the Applicant's response to ExQ1 DCO1.S8 in its Comments on Deadline 3 Submissions.

AP19 Schedule 4 Discharge of requirements

The applicant and local authorities are both to provide a response to the ExA questions and comments including an update by deadline 5

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(Wednesday 10 June) regarding post-discharge functions and the involvement of the Department of Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ), following the related submissions at the final deadline of the Sea Link examination. Enquiries are to be made whether DESNZ has been consulted or provided comments regarding the draft wording of the relevant schedule in the Sea Link draft DCO.

SCC answered this question in its response to ExQ1 DCO1.S19 [REP3-086].

AP20 Article 60 and Schedule 19

Local authorities to respond to the points made at the hearing.

SCC understands that this Action Point is directed towards Braintree District Council, SCC will await their submission before providing any comment.

AP22 ExQ1 GEN 1.21 and Appendix E

The local authorities, highway authorities, police forces and statutory undertakers named in the Appendix E of [REP3-074] are to provide further response to ExQ1 GEN 1.21 and Appendix E, having regard to the criteria set out in s122(2) of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010. Rosie Pearson for Pylons East Anglia and Charles Micklem to provide in writing their comments regarding clauses in agreements relating to objections to planning applications and projects.

SCC has commented on the Applicant's response to ExQ1 GEN1.21 in its Comments on D3 Submissions.

Item 8 (Landscape and Visual effects)

AP25 Limits of Deviation 1

Local authorities to identify the most sensitive locations and specific viewpoints that they would like to see additional visuals of pylons within the limits of deviation (so as to further illustrate the worst case scenario). The list of viewpoints is to be agreed as soon as possible with the applicant, and submitted by the applicant at deadline 4 (Tuesday 12 May). The applicant is to submit the agreed visuals by deadline 5 (Wednesday 10 June).

As stated in the Joint Suffolk LIR (paragraph 13.18) [REP1-178], SCC and BMSDC requested that the pylon positions in key locations should be as

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shown on consented plans, unless otherwise agreed with the relevant planning authority and, where applicable, Historic England. In particular, crossing the Waveney Valley, Wortham Ling, around Mellis Common, north of Gislingham, at Wickham Skeith and through the Gipping Valley any changes and deviation should only be made in agreement with the relevant local planning authority and, where applicable, Historic England.

Around Mellis Common, SCC has asked that visualisations be provided to demonstrate whether towers of a lower height would reduce visual effects on Mellis Common.

Additional areas of concern in Suffolk Landscape and Visual terms regarding Limits of Deviation and request for additional visualisations and assessment.

SCC and BMSDC have co-produced the below table and have shared this with the Applicant.

Location Reference		Potential increased effects resulting from LoD			
Pylon Tower	Related view-point	Longitudinal	Lateral	Tower height	Comments
RG 93, 94	2.22	✓	✓	✓	Effects could be considerably worse for residential property on Lion Road (not the one in the viewpoint), if pylon was moved east and/or south. Effects could also be worse for property shown in VP if tower was moved west.
RG 106, 107	--	✓	✓		Furze Way – Oversailing residential properties could be made worse is towers were moved.
RG 134 - 136	2.34e	✓	✓	✓	Potter’s Lane, Potter’s Farm, Wicks Fram; Visual

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RG 161-163	2.28, HE35	✓	✓	✓	Hill Farm, Creeting Hall Visual amenity
RG 168 -172	2.16		✓	✓	Badley Hall cluster; while the proposed alignment is not visible from this location, assurance is sought that this remains the case, should taller towers need to be installed closer to this location. Great Newton Wood and Lodgefield Row; these woodlands could be impacted by lateral deviation.
RG 175	--	✓	✓	✓	Heritage Asset near Gibbons Farm
RG 185	2.38	✓			Ringshall House
RG 188,189	--		✓		Middle Wood
RG 192	2.19(?)	✓	✓		Court Farm
RG 193	--		✓		Hill Farm
RG 197, 200	--	✓	✓	✓	Blood Hill: The Clamps (potential additional vegetation loss) and Bleak Hall (visual amenity)
RG 201, 202	--		✓		Somersham Park; ancient woodland could be affected
JC 09,10	--		✓		Burstall Long Wood; ancient woodland could be affected
JC 11, 12	3.02 (?)	✓	✓	✓	Burstall Lane: Tower location could potentially be located adjacent to

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					residential property
JC 14, 15, 16	3.02	✓	✓	✓	Hurdle Makers Hill (A1071): Guest House, Home Farm, Heritage Asset

AP28 Waveney Valley

Provide more information on the technical reasons for other pylon types being discounted. Local authorities to provide further comments in writing in response to the discussion regarding the setting of St Remigius Church.

SCC has provided additional commentary on this matter in Agenda Item 8.3 above.

Item 11 (Traffic and Transport)

AP43 Abnormal Indivisible Loads: cumulative impacts

Applicant and local highway authorities to provide in writing an update on cumulative impacts of AIL routing and progress with route assessments, including structural assessment.

SCC understands that this matter sits with the Applicant, the Council will continue to engage.

AP46 Non-primary access routes (PARs)

Applicant and Suffolk County Council to discuss the inclusion of non-PARs in the outline construction traffic management plan (CTMP) and the assessment of environmental effects, and provide further written comments to summarise the issue and discussions to date.

SCC welcomes the inclusion of the Non-primary access routes into the oCTMP, however would like to see more information on these including estimated vehicle numbers, length of time the route will be used for and what the routes are.

CLOSED