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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this Report

- 1.1.1 This document provides the Applicant's response to comments provided by Interested Parties (IPs) and Affected Parties (APs) on the Applicant's response to the Examining Authority's first written questions (ExQ1) [PD-014]. The Applicant's response was provided at Deadline 3, 10 April 2026 in **8.9.1 Applicant's Responses to First Written Questions [REP3-074]**. IPs and APs have provided their comments on these responses at Deadline 4, 12 May 2026.
- 1.1.2 The Applicant has reviewed the IP and AP comments on its responses to ExQ1 and provides comments where clarification, correction, or further context is necessary or helpful. Where the Applicant has no comment, the IP response has not been included.

1.2 Document Structure and Content

- 1.2.1 This document is structured into the ExQ1 topics, with one table per topic. Where the Applicant's comments relate to more than one IP response, the column is merged and the comments are not repeated.
- 1.2.2 The Applicant has responded to the submissions from Pylons East Anglia (PEA) [REP4-369] separately in **8.4.13.1 Applicant's Response to Pylons East Anglia's Comments on its ExQ1 Responses**. This is because PEA submitted a number of detailed appendices with their submission and to which the Applicant has also responded. Given the length of that submission and the Applicant's response, a separate document was considered most appropriate.

2. Applicant’s Response to Comments on its ExQ1 Responses

Table 2.1 Applicant’s Response to Comments on its ExQ1 Responses

Written Question	Applicant’s Response to Written Question	IP Comment on Applicant Response	Applicant Response
<p>GEN 1.11 Norwich Main substation (Work No.1) 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. 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]. The applicant is asked to clarify: 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>	<p>We assume the ExA were seeing the Norwich Main Substation extension works which were subject to a separate Town and Country Planning Act (TCPA) application that was approved by the local planning authority in September 2024. The works under this TCPA are separate to the DCO works and are primarily to connect two contracted windfarms, Hornsea Project Three and Equinor (Sheringham Shoal/Dudgeon Windfarm Extensions). The works listed in Work No.1 a-d of Schedule 1 of the draft DCO are shown on the Works Plans Section A, Sheet 1 [APP-017]. This is indicated as a hatched area as the position of these elements are yet to be finalised. The majority of the works in items Works 1 b-d were also included in the TCPA. Works are also listed in Schedule 1 to allow any necessary further works (falling within Work No.1) associated with the Norwich to Tilbury element of the substation extension to be done under the DCO and outside of the already granted TCPA permission. In response to clarifications a) and b) required by the ExA, the only element under DCO Work No. 1 that has been commenced to date pursuant to the separate TCPA permission is the busbar extension to enable the Norwich to Tilbury bays. This is currently under construction. DCO Works No.1 (e) refers to the ‘landscaping, including mitigation planting’ which can be found at ‘Norwich Substation Landscape Proposals (drawing No. 12055-LUC-XX-XX-DR-L-001) in 7.4 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan Appendix D - Outline Landscape Proposals [APP-325]. Regarding point c), no overlap is expected between Norwich to Tilbury activities and Hornsea 3 as it is expected that the latter will be completed in advance of the former's arrival on site. In a worse case scenario, if there should be any further delays to the Hornsea 3 Project, it is still only expected that this may overlap with Norwich to Tilbury enabling works.</p>	<p>Equinor New Energy Limited on behalf of Sheringham Shoal and Dudgeon Extensions ProjCo Limited [REP4-359] Response to Applicant’s Responses to First Written Questions (REP3-074) In addition to points raised within the Statement of Common Ground, SSDEPL wishes to respond to the Examining Authorities’ request for comment on responses received at Deadline 3. The Examining Authority raised Question Gen 1.11 in its First Written Questions concerning the Norwich Main substation and interactions between NGET and Hornsea Three, noting the Examining Authority had seen construction works being undertaken there during the site visit. SSDEPL has reviewed NGET’s response to this question which states that “no overlap” is expected with the Hornsea 3 Project. SSDEPL note that the ExA’s question did not explicitly ask about the overlap between SSDE, Hornsea 3 and NGET; however, SSDEPL would emphasise that there are multiple projects constructing or to be constructed in the vicinity of the Norwich Main area with significant spatial and temporal overlap expected. This is therefore a complex area for project interactions that requires careful consideration. This further underlines the need for suitable protection to be included within the draft development consent order for the benefit of SSDEPL to ensure this critical national priority infrastructure can be developed pursuant to the Sheringham Shoal and Dudgeon Extensions Offshore Wind Farm Order 2024. SSDEPL would direct the Examining Authority to its previous submissions (referenced above) which set out the interactions between SSDEPL and the N-T Project in detail. Conclusion SSDEPL continues to object to the proposed Norwich to Tilbury DCO until their concerns are resolved. In light of the positive steps taken to date, we believe that a resolution can be achieved.</p>	<p>The Applicant notes the respondent’s position and that productive legal negotiations are ongoing between both parties seeking to agree suitable protections for SSDEPL within the order. National Grid agrees with the respondent’s view that a resolution can be achieved soon based on the positive engagement to date.</p>

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<p>GEN 1.21 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> <p>a) 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.</p> <p>b) Justify its intended use of unilateral undertakings in the instances where a bilateral (section 106) agreement would be preferable.</p> <p>c) 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> <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>The response has been provided in the form of a table (Appendix E) with the requests identified from the Local Impact Reports (LIRs) grouped by the themes identified by the Examining Authority in their Initial Assessment of Principal Issues (IAP). It was not always clear within the LIRs whether the Local Planning Authority was requesting a measure be secured by a legal agreement or alternative measure, and if a legal agreement was requested, what form of legal agreement was being requested. The Applicant has therefore taken a conservative approach and where the Local Planning Authority has indicated in their LIR that the measure could be secured by a legal agreement, even if alternative mechanisms have also been identified in the LIR, this has been included within the table. Measures which would require a financial contribution or necessitate the involvement of other developers have also been included in the table.</p> <p>If the mechanism by which the agreement would be secured has not been specified by the Local Planning Authority, the Applicant has made the assumption that the stakeholder is seeking a bilateral s106 agreement. The relevant tests for s106 agreements are outlined in Regulation 122 of The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010. The obligation must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms • Directly related to the development • Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development. 	<p>Essex County Council [REP4-328]</p> <p>Appendix D, ECC Highway Authority response to ExQ1 GEN 1.21 and Appendix E</p> <p>The appendix includes Essex County Council Highway Authority's tabulated response covering matters including review of monitoring, review of CWTP, pre and post construction condition surveys, highway checks, PRoW network discussions, road safety review, and structural reviews.</p> <p>Suffolk County Council [REP4-355]</p> <p>SCC considers that its response to ExQ1 GEN1.21 [REP3 086] are those schedules requested by the Council for a bilateral s106 agreement. Following engagement since Issue Specific Hearing 2, the Council understands that the schedule related to police escorts for AIL movements is no longer required, as an alternative securing mechanism is preferred between the parties. The Council considers that these meet the relevant tests for s106 agreement, as outlined in s122(2) of the Community Infrastructure Levy ("CIL") Regulations 2010. SCC can provide further justification in the format of a CIL compliance assessment, if requested.</p>	<p>Please see Appendix A of this document.</p> <p>Please refer to Appendix A of 8.4.10 Applicant's Comments on Responses to ExQ1 [REP4-0299] in which the Applicant provides its comments on Interested Party responses to EXQ1 GEN 1.21.</p>
<p>DES 1.9 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>	<p>As detailed in 7.16 Design Approach for Site Specific Infrastructure (DASSI) [APP-354], paragraph 1.3.33, lighting columns would typically be 12.5 m tall, and all lighting would be designed in accordance with the appropriate design standards.</p> <p>Luminaires would be directional Light-Emitting Diodes (LED) type fittings. The minimum exterior lighting requirements as set out in the NGET Technical Specifications (TS 1.10.04) are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintained average illuminance: 6.0 lux • Maintained minimum point illuminance: 2.5 lux. <p>Light spillage will be managed by minimising the provision of lighting: keeping to where it is required for tasks, specifying fittings that avoid light spillage, and using controls such that it only comes on when required. This will follow the dark skies strategy: to cut light pollution, its impact on wildlife, prevent wasting</p>	<p>Suffolk County Council [REP4-335]</p> <p>SCC disagrees with the Applicant's response and considers that permanent lighting schemes need to be approved by the discharging authority to safeguard wildlife and visual receptor amenity, and that a Requirement to this effect needs to be included in the DCO.</p>	<p>It is not evident whether SCC has taken account of the additional information submitted at Deadline 4, which comprised Appendix B (Lux Level Plans) to 7.16 Design Approach for Site Specific Infrastructure (DASSI) [Revision C], which provides further detail on operational lighting parameters and indicative light contours to assist the Examining Authority and Interested Parties. In the absence of specific commentary on this material or the information provided in response to DES 1.9, it is difficult to identify any particular</p>

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<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>electricity, and mitigating visual impact at night. Windows will be fitted with blinds to control light spill if the facility is occupied after dark.</p> <p>During normal operational conditions, all National Grid substations are typically unmanned, therefore the use of the substation lighting on substation buildings or High Voltage compounds during the evening or night time is limited to fault response activities by the call out engineers or security call outs when the security team or police respond to a security alarm; in all other circumstances the substation lighting is off, outside of working hours.</p> <p>Infrequent additional task lighting may be required when undertaking specific maintenance activities.</p> <p>The potential impacts of operational lighting on ecological receptors at the new and upgraded substations (East Anglia Connection Node (EACN), Norwich Main, Bramford and Tilbury North), have been fully assessed within 6.8 Environmental Statement Chapter 8 - Ecology and Biodiversity [AS-026]. The potential ecological impacts of operational lighting primarily relate to the disruption to bat foraging and commuting routes. Appropriate bat mitigation for the substation sites, during the operational phase, has been included within the 7.4 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan [REP2-018] which refers to sensitive lighting design for bats. Commitment B06 within the 7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [REP2-014], also sets out the lighting design considerations that need to be followed to protect ecological receptors. With mitigation in place the assessment has identified no significant residual effects on any ecological receptors, as a result of lighting at any new or upgraded substations, including the EACN Substation, during the operational phase.</p> <p>With regard to night-time effects, the key parameters and assumptions for the landscape and visual assessment are set out in paragraph 13.4.20 of 6.13 Environmental Statement Chapter 13 - Landscape and Visual [APP-226]. As noted above, the use of operational lighting associated with the substations and substation extensions would be limited to fault response activities or security call outs, and the default position would be for lighting to be off. No assessment of operational lighting on landscape and visual receptors was therefore undertaken, due to the limited potential for significant effects. Lighting during construction is considered in the landscape and visual assessment in 6.13.A2 Environmental Statement Appendix 13.2 - Landscape Baseline and Assessment [APP-228] and 6.13.A3 Environmental Statement Appendix 13.3 - Visual Baseline and Assessment [APP-229 to APP-232].</p> <p>The Applicant has considered whether it would be appropriate for operational lighting schemes to be subject to approval through a Development Consent Order Requirement. However, in light of the limited and intermittent nature of operational lighting at substations, the absence of routine night-time lighting during</p>		<p>concerns with the Applicant's assessment or the mitigation secured.</p> <p>The Applicant's position remains that, having regard to the limited and intermittent nature of operational lighting, the absence of routine night-time lighting during normal operation, and the measures already embedded within the application documents, the effects of operational lighting have been appropriately assessed and addressed. On that basis, the Applicant does not consider that a Requirement securing approval of a permanent operational lighting scheme is necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms.</p>

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	<p>normal operation, and the fact that ecological and landscape effects of lighting have been assessed and mitigated through the application documents, the Applicant does not consider such a Requirement to be necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms.</p> <p>Further detail on lighting parameters and indicative light contours will nevertheless be provided during the Examination by Deadline 4 to assist the Examining Authority and Interested Parties.</p>		
<p>DES 1.10 T-pylons (1) The ExA note that in [REP1-069] you imply that it is technically possible to use T-pylons in combination with standard steel lattice pylons, and whilst you have discounted their use, the ExA wish to explore this further: Therefore, please explain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How the eight areas assessed were chosen and why other areas were not; what was the criteria for choosing these sections of the route for consideration and were any other stretches of the route considered for their use, and if not, why not? Were they considered for the area around Ingatestone, and if not, why not? Whether the use of both pylon types would be a simple hybrid solution or whether additional infrastructure is required between the two types of pylons. If additional transition infrastructure is required, explain what this is and provide plans showing the appearance of these structures and where they would need to be located for each transition. Are there any technical constraints to a more 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In response to the first two bullets a) How were the eight areas identified and why were other areas not chosen? And b) whether areas around Ingatestone were considered? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7.21 Errata 2024 - Design Development Report for the Project Appendices [REP1-069] This document includes Appendix C that reports on a review of the whole route of the Norwich to Tilbury Project for locations where T-pylons may provide the potential (through applying the mitigation hierarchy) to mitigate landscape and visual effects and which were not expected to be limited by technical constraints such as excessive angle of directional change or presenting additional challenge to the requirements for additional vehicular access. They are taken forward as part of the mitigation hierarchy because of their additional cost (see paragraph 2.5.9 in 5.15 Design Development Report [APP-122]) and other considerations noting they are not a solution suitable for every location. Because of their consideration via the mitigation hierarchy the initial consideration was focussed on excluding sections where the general alignment characteristics and technical suitability of T-pylons was compromised by, for example, sharp angle changes. As such there were no inclusion criteria to identify sections to consider because the whole route was considered. The following five broad sections were identified as having potential suitability for Tpylon: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tacolneston to Shelfanger Diss Gislingham to Stowupland Fuller Street to Coggeshall Bulphan to Horndon on the Hill. <p>It follows that the remainder of the route including the following sections do not meet all aspects of the context specific circumstances where T-pylon may have some potential, in particular the greater changes of direction, crossings of electrified rail lines, etc. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EACN Substation to Great Horkesley Chelmsford North 	<p>Suffolk County Council [REP4-335] SCC would welcome further clarification from the Applicant with regards to their interpretation of the mitigation hierarchy. The first principle of the mitigation hierarchy is to avoid harm, followed by minimising harm. This is not the same as having concluded that the harm is, according to the Applicant's assessment, acceptable. In SCC's (Landscape) view it should be considered if landscape and visual effects in particularly sensitive areas (such as Waveney Valley, Mellis Common, Gipping Valley) could be further reduced using an alternative pylon design and changes to the route alignment. SCC has previously asked that a comparison to the standard towers should be carried out around Mellis Common, with the specific ask to weigh up potential benefits of shorter towers on views from the common against the increased number and visual effects of shorter towers and the landscape and visual effects on locations and visual receptors away from the common, closer to where the towers would be placed, such as Burgate Road. SCC notes the Applicant's response in this regard at LV1.25.</p>	<p>The Applicant has provided clarification relating to the mitigation hierarchy and pylon types in response to ExQ2 LV 2.14 in 8.9.2 Applicant's Responses to Second Written Questions [Revision A]. The Applicant provided relevant comments on the application of the mitigation hierarchy in response to the answers provided by stakeholders to the first written questions and specifically LV 1.17 in 8.4.10 Applicant's Comments on Responses to ExQ1 [REP4-299] on pages 282-287. Whilst this response highlighted that National Landscape designation does not prohibit development or activities within the National Landscapes, nor does it prohibit development that causes harm to a National Landscape, the NPSs similarly do not prevent all development whether within or outside the National Landscape which may have an adverse effect. The Applicant considers the mitigation hierarchy has been appropriately applied. 6.5 Environmental Statement Chapter 5 – EIA Approach and Method [APP-135] outlines the approach taken to mitigation and the application of the mitigation hierarchy – avoid, prevent, reduce, offset. Whilst understanding SCC's view that an area it identifies as having enhanced value should be considered in a manner similar to nationally designated landscapes, this is not the position set out in the policies that govern the determination of the Project. As such, the Applicant's position remains that the relevant consideration is not whether a particular mitigation is the best-performing, but whether there is a basis, in terms of policy acceptability, to</p>

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<p>recessive colour being used (noting that they are generally light grey).</p> <p>In addition, provide visualisations to support your claim that T-pylons would not mitigate landscape and visual effects. Use some of the following VP's to illustrate this (worst-case scenario examples):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.07 to 1.12; 1.14, 1.15, 2.06 to 2.12; 5.04, 5.05, 6.13 to 6.16; 7.08, 7.09, 7.12 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brentwood to Ingatestone. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In respect specifically of the area around Ingatestone this requires crossing of the A12 and two sections of electrified rail line as well as a number of larger changes of direction. Taken together they are considered to provide a technically unsuitable area for the use of T-pylon. <p>Having identified locations with potential for the use of T-pylons, the Applicant then applied the mitigation hierarchy. It does this in response to its duties to be economic and efficient and in light of the independent report on the Comparison of Electricity Transmission Technologies: Costs and Characteristics¹⁴ which identified the T-pylon lifetime costs are around 1.6 to 1.7 times that of a conventional overhead line. Ultimately the conclusion drawn, where overhead line was the preferred connection technology, was that lattice pylons were consistent with planning policy and the need to mitigate for unacceptable effects is not engaged.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can the two pylon types be used as a hybrid solution or is additional infrastructure required? <p>They can be used as a hybrid solution; however, transitions from lattice to T-pylon sections are generally via two additional angle structures. In other words, we would need to go from a lattice angle pylon to a T-pylon angle structure where these might not have been required (suspension pylons would have been sufficient) if the transition was not made. There would be changes to the maintenance access requirements due to the different access needs for the T Pylons. Also, the conductors will go from vertical configuration to delta configuration with a more complex (criss-cross arrangement in that transition span potentially increasing visual effects. The image below shows the transition from lattice pylon to T-pylon on the Hinkley Connection Project adjacent to the M5.</p> <p><i>[Applicant's note: figure has not been replicated here, see REP3-074 for original]</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transition pylon requirements and plans <p>With the conclusion reached that lattice pylons were the appropriate pylon type for the Project, there was no further development of detailed design arrangements, modified directional changes nor consideration of preferred locations for transitions between pylon types.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there technical constraints to use of a more recessive colour? <p>No, any colour scheme can be adopted. Across the world vertical tubular supports are noted to adopt different colour schemes. Graduated changes from darker to lighter as well as other solid colours such as green schemes have been used. It is generally accepted that matt grey shades seem to recede into the background best over time given average UK climatic conditions. To date T-pylons have only been adopted for one the National Grid Electricity Transmission Network on the Hinkley Connection</p>		<p>consider different design aspects higher up the mitigation hierarchy.</p> <p>At Mellis the use of lattice pylons is not considered to be unacceptable in policy terms and there is no basis to justify consideration of other pylon types.</p>

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	<p>Project. The National Grid (Hinkley Point C Connection Project) Order 2016 includes at Requirement 36 'All T-pylons must be painted Agate Grey (RAL 7038) in a low reflectivity finish unless a different colour or surface finish is otherwise agreed with the relevant planning authority'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T-pylon visualisations that support the claim that T-pylons would not mitigate landscape and visual effects. <p>The Applicant's position is that the appropriate basis for decision-making between pylon types is not a comparative exercise intended to demonstrate a reduction in landscape and visual effects through the use of one type against another. Rather, in accordance with the mitigation hierarchy and established NSIP policy, alternative design solutions such as T-pylons only arise for consideration where the effects of the assessed solution (in this case lattice pylons) are found to be unacceptable in policy or environmental terms.</p> <p>The Applicant's assessment is that this threshold is not met. The landscape and visual effects of the proposed lattice pylons have been fully assessed within the Environmental Statement, supported by viewpoint photomontages that are representative and proportionate to the scale of the Project and the receiving landscapes. That assessment concludes that, while effects are acknowledged, they are not unacceptable in policy terms.</p> <p>Given this position, and noting that the Project has been optimised or lattice pylons, no equivalent optimise T pylon design is available. The Applicant does not consider it necessary or proportionate to prepare additional visualisations for an alternative pylon form that has not been selected and is not relied upon to make the Project acceptable.</p> <p>However, the Applicant will continue to engage constructively with the Examining Authority should further clarification be required on the assessment approach or the application of the mitigation hierarchy.</p>		
<p>ALT 1.4 Contracted connections: the Essex Coast Generation Group Paragraphs 3.7.17 and 3.7.18 of the SOBR [APP-355] refer to National Grid's contracted connections for a total of 3,480 Megawatts (MW) of total new generation from the following energy projects (the 'Essex Coast Generation Group').</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Falls Offshore Windfarm (1,000 MW by 2030) • Five Estuaries Offshore Windfarm (1,080 MW by 2030) 	<p>Response to Part a</p> <p>The Applicant pursuant to its Transmission Owner Licence Condition D4A '<i>Condition D4A: Obligations in relation to offers for connection etc</i>' is obliged to provide the following information to the National Energy System Operator (NESO):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicative date of connection • Indicative point of connection • Such further information that may be appropriate. <p>It is then the NESO obligation under its System Operator Licence E12 '<i>Requirement to offer terms</i>' to give the customer an offer for connection which they sign. This then becomes our contractual obliged offer of connection that NESO, the Applicant and customer are required to meet.</p> <p>The Applicant's Transmission Owner Licence Condition D5 '<i>Prohibition on engaging in preferential or discriminatory behaviour</i>' does not allow us then to discriminate in any form '<i>in</i></p>	<p>Suffolk County Council [REP4-335]</p> <p>SCC is surprised at the Applicant's attempt to rely on its licence conditions in order to decline to answer a relevant question asked by the ExA about the feasibility of identified generation projects providing new electricity by 2030, and if they are delayed, the implications for the Applicant's consideration of alternatives. The Applicant claims that to provide an update on whether any of those projects are feasible by 2030, given their current consenting status, would involve the Applicant breaching its licence condition D5 in relation to discriminating against persons who have a connection offer.</p> <p>SCC does not consider this is a tenable interpretation of licence condition D5 and would invite the ExA to ask Ofgem, as the grantor of the licence whether it shares the Applicant's view that it cannot answer the ExA's question. Licence condition D5 of the Applicant's Transmission</p>	<p>The Applicant considers that it has provided a response to ALT 1.4 which is sufficient and accurate. Whilst recognising the objection and comments of SCC in response, the Applicant has reflected the public connection background and licence conditions and has no further comment to make. The Applicant therefore refers to its earlier response (as reproduced in the second column in this table). The Applicant further acknowledges the request SCC has made to the ExA for further consideration of this matter and will seek to assist should the ExA require additional clarification through future questions or other formal requests.</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tarchon Energy Limited Interconnector (1,400 MW By 2030) <p>At the time of writing, there has been no decision on the North Falls application, and the Planning Inspectorate's National Infrastructure Project webpage for Tarchon Interconnector indicates that submission of the application is expected in January 2028.</p> <p>The applicant is asked to:</p> <p>a) Provide an update to whether it is feasible that any of the above projects would provide the expected amount of new energy generation by 2030, and if not, how any delays would affect its assessment of alternatives.</p> <p>b) Clarify the reasons for initial selection of the Tendring peninsula (and then for zone A) for the EACN together with the East Coast Generation Group.</p> <p>c) Provide details of the timing of the selection of the sites for the three projects in respect of the production of the strategic options in the Corridor and Preliminary Routeing Siting Study (CPRSS) in 2022, given that North Falls and Five Estuaries were not submitted to the Planning Inspectorate until 2024 and Tarchon Interconnector is yet to be submitted.</p> <p>The applicant is also directed to ExQ1 GEN 1.20 which requests SoCGs with North Falls and Five Estuaries.</p>	<p><i>meeting its obligations under standard condition D4A (Obligations in relation to offers for connection etc)'. This includes public comment on generation abilities to meet dates, such that any comment may discriminate on any generator's ability to fund, consult or gain required permissions for their project</i></p> <p>As of 26 March 2026 the Applicant's contracted position as recorded on the NESO Transmission Entry Capacity (TEC) Register and the NESO Interconnector Register is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Falls Offshore Windfarm (1,000 MW by 2030) Five Estuaries Offshore Windfarm (1,080 MW by 2030) Tarchon Energy Limited Interconnector (1,400 MW By 2030). <p>The application for an electricity connection is completely independent of the planning requirement for such a connection. Applications for connection to the transmission system are often made before any planning application and a planning application is not required to receive an offer for connection. It is for the company applying for a connection to manage their own planning application and seek to modify the dates of their transmission connection offer should that process provide different timescales to the contractual connection date. They would need to do this to avoid penalties and costs associated with paying for the transmission capacity that they have secured by their contracted date. This is known as a termination charge and includes any liability fees incurred if a project is cancelled or reduced in capacity, covering costs for work already carried out, paid to the NESO. Any changes to contractual dates are reflected in the TEC and Interconnector Register. A customer can undertake a change in date through a modification application to their contract, at which point the applicant is free to reflect changes in Need or Timing, based upon information the customer provides which may reflect information which may be in the public domain, this would not change the connection location or works if only a date change is required.</p> <p>Response to Part b</p> <p>We would note at the outset that the Applicant is only responsible for the siting of the EACN Substation, but acknowledges that as the EACN provides the connection point to generation customers there is a reasonable assumption that the substations of those other developments (the Essex Coast Generation Group) will be located in close proximity. At the initial siting stage we obtained information on permanent land requirements from the contracted customers and factored this into the process to ensure that there was potentially enough space for multiple substations. The securing of consent for the two other substations for North Falls and Five Estuaries rests with their respective developers and similarly it rests with Tarchon to site and secure consent for its convertor station.</p> <p>The Project responds to a two part need case to reinforce boundary transfers with a Norwich to Bramford to Tilbury double</p>	<p>licence states that it may not "unduly discriminate between any persons" when meeting specified licence obligations, one of which is its obligations in relation to offers for connection (licence condition D4A). Providing factual information, which the Applicant believes to be correct, in response to a request for that information by a public authority (i.e. the ExA) does not constitute "discrimination", let alone "undue discrimination" between any persons, whether holders of connection offers or not. The Applicant appears to have confused "undue discrimination" with comments which may be adverse to the interests of another person. Making a factually true statement in response to a perfectly proper request for information is not discrimination.</p> <p>SCC has already drawn attention in [REP1-177] to the discrepancy between the Applicant's calculations of electricity generating capacity and the realistic time line(s) for the delivery of the projects generating that capacity and is disappointed that the Applicant has not engaged with this issue or provided the Examination with updated information reflecting known facts from the TEC register and the Planning Inspectorate's register of NSIP applications (or proposed applications), and the Applicant's failure to answer Part a of ALT1.4 needs to be seen in that light. SCC would request the ExA to continue to seek this information in its Second Written Questions.</p>	

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	<p>circuit connection and to connect the Essex Coast Generation Group. An integrated solution is one of many factors in reaching a preliminary preferred 7.18 2022 - Corridor and Preliminary Routeing and Siting Study [APP-356] providing the connection with less infrastructure than separate projects. This required the identification of an EACN location which is summarised in overview with further detail in the Design Development Report (APP-122) and the ES alternatives chapter (APP-130).</p> <p>The general location of a connection point reflects the location of the generation sources and the Transmission System. The independent NESO (then ESO) identifies the general location and issues Connection Offers which, once signed by the customer, are responded to by the Applicant who completes detailed siting (either on the existing Transmission System or at a new location linked by new 400kV connections) and routeing (of the 400kV connection if required) to identify an optimum solution.</p> <p>EACN (general siting) is set out in page 22–23 of 7.18 2022 - Corridor and Preliminary Routeing and Siting Study [APP-356] and provides the reasoning for the selection of the Tendring Peninsula for the connection in view of, at the time, the North Falls and Five Estuaries wind farm connection agreements, due to the location of these generators and the customer connection works indicating the general location for connection. The conclusions from page 23 were <i>'Overall the appraisal concluded that options associated with Clacton landing points and EAC nodes in Tendring District are preferred. These locations, in combination with the required onshore connections from the node to the NTS, are more compliant with Holford and Horlock routeing and siting guidance, in particular by offering greater potential to avoid and minimise effects on AONBs than would be the case with Felixstowe landing points.'</i></p> <p>Potential sites were identified throughout the Tendring Peninsula with Zone A (combining a number of adjacent blocks for potential development) emerging as being preferred following a selection process. This is then subject to ongoing back-check and review. Overall, alternative locations for the East Anglia Connection Node (EACN) Substation closer to the coast as well as alternatives further inland have been considered. In making decisions the Applicant notes that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Siting and routeing should consider the effects and costs of 400kV connection infrastructure as well as how that influences the customer connection infrastructure and make a balanced decision. • Connections closer to the coast require two points of connection to the Transmission System. • The absence of nationally designated landscapes means the strong starting presumption for overhead lines (NPS EN-5) for connections on the Tendring Peninsula is not reversed. As a result, any site, beyond where they may impact the setting of a Nationally Designated landscape, is expected to require parallel 400kV overhead line connections. 		

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	<p>The preliminary location for the EACN Substation (Zone A) was developed as set out in 7.18 2022 – Corridor and Preliminary Routeing and Siting Study [APP-356] in Section 6 as part of an iterative process. That document identifies the alternative sites considered at that stage of study. Other locations including the former Royal Air Force Boxted have been considered as they have been raised through consultation and the Applicant's position on them set out in the various Design Development Reports [APP-122, APP-358, APP-359 and APP-360].</p> <p>The selected location east of Ardleigh balances the effects arising from 400 kV connection corridors and substation for the Applicant and the needs of those with signed connection agreements who will connect at the EACN. It took into consideration the installation of one of the Applicant's connections by underground cable to Zone A but the likely need for an onward double overhead line down the Tendring Peninsula to progress sites closer to the coast. Given the potential for co-location of customer infrastructure, sites were not progressed if they were individually too small and were subsequently clustered into zones. Zone A had the scale to potentially accommodate both the Applicant's and some of the other customer infrastructure.</p> <p>The Tarchon interconnector signed connection agreement came in after the CPRSS but as it sought to make landfall in a similar location to North Falls and Five Estuaries, with the proposed EACN having sufficient capacity to accommodate this connection, it was highly coordinated, economical and efficient to offer Tarchon a connection to EACN. At the time of responding (Prior to deadline 3) no information on Tarchon siting was available.</p> <p>Response to Part C</p> <p>Chapter 6. 'East Anglia Connection Substation Study Options Appraisal' pages 87-101 in 7.18 2022 - Corridor and Preliminary Routeing and Siting Study [APP-356] sets out in detail the selection of locations for the EACN given the generation and interconnection offers made at EACN:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Falls Offshore Windfarm (1,000 MW by 2030) • Five Estuaries Offshore Windfarm (1,080 MW by 2030) • Tarchon Energy Limited Interconnector (1,400 MW By 2030). <p>Pursuant Transmission Owner Licence Condition D4A '<i>Condition D4A: Obligations in relation to offers for connection etc</i>' as detailed in Part a above. Also set out in Part a, is that this process is independent of the planning process for the named connections above, which is for the developers of those projects to seek any funding or permissions required to deliver their projects.</p> <p>As noted in Part b above Five Estuaries and North Falls were the first connections to require the EACN substation to be developed as referred to within 7.18 2022 - Corridor and Preliminary Routeing and Siting Study [APP-356]. The Tarchon connection was subsequent to this date and not referred to within the CPRSS; however, it was captured in both 7.19 2023 - Strategic</p>		

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	<p>Options Backcheck and Review [APP-357] and 7.17 Strategic Options Backcheck and Review [APP-355].</p> <p>As referred to in Part b, the Tarchon interconnector connection agreement was signed after the CPRSS but as it sought to make landfall in a similar location to North Falls and Five Estuaries, with the proposed EACN having sufficient capacity to accommodate this connection, it was highly coordinated, economical and efficient to offer Tarchon a connection to EACN.</p> <p>The timing and submissions to the Planning Inspectorate in respect of these projects is a matter solely for these developers, who may seek to modify their connection dates through the connections application process if they are at risk of missing contractual date, which will then be reflected in the relevant NESO TEC or Interconnector Register.</p> <p>The Applicant is compelled to respond to the contracted dates within connection agreements, and is aware of no information to suggest that the dates will not be met. However it is essential to repeat the point made at the start of response (a) above, which is that there are two parts to the need case which are responded to through an integrated connection. Even if one or other customer did not meet the connection date, the wider reinforcement is needed to the identified programme.</p>		
<p>BIO 1.15 Presence of white-clawed crayfish At OFH3 [EV7-001] and [EV7-002] and in [REP1-432] Mr Norman Stevens states that studies by the Norfolk Rivers Trust indicate the presence of white-clawed crayfish in the River Tas. Also, in [RR-1073] the Environment Agency notes that there are records of white-clawed crayfish on the River Tas (which is within the study area) and that they may be present where there are no recent records on the River Tas system and its tributaries. The ExA is aware that in paragraph 8.5.33 of ES Chapter 8 [AS-026] you have stated that desk studies revealed no records and field surveys revealed no presence of white-clawed crayfish in the Study Area. The ExA also notes that in N5 of [REP1-132] you have not specifically addressed the Environment Agency</p>	<p>Surveys for white-clawed crayfish at the River Tas were scoped out, as presented within 6.19 Scoping Report [APP-288 – APP-296], following a review of the desk study data and an assessment of potential impacts. While white-clawed crayfish are known to be present within the wider River Tas catchment, no desk study records of white-clawed crayfish have been obtained within 2 km of the Order Limits, in the 10 years preceding 2022. Records for the invasive signal crayfish in the river catchment within the Order Limits were obtained as part of the desk study. As signal crayfish predate on native crayfish and carry a plague that is fatal to white-clawed crayfish, it is unlikely that the native species are present in the study area. No ark sites¹⁹ were identified by the desk study. The overhead line would oversail the River Tas and have no effect on the banks where crayfish could reside. Proposed direct impacts to the River Tas are limited to one crossing between pylons RG49 and RG50 for a temporary construction haul road. This crossing would be a clear span bridge, which would not directly impact the riverbanks, the riverbed, the natural water flow or substrate and would therefore have no impacts to any white-clawed crayfish that may be present within the wider area. Surveys of the proposed crossing point of the River Tas indicate that water quality was poor, with high levels of silt in the water column. The Project would also cross water features that were identified as drainage ditches that are linked to the River Tas. These may be tributaries of the River Tas with banks that have been straightened. Many of these ditches appeared to dry out or hold limited amounts of water and so would be unsuitable for use</p>	<p>Norman Stevens [REP4-413] Replying to National Grid's response to the Planning Inspectorate's questions in document EN020027-002426 <u>BIO 1.15 Presence of White Clawed Crayfish.</u> How can National Grid find it acceptable to 'scope out' surveys for White Clawed Crayfish in the River Tas following a review of a <u>desk study</u> and an assessment of potential impacts? White Clawed Crayfish are an endangered and protected species and with a project of the magnitude of Norwich to Tilbury surely significant on site surveying and research must be undertaken to establish the size of the crayfish population and identify their locations in the River Tas and tributaries. It is not acceptable for National Grid to make decisions, that potentially could eradicate the Crayfish, based on desk studies. National Grid acknowledge White Clawed Crayfish are present in the wider River Tas catchment but they say there are no records of the species within 2 km of the order limits in the 10 years preceding 2022. Again this assumption is based on <u>desk studies</u> and does not prove that White Clawed Crayfish are not present within the order limits. From <u>desk studies</u> National Grid found that there is evidence of invasive Signal Crayfish within the order limits. Because of predation and disease Signal Crayfish</p>	<p>The scope of ecological surveys, including white-clawed crayfish, has been informed by a combination of desk studies, likely impacts and habitat suitability, as is standard practice. Field surveys are necessary only where there is the potential for a species to be significantly affected by the Project. While there are four locations where the Project crosses the River Tas or its tributaries, the works would not directly impact either the base or the banks of the watercourses where crayfish, if present, could be residing. The implementation of standard pollution control measures as outlined in 7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice (Revision E), would ensure that water quality is protected throughout the length of the Project including the River Tas and its tributaries. The presence within the River Tas of the invasive American signal crayfish, and therefore the fatal crayfish plague, has been considered as part of the overall habitat suitability assessment for suitability to support white-clawed crayfish.</p>

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<p>comments on this. Therefore please respond to Mr Stevens' and the Environment Agency's comments, explain whether a white-clawed crayfish licence from Natural England is likely to be required for any elements of the proposed development, and clarify how the potential presence of this species would affect the assessment conclusions you have reached in ES Chapter 8 [AS-026], including whether there are any ark sites nearby that might be affected. Please update Table 5.1 of the outline CoCP accordingly.</p>	<p>by white-clawed crayfish. While signal crayfish can survive without water and can travel overland, white-clawed crayfish cannot and without water they desiccate and die.</p> <p>The River Tas and its tributaries would be protected from pollution during construction of the Project by the standard pollution control and management measures that are secured through inclusion of commitments within 7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [REP2-014]. Measures include those to control runoff from worksites that may contain elevated concentrations of silt, as well as controls on potentially polluting activities such as refuelling and working with concrete, including protocols for unplanned events/spillages. In addition, due to the known presence of white-clawed crayfish within the River Tas in the wider area, specific biosecurity measures have been included within 7.4 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan [REP2-018] to ensure no spread of crayfish plague, as agreed with the Environment Agency.</p> <p>There would be no significant residual effects to the white-clawed crayfish at the River Tas or any other river within/adjacent to the Order Limits. For these reasons it is considered that the Project will not need to apply for a conservation licence with respect to white-clawed crayfish and there is no need to amend Table 5.1 within 7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [REP2-014].</p>	<p>are a danger to the native White Clawed Crayfish. Based on the presence of Signal Crayfish National Grid state it is 'unlikely' that the native species are present in the study area. But this is an assumption again based on <u>desk studies</u> and not the result of carrying out thorough surveys.</p> <p>It is apparent from the response from National Grid that desk studies are deemed sufficient for decision making when dealing with the White Clawed Crayfish in the River Tas. I ask the Planning Inspectorate to insist that National Grid obtain a conservation licence from Natural England for the project, appropriate for this protected species.</p> <p>The River Tas being a rare chalk stream would be vulnerable to pollution from the Norwich to Tilbury project. National Grid say that the river and its tributaries would be protected from pollution during construction. However, because the pylon route is on higher ground above the River Tas valley, the substantial ground works, the presence of concrete and risk of spillage from refuelling plant etc would present a scenario of high pollution risk through drainage into the river. The proposed pylon route crosses the river and tributaries / feeders in several places and there would be a high risk of pollution from construction particularly near RG049, RG042, RG032 and RG024 as these pylons are at crossing points on the river and its tributaries / feeders. Besides the main tributaries and feeders there are numerous ditches across the landscape, crossed by the pylon route, that link up and eventually drain into the River Tas thus posing further possibilities for pollution. It is difficult to accept that the River Tas and it's wildlife would not be adversely affected by the Norwich to Tilbury project. This is an inappropriate project and should be rejected especially as there are better alternatives to upgrade the grid that National Grid have dismissed.</p>	<p>White-clawed crayfish surveys were scoped out due to the absence of records and the absence of a pathway to effect that would require a licence or bespoke mitigation. This approach was agreed with the Local Planning Authorities and the Environment Agency as detailed in Table 3.3 of 5.9.15 Draft Statement of Common Ground - Environment Agency [REP4-085].</p>
<p>DCO 1.A2 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</p>	<p>The Applicant selected 28 days for the decision-making and deemed consent time periods following detailed consideration of the programme for delivery of the Project. In selecting 28 days, the Applicant took into account:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Its commitment to continued proactive and proportionate engagement with host Local Authorities and statutory consultees to support the efficient and timely determination of post-consent submissions • That the discharge of Development Consent Order (DCO) Requirements will build directly on the extensive pre-application engagement and the Examination process, through which the principle, scope and controls for the Project will have been thoroughly considered. By the point of consent, the intent of the Requirements, the parameters of the authorised development, and the mitigation framework 	<p>Suffolk County Council [REP4-335] SCC notes the applicant's reply; however, SCC maintains its long-held position: the proposed timeframe is too short. SCC has elaborated on this point in several submissions, for example in paragraphs 14.19 to 14.26 of its LIR [REP1-178] and in its answer to this question in its response to ExQ1 [REP3-086] (pages 34 to 36 of 82). The latter response summarises the robust process SCC follows to ensure any consent / requirement application is dealt with appropriately and within a reasonable time limit. The former response makes the point – accepted by the Sea Link ExA – that owing to number of DCO applications hosted in Suffolk, it is appropriate for this volume of work to be reflected in the time for discharging documents. If the instant development were to take place where no other DCOs were demanding the determination of</p>	<p>The Applicant does not agree that the proposed determination period is unreasonable or that it should be extended on the basis of the current or anticipated workload of Suffolk County Council.</p> <p>While the Applicant recognises the volume of Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects with which Suffolk County Council is engaged, the discharge of requirements under this DCO must be considered within the statutory framework of the Planning Act 2008, which is intended to facilitate the timely delivery of nationally significant infrastructure.</p>

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<p>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>secured through the DCO and Environmental Statement will be well understood and familiar to the relevant authorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the post-consent submissions will focus on the detailed implementation of agreed measures, rather than introducing new concepts or untested mitigation. The Applicant will continue to engage with authorities on draft submissions where appropriate, helping to clarify expectations and reduce the likelihood of iterative amendments • Recent precedent timescales for deemed consents in articles of the National Grid (Yorkshire Green Energy Enablement Project) Development Consent Order 2024 and the Applicant's preference for 28 days in its application for the National Grid (Bramford to Twinstead Reinforcement) Order 2024. <p>The Applicant notes the Examining Authority's request for details of its consideration of validation periods, consultation periods, report writing periods, committee cycles and decision issuing periods that may apply. Whilst there are prescribed periods for applications made under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, in the context of a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project of critical national priority such as this, and where the details of the application and the foundations for submission of applications for post-consent approvals have been considered in great detail as part of the Examination process, the Applicant's position is that adopting similar validation, consultation, report writing, committee and decision periods would undermine the delivery of urgent and critical nationally significant infrastructure.</p> <p>The Applicant has had regard to the concerns of the Examining Authority and the host authorities and proposes to extend the 28-day period to 25 business days. The Applicant considers that this provides sufficient additional time to the relevant decision-making authorities and brings this in line with the 35 days that the Secretary of State considered to be appropriate for the National Grid (Bramford to Twinstead Reinforcement) Order 2024. Furthermore, the use of business days instead of days will ensure that the relevant authorities are not disadvantaged by weekend and Bank Holiday periods. As noted in 8.4.1 Applicant's Comments on Relevant Representations [REP2-023] and 8.8.2 Applicant's Comments on Local Impact Reports [REP2-030], there is scope within paragraph 1(1)(c) of Schedule 4 (Discharge of Requirements) (3.1 Draft Development Consent Order [Revision C]) and within each article that makes provision for deemed consent to extend the decision period by agreement in writing between the undertaker and the relevant authority. Paragraph 2 of Schedule 4 (Discharge of Requirements) also allows the relevant authority to seek further information from the Applicant and to consult with those required by the terms of the Requirement in question.</p> <p>The Applicant notes that some authorities have requested decision periods far in excess of what is acceptable to the Applicant as it seeks to deliver the Project by 2030 and which is of critical importance to the UK government's Clean Power Target</p>	<p>applications within a strict time period, there might be merit in having a determination period of shorter than 56 days / 40 business days. Here, however, SCC is already determining applications (or will shortly be determining applications) for –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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). <p>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.</p> <p>There are several others – including solar and water schemes – at pre-application stage. In this context, the applicant's position is untenable: a quart will not fit in a pint pot.</p>	<p>The Applicant considers that it would not be appropriate for the determination period for this Project to be extended to reflect the resourcing or workload pressures of a particular authority. The delivery of a project of critical national priority should not be contingent upon the extent of other consents being determined by the same authority, nor should it be subject to delay arising from factors external to the Project itself.</p> <p>In practice, the proposed timeframe does not preclude effective consideration of applications. The Applicant is developing a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) framework with all host authorities based upon iterative engagement prior to submission. This front-loading of work is intended to ensure that applications submitted for approval are sufficiently mature, thereby enabling efficient determination within the prescribed period. The draft DCO includes appropriate procedural safeguards to ensure that applications are only determined when sufficient information has been provided. Where the relevant planning authority considers that further information is required, it may request additional information, with the effect that the determination period is not engaged until that information has been submitted. In practice, this ensures that the statutory timeframe applies to complete applications only, not to those requiring further clarification. In addition, the determination period may be extended by agreement between the Applicant and the authority where appropriate. These mechanisms ensure that the authority retains full control over the adequacy of submissions, while maintaining a proportionate and efficient framework for decision-making should they not be satisfied that the pre-application process the Applicant is endorsing should be sufficient.</p> <p>The Applicant also notes that the requirements to be discharged predominantly seek to finalise outline plans that have been subject to extensive comment and review as part of the</p>

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	<p>of 2030. The Applicant's position remains that extending the decision-making period beyond what the Applicant proposes would not be proportionate or appropriate given the programme constraints faced by the Applicant, the nature of the applications proposed to be made, and in the context that Annex 2 of the NESO Clean Power 2030 Report²² identifies that if the Applicant delivers the Project by the end of 2031 instead of by the end of 2030, the consumer would be exposed to additional constraints costs in excess of £2.5 billion. This equates to £7 million for every day that the energisation of the Project is delayed into 2031.</p> <p>With the exception of Schedule 16 (Protective Provisions) the details of which remain under discussion with the relevant stakeholders, the Applicant has updated the 3.1 Draft Development Consent Order (Revision C) to reflect these newly proposed timescales.</p>		<p>examination process, thus reducing the extent to which applications require extensive reconsideration of matters already assessed during examination and accepted by the Secretary of State should consent be granted.</p> <p>Accordingly, the Applicant maintains that the proposed determination period strikes an appropriate balance between ensuring robust consideration by the relevant planning authority and supporting the timely delivery of this Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project. Finally, the Applicant notes the possibility for the Department for Energy and Net Zero (DEZNZ) to be a discharging authority for the Project. The Applicant provides an update on this at Appendix A of 8.4.12 Applicant's Comments on Post-Hearing Submissions and Interested Party Action Points.</p>
<p>DCO 1.A6 Article 2 (Interpretation) (maintain) Braintree DC in its RR [RR-0383] and LIR [REP1-148], along with a number of other local authorities and statutory undertakers, considers the definition of "Maintain" needs to be clear with regard to who decides whether the maintenance would give rise to any materially new or materially different environmental effects. Signpost your responses to this matter or provide a considered response.</p>	<p>Please refer to the Applicant's responses to these comments on page 158 of 8.4.1 Applicant's Comments on Relevant Representations [REP2-023] and page 130 of 8.8.2 Applicant's Comments on Local Impact Reports [REP2-030].</p> <p>The Applicant notes the concern raised, however, it would reiterate that as a transmission licence holder, the Applicant has statutory duties to maintain its apparatus in order to ensure a safe, effective and efficient electricity transmission system. Furthermore, the power for the Applicant to maintain the authorised development is, as the Council recognises, tied to those maintenance activities not giving rise to any materially new or materially different environmental effects to those identified in the environmental statement. The onus is on the Applicant to ensure that these maintenance activities do not give rise to any materially new or materially different environmental effects. A failure to comply with a term of the DCO would be an offence.</p> <p>This approach to maintenance has precedent in a number of made development consent orders, including the National Grid (Bramford to Twinstead Reinforcement) Order 2024 and the National Grid (Yorkshire Green Energy Enablement Project) Development Consent Order 2024.</p>	<p>Suffolk County Council [REP4-335] SCC notes the applicant's reply; however, the definition of "maintain" in the latest version of the draft DCO remains unchanged and it does not seem to address the point made by Braintree DC in its LIR regarding who decides whether the maintenance would give rise to any materially new or materially different environmental effects. Since this is Braintree DC's point, SCC will consider their response to this question before, potentially, commenting further.</p>	<p>Please refer to the Applicant's response to DCO 2.A2 on the definition of 'maintain' in 8.9.2 Applicant's Responses to Second Written Questions.</p>
<p>DCO 1.A7 Article 2 (Interpretation) (order land) 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</p>	<p>The definition of 'Order land' is 'the land shown on the land plans and described in the book of reference'. The definition of Order land, therefore, must be understood as what is shown on those plans but also what is described in the Book of Reference. Table 2.1 of 4.3 Book of Reference [AS-018] describes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The land use power sought 	<p>Suffolk County Council [REP4-335] SCC notes that the Applicant's response to this question is not dissimilar to that provided by SCC in its response to ExQ1 [REP3-086] (pages 37 and 38 of 82). SCC therefore has no concerns with the Applicant's response. Should the ExA consider further clarification is required in the drafting, SCC would remind the ExA of the drafting proposed by SCC in its own response to this question.</p>	<p>The Applicant notes the Council's comment on this matter.</p>

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<p>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>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The colour of the land on the 2.2 Land Plans [AS-005 to AS-012] that is associated with the power sought • The principal relevant article in the 3.1 Draft Development Consent Order [Revision C] • A description of the powers afforded by each Class • A list of any subordinate powers, which can also be exercised on land to which the primary power relates. <p>For example, Class 1 authorises the compulsory acquisition of land. The undertaker can only exercise powers to compulsorily acquire land on the land shown brown on the 2.2 Land Plans [AS-005 to AS-012]. The powers that the undertaker can exercise on the brown land are those set out in Article 24 (compulsory acquisition of land). The fourth column of the table sets out the description of the Class (i.e. the purpose for which the land can be acquired). The final column lists any subordinate powers so, in the case of the brown land, the undertaker can also exercise Class 2 powers (compulsory acquisition of rights – overhead lines), Class 3 powers (compulsory acquisition of rights – underground cable system), Class 4 powers (compulsory acquisition of rights – overhead line and underground cabling system), Class 5 powers (compulsory acquisition of rights – access), Class 6 (compulsory acquisition of rights – drainage) and Class 7 (temporary use).</p> <p>Thus land over which a class of rights can be exercised is shaded a particular colour on the Land Plans. The entry for Class 8 is clear that the white land is 'Land that is not subject to powers of acquisition nor temporary use'. The columns relating to the relevant article of the 3.1 Draft Development Consent Order [Revision C], the description of the Class and the subordinate classes are also blank or marked as 'N/A' to make it clear that no powers of compulsory acquisition of land, rights or temporary possession of land can be exercised over the white land.</p> <p>The Applicant does not consider there to be any reading of the 3.1 Draft Development Consent Order [Revision C] that would allow compulsory acquisition powers or temporary possession powers to be exercised over the Class 8 (white) land. The Applicant therefore does not propose to amend the definition of Order land in the 3.1 Draft Development Consent Order [Revision C]. It would not be appropriate, or necessary, to start introducing or excluding details from the 4.1 Book of Reference [AS-018] into that definition and doing so in part could create unnecessary uncertainty. This approach has precedence and the definition of the Order land is consistent with the definition contained in the National Grid (Bramford to Twinstead Reinforcement) Order 2024.</p>		
<p>DCO 1.A28</p> <p>Article 23 (Removal of Human Remains)</p> <p>Whilst noting your commentary in the EM [APP-057] in relation</p>	<p>Article 23 (removal of human remains) of 3.1 Draft Development Consent Order [Revision C] is a precautionary mechanism and it is consistent with that precautionary mechanism that the application documents identify only one specific known cremation burial site at this stage. This is recorded as non-designated</p>	<p>Suffolk County Council [REP4-335]</p> <p>The wording of article 23 is suited for the removal of modern burials from known contemporary burial grounds, such as consecrated burial grounds or modern cemeteries and is not suited for the excavation, recording</p>	<p>Please refer to the Applicant's response to DCO 2.A3 in 8.9.2 Applicant's Responses to Second Written Questions.</p>

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<p>to DCOs that have included articles enabling the removal of human remains, as well as the justification for such an article in paragraph 3.27.6, the ExA, having reviewed the submitted application documents has not found any direct reference to human remains or potential sites of human remains. As such the ExA would request you signpost it to where such matters are referenced in the submitted application documentation.</p> <p>Additionally, whilst the ExA is aware of similar articles related to the removal of human remains in other DCOs, it is equally aware that other similar articles have been removed from DCOs in recent decisions made by the Secretary of State, where limited or no reasoned justification has been provided during the examination of those submissions to substantiate their inclusion. (For example: the HyNet CO2 Pipeline Order 2024; The Sunnica Energy Farm Order 2024; The Gate Burton Energy Park Order 2024; and The Mallard Pass Solar Farm Order 2024).</p> <p>Clarify paragraph 3.27.6 of the EM [APP-057], as to why this article is considered to be necessary/ relevant to the development being sought and whether the article would be reasonable in all other respects.</p>	<p>heritage asset 3293 in 6.11 Environmental Statement Chapter 11 - Historic Environment [AS-068] and 6.11.A2 Environmental Statement Appendix 11.2 - Historic Environment Assessment Tables [AS-070]. The purpose of this precautionary is to provide a consolidated, efficient and legally certain process in the event that further human remains are unexpectedly discovered during works.</p> <p>The authorised development includes sections of underground cabling, the excavation works for which carry an inherent (if low) risk of disturbing previously unidentified remains across a substantial linear route. Though low risk, discovery of human remains is a high impact event for the purposes of construction and, thus, a delivery risk. In the absence of Article 23, if a body is discovered, the undertaker would be required to navigate a series of separate and potentially slow statutory regimes (including the Burial Act 1857, the Town and Country Planning (Churches, Places of Religious Worship and Burial Ground) Regulations 1950 (the 1950 Regulations) and sections 238 and 239 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990), each of which has its own procedural requirements.</p> <p>Article 23 disapplies section 25 of the Burial Act 1857 and the 1950 Regulations and applies sections 238 and 239 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. In doing so, it gives effect to the consolidated process set out in Article 23 in their place. Without Article 23, those regimes would apply in their uncoordinated, piecemeal form and compliance with those regimes could delay the delivery of this Project. Given its status as a project of critical national priority, the consequences of delay would be particularly acute, including the additional constraints costs identified in Annex 2 of the NESO Clean Power 2030 Report²⁵ as being £2.5 billion should the Applicant deliver the Project by the end of 2031 instead of by the end of 2030 – equating to £7 million for every day that the energisation of the Project is delayed into 2031. Any mechanism which reduces the risk of construction delay, however low the probability of the trigger event occurring may be, is of particular importance in the context of this Project.</p> <p>Like many provisions in Development Consent Orders (DCOs), the inclusion of a precautionary article such as this is intended to guard against unnecessary delay, difficulty and obstruction to construction in the event that something that is an unexpected but realistic possibility occurs. There is therefore potentially significant public interest benefit from including Article 23 and no public interest harm.</p> <p>This question was raised by the Examining Authority during the examination of the Associated British Ports (Immingham Green Energy Terminal) Order 2025, who considered this point carefully at paragraphs 7.4.12–7.4.19 of its recommendation report. The Examining Authority in that case accepted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The likelihood of encountering human remains may be low based on the evidence before the examination, but could not be entirely eliminated given the nature and scale of the works 	<p>and study of human remains from archaeological contexts. Furthermore, to follow the process defined in article 23 would be detrimental to the archaeological investigation and appropriate treatment of human remains from archaeological contexts.</p> <p>Article 23 does not include provision for the treatment of human remains from archaeological contexts, even if they are older than 100 years. It does not grant a license to excavate the human remains for archaeological research, or to retain those remains for future archaeological and scientific analysis in a museum or archaeological archive (where required). It instead focuses on the removal, reburial/cremation of those remains. Therefore, Article 23 is an inappropriate mechanism for the treatment human remains identified through archaeological investigations.</p> <p>The inclusion of Article 23 could be considered in conflict with the provisions of Requirement 5 (Archaeology), as the treatment of human remains from archaeological contexts will be detailed in an approved Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and Outline Written Scheme of Investigation and subsequent Detailed Written Schemes of Investigation.</p> <p>Human remains will be identified during the course of the archaeological fieldwork required for this development, as has been shown with the discovery of cremation burial 3293 in trial trenching of Area 15N. This does not equate to a modern known burial ground, and article 23 would not be appropriate to apply to these human remains.</p> <p>SCCAS believe that it would be more efficient following the standard archaeological approaches to excavating and recording of human remains under a Ministry of Justice burial license and this would not add significant delays to the delivery programme, and we believe this would reduce the likelihood of delays to the project compared to the use of the article 23 approach.</p> <p>Another NSIP in Suffolk, BTNO is working under a scheme wide MoJ Burial Licence which covers removal of human remains from the development area in both Suffolk and Essex, and this is not a factor causing delays to project delivery.</p> <p>Archaeological evaluation by trial trenching should be undertaken at the earliest opportunity to help inform the development for the potential of encountering human remains from archaeological contexts.</p>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whilst other legislative procedures exist for the removal of remains, their limitations (including the risk of delay arising from having to navigate multiple disparate regimes) could negatively affect delivery of the authorised development • The DCO article provides a consolidated process that mitigates that delivery risk and is only engaged if remains are actually encountered • On that basis, the article was proportionate and reasonable and should be retained. <p>Article 23 does not allow the Applicant to act unilaterally. It is subject to appropriate procedural protections, public notification and oversight by the relevant county court and the Secretary of State and provides for formal reporting obligations. The article is consistent with established DCO drafting practice and the Applicant's position is that it should remain.</p> <p>The Applicant notes that Suffolk County Council also made comments in its Local Impact Report [REP1-178-179] on Article 23 (human remains). In its Local Impact report, Suffolk County Council states that <i>"SCCAS understands there are no records of any historic human remains or burial sites within the Order Limits in Suffolk. However, it is not uncommon for human remains to be encountered during archaeological fieldwork, and a project of this scale should anticipate the potential discovery of such remains during ongoing evaluation and mitigation."</i></p> <p>However, they go on to state that <i>"SCCAS considers article 23 conflicts with archaeological best practice for dealing with human remains in archaeological contexts as it would lead to burial features being exposed for an extended period, constituting a risk of damage or harm. For remains over 100 years old, it is usually standard archaeological practice that the terms of the Burial Act 1857 are followed; however, by article 23(17), section 25 of the Burial Act 1857 is disapplied in respect of a removal carried out in accordance with article 23. SCCAS considers article 23 should be amended so that the removal of remains considered to be over 100 years old should be carried out in line with the Burial Act 1857, any issued burial license, the relevant detailed written scheme of investigation, and best practice documents. SCCAS therefore recommends that article 23 is amended as follows—</i> <i>"(17) Subject to subject to paragraph (17)A, section 25 of the Burial Act 1857</i> <i>(offence of removal of body from burial grounds) does not apply to a removal carried out in accordance with this article.</i> <i>(17A) Subject to paragraph (17B), the disapplication mentioned in paragraph (17) does not apply to the removal of human remains where the undertaker is satisfied that the remains were interred more than 100 years ago.</i> <i>(17B) A removal to which paragraph (17A) applies must also be carried out in accordance with any issued burial license, any relevant detailed written scheme of investigation approved in</i></p>		

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	<p><i>accordance with requirement 5 (archaeology), and best practice documents”.</i></p> <p>The Applicant's position is that the proposed amendment introduces uncertainty due to imprecise drafting (for example, it is unclear what is meant by “best practice documents”). Furthermore, the Applicant would question why a burial licence would be necessary given the procedure set out in Article 23 of 3.1 Draft Development Consent Order [Revision C] provides that the Applicant must apply to the Secretary of State for direction as to the subsequent treatment of the remains and must comply with the terms of the DCO and the Secretary of State's direction. Failure to comply would be a breach of a term of the DCO and would be an offence.</p> <p>However, the Applicant appreciates Suffolk County Council's concern about compliance with the relevant written scheme of investigation and, should the Examining Authority consider it necessary and appropriate, the Applicant would be willing to include the following wording in paragraph (13):</p> <p>“(13) In the case of remains in relation to which paragraph (12) applies, the undertaker—</p> <p>(a) may remove the remains;</p> <p>(b) must apply for direction from the Secretary of State under paragraph (15) as to their subsequent treatment; and</p> <p>(c) must deal with the remains in such manner, and subject to such conditions, as the Secretary of State directs,</p> <p><u>in each case in accordance with any applicable terms of a relevant written scheme of investigation approved under paragraph 5 (archaeology) of Schedule 3 (requirements), unless the Secretary of State directs otherwise.</u></p> <p>In question DCO 1.S8, the Examining Authority notes that Norfolk County Council sought in its Local Impact Report an amendment to the party to be notified under Article 23. The Applicant has updated the definition of relevant planning authority in Article 2(1) of 3.1 Draft Development Consent Order [Revision C] which addresses the point raised by Norfolk County Council.</p>		
<p>DCO 1.A32</p> <p>Article 34 (Time limit for exercise of authority to acquire land and rights compulsorily)</p> <p>Justify the necessity of including article 34(3) given that in the event of a legal challenge, this may give rise to uncertainty as to when CA powers will be exercised. The ExA also seeks clarification as to how this is consistent with the Human Rights Act 1998.</p>	<p>Should the Secretary of State grant development consent and a legal challenge is made, the Applicant could progress the development of the Project, but it would be doing so at risk, therefore the scope of any works to be carried out or powers exercised would need to be carefully considered in line with the Applicant's statutory duty to maintain an economic and efficient transmission network. It is, therefore, essential that the period for exercising compulsory acquisition powers extends to account for a pause or slowing down of the processes and development of the Project that occur as a result of any legal challenge.</p> <p>The inclusion of Article 34(4)(b) makes clear that the extension of time for the exercise of compulsory acquisition powers will be for a maximum of one year to provide certainty to affected landowners. The Applicant concluded in 4.1 Statement of Reasons [REP2-009], that the Project's significant public benefits</p>	<p>Suffolk County Council [REP4-335]</p> <p>SCC can see the merit of including this provision; however, it also considers that article 34(4)(b) is unnecessary and any extension should be based on the time lost. Paragraph (4) should therefore be amended as follows –</p> <p>“(4) Under paragraph (3) the period is taken to be extended by—</p> <p>(a) a period equivalent to the period beginning with the day the proceedings are filed and ending on the day they are withdrawn or finally determined, or</p> <p>(b) if shorter, one year.”</p> <p>Regarding paragraph (1), SCC considers allowing the applicant seven years to issue ‘notices to treat’ or a</p>	<p>In relation to Suffolk's comments on the relevance of paragraph 4(b) of Article 34, the Applicant refers back to its original response to DCO 1.A32 which is included in the second column of this table.</p> <p>In relation to Suffolk's comments on the proposed seven-year time limit for the exercise of compulsory acquisition powers, the Applicant refers to page 147 of 8.4.9 Applicant's Comments on any Further Information or Submissions received by Deadline 3 [REP4-298]. The Applicant maintains that this period is necessary and proportionate to enable construction under temporary use powers</p>

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	<p>would outweigh its effects on the private loss of persons who own property in the Order Limits such that there would not be a disproportionate interference with their Article 8 and Article 1 First Protocol rights under the Human Rights Act 1998.</p> <p>Please refer to the Applicant's response to question CA 1.13 in which the Applicant sets out further detail on the compelling case in the public interest.</p>	<p>'general vesting declaration' to acquire the land or rights that is subject to the power of compulsory purchase is excessive.</p> <p>Five years is the usual position, and SCC considers the usual position should be adopted here, especially since (per article 34(4)) that period will not be eaten into by any legal challenge to the decision to grant development consent for the project.</p> <p>SCC provided more detail on this point in SCC's LIR [REP1-178] (paragraph 14.38).</p>	<p>and subsequent exercise of powers of compulsory acquisition after construction and demobilisation, taking into account reinstatement requirements, and the programme, nature and scale of the Project.</p>
<p>DCO 1.A42</p> <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><i>[Applicant's note: the written question was addressed to 'All local authorities, highway authorities and statutory undertakers' in PD-014, therefore an Applicant Response was not provided]</i></p>	<p>Essex County Council [REP4-328]</p> <p>The dDCO under Article 50 seeks to disapply the Hedgerows Regulation 1997 and more specifically, the obligation for the undertaker to secure consent to remove hedgerows under the regulations. ECC considers the breadth of the disapplication, would allow removal of otherwise strongly protected hedgerows via a "reasonably believes it to be necessary" trigger, to take place without the consent of the LPA.</p> <p>Hedgerows in this landscape are biodiversity assets of national policy weight, not generic vegetation. The Applicant's Hedgerow Report (APP-161) identified 466 hedgerows as potentially important, and surveyed 79, of which 34 were identified as "important".</p> <p>Disapplication of this protection on the basis of a "reasonable belief" trigger transfers all of those judgements to the undertaker – a commercial party with an interest in clearing the corridor cheaply and quickly. There is currently no requirement for a competent ecologist to feed into that assessment (for example, to assist with whether wholesale removal may not be justified) or a requirement for any written records to be kept. The triggers for when it may be necessary in the "reasonable belief" for the hedgerow to be removed (obstructing construction etc) are also very wide.</p> <p>ECC notes that the Government's "Planning Act 2008: Content of a Development Consent Order" guidance is explicit that an Article disapplying the Hedgerows Regulations should either (i) refer to specific hedgerows described clearly in a Schedule, or (ii) include "powers for general removal of hedgerows subject to appropriate controls and mitigation being included." A bare "reasonable belief" trigger, with no mapped Schedule and no controls, does not appear to comply with this.</p> <p>ECC is of the opinion that the Applicant has the raw material for a Schedule of Hedgerows from the Hedgerow Report. The dDCO could then disapply the Hedgerow Regulations in relation to the Schedule of Hedgerows, should it be necessary to cut or remove those hedgerows, and could include a residual, narrow fallback article to</p>	<p>The Applicant disagrees with Essex County Council's interpretation and has set this out in response to a similar query to a Submission from Suffolk County Council [REP4-335] in Appendix A of 8.4.11 Applicant's Comments on any Further Information or Submissions Received by Deadline 4 however to summarise:</p> <p>The Applicant does not agree that Article 50 would allow for the uncontrolled removal of hedgerows on the basis of a reasonable belief of necessity, nor that it transfers unregulated decision-making to the undertaker. Article 50 is clear that any of the specified works to trees, hedgerows and important hedgerows can only be carried out where it is reasonably necessary to prevent the tree, hedgerow or important hedgerow from obstructing or interfering with the construction, maintenance or operation of the authorised development or from constituting a danger to persons constructing, maintaining or operating the authorised development. The scope for these works is further controlled by article (2) which prohibits any unnecessary damage being carried out. Compensation is payable for any loss or damage caused, meaning that vast and uncontrolled clearances would not be a cheaper way to proceed quickly.</p> <p>Although Article 50 disapplies The Hedgerows Regulations 1997, it must be read in the context of the wider Development Consent Order framework, which imposes a comprehensive and enforceable set of controls governing the removal of vegetation, including</p>

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		<p>deal with unforeseen cases (which could retain LPA approval).</p> <p>The Applicant cannot simultaneously argue (i) that the survey work has been thorough enough to underpin the Environmental Statement and Biodiversity Net Gain calculations and (ii) that it is unable to specify which hedgerows it intends to remove. If (i) is correct, (ii) follows. If (ii) is true, the survey is not robust enough to support the wide disapplication sought.</p>	<p>hedgerows by way of compliance with Schedule 3 Requirement 4.</p> <p>7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision E], secured by Requirement 4, provides a structured process whereby hedgerow removal is only determined following detailed survey design refinement and in accordance with an Arboricultural Method Statement. These measures ensure that decisions are informed by appropriate technical input and subject to formal approval by the Local Planning Authority. It also commits to maintaining a photographic and written record of removal and reinstatement.</p> <p>The disapplication of The Hedgerows Regulations 1997 therefore replaces a separate consenting regime with a more integrated and equally robust DCO-based control framework, consistent with relevant guidance.</p>
<p>DCO 1.S5</p> <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</p>	<p>Discharging authority</p> <p>The Applicant has considered the feedback received from the host authorities, including the detailed comments of Norfolk County Council in its Local Impact Report (LIR) [REP1-173], on the approach to defining the ‘relevant planning authority’ in 3.1 Draft Development Consent Order (the ‘dDCO’). The definition in the dDCO as submitted is common across a number of made development consent orders, including the National Grid (Bramford to Twinstead Reinforcement) Order 2024 and the National Grid (Yorkshire Green Energy Enablement Project) Development Consent Order 2024.</p> <p>However, the Applicant recognises that the circumstances of each made DCO may differ and, in this case, to limit any scope for ambiguity proposes to replace the existing definition of ‘relevant planning authority’ with a new two-limb definition as follows in Article 2 (Interpretation) of 3.1 Draft Development Consent Order [Revision C]: “relevant planning authority” means, in any given provision of this Order—</p> <p>(a) for an area to which the provision relates in respect of which there is both a district planning authority and a county planning authority for the purposes of Part I (Planning Authorities) of the 1990 Act, the district planning authority; and</p> <p>(b) for an area to which the provision relates in respect of which there is only one local planning authority for the purposes of that Part, that one local planning authority, or any successor exercising its functions as local planning authority for the purposes of that Part;’</p>	<p>Suffolk County Council [REP4-335]</p> <p>SCC is pleased the term “discharging authority” has been omitted from the draft Order. The definitions of “relevant planning authority” and “relevant county planning authority” appear fine; however, SCC does not agree with the way the applicant proposes to apply those terms in certain of the provisions mentioned in the response. Those provisions are –</p> <p><u>Article 7(5) (consent to transfer benefit of order)</u>: SCC, and the other relevant county planning authorities should be notified of any transfer / grant of the benefit of the Order because the authorised development is taking place in their administrative areas. SCC considers this would require negligible administrative effort on the undertaker’s behalf and does not accept doing so would be “unduly onerous and unusual”. In any event, since SCC considers it should discharge certain of the requirements mentioned below, it would be entirely appropriate for SCC to be notified).</p> <p><u>Article 23(4) and 23(11)(b) (removal of human remains)</u>: A more general point: as mentioned elsewhere in this Deadline’s submission, SCC considers this article should be omitted. (Please see SCC’s comments on the applicant’s Schedule of Changes to the Draft DCO [REP3-009]).</p> <p><u>Requirement 5 (archaeology) of Schedule 3 (requirements)</u>: In Suffolk, SCC should be the discharging authority because archaeology is a county function. This</p>	<p><u>Article 7(5) (transfer benefit of order)</u>: The Applicant maintains its position set out in its response to DCO 1.S5 and does not propose to amend 3.1 Draft Development Consent Order [Revision E] to notify county planning authorities in addition to district planning authorities.</p> <p><u>Article 23(4) and 23(11)(b) (removal of human remains)</u>: Please refer to the Applicant’s response to DCO2 A.3 in 8.9.2 Applicant’s Responses to Second Written Questions [Revision A].</p> <p><u>Requirement 5 (archaeology) of Schedule 3</u>: The Applicant recognises that the expertise may rest in this authority with the county, but it is unusual and unhelpful to have multiple different authorities discharging different requirements in the same location. Just as a planning permission would have one discharging authority, albeit having regard to the views of multiple differing consultees, there is no reason for 3.1 Draft Development Consent Order [Revision E] to depart from that administrative norm. The Applicant does not propose to amend Requirement 5 of 3.1 Draft</p>

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<p>reference to 'safety checks' is listed in (c). Are they not the same thing? Clarify and amend as necessary.</p>	<p>The Applicant also proposes to insert a new definition of 'relevant county planning authority' as follows: "relevant county planning authority" means, in any given provision of this Order, the county planning authority (which has the meaning given in Part I (Planning Authorities) of the 1990 Act) for the area to which the provision relates or any successor exercising its functions as local planning authority for the purposes of that Part;</p> <p>This approach: (i) removes any ambiguity Norfolk County Council has identified, by making clear that in a two-tier area the district planning authority is the primary discharging body; (ii) retains a separate 'relevant county planning authority' definition, enabling requirements to specify county-level consultees expressly; and (iii) avoids complications for any other authorities within the Order Limits that are, or may become, unitary or metropolitan district authorities, for whom Norfolk County Council's proposed 'relevant district planning authority' definition would not be appropriate. Limb (b) of the Applicant's definition captures those single-authority scenarios without requiring an exhaustive schedule of which councils are unitary, which would be unusual and unwieldy on the face of the DCO.</p> <p>The general principle the Applicant would apply is that: (i) the 'relevant planning authority' (per the new two-limb definition) would be the primary discharging body throughout the Requirements; and (ii) 'relevant county planning authority' will be named expressly as a consultee where county-level expertise is relevant (e.g. archaeology, flood risk, construction surface water drainage), with Requirements amended to read 'following consultation with the relevant county planning authority'.</p> <p>Specific other consequential points identified at Table 4-A: Proposed substantive changes to articles and requirements of Norfolk County Council's LIR [REP1-173] relevant to the question of appropriate planning authority are addressed as follows:</p> <p>Article 5(4) (now 5(5)) (Limits of deviation): As per the new definition of relevant planning authority, i.e. the district planning authority in two-tier areas, the Secretary of State would consult the district planning authority and so the intention of the proposed amendment is met.</p> <p>Article 7(5) (Consent to transfer benefit of order): It would be unduly onerous and unusual for any notification of any transfer/grant of the benefit of the Order to extend to the relevant county planning authority as well as the district planning authority in two-tier areas, given that the relevant county planning authority in such circumstances is a consultee on approvals under the dDCO related to their function and not primary discharging authority.</p> <p>Article 23(4) and 23(11)(b) (Removal of human remains): As per the new definition of relevant planning authority, i.e. the district planning authority in two-tier areas, the copies of the notices/certificates would go to the district planning authority and so the intention of the proposed amendment is met.</p>	<p>approach is precedent. For instance, requirement 3 (project wide: archaeology and peat) of the Sizewell C (Nuclear Generating Station) Order 2022 (SI 2022/853) names SCC as the approving authority for archaeological matters.</p> <p><u>Requirement 4(1), (3) and (4) (construction management plan) of Schedule 3 (requirements):</u> Under paragraph (1), the relevant planning authority must consult the relevant highway authority before approving the construction traffic management plan. SCC considers the relevant highway authority should be responsible for approving that plan.</p> <p>Failing that, SCC considers the relevant highway authority should be consulted before any departure to that document is approved under paragraph (2) and, likewise, before any departure from the document is agreed under paragraph (3).</p> <p>Start up and slow down activities: SCC notes that the Applicant's response to this question is not dissimilar to that provided by SCC in its response to ExQ1 [REP3-086] (page 50). SCC therefore has no concerns with the Applicant's response.</p>	<p>Development Consent Order [Revision E] to be discharged by the county planning authority.</p> <p><u>Requirement 4(1), (3) and (4) (discharge of requirements) of Schedule 3:</u> It is unusual and unhelpful to have multiple different authorities discharging different requirements in the same location. Just as a planning permission would have one discharging authority, albeit having regard to the views of multiple differing consultees, there is no reason for 3.1 Draft Development Consent Order [Revision E] to depart from that administrative norm. Therefore, the Applicant does not propose to amend 3.1 Draft Development Consent Order [Revision E] to make this proposed change. However, the Applicant is content for the relevant highway authority to be consulted on any departure from the approved outline or final Construction Traffic Management Plan (as the case may be) under paragraphs (2) and (3) and has reflected this in 3.1 Draft Development Consent Order [Revision E].</p> <p><u>Start-up and close-down:</u> The Applicant notes the Council's position on start-up and close-down activities.</p>

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	<p>Article 48(3) (Defence to proceedings in respect of statutory nuisance): As per the new definition of relevant planning authority, i.e. the district planning authority in two-tier areas, the references to powers under the Control of Pollution Act 1974 would be allocated as per Norfolk County Council's proposed amendment.</p> <p>Article 55(1) (Procedure regarding certain approvals etc.): As per Applicant comments above, in a two-tier area the district planning authority is the primary discharging body and the relevant county planning authority a consultee where appropriate. The relevant application or request would thus not be sent to the relevant county planning authority and it need not be included.</p> <p>Paragraph 1 (Interpretation) of Schedule 3 (requirements): As per Applicant comments above, in a two-tier area the district planning authority is the primary discharging body and the relevant county planning authority a consultee where appropriate, so the intention of the various proposed amendments is achieved without needing to make them.</p> <p>Requirement 3 (Stages of authorised development) of Schedule 3 (requirements): References should remain to the relevant planning authority for the reasons set out above.</p> <p>Requirement 4(1), (3) and (4) (Construction Management Plans) of Schedule 3 (requirements): Whilst such references were appropriate in the made DCOs in which they have appeared, in this dDCO references within Requirements to any 'other discharging authority as may be appropriate' have been removed in favour of specifying the 'relevant planning authority' as discharging body to reduce scope for ambiguity. Reference should remain to the relevant planning authority for the reasons set out above.</p> <p>Requirement 5 (Archaeology) of Schedule 3 (requirements): References should remain to the relevant planning authority for the reasons set out above but scope has been included for consultation with the relevant county planning authority as well as, where relevant, Historic England.</p> <p>Requirements 8 to 13 of Schedule 3 (requirements): References should remain to the relevant planning authority for the reasons set out above.</p> <p>Turning to the definition of 'discharging authority', whilst such references were appropriate in the made DCOs in which they have appeared, in the 3.1 Draft Development Consent Order [Revision C] references within Requirements to any 'other discharging authority as may be appropriate' have been removed in favour of specifying the 'relevant planning authority' as discharging body to reduce scope for ambiguity in this case (per the new two-limb definition of 'relevant planning authority' above).</p> <p>The use of 'street authority' and 'highway authority' is to account for the distinct roles as defined under the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 and the Highways Act 1980.</p> <p>Start up and close down activities</p>		

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<p>DCO 1.S8 Schedule 3 – Requirement 5 (archaeology) 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. 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. 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. 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,</p>	<p>The safety checks referred to in paragraph (c) of the definition of 'start up and close down activities' relates to general site inspections and safety checks, whereas the safety checks referred to in paragraph (g) are associated with low key maintenance of plant and machinery. The Applicant proposes to retain the two items as drafted. The drafting has precedent in the National Grid (Bramford to Twinstead Reinforcement) Order 2024.</p> <p>The Applicant has prepared a discussion draft of Requirement 5 (Archaeology) as it would look if all of the proposed amendments of the host authorities and Historic England were accepted. This discussion draft is set out in tabular format, with the Applicant's comments on each proposed change set out alongside the proposed revisions.</p> <p>The Applicant is particularly concerned about the proposed restriction on 'intrusive site preparation works' and considers that this has real potential to significantly impact the delivery programme by restricting what would ordinarily be standard pre-commencement works until such a time as the relevant planning authority agrees an archaeological or geoarchaeological written scheme of investigation. Whilst such a restriction may be appropriate and proportionate for a single site project, the Applicant's position is that it would be wholly disproportionate for a project that spans a route of approximately 180 km and passes through 13 host authorities. The pre-commencement works have already been assessed in the Environmental Statement and the Applicant had proposed a suitable, and precedented, control by requiring all pre-commencement works to be carried out in accordance with the 7.5 Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and Outline Written Scheme of Investigation [APP-328] (OAMS and OWSI).</p> <p>Evaluation trial trenching has been agreed directly with the archaeological advisors to the host authorities. For the priority/first phase of work, this comprised an overarching WSI (which set out scope and methodology), supported by site specific WSIs (which contained the relevant archaeological background, site specific methodology and trench plans). For the Phase 2 element of the evaluation archaeological trial trenching, the Applicant is seeking to agree the details and the overarching scope will be contained in a future revision of 7.5 Outline AMS-OWSI and again supported by site specific WSIs. The approach to agreement for the Phase 2 element has been discussed and agreed with the stakeholders in regular meetings.</p> <p>The Applicant further explains its position in the table below and does not repeat that here.</p> <p>Commitment H04 in 7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [REP2-014], issued at Deadline 2 was updated to address the comments provided in Local Impact Reports and Historic England's Written Representation (updated text in red):</p>	<p>Essex County Council [REP4-328] Comments on additional submission accepted by the ExA from the Applicant regarding Archaeology - Document: 8.9.1 Applicant's Responses to First Written Questions (Additional Submission)</p> <p>Place Services is providing a response to document 8.9.1 Applicant's Responses to First Written Questions (Additional Submission) with regard to archaeology for Essex County Council (ECC) and on behalf of Colchester, Tendring, Chelmsford, Basildon, Brentwood and Thurrock planning authority areas.</p> <p>Currently Requirement 5 (Archaeology) states: <i>5 (4) All pre-commencement operations must be carried out in accordance with the outline archaeological mitigation strategy and outline written scheme of investigation, unless otherwise agreed with the relevant planning authority following consultation with the relevant county planning authority and, if relevant, Historic England.</i></p> <p>It was requested in the Local Impact Report (REP1-161) and at Deadline 2 that changes were made to the wording of 5 (4) to: <i>5 (4) Intrusive site preparation works must not take place until an archaeological or geoarchaeological written scheme(s) of investigation in accordance with the outline written scheme(s) of investigation as appropriate has been submitted to and approved by the discharging authority in consultation with Historic England. The archaeological or geoarchaeological written scheme(s) of investigation required under this sub-paragraph must be implemented as approved.</i></p> <p>The Applicant considers this wording "significantly and unacceptably limits the scope of pre commencement operations that can be carried out prior to commencement of the authorised development" however the outline archaeological mitigation strategy and outline written scheme of investigation (OAMS-OWSI) have not been approved and are not yet considered adequate as control documents.</p> <p>The OAMS-OWSI (APP-328) submitted with the application was not considered sufficient to ensure adequate evaluation and mitigation of heritage assets</p>	<p>Following the issue of its discussion draft of Requirement 5 at Deadline 3 (AS-090), the Applicant has updated Requirement 5 in 3.1 Draft Development Consent Order [Revision E] to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Provide for the approval of written scheme of investigation (WSI) for archaeological evaluation works; (b) Clarify for consistency with 7.5 Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and Outline Written Scheme of Investigation [Revision B] (OAMS-OWSI) that a preservation in situ management plan would, if relevant, form part of a detailed written scheme of investigation as opposed to being separate; (c) Provide that evaluation works must be carried out in accordance with the WSI referred to in (a) above; and (d) Set out the process for post-excavation assessment, approval of an archaeological updated project design, post-excavation analysis, publication and archiving. <p>The Applicant has retained its original wording regarding pre-commencement operations being carried out in accordance with the OAMS-OWSI because it remains concerned that a blanket prohibition on intrusive site preparation works would prevent anything being done on site that would, even to the smallest degree, break the surface of the ground. This could include de minimis activities such as the erection of a fence post. Whilst the Applicant recognises the need to ensure that buried archaeology is suitably preserved, its position is that in the context of a project of critical national</p>

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<p>requirement 5 of the draft DCO and to H04 of the outline CoCP). 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><i>'Where a previously unknown heritage asset has been discovered, or a known heritage asset has proven to be more significant than foreseen at the time of application, the Project will inform the LPA and Historic England and agree a solution that protects the significance of the new discovery, through preservation or excavation and recording, whichever is practicable within the Project construction requirements. The Main Works Contractor(s) will be responsible for making sure staff are aware of what to do in the event of an unexpected heritage asset. This will include toolbox talks within site inductions.'</i></p> <p>Please refer to the Applicant's response to question DCO 1.A28 in relation to any proposed amendments to Article 23 (removal of human remains).</p> <p><i>[Applicant's note: Appendix A. Supplement 1 – 1.S8 Draft Development Consent Order has not been replicated here due to length and format, see AS-090 for original]</i></p>	<p>following consent. A number of amendments were required and provided to the Applicant's archaeological advisors. A revised OAMS-OWSI has been discussed at regular meetings and is to be submitted before Deadline 5. At present there is no agreement or sight of the revised OAMS-OWSI, there is also no agreement as to the further scope of works in the overhead sections of the development and other areas of associated infrastructure. The agreement of an appropriate OAMS-OWSI within the determination period is critical to the undertaking of appropriate and timely archaeological and geoarchaeological mitigation post consent.</p> <p>Any pre-commencement works would therefore need to take place in accordance with an agreed OAMS-OWSI which included details of scope and identification of areas for the completion of all evaluation works. This document, at present, does not exist and therefore the Requirement refers to a control document that is not yet submitted into the DCO library nor has agreement with the local authority advisors or Historic England.</p> <p>The Bramford to Twinstead NSIP failed to reach agreement on the OWSI and this has led to significant delays in the timetable. Therefore it cannot be assumed that agreement on the projects OAMS-OWSI will be achieved before determination.</p> <p>A further requirement for post-excavation works and publication was requested in the Local Impact Report (REP1-161) and at Deadline 2. The suggested wording proposed is reproduced below:</p> <p><i>5 (5) Unless otherwise agreed with the local planning authority.</i></p> <p><i>(a) No later than one year following the completion of the fieldwork specified in each site-specific written scheme of investigation, a site-specific post excavation assessment (PXA) for that site must be completed in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation and submitted to the local planning authority for approval.</i></p> <p><i>(b) No later than one year following the approval of the final site-specific post excavation assessment, an archaeological updated project design for all applicable sites, must be submitted to the local planning authority for approval. The archaeological updated project design must be produced in general accordance with the detailed Written Scheme of Investigation for each stage, include details of the scope of post-excavation analysis and publication and have regard to the site-specific research agendas set out in the site-specific written schemes of investigation.</i></p> <p><i>(c) Post-excavation analysis and publication must be carried out in accordance with the approved archaeological updated project design and provision</i></p>	<p>priority, a blanket prohibition is disproportionate and unnecessary. The Applicant considers that the measures set out in the updated OAMS-OWSI, together with its identification of priority areas and the extensive trial trenching that it has already carried out to date, would ensure the adequate protection of buried archaeology during pre-commencement works.</p> <p>7.5 Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and Outline Written Scheme of Investigation [Revision B] has been updated following two rounds of consultation with Historic England and the archaeological advisors to the Local Planning Authorities since submission of the document to the Planning Inspectorate with the DCO Application for the Project. The Applicant considers that this document provides suitable processes, measures and controls to ensure the appropriate completion of evaluation and undertaking of mitigation for the Project, in line with the Applicant's responsibilities in NPS EN-1.</p>

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		<p><i>made for the full archive to be submitted to the appropriate museum.</i></p> <p>The Applicant's position is that the inclusion of paragraph (6)(a) of the discussion draft, together with paragraph (7), would be the clearest approach to adopt.</p> <p><i>6(c) Post-excavation analysis and publication must be carried out in accordance with the approved archaeological updated project design and provision made for the full archive to be submitted to the appropriate museum.</i></p> <p><i>(7) No later than two years after the completion of the construction phase of work, an Updated Project Design must be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The Updated Project Design must be in general accordance with the approved Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and Outline Written Scheme of Investigation, and relevant Detailed Written Schemes of Investigation, and set out scope for full post excavation analysis, publication, and address the site-specific research agendas. Post-excavation analysis and publication must be carried out in accordance with the approved Updated Project Design.</i></p> <p>ECC consider this position would be acceptable.</p>	
<p>DCO 1.S19 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</p>	<p>A) The Applicant notes the government's response to the Nuclear Regulatory Review 2025, published on 13 March 2026³¹, including the clear policy intent to accelerate the delivery of low-carbon energy and electricity network infrastructure through more effective post-consent processes.</p> <p>In particular, the Applicant recognises the government's intention, as set out in its response to Recommendation 30, to establish a new unit within the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) to coordinate post-consent discharge functions for nuclear power and electricity network projects. The Applicant</p>	<p>Suffolk County Council [REP4-335]</p> <p>Please see SCCAS comments on Appendix A. Supplement 1 – 1.S8 Draft Development Consent Order (Table 10 below).</p> <p>Table 10: 8.9.1 (A) Applicant's Response to First Written Questions – Appendix A (Answer to DCO 1.S8) [AS-090]</p> <p>The table includes Suffolk County Council's response to the written question DCO 1.S8. It provides a number of service areas and/or topics, referenced paragraph or item, and Suffolk County Council's comments. The service area/topics include timing and conditions of archaeological evaluation works, preservation in situ management plans, written schemes of investigations, site-specific post excavation assessments, project designs, and archaeological archive.</p> <p>Suffolk County Council [REP4-335]</p> <p>At this stage of the Examination, SCC considers the matter of the DESNZ unit being considered a discharging authority should be deferred. SCC expects 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</p>	<p>The Applicant responds to these points in Appendix B of this document.</p> <p>The Applicant confirms that the proposal for the DESNZ unit involvement in the discharge of requirements was discussed with the host local authorities, including Suffolk County Council, at a meeting held on 21 May 2026. Following those discussions, the Applicant has submitted its proposed drafting at Deadline 5, in Appendix A of 8.4.12 Applicant's Comments on Post-Hearing</p>

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<p>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> <p>a) Provide comments on the above publication in respect of post-consent discharge functions.</p> <p>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?</p>	<p>understands that this proposal is aimed at improving efficiency, consistency and timeliness in the discharge of requirements for nationally significant energy infrastructure.</p> <p>The Applicant is supportive of the overarching objectives of this approach and is keen to understand further details as they emerge from DESNZ as this proposal develops, including to understand how such a unit might operate in practice, the scope of requirements it may discharge, and how it would interface with Local Planning Authorities and other statutory bodies.</p> <p>The Applicant also considers it important to understand the views of local authorities/discharging authorities on this emerging approach and feels there is time remaining in the Examination period for those views to be considered. The Applicant intends to discuss the recommendations of the review recently published with the local authorities as it seeks to maintain effective working relationships at the local level.</p> <p>B) The Applicant considers that the current drafting of Schedule 4 of the 3.1 Draft Development Consent Order [Revision C] represents an appropriate and proportionate mechanism for the post-consent discharge of requirements at this stage of the Project based on the current approach adopted by other NSIPs.</p> <p>The proposed approach reflects established practice across Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project regimes and aligns with the engagement undertaken with host Local Planning Authorities to date whose expectation that discharge of DCO requirements will primarily fall to them given the largely local issue they address.</p> <p>The Applicant recognises that alternative approaches to post-consent discharge have been adopted in other made Development Consent Orders, including Schedule 2, Part 2 of The A122 (Lower Thames Crossing) Development Consent Order 2025, and accepts that this represents a potential model for schemes where a centralised discharge function is established.</p> <p>Given the evolving nature of the government's proposals, the Applicant remains open to further consideration of this issue as the Examination progresses, government's approach develops and through engagement with the local authorities. Should it become appropriate and beneficial to do so, the Applicant may wish to explore the submission of alternative drafting options, including the potential for two versions of Schedule 4 of the Development Consent Order to be considered.</p> <p>Any such approach would need to ensure continuity of engagement, protect programme delivery, and provide clarity and certainty for all parties involved.</p>	<p>expressed by 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>Submissions and Interested Party Action Points.</p> <p>The Applicant considers it appropriate to introduce the proposal at this stage in advance of the Issue Specific Hearing 3 (ISH3) in order to provide the Examining Authority, local authorities and other interested parties with an opportunity to consider the proposal and make representations on it during the remainder of the Examination.</p> <p>The Applicant confirms that it is not currently proposing the submission of alternative versions of Schedule 4 to 3.1 Draft Development Consent Order [Revision E] for consideration during the Examination.</p>
<p>HE 1.10 Limits of deviation Numerous councils in their Local Impact Reports (LIRs) raise concerns over the LoD and the effect that any subsequent</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The assessment presented within Section 11.7 of 6.11 Environmental Statement Chapter 11 - Historic Environment [AS-068], 6.11.A2 Environmental Statement Appendix 11.2 Historic Environment Assessment Tables [AS-070] and 6.11.A7 Environmental Statement Appendix 11.7 - Assessment of Harm to Designated Heritage Assets 	<p>Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council [REP4-320] Response to part f) (p.243)</p> <p>The applicant says: 'Where circumstances may lead to a longitudinal or lateral change in position, the Project has a robust internal governance and assurance process to ensure compliance with the DCO, to ensure the change</p>	<p>Part E - Historic environment: The Grade I Langleys House (1305533) and Grade II Wyfields Farmhouse (1337057), have been identified in Commitment GG34 of document 7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision E]. For</p>

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<p>movement in proposed pylons may have on the significance of nearby heritage assets. The contents of Commitment GG34 in the outline CoCP is noted in this respect [APP-300] but this appears primarily to address archaeological and other concerns (with the odd exception). Set out:</p> <p>a) Whether changes to the LoD were considered in the overall heritage harm assessment.</p> <p>b) In relation to those heritage assets that, through your assessments in [APP-215], would be subject to a mid-less than substantial level of harm during both construction and operation, explain the options available to you to reduce the vertical and horizontal LoD in the vicinity of those assets. If you consider there to be none, provide evidence of the constraints to support this position.</p> <p>c) The potential changes in levels of harm that could occur to heritage assets along the route were pylons and OHLs to be sited closer, and/or be taller.</p> <p>d) Any subsequent changes in the level of heritage harm which may occur as a result of such movement.</p> <p>e) Whether GG34 should and will be expanded in the light of the above.</p> <p>f) Whether more certainty should and can be given to the location of pylons in the vicinity of heritage assets.</p>	<p>[APP-215] has been undertaken on the design shown on 6.4.F1 Environmental Statement Figure 4.1 - Proposed Project Design [APP-133] and 6.4.F2 Environmental Statement Figure 4.2 - Proposed Project Design - Permanent Features [APP-134]. 'Sensitivity testing' has been undertaken to determine if changes to the design within the Limits of Deviation (LoD) would affect the assessment, as set out in Section 11.9 of 6.11 Environmental Statement Chapter 11 - Historic Environment [AS-068]. Theoretically, alternative locations could change the assessment for the historic environment in relation to physical impacts and impacts through change to setting that affect the value of a heritage asset. While alternative locations within the LoD have been considered, the Environmental Statement (ES) assessment comprehensively accounts for the reasonable worst-case physical and setting impacts on heritage assets. Therefore, no significant effects beyond those reported in the ES residual effects section are anticipated due to alternative pylon locations or adjustments within the LoD. The Study Areas for Historic Environment are set from the Order Limits and therefore the baseline accounts for the LoD. The LoD was reviewed and in particularly sensitive locations for heritage assets specific commitments are set out in 7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [REP2-014] to restrict the longitudinal LoD. The assessment in 6.11 Environmental Statement Chapter 11 - Historic Environment [AS-068] and its appendices has considered the reasonable worst case potential effects of locating pylons or conductors anywhere within the LoD and has considered the potential effects of a vertical increase in height of up to 6 m from the pylon design heights presented within 2.3 Works Plans [APP-017 – APP-024].</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Project has been through extensive design iterations to remove or reduce effects on heritage assets. However, given the density of designated heritage assets within this region it has not been possible to avoid impacts to all designated heritage assets. The response to part a) sets out the steps taken to consider whether change within the LoD would alter the conclusions of the historic environment assessment. As the assessment considered the reasonable worst-case scenario and has concluded either less than substantial harm or no harm to designated heritage assets following sensitivity testing regarding the LoD, there is no requirement to further reduce the LoD. Therefore, options have already been considered, and where relevant taken, to reduce the LoD to the required level. Relevant national planning policy requires the Project to give considerable importance and weight to the desirability of preserving heritage assets and any harm or loss of significance of a designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification. The policy also states that substantial harm or loss of significance to designated heritage assets should be exceptional (in the case of Grade II Listed 	<p>does not give rise to any materially new or materially different environmental effects, and to secure mitigation where relevant.'</p> <p>We would request further details of the internal governance and assurance process and if/how changes in pylon position within the LoD will be communicated to the relevant local authorities.</p> <p>Response to part e) (p.243)</p> <p>Whilst we understand the assessment is meant to cover the worst case scenario, we remain concerned that GG34 only provides commitments with regards to two listed buildings along the whole route of the project. We would request further details as to why the two assets included in GG34 were selected when none of the twelve listed buildings in Section B which have been assessed to experience a Mid level of less than substantial harm to their significance arising from the operational phase have been included in GG34.</p>	<p>Langleys House this is because pylons TB136 and TB137 are located either side of a designed, sensitive view from the rear of Langleys House to the east-north-east and so have been restricted from movement within the LoD to keep their impact on the view to the minimum. With regard to Wyfields Farmhouse, pylon TB245 is 200 m west of the asset and moving it northwards would be beneficial and potentially slightly reduce the impact of the Project on the asset. Further details regarding commitment GG34 in relation to Wyfields Farmhouse are provided in response to ExQ2 HE 2.6 (submitted at Deadline 5 in 8.9.2 Applicant's Responses to Second Written Questions [Revision A]).</p> <p>Regarding the 12 listed buildings in Section B noted by the Respondent, the Applicant has provided a response to this for ExQ2 HE 2.7 in 8.9.2 Applicant's Responses to Second Written Questions [Revision A].</p> <p>Part F- The Applicant confirms that a structured and robust internal Assessment of Change process is embedded within the Project's governance framework and applies to all proposed movements of infrastructure, including pylons within the Limits of Deviation (LoD).</p> <p>Any proposed movement by the Main Works Contractor is subject to a formal review against the full control framework secured by the DCO. This includes consideration of compliance with the Order Limits, the LoD, the parameters assessed within the Environmental Statement, and all relevant secured mitigation and requirements. The process ensures that any movement remains within the scope of the authorised development and does not give rise to materially new or materially different environmental effects. All such assessments produced by the Main Works Contractor are reviewed by the Applicant, and changes are only permitted where they are demonstrably</p>

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	<p>Buildings) or wholly exceptional (in the case of assets of the highest significance). (NPS EN-1 paragraphs 5.9.29 – 5.9.32). The assessment demonstrates the Project would not result in substantial harm. Having applied the mitigation hierarchy, the Application is satisfied there is no requirement to further reduce the LoD.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please see the response to part a) above. • Please see the response to part a) above. • The Applicant reviewed the submitted design prior to submission of the DCO application in order to determine the locations in which restriction of the LoD was considered necessary to avoid an increase in impacts to heritage assets. No changes to the design have been proposed that change the prior conclusions of this review, or the locations identified in GG34. • Please see the response to part b) above. The Applicant must deliver the scheme in line with stringent technical design requirements including Regulatory and Other Constraints (Such as Operational, Safety and Security Requirements); please see 7.15 Design and Access Statement [REP2-020] paras 5.3.50 to 5.3.58 for further information. Combined, these Regulatory and Other Constraints ensure the design meets certain standards and provide adequate controls across the LoD. Where circumstances may lead to a longitudinal or lateral change in position, the Project has a robust internal governance and assurance process to ensure compliance with the DCO, to ensure the change does not give rise to any materially new or materially different environmental effects, and to secure mitigation where relevant. 		<p>within the parameters of what has been assessed and consented.</p> <p>The Applicant notes, however, that the DCO operates as a permissive consent. It authorises development within defined limits and subject to specified controls, and does not impose a general requirement on the undertaker to seek approval for, or demonstrate compliance with, every instance of detailed design development where this falls within those authorised parameters. There is therefore no requirement under the DCO to report or obtain agreement from the relevant planning authorities in respect of movements that remain within the LoD and the assessed environmental envelope.</p> <p>Accordingly, movements of this nature being inherent to the progression of detailed design are managed through the Applicant's internal governance and assurance processes rather than through routine notification to local planning authorities. The DCO already defines where external approvals are required, for example through Requirements, and those mechanisms provide the appropriate points of control and engagement.</p> <p>This approach reflects the established function of the LoD and the Rochdale Envelope within the DCO regime to allow flexibility within assessed and secured parameters, without requiring further approval where that flexibility is lawfully exercised.</p>
<p>HE 1.34 Highfields Farmhouse and Coney Byes, West Bergholt The ExA noted these Grade II listed heritage assets on its visits. Both assets would appear to have reasonably clear views to their south and west respectively over a reasonably steep sided valley in which the pylons are proposed to be sited. Your assessment of harm to these assets consider that both</p>	<p>The setting of Highfields Farmhouse (1225094) is informed by the asset's location within its associated farmyard and attractive garden which is defined by mature hedges with occasional trees. The setting is also informed by the asset's relationships with its associated non-designated outbuildings, some of which are recorded on the first edition OS map of 1880, and with the grade II listed King's Farmhouse (1266530) located c. 140 m to the south. The setting is further informed by the surrounding agricultural land with which the asset and associated buildings have a historic relationship and possibly an ongoing functional relationship. The operation (and maintenance) phase of the Project would result in pylons TB39 and TB40 entering the setting of the asset on the opposing, eastern bank of a shallow north/south aligned valley that separates the asset and the</p>	<p>Joanne Lesley Elliot [REP4-403] <u>Applicants Response to First written Questions HE 1.34 (Page 319) Highfields Farm and Coney Byes, West Bergholt.</u> I apologise for the detail, but it is necessary to illustrate how inadequate National Grid's assessment has been, as owners of Highfield Farmhouse for over 21 years, we have a very detailed knowledge of the asset and it's setting. These comments specifically relate to the references to Highfield Farmhouse but the impact on the neighbouring listed assets, Coney Byes and Kings Hall (referred to as Kings Farmhouse) are similarly understated.</p>	<p>The Project will introduce new overhead line infrastructure into the local landscape, which may result in change to existing views. The Applicant recognises that this represents a perceptible alteration to visual amenity for receptors in the area. The significance of this change has been assessed in accordance with the methodology set out in the 6.11.A2 Environmental Statement Appendix 11.2 [AS-070]. The Applicant acknowledges that the proposed development will alter the existing view. This change has been robustly assessed,</p>

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<p>will have a lower less than substantial harm caused to their significance from the proposed development. Provide further justification for this assessment.</p>	<p>Project. Mature tree cover in the intervening landscape would provide some partial screening, however, a moderate proportion of the pylons would be visible for the asset with pylon TB39 lying c. 250 m and pylon TB40 located c. 310 m to the south-east. Pylon TB40 would be visible from the southern access driveway when departing the asset and the pylons would also likely be visible in the background of the view of the asset from the northern access driveway. The Project would not, however, impinge on the view of asset from the unnamed road to the south-west, nor would it interrupt street-level views from the same road to the south-east due to screening by mature tree cover in the intervening landscape. The Project would have no impact on the relationship between the asset and its garden, and its non-designated outbuildings, nor the relationship with King's Farmhouse to the south. The Project would not impact the understanding of the asset and its outbuildings as a post medieval farmstead nor would it detract from the cohesion of the farmstead. The Project, therefore, amounts to a minor change to the wider rural setting of the asset only and so the Applicant is confident in the assessment of the asset presented in 6.11.A2 Environmental Statement Appendix 11.2 - Historic Environment Assessment Tables [AS-070], 6.11.A7 Environmental Statement Appendix 11.7 - Assessment of Harm to Designated Heritage Assets [APP-215] and 6.11 Environmental Statement Chapter 11 - Historic Environment [AS-068].</p> <p>The setting of Coney Byes (1225071) is informed by the asset's location within its possibly former farmyard location and a wider grassed grounds. There are also grassed lawns to the west and south and there is mature tree cover to the south, west and north. The setting is further informed by the asset's relationships with its non-designated outbuildings, some of which are recorded on the first edition OS map of 1880 and with the characterful modern residential property to the east. The surrounding rural/agricultural landscape, with which the asset and its outbuilding have historical and possibly ongoing functional relationships, also positively contributes to the setting of the asset. The operation (and maintenance) phase of the Project would result in pylon TB40 entering the setting of the asset within its wider rural/agricultural element c. 340 m to the north-west. The pylon would be partially screened by the mature tree cover of the asset's grounds and by a small copse and hedged and tree lined field boundaries in the intervening landscape. A moderate proportion of the pylon would, however, be occasionally visible at ground level from the asset. The Project would interrupt a long distance (c. 860 m) view of the asset from an unnamed road across the shallow valley to the west, but the asset is not visible from the roads to the east. The Project would have no impact on the relationship between the asset and its grounds, and its non-designated outbuildings, nor</p>	<p>The Applicant states that "The operation (and maintenance) phase of the Project would result in pylons TB39 and TB40 entering the setting of the asset on the opposing eastern bank of a shallow north/south aligned valley that separates the asset and the project.", "A moderate proportion of the pylons would be visible for the asset" , "Pylon TB40 would be visible from the southern access driveway when departing the asset and the pylons would also likely be visible in the background of the view of the asset from the northern access driveway."</p> <p>ALL pylons from the Sealing End Compound (TB 35 & TB 36) to TB43 & possibly TB44 are visible from the asset and garden, not just the driveway. Pylons would be the dominating feature of the view from every single room. At one of the consultation events, we were shown visualisations from Highfield Farm and it is clear that all the pylons mentioned above would be visible. The images which follow are screen shots so are not particularly clear, the pylons are even more imposing on a clear computer screen.</p> <p>This image shows TB 34/35 (sealing end compound) and TB37 and TB38. It does not include the two pylons closest to the house, TB 39 and TB40.</p> <p><i>[Applicant's note: figure presenting visualisations not replicated here, see REP4-403 for original]</i></p> <p>The views from the South elevation are far reaching across the very attractive valley, there is no screening at all and every pylon across the valley to Fordham will be visible. Pylons TB40 all the way to TB44, and possibly further, will be clearly visible.</p> <p>The image below shows TB41 onwards - these are considered by the Applicant to have no impact but they clearly do have a very adverse impact.</p> <p><i>[Applicant's note: figure presenting visualisations not replicated here, see REP4-403 for original]</i></p> <p>The Applicants own Document 6.13.F14 Environmental Statement Figure 13.14 – ZTV of Great Horkesley (Tilbury side) CSE Compound shows the full structure of the Sealing End Compound gantries will be visible from Highfield Farm (and the neighbouring listed properties). The gantries are significantly smaller than the subsequent pylons. Pylon TB40 sits on a hill and as an angled pylon is likely to be even larger and more imposing than the neighbouring pylons, we would like the Applicant to set out the dimensions of this pylon and assess where it will be visible from as it is in a very prominent position.</p> <p>National Grid also states that "Mature tree cover in the intervening landscape would provide some partial</p>	<p>and mitigation has been incorporated where feasible. The resulting effects are considered acceptable when weighed against the nation's need and compliance with NPS EN-1 and EN-5.</p> <p>Historic environment: The Applicant is satisfied that the assessment of Highfields Farm as presented in 6.11.A2 Environmental Statement Appendix 11.2 - Historic Environment Assessment Tables [AS-070], 6.11.A7 Environmental Statement Appendix 11.7 - Assessment of Harm to Designated Heritage Assets [APP-215] and 6.11 Environmental Statement Chapter 11 - Historic Environment [AS-068], and discussed further in the Applicant's response to HE 1.34 (8.9.1 Applicant's Responses to First Written Questions [REP3-074]) is proportionate and appropriate.</p> <p>It should be noted that intervisibility alone does not mean the setting of the heritage asset extends to include visible elements of the Project. The setting of a heritage asset is not defined solely by whether it is visible from or has visibility to a development but rather a combination of factors. In line with established heritage guidance¹, the Applicant has considered all relevant factors and has concluded that the current assessment of the asset is proportionate and appropriate.</p>

¹ Historic England (2017) The Setting of Heritage Assets Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition))

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	<p>with the residential property to the east. The Project would not impact the understanding of the asset and its outbuildings as a post medieval farmstead, nor would it detract from the cohesion of the farmstead. The Project, therefore, amounts to a minor change to the wider rural setting of the asset only, and so the Applicant is confident in the assessment of the asset presented in 6.11.A2 Environmental Statement Appendix 11.2 - Historic Environment Assessment Tables [AS-070], 6.11.A7 Environmental Statement Appendix 11.7 - Assessment of Harm to Designated Heritage Assets [APP-215] and 6.11 Environmental Statement Chapter 11 - Historic Environment [AS-068].</p>	<p>screening, however a moderate proportion of the pylons [TB 39 & TB40] would be visible.....”</p> <p>Clearly, more pylons than these two would be visible. As they are positioned on land higher than the trees, any screening would be less than “moderate”, the trees are deciduous so the pylons would be fully visible from bottom to top in winter. Furthermore, some of the trees mentioned are bat willows which are due to be harvested (with saplings replanted) within the next five years and National Grid have also stated that they intend to remove a significant number of the other “screening” trees in order to bury an existing small overhead electricity line on our land.</p> <p>National Grid also state “The project would not, however, impinge on the view of the asset from the unnamed road (it is Fordham Road) to the south west, nor would it interrupt street-level views from the same road to the south-east due to the screening by mature tree cover in the intervening landscape.”</p> <p>The comments above about the trees also apply here.</p> <p>In Document 7.12 – Visualisations – Part 5 (copied below) show how the pylons will materially and adversely change the setting of Highfield Farmhouse and how they will dominate the setting. Highfield Farmhouse and its outbuildings are circled in red.</p> <p><i>[Applicant's note: figures presenting visualisations not replicated here, see REP4-403 for original]</i></p> <p>National Grid also stated “The project would have no impact on the relationship between the asset and its garden”. This is also not true. The farmhouse sits at the top of a hill and is rarely without some wind. We have created a landscaped garden next to the pond at the bottom of the hill close to the entrance with a summerhouse and seating/dining area. It is frequently used in summer. TB39 sits just behind it and the wires will feel as if they are almost overhead. They will also interfere with the flightpath of the wildfowl and resident Heron on the pond. National Grid have repeatedly been told about this and their agents have visited.</p> <p><i>[Applicant's note: figure presenting visualisations not replicated here, see REP4-403 for original]</i></p> <p>We therefore wholeheartedly disagree with the conclusion set out by the applicant that “The Project, therefore, amounts to a minor change to the wider rural setting of the asset only...”</p> <p>The Project is a material adverse change to the immediate setting of the asset. Furthermore, it is a major adverse change to the wider setting of the valley which runs along a tributary to the Colne Valley and to the Colne Valley itself.</p>	

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		<p>Very specific questions about noise and flooding risk which will affect the property, its garden and access have also been. The response provided to the Flooding Risk appears to be generic rather than specific. The noise concerns given the unique topography of the setting have not been addressed at all.</p> <p>Mark Passmore [REP4-408]</p> <p>I refer to National Grid's ("NG") response to the Inspector's questions following their submission of an application to construct pylons from Norwich to Tilbury. In particular I refer to NG's comments in respect of two listed properties (to which it refers as "assets") in the Colne Valley in paragraph reference HE 1.34.</p> <p>NG state that the Project amounts to a minor change to the wider rural setting and has selected several criteria to justify their contention that the Project would have minor impact or none on the rural setting and its inhabitants. Nothing could be further from the truth. The viewfall diagrams that NG produced showing the impact of the pylons were misleading because they depicted much smaller pylons than those proposed in the Colne Valley. Even so, the illustrations demonstrated clearly that the pylons would have a major impact.</p> <p>NG's statements are selective and misleading and, in significant part, simply false. The information provided omits significant parts of the data available and they fail to mention some of the pylons that are very close. Specifically they make no mention of either pylon TB41 or TB42 both of which would have a very significant impact on the settings of both properties to which NG refers in their statements in HE 1.34.</p> <p>The pylons as proposed will totally dominate the valley. Their size is such that they will be three times as high as any trees in the locality and the skies will be filled with cables.</p> <p>Concerning [redacted], NG state that the project would "result in pylon TB40 entering the setting of the asset within its wider rural/agricultural element c. 340 m to the North west. The pylon would be partially screened by the mature tree cover of the asset's grounds and by a small copse and hedged and tree lined boundaries in the intervening landscape. A moderate proportion of the pylon would, however, be occasionally visible from at ground level from the asset" This statement from NG overstates the distance of the property from the pylon and dramatically understates the real consequence of this project; it suggests that it was written without ever visiting the property to consider the real impact. The size of the</p>	<p>The Applicant is satisfied that the assessment of Coney Byes as presented in 6.11.A2 Environmental Statement Appendix 11.2 - Historic Environment Assessment Tables [AS-070], 6.11.A7 Environmental Statement Appendix 11.7 - Assessment of Harm to Designated Heritage Assets [APP-215] and 6.11 Environmental Statement Chapter 11 - Historic Environment [AS-068], and discussed further in the Applicant's response to HE 1.34 (8.9.1 Applicant's Responses to First Written Questions [REP3-074]) is proportionate and appropriate.</p> <p>It should be noted that intervisibility alone does not mean the setting of the heritage asset extends to include visible elements of the Project and for this reason pylon TB41 at c.510 m from the asset and TB42 at c.840 m from the asset were considered to lie outside the extent of the asset's setting. The setting of a heritage asset is not defined solely by whether it is visible from or has visibility to a development but rather a combination of factors. In line with established heritage guidance², the Applicant has considered all relevant factors and has concluded that the current assessment of the asset is proportionate and appropriate.</p> <p>Upon further investigation, the unnamed road is Fordham Road. The long-distance view of the asset from Fordham Road is interrupted by the Project but this is not solely used to define the conclusions of the assessment.</p> <p>The view from the east is relevant as it had the potential to include the Project in the backdrop of the view and this is why it was considered to inform assessment in accordance with professional guidance identified in 6.11.A1 Environmental</p>

² Historic England (2017) The Setting of Heritage Assets Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition)

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		<p>pylons is such that almost the whole structure would be visible at all times, in addition to the overhead cables. As noted earlier NG make no reference to other pylons that will have a major impact on the setting of the listed [redacted], in particular pylons TB41 and TB42. The proposed position of TB41 is directly in front of [redacted] across the valley in an arable field with an uninterrupted view. There is no screening. Pylon TB42 is slightly to the left of the view from [redacted] across the open valley, again in an open arable field. The suggestion that the project would interrupt a long distance (860 m) view of the asset from an unnamed road seeks to suggest a minor impact. This is nonsense and intended to mislead; there is no unnamed road in the vicinity. This last comment from NG does refer to the valley being shallow; needless to say this adds weight to the fact that the project in this area would be so obtrusive.</p> <p>NG comment that the asset ([redacted]) is not visible from the east; this is entirely irrelevant (and again intended to mislead) because the pylons as proposed will be constructed to the west of the property.</p> <p>NG state that the project would have no impact on the relationship between the assets and its grounds, and its non-designated buildings nor with its neighbour to the east. NG further state that "the Project would not impact on the understanding of the asset and its outbuildings as a post medieval farmstead. The Project therefore amounts to a minor change to the wider rural setting of the asset only." These comments by NG merely confirm that the pylons will not be constructed within those properties, as a justification to conclude that the effect of the pylons will be minor. Consistent with their intent to mislead, they seek to ignore the effect of the pylons on the general environment which would significantly and detrimentally impact the quality of life in those properties. There is no question that this project, as proposed, would entirely overwhelm the rural and historic setting of the Colne Valley, the quality of which is on a par with registered Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It would unnecessarily destroy another valuable resource for future generations.</p> <p>To suggest that pylons "disappear into the distance" and that the effects are minor clearly cannot apply to properties that are in close proximity to pylons that are 50 metres (164 feet) high.</p> <p>An offshore grid, preferably, or underground cables would be much better options than pylons and it is to be hoped that the Planning Inspectorate will ensure that NG changes its plans.</p>	<p>Statement Appendix 11.1 - Historic Environment Baseline Report [APP-209] and 6.11 Environmental Statement Chapter 11 - Historic Environment [AS-068].</p>

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		<p>Penelope Ann Richards [REP4-414] Dear Sir/Madam, I am writing to comment on the response from National Grid to the Inspector's questions, and in particular in respect of point HE 1.34. This refers specifically to two properties in the Colne Valley. A glance at the map showing pylons TB40, TB41 and TB42 will demonstrate that National Grid's comments are entirely false. Their suggestion that "a moderate proportion of the pylon would, however, be occasionally visible at ground level from the asset" is clearly untrue. [redacted] sits on a ridge and faces west across the Colne Valley. The pylons wires, as proposed, will run parallel to the house and will obscure the views both from and to the house from the valley and from Fossetts Lane. The corner pylon TB40 is directly beside our paddock and separated only by a hedge. The distance to the house as the crow flies is more likely to be 200/250 yards. The proximity of the wires and noise vibration will render the space between a health hazard most likely including the house itself. The pylons are at least three times the height of trees in the locality. There is an insignificant area of woodland in the bottom of the valley between pylons TB40 and TB41 but this would not significantly screen the pylons. Much of this woodland is likely to be shortlived futuristically. National Grid appear to have approached [redacted] from the East, mentioning the barns, so one can only conclude that they did not consider the view from the house to the west. An Air bnb business is run from the barns and the entirety of the space around the property is the attraction for guests, especially the views across the Colne Valley as noted in comments from happy guests. Due to the proximity of the pylons we have been advised that the value for the property would be reduced by half and the paddock unsaleable. The Air bnb business will be destroyed. National Grid's project is not in the public interest. It is in the interests of those having the most to do for the longest possible time and at the greatest profit for their investors and directors. They continue to misinform as that is the most lucrative approach.</p>	<p>The ES refers to the study that was commissioned by Scottish Renewables³ to consider the effects on property values arising from the operation of the Beauldy-Denny overhead line in paragraphs 15.3.7-12 of Document 6.15 Environmental Statement Chapter 15 - Socio-economics Recreation and Tourism [APP-265]. Those paragraphs of the ES confirm that the conclusion of that study was that the Beauldy-Denny overhead line, a 130-mile-long electricity transmission line that became fully operational in 2015, with properties located very close to the overhead line, where visual impacts could not be mitigated by screening and where there was an audible hum and/or a perceived health risk, had limited effects on properties offered for sale. The study also concluded that those limited effects were not an issue for all purchasers, such that the actual effect was a matter of individual perception. The study looked at house prices along the route of the overhead line and compared them to house prices in both the local regions and in Scotland between 2004 and 2022. This enabled consideration of effects during the construction phase and during the first seven years of operation. It also detailed discussions with local estate agents along the line of the route to understand their views. The study demonstrated that while there had been a 14% reduction in the volume of house sales in the area of the overhead line route, compared to Scotland (where there was a 4% increase), house price growth in the area was greater since 2015 (41%) when compared to the rest of Scotland (30%). The study also concluded that once the overhead line had been constructed, and could be seen by potential house purchasers, effects fell away to be replaced by more usual considerations for house purchasers, such as interest rates, cost of living and supply.</p>

³ BiGGAR Economics (2024) House Prices: Impact of Beauldy-Denny Grid Infrastructure

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			<p>The overall conclusion of the study was that there was no discernible effect because of the operation of the Beaulieu-Denny overhead line. The Applicant's standard procedure involves collaborating directly with individual landowners, farmers and their agents, aiming to accommodate normal activities during the construction phase wherever practicable. This approach is supported by ongoing engagement to agree holding-specific mitigation measures. The Applicant's Land Agents, Fisher German, are actively meeting with all affected landowners and their appointed representatives to discuss and agree upon such matters. Any losses resulting from disturbance or temporary possession will be addressed in line with the statutory compensation code, ensuring affected parties are appropriately compensated for impacts experienced.</p> <p>Tourism demand is influenced by many factors, not just pylons; and visual impact does not automatically equal business collapse. There is significant evidence that many areas with transmission infrastructure continue to attract visitors. Losses are often speculative unless backed by occupancy data, booking trends, expert valuation evidence or market analysis. Compensation mechanisms may exist where direct losses can be proven. There is also evidence that fears before construction can be stronger than the long-term measurable effects afterward as evidenced in the Beaulieu-Denny line in Scotland.</p> <p>An assessment of construction noise and vibration is presented in ES Chapter 14 Noise and Vibration [APP-256] and includes consideration of this property. Adverse effects from construction noise are expected at this location. However, the effects are not expected to be significant, even without mitigation. Construction vibration is expected to be negligible and not significant, even without mitigation.</p>

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<p>HE 1.43</p> <p>Amount of archaeological survey information available</p> <p>A number of local authorities in their LIRs, for example Braintree DC [REP1-148], Colchester City Council in [REP1-156], and Suffolk CC, Mid Suffolk DC and Babergh DC in [REP1-178] and Historic England in its WR [REP1-191] have raised concerns about the amount of archaeological survey work and evaluation that has been undertaken so far, including outside of the 'priority areas', and consider there to be a significant shortfall. The ExA notes the flow diagram of the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) process that is set out in the outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy (AMS) and outline WSI [APP-328] and also that, as stated in the applicant's Comments on RRs [REP1-132] the phase 2 stage of the geophysical survey and trial trenching will continue in 2026. Having regard to paragraphs 5.9.11 and 5.9.12 of NPS EN-1 (2023) the applicant is requested to justify its approach to the incomplete provision of archaeological evaluation at this stage.</p> <p>As indicated in the updated ES Chapter 11 [AS-068] it would</p>	<p>The Applicant considers that it has provided proportionate and suitable archaeological evaluation for the Project, in accordance with paragraphs 5.9.11 and 5.9.12 of NPS EN-1. The fieldwork undertaken to date comprises a more comprehensive approach to evaluation than many other Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects have completed and has been considered sufficient to determine consent by the Planning Inspectorate and the Secretary of State. Historic Environment walkover surveys have been undertaken across 97% of the Order Limits. Geophysical survey has been undertaken across 96% of priority areas and 30% of phase 2 areas, at the point of submission in January 2026 of the Supplementary Environmental Information [AS-068 to AS-083]. This represents a combined total of 74% of the overall geophysical survey area and the area of intrusive impact for the Project. Archaeological trial trenching had been completed for 89% of priority areas at the point of submission of Supplementary Environmental Information [AS-068 to AS-083]. For the remainder of the Project's areas of intrusive impact, a reasonable worst-case assumption has been made regarding archaeological potential and Project impacts to inform assessment, on the basis of the extensive desk-based information and the available results of evaluation. The approach to the archaeological fieldwork and programme for this work was first raised with stakeholders in late 2023 and is included in the Statements of Common Ground [refs]. It is an agreed matter with Norfolk and Essex County Councils and Historic England, and is under discussion with Suffolk County Council.</p> <p>The remaining 11% of the priority archaeological trial trenching is in progress and fieldwork is expected to be complete in April 2026. The work had been programmed to be undertaken in 2025 but unfortunately land access issues prevented this. The trial trenching is being undertaken as soon as land access is available. The preliminary results of the work to date indicate that the geophysical survey and desk-based information for these areas has provided a good representation of the archaeology, which is already included in the historic environment baseline and assessment, and it is not anticipated that this element of the work would change the conclusions of assessment presented in 6.11</p>	<p>Suffolk County Council [REP4-335]</p> <p>SCCAS supports the ExA in requesting clarity on the extent of the archaeological work that has been undertaken and reported on to date, and the extent of the archaeological evaluation that have yet to be completed. We would strongly recommend that this is expressed in map form showing which parts of the project have been subject to archaeological evaluation (both geophysical survey and trial trenching) and remaining areas which require archaeological evaluation (both geophysical survey and trial trenching). This should be included in the OAMS-OWSI.</p> <p>Currently there is the absence of an approved 7.5 Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and Outline Written Scheme of Investigation [APP-328]. The draft document as currently submitted does not provide the clarity necessary with regards to the extent of evaluation that has been undertaken or will be undertaken to ensure the whole project is subject to appropriate archaeological evaluation to inform a programme of archaeological mitigation.</p> <p>As of 8th May 2026, the applicant has submitted plans to SCCAS for review that show proposed mitigation areas within the priority areas. These plans must be clearly marked "indicative" because mitigation areas may be revised in response to engineering design or the identification of archaeological remains. The plans are due to be submitted at Deadline 5 and SCCAS will comment on them prior to submission.</p>	<p>Additionally, the contractor is required to undertake detailed construction noise and vibration assessments and detailed specific mitigation measures in a noise and vibration management plan, and to employ best practicable means to reduce the effects of construction noise and vibration, as per commitments NV05 and NV01 of 7.2 Code of Construction Practice [Revision E], respectively.</p> <p>In relation to the historic environment, please see the Applicant's response to [REP4-408] above in this document.</p> <p>The Applicant submitted an updated version of 6.11.F4 Environmental Statement Figure 11.4 - Phase 1 and 2 Geophysical Survey Areas and Archaeological Trial Trenching Priority Areas [AS-082] in January 2026, to provide the requested information on progress with archaeological evaluation.</p> <p>In response to Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service's (SCCAS) earlier comments and through ongoing engagement in regular meetings, two figures have been produced to accompany 7.5 Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and Outline Written Scheme of Investigation [Revision B]: Figure 1 - Showing the progress of the Priority geophysical survey and archaeological trial trenching, the progress of the Phase 2 geophysical survey, and the location of the Phase 2 archaeological trial trenching; and Figure 2 - Location of Archaeological Mitigation Areas Within Priority Trial Trenching Areas. These have been provided to Historic England, Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex councils along with the updated document 7.5 Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and Outline Written Scheme of Investigation [Revision B] for review.</p>

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<p>appear that 30% of the phase 2 areas have now had geophysical survey work completed. However, the applicant is requested to either clarify, or to signpost to where it has been clearly set out, exactly how much of all the proposed archaeological geophysical survey work and trial trenching work within any of the order limits has now been carried out (and had the results submitted), and how much is still left to be undertaken and/ or have the results submitted.</p> <p>Also, the ExA is uncertain whether or not any of the results of the proposed 2026 evaluation work would be undertaken and submitted within the Examination period. The applicant is therefore requested to provide a more detailed timeline for all of its further proposed archaeological survey work to indicate what is to be undertaken and when. This should include a proposed timeline for the submission of all final reports and the archiving/ dissemination of information resulting from all outstanding archaeological evaluation work.</p>	<p>Environmental Statement Chapter 11 - Historic Environment [AS-070]. Final reports of this element of the archaeological trial trenching are expected in August 2026 and therefore are not expected to be available during examination. The reports will be shared directly with the Archaeological Advisors to the Local Planning Authorities for approval and in order to agree appropriate mitigation for these areas, as set out in 7.5 Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and Outline Written Scheme of Investigation [APP-328] secured through Requirement 5 of 3.1 Draft Development Consent Order [Revision C].</p> <p>The phase 2 geophysical survey, as of 27 March 2026, was approximately 80% complete. Survey of all areas where land access is available, is expected to be completed in April 2026, with the final report expected six weeks from the end of survey. Therefore, this report and any associated updates to baseline and assessment will be submitted into the Examination as supplementary information, no later than Deadline 6.</p> <p>Phase 2 of the archaeological trial trenching is programmed to commence in summer 2026 and is expected to be mostly complete by the end of 2026. This programme has been agreed with the archaeological advisors to the Local Planning Authorities and Historic England (as set out in the Statements of Common Ground [Refs]) as this phase of fieldwork on comparable developments is often not undertaken until after consent has been granted. For the Project, the decision to proceed with this work as soon as possible is driven by construction programme constraints, should consent be granted. Therefore, the results of this work will not be available for the Examination but will be shared directly with the Archaeological Advisors to the Local Planning Authorities for approval and in order to agree appropriate mitigation for these areas as set out in 7.5 Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and Outline Written Scheme of Investigation [APP-328] secured through Requirement 5 of 3.1 Draft Development Consent Order [Revision C].</p> <p>The archiving and dissemination of the fieldwork will be undertaken as a single phase of work on the completion of mitigation fieldwork for the Project. The evaluation archive would be transferred to the archaeological contractor(s) for the mitigation to ensure the evaluation results inform mitigation fieldwork and reporting, and to ensure the archive is deposited coherently for the different geographical areas of the Project. This approach has been requested by the archaeological advisors to the Local Planning Authorities and Historic England and will be secured through the 7.5 Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and Outline Written Scheme of Investigation [APP-328] once updated. Should the Project not gain consent, the evaluation archiving and dissemination would be undertaken at that point for all completed fieldwork.</p>		

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<p>HE 1.44</p> <p>Understanding of the archaeology in the River Stour area</p> <p>In its WR [REP1-191] Historic England considers that further survey work is required in order to understand the complex of archaeology that exists on both sides of the River Stour and the potential palaeoenvironmental deposits within the river itself. In paragraph 6.6 of [REP1-191] Historic England states that, in relation to the River Stour: "We are seeking contingency allowed for expected high value discoveries." Therefore, the applicant is requested to set out what archaeological evaluation and mitigation measures are proposed for this location and explain how these are to be secured in the draft DCO.</p>	<p>The Applicant acknowledges Historic England's comments regarding the need for further survey work and contingency for high value discoveries in the River Stour area. The Project design at the River Stour crossing comprises open-cut underground cable works to the north and south of the river, with a trenchless crossing technique beneath the river itself and beneath the field to the immediate south of Higham Road (in order to ensure preservation of high value non-designated archaeology within this field). Archaeological trial trenching has been completed to the north of the river and results are included in the historic environment baseline and assessment (6.11 Environmental Statement Chapter 11 - Historic Environment [AS-068] and 6.11.A2 Environmental Statement Appendix 11.2 - Historic Environment Assessment Tables [AS-070]). Trial trenching is in progress to the south of the river and preliminary results indicates that the geophysical survey of this area has provided a good representation of the archaeology, which is already included in the historic environment baseline and assessment. The results of geoarchaeological and archaeological monitoring of ground investigation works at the River Stour are reported in 6.11.A6 Environmental Statement Appendix 11.6 - Geoarchaeological Monitoring of Ground Investigation Works Report [APP-214] and included in 6.11 Environmental Statement Chapter 11 - Historic Environment [AS-068].</p> <p>A specific commitment within the 7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [REP2-014] secured through Requirement 4 of 3.1 Draft Development Consent Order [APP-056], commitment B26, requires the Main Works Contractor(s) to prepare a trenchless crossing method statement and contingency plan for the River Stour crossing, to be submitted to the relevant Local Planning Authority and Natural England once detailed design is available.</p> <p>Where there is potential for sensitive archaeological or palaeoenvironmental deposits and known areas of deep ground impact (such as at pylon bases or trenchless crossings), further geoarchaeological and palaeoenvironmental investigations will be undertaken. This provision for additional work in areas of impact is included in the 7.5 Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and Outline Written Scheme of Investigation [APP-328] secured through Requirement 5 of 3.1 Draft Development Consent Order [APP-056]. This document is being updated in consultation with Local Planning Authority Archaeological Advisors and Historic England, taking into account detailed comments received in Written Representations and Local Impact Reports.</p> <p>In addition, Commitment GH11 in the 7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [REP2-014] secures the requirement for a Hydrogeological Risk Assessment to be undertaken at all trenchless crossing locations, including the River Stour crossing. This ensures that any risks to groundwater and associated</p>	<p>Suffolk County Council [REP4-335]</p> <p>SCCAS agree with Historic England on this matter.</p> <p>Currently there is the absence of an approved 7.5 Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and Outline Written Scheme of Investigation [APP-328]. The draft document as currently submitted does not provide the clarity necessary, particularly with regards to palaeoenvironmental and geoarchaeological investigation of the Stour River Valley. SCCAS have provided detailed comments on the Draft OAMS-OWSI.</p>	<p>The updated 7.5 Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and Outline Written Scheme of Investigation [Revision B] is provided at Deadline 5. This was updated in reference to comments made by Historic England, Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex Councils responding to further stakeholder comments, having been shared with relevant stakeholders in early May.</p>

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	<p>deposits are identified and managed appropriately as part of the Project.</p> <p>These measures ensure that appropriate evaluation and mitigation of archaeological and palaeoenvironmental assets will be secured and implemented.</p>		
<p>HE 1.45</p> <p>Adequacy of the outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and outline Written Scheme of Investigation (outline AMS/ outline WSI)</p> <p>Various local authorities in their RRs and LIRs, for example Colchester City Council in [REP1-156] and Historic England in [REP1-191], have stated their belief that the outline AMS/ outline WSI [APP-328] is not adequate in its current form and requires amendments. Explain your progress on discussions with the local authorities and Historic England on this matter and clarify when an amended version of the outline AMS/ outline WSI, as referenced by Norfolk CC in [REP1-173] and as stated in the applicant's Response to RRs [REP1-132], will be submitted into the examination.</p>	<p>The Applicant acknowledges the comment regarding the adequacy of 7.5 Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and Outline Written Scheme of Investigation [APP-328]. An early draft of the document was shared with the historic environment stakeholders prior to submission of the DCO application, and the comments received were taken into account in the updates made for the version submitted with the DCO application. The document uses a format that has been adopted on several consented DCO projects. The Applicant has actively engaged with Local Planning Authorities and Historic England regarding this document since submission of the DCO application. We have discussed progress on the ongoing geophysical survey and trial trenching, the approach to phase 2 trial trenching and the programme for updates to 7.5 Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and Outline Written Scheme of Investigation [APP-328] at meetings with Essex and Suffolk County Councils on 26 March 2026, with Norfolk County Council on 27 March 2026, and with representatives from Historic England, Thurrock Council and Essex, Suffolk and Norfolk County Councils, at the Archaeological Working Group Meeting on 1 April 2026.</p> <p>The Applicant is currently preparing an updated version of 7.5 Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and Outline Written Scheme of Investigation [APP-328] taking into account feedback received from stakeholders including Colchester City Council and Historic England. The updated document is scheduled for submission at Deadline 5. Prior to this, the updated document will be shared with the relevant stakeholders for their review.</p>	<p>Suffolk County Council [REP4-335]</p> <p>SCCAS stand by our comments provided on the submitted 7.5 Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and Outline Written Scheme of Investigation [APP-328]. The draft document submitted for review in April 2025 was an incomplete document with large sections absent. So SCCAS were unable to provide constructive comments on that draft submission.</p>	<p>The updated 7.5 Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and Outline Written Scheme of Investigation [Revision B] is provided at Deadline 5. This was updated in reference to comments made by Historic England, Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex Councils responding to further stakeholder comments, having been shared with relevant stakeholders in early May.</p>
<p>HE 1.46</p> <p>Engagement with Suffolk CC</p> <p>In [RR-3520] Suffolk CC commented that as it currently stands the submitted outline AMS/ outline WSI [APP-328] does not meet national standards and requirements 5 of the draft DCO does not provide adequate protection. In light of the additional archaeological information you submitted, dated January 2026 and submitted into the examination on 2 February 2026 [AS-068] to [AS-083], comment on Suffolk CC's</p>	<p>The Applicant acknowledges Suffolk County Council's concerns regarding the adequacy of the submitted 7.5 Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and Outline Written Scheme of Investigation [APP-328] (Outline AMS/OWSI) and the protections afforded by Requirement 5 of 3.1 Draft Development Consent Order [Revision C]. An early draft of the Outline AMS/OWSI was shared with Suffolk County Council prior to submission of the DCO application, and the comments received were taken into account in the updates made for the version submitted with the DCO application. The document uses a format that has been adopted on several consented DCO projects. It is our understanding that when the Outline AMS/OWSI is updated, and providing Suffolk County Council is content with these updates, the majority of the concerns regarding Requirement 5 will also be resolved. However, we will continue to engage to confirm this.</p>	<p>Suffolk County Council [REP4-335]</p> <p>SCCAS are in ongoing discussions with the applicant but await submission of the amended 7.5 Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and Outline Written Scheme of Investigation [APP-328] before we can comment further.</p>	<p>The updated 7.5 Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and Outline Written Scheme of Investigation [Revision B] is provided at Deadline 5. This was updated in reference to comments made by Historic England, Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex Councils responding to further stakeholder comments, having been shared with relevant stakeholders in early May.</p>

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<p>concerns, state whether you have been in recent discussions with Suffolk CC over this matter and what the outcomes of any such discussions have been.</p>	<p>The Applicant has also engaged in recent discussions with Suffolk County Council regarding progress on ongoing geophysical survey and trial trenching, the approach to Phase 2 trial trenching, and the timetable for updating the Outline AMS/OWSI. These discussions took place during meetings on 26 March and 1 April 2026.</p> <p>In light of these discussions as well as additional archaeological information submitted in 2026 [AS-068 to AS-083], the Applicant is preparing an updated 7.5 Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and Outline Written Scheme of Investigation [APP-328], which is planned for submission at Deadline 5. Prior to this the updated document will be shared with Suffolk County Council for review.</p>		
<p>HE 1.47 Reliability of geophysical survey data Essex CC in its LIR [REP1-161] has noted that "... the reliability of the geophysical survey to detect archaeological features has been demonstrated to be inconsistent." Essex CC goes on to consider that this could be due to the sandy nature of the local soils. Comment on Essex CC's views on the reliability of the geophysical survey work in detecting archaeological features and explain how any unreliability in geophysical data been accounted for in assessing areas for trial trenching and in drawing your conclusions on the assessment of effects on archaeology in ES Chapter 11 [AS-068].</p>	<p>Magnetometer survey (as used for the Project) is an extremely useful, rapid, cost effective, non-invasive technique for archaeological prospection that can identify anomalies derived from geological, archaeological, or modern origins. The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists defines geophysical survey as: <i>'Archaeological geophysical survey uses non-intrusive and non-destructive techniques to determine the presence or absence of anomalies likely to be caused by archaeological features, structures or deposits, as far as reasonably possible, within a specified area or site on land, in the inter-tidal zone or underwater. Geophysical survey determines the presence of anomalies of archaeological potential through measurement of one or more physical properties of the subsurface'</i>⁵¹.</p> <p>As magnetometer survey creates an image of below ground deposits by measuring the magnetic differences between the underlying superficial geological deposits and features cut into those deposits, it is well suited to detecting large features or features with sufficiently magnetic fills to be detected above the natural magnetic variability of the superficial geology. Magnetometry is also suited to identifying deposits altered through heating, organic decay, and containing burnt material ditches, pits, hearths and kilns. The technique does, however, have its limitations and it cannot inform the archaeological significance, function, date, depth, or state of preservation of those anomalies it does identify. Furthermore, the technique is not capable of detecting archaeological features that do not have a magnetic signature sufficiently different to the surrounding superficial geology to be distinguished by the magnetometer. Magnetometry, therefore, struggles to identify small, ephemeral archaeological features, such as graves which are rapidly backfilled with the same material which was dug out to create the grave, and features of pre-Iron Age date when metallurgy was much more prevalent resulting in magnetically enhanced industrial waste being incorporated into archaeological features.</p> <p>Due to these shortcomings, the lack of geophysical data has not been treated as negative evidence by the Project, and the absence of anomalies does not prove that archaeological features are absent. For this reason, and in agreement with the</p>	<p>Suffolk County Council [REP4-335] SCC Archaeological Service agrees with Essex CC concerns with regards to the reliability of geophysical survey data and recommend the implementation of a programme of archaeological trial trenching is essential to ground-truth the geophysical survey results.</p>	<p>The Applicant confirms that all areas of the Project that will experience sub-surface impact will, following geophysical survey, be evaluated by archaeological trial trenching.</p>

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	<p>archaeological advisors to the Local Planning Authorities, all the geophysically surveyed areas within areas of impact within the Order Limits will be subject to a trial trenching programme that will target geophysical anomalies, cropmarks, old map features, LiDAR anomalies and also 'blank' areas in the geophysical data to test its efficacy. The assessment of the Project's effects on the archaeological resource presented in 6.11 Environmental Statement Chapter 11 - Historic Environment [AS-068] is based on all available sources comprising Historic Environment Record data (e.g. findspots and artefact scatters, cropmarks, results of previous fieldwork), Project mapped cropmarks, Project mapped LiDAR, Project mapped historic map features, a systematic walkover survey undertaken by the Applicant, and where fieldwork has been undertaken for the Project, the results of geophysical survey and archaeological trial trenching.</p> <p>The Applicant has, therefore, built up as complete a picture as possible of the archaeological resource within the Order Limits, and on the basis of the accumulated evidence, has been able to infer the potential for the presence of subsurface archaeological remains. In order to assess the impact of the Project on the potential archaeological resource, a realistic worst-case approach has been adopted when assessing the value of the archaeological baseline to ensure that the significance of effect is not underestimated. Both geophysical survey and trial trenching are ongoing but a lot of the evaluation work has been completed and the results have been submitted (6.11.A3 Environmental Statement Appendix 11.3 - EACN Substation Geophysical Survey Report [APP-211], 6.11.A4 Environmental Statement Appendix 11.4 - Geophysical Survey Results Report [APP-212], 6.11.A4 Environmental Statement Appendix 11.4 - Geophysical Survey (Priority Areas) Results Report - Part 1 [AS-072], 6.11.A4 Environmental Statement Appendix 11.4 - Geophysical Survey (Priority Areas) Results Report - Part 2 [AS-074], 6.11.A4 Environmental Statement Appendix 11.4 - Geophysical Survey (Priority Areas) Results Report - Part 3 [AS-076], and 6.11.A5 Environmental Statement Appendix 11.5 - Trial Trenching Results Report [APP-213 and AS-078]). The results of the ongoing geophysical survey and trial trenching will be made available to the archaeological advisors to the Local Planning Authorities as they become available and the combined results will inform the ongoing production of 7.5 Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and Outline Written Scheme of Investigation [APP-328], which will set out appropriate mitigation for the archaeological remains within the bounds of the Project's Order Limits. The Applicant is, therefore, confident that the archaeological resource within and potentially affected by the Project will be fully mitigated either through avoidance or full excavation.</p>		
<p>HE 1.48 Assessment of residual effects on archaeology</p>	<p>The Applicant's response regarding the reliability of geophysical surveys and confidence in the assessment of residual effects is set out in response to ExQ1 HE 1.43 and HE 1.47. As outlined in</p>	<p>Suffolk County Council [REP4-335] SCCAS broadly agree with the approach set out here by the applicant, however, we need clarity from the applicant</p>	<p>The Applicant confirms its commitment to the historic environment and as, previously communicated to SCCAS,</p>

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<p>With potential issues over the complete reliability of geophysical survey information in some locations, some of the identified priority areas still to be fully surveyed and evaluated, and significant stretches of the route of the proposed development not having been surveyed at all, explain how at this stage you can be confident in your assessments of residual effects that are set out in section 11.7 of ES Chapter 11 [AS-068]. Furthermore, in the Secretary of State's decision letter for the Five Estuaries offshore wind farm, dated 17 December 2025, it was stated that: "The Secretary of State considers preservation by record does not amount to mitigation of harm for archaeological remains...". Comment on the implications of this for your assessment of the significance of effects in ES Chapter 11 [AS-068].</p>	<p>HE 1.43 and HE 1.47 the reliability of geophysical survey assessment has been taken into account in the planning of trial trenching, with trenches targeting both areas of "known archaeology" and those that appear blank in geophysics results. The geophysical survey and trial trenching are now both well progressed and to date the findings of both phases of fieldwork are correlating with the assessment of residual effects as set out in section 11.7 of ES Chapter 11 the Applicant remains confident in the assessment.</p> <p>Whilst the Applicant acknowledges that preservation by record is not accepted as a direct mitigation for harm which the recorded information cannot reverse, the knowledge created by the record increases our understanding of the archaeological resource and is a relevant consideration in any overall assessment and is best practice where conservation cannot be achieved. (6.11.A2 Environmental Statement Appendix 11.2 - Historic Environment Assessment Tables [AS-070]). Archaeological assessment in the form of excavation and recording ensures that the archaeological remains are not completely lost without any knowledge of them being obtained, as set out by Historic England.52 Preservation by record would only be applied for the Project when the mitigation hierarchy has been applied, no other reasonable options are available, and the impact prior to mitigation would not be unacceptable in terms of the provisions in NPS EN-1. The approach to archaeological excavation and recording and the cases in which it is proposed, align with the Historic England guidance52.</p>	<p>that areas where archaeological evaluation (both geophysical survey and trial trenching) has not been completed prior to determination of this DCO, that these works will continue for all areas of development impact post-consent (should the application be granted permission).</p>	<p>confirms that any areas of evaluation (geophysics and trial trenching) not completed prior to the determination of the DCO will be completed post-consent assuming the application is granted. This position is set out in 7.5 Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and Outline Written Scheme of Investigation [Revision B], the updated version of which was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate at Deadline 5.</p>
<p>HE 1.51 Full discharge of requirement 5 At what stage of the proposed development do you consider that all elements of requirement 5 of the draft DCO [APP-056] would be fully discharged? Explain why an additional subparagraph to requirement 5 has not been provided that references the need for final approval from the relevant planning authority, in consultation with Historic England, of a completion report so as to enable the full discharge of requirement 5 (subject to any ongoing maintenance or decommissioning measures).</p>	<p>Requirement 5 would be fully discharged following completion of all archaeological mitigation works and post-excavations obligations secured through the approved Detailed Written Scheme(s) of Investigation prepared in accordance with 7.5 Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and Outline Written Scheme of Investigation [APP-328]. The approach set out therein, and secured through Requirement 5 within 3.1 Draft Development Consent Order [Revision C], includes provision for a range of evaluation and mitigation strategies, including the preparation and implementation of preservation in situ management plans, where highly significant remains are identified.</p> <p>Completion of post-excavation assessment and reporting is integral to the approved Written Scheme of Investigation. 7.5 Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and Outline Written Scheme of Investigation [APP-328] explicitly provides for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-excavation assessment • Analysis, reporting and publication • Deposition of the archaeological archive. <p>All of these form part of the scope of each Detailed Written Scheme of Investigation and its implementation (7.5 Outline</p>	<p>Suffolk County Council [REP4-335] Please see SCCAS comments on Appendix A. Supplement 1 – 1.S8 Draft Development Consent Order (.S8 below). The public benefit of archaeology comes from both the preservation of those heritage assets and through excavation and recording with the dissemination of the information arising from those archaeological investigations. It is therefore vital that a requirement secures the timely delivery of post-excavation analysis, publication, archiving and outreach. This is typically achieved through formal agreement of an Updated Project Design.</p>	<p>The Applicant is committed to the production of an Updated Project Design (UPD), which will detail the timely delivery post-excavation analysis, publication, archiving and outreach. The requirement for the archaeological contractor(s) to produce a UPD is set out in the updated version of document 7.5 Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and Outline Written Scheme of Investigation [Revision B] provided at Deadline 5.</p>

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	<p>Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and Outline Written Scheme of Investigation [APP-328], Sections 6.2 and 6.3). Requirement 5 already requires that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each Detailed Written Scheme of Investigation is approved by the relevant planning authority • Historic England is consulted where relevant, before works commence. <p>This is the point at which archaeological methodology, reporting commitments and post-excavation outputs are formally agreed. 7.5 Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and Outline Written Scheme of Investigation [APP-328] (Sections 5.1.1 and 5.1.11) confirms that Historic England and Local Planning Authority (LPA) archaeological advisers are engaged both at Written Scheme of Investigation preparation and during its implementation. 7.5 Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and Outline Written Scheme of Investigation [APP-328] makes clear that interim statements are prepared following completion of fieldwork and that post-excavation assessment reports are produced and agreed through the LPA archaeological advisory process (with Historic England where relevant). These obligations are embedded within the approved Written Scheme of Investigation (7.5 Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and Outline Written Scheme of Investigation [APP-328], Sections 6.2.1 and 6.3.2).</p> <p>Post-excavation analysis, publication and archiving can also extend beyond the physical construction programme. The chosen drafting allows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full archaeological mitigation to be secured and delivered • Requirement 5 to be discharged once those obligations have been met in substance, without artificially tying discharge to a single document or date. 		
<p>HW 1.9 Colchester City Council's local impact report – assessment of health and wellbeing</p> <p>Paragraph 9.42 of Colchester City Council's LIR [REP1-156] identifies a number of actions the Council suggests the applicant needs to undertake to address its concerns with the assessment of health and wellbeing. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated assessment incorporating October 2025 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) and Lower Layer Super Output Area (LSOA) level data for Colchester. 	<p>The Applicant's response to each of the actions identified in Colchester City Council's Local Impact Report [REP1-156] is as follows, providing further justification and evidence as required for each:</p> <p>1) Updated assessment incorporating October 2025 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) and Lower Layer Super Output Area (LSOA) level data for Colchester</p> <p>As previously set out in 8.4.1 Applicant's Comments on Relevant Representations [REP1-132], the assessment undertaken in 6.10 Environmental Statement Chapter 10 – Health and Wellbeing [APP-192] reported the available IMD data at the time it was prepared to understand baseline health and socio-economic characteristics of populations potentially affected by the Project. A review of the updated IMD data published in October 2025 (after the DCO application was submitted) shows that, as a whole, deprivation levels have reduced for the Colchester City Council area, with fewer</p>	<p>Suffolk County Council [REP4-335]</p> <p>SCC (Public Health) notes that the Applicant accepts within its responses, including HW 1.9, that individuals across the Project route are likely to experience impacts on mental health and wellbeing during both construction and operation including stress and anxiety and further acknowledges that people living closest to the Project and vulnerable groups may experience these impacts differently. In this context, SCC considers that the Applicant's subsequent conclusion that there is therefore "<i>no requirement for monitoring measures</i>" is not logically consistent with the Applicant's own assessment, or with the precautionary principles.</p> <p>SCC is concerned by the Applicant's reliance on the notion that distinguishing project related mental health impacts from wider social, economic or personal factors is methodologically difficult, leading to the conclusion that monitoring would not generate reliable or actionable</p>	<p>The Applicant has concluded in 6.10 Environmental Statement Chapter 10 – Health and Wellbeing [APP-192] that there would be no significant health and wellbeing impacts as a result of the Project, although it is noted that individuals will be impacted differently depending on factors including their location and outlook. As such, under The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017, there is no requirement for monitoring measures.</p> <p>The Applicant accepts that monitoring impacts on health and wellbeing is possible – indeed, studies such as the 10-year research project undertaken in</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integration of local health and wellbeing strategies and Integrated Care System Joint Forward Plans. Inclusive engagement measures for language-vulnerable communities. Consideration of cumulative mental health impacts through Mental Wellbeing Impact Assessment workshops. A robust Health and Wellbeing Monitoring Framework with enforceable commitments. <p>The applicant is requested to respond to each of the requests identified, taking account of the justification and background in the preceding paragraphs of the LIR and provide commentary on how these can be addressed including the information and assessment requested or explain why it is not necessary.</p> <p>Note: Your response to updating the IMD, as set out in [REP1-132] is noted. However, the ExA would ask what evidence has been put forward to substantiate there is no need to update the document with the most up to date data. In the absence of adequate evidence, you must revisit the relevant chapter of the ES and address any changes as a result of the IMD being updated. (Also see question SET 1.1 below).</p>	<p>neighbourhoods now ranking among the most deprived in England.</p> <p>The images below show deprivation by LSOA for 2019 (top image) and 2025 (bottom image). The darker colours indicate areas of higher deprivation.</p> <p><i>[Applicant's note: figure has not been replicated here, see REP3-074 for original]</i></p> <p>The 2019 IMD and the October 2025 IMD provide snapshots of relative deprivation across LSOAs, with Colchester City Council showing overall improvement in its national position between the two time periods. Nationally, Colchester ranked better in 2025 at 173rd out of 296 local authorities (less deprived than 57% of districts), compared to its 2019 position among 317 authorities, where it had higher proportions of deprived LSOAs. Only 2% of Colchester's 116 LSOAs fell in England's most deprived 10% in 2025 (well below the national 10% average) down from more neighbourhoods in that category in 2019, reflecting continued progress in tackling deprivation.</p> <p>In consideration of deprivation domains that may be of particular relevance to vulnerable communities, notably the income and health domains, again, there have been general improvements between 2019 and 2025. In 2019, income deprivation contributed significantly to deprivation rankings in areas like Greenstead (to the east of Colchester), where multiple LSOAs ranked among Colchester's most deprived, driven by low income indicators such as benefit receipt. By 2025, fewer LSOAs overall showed extreme deprivation, with just two in Greenstead remaining in the most deprived national index, reflecting local regeneration efforts. Similarly for the health deprivation domain, 2019 saw health metrics (mortality rates, morbidity, disabilities) elevating deprivation scores in vulnerable LSOAs, particularly in eastern wards. The 2025 update shows sustained low overall health deprivation relative to national averages, although it is noted that persistent challenges remain in two of the Greenstead LSOAs. Across Colchester's LSOAs, 592 nationally moved out of the most deprived decile since 2019, although domain-specific shifts have been modest.</p> <p>Colchester wards included in the baseline assessment for 6.10 Environmental Statement Chapter 10 – Health and Wellbeing [APP-192] fall outside of the urban area and comprise Marks Tey and Layer; Lexden and Braiswick; and Rural North. Between 2019 and 2025, deprivation trends in these specific wards have diverged. Marks Tey and Layer has exhibited modest improvements in income deprivation by 2025; several LSOAs that were previously ranked nearer the mid-to-lower quintiles moved toward less deprived positions, driven by slight increases in employment and reductions in benefit dependency, potentially linked to local housing developments and improved transport</p>	<p>information. SCC does not accept this position. Difficulty in attribution is not unique to mental health and wellbeing, nor is it a reason used to exclude monitoring in other environmental disciplines within the ES. Noise, vibration and air quality effects are all influenced by multiple external variables yet monitoring remain standard and accepted practice to identify deviations from expected conditions and inform responsive mitigation.</p> <p>Mental health and wellbeing monitoring is not predicated on establishing a single, linear causal pathway between a project and diagnosable mental illness. It should be intended to identify patterns, trends and differential effects over time, particularly among communities most exposed to construction activity and those with fewer coping resources or opportunities for respite, as identified in [REP1-178]. Monitoring therefore operates as an early warning and safeguarding mechanism, enabling emerging issues to be recognised and escalated before they become more acute or entrenched.</p> <p>SCC also considers that the Applicant's proposed reliance on engagement, complaints and liaison mechanisms as a proxy for monitoring is insufficient. While SCC recognises and welcomes commitments to ongoing engagement and communication, such mechanisms are inherently reactive and unlikely to capture the experiences of those less able or willing to raise concerns formally. Vulnerable groups, including those experiencing anxiety, stress or reduced mental wellbeing, may be those least likely to engage actively with complaints processes. Complaints based datasets cannot be considered a robust or equitable substitute for structured monitoring. Monitoring should be viewed as complementary to engagement, not a replacement for it. A proportionate mental health and wellbeing monitoring framework would provide a transparent, evidence informed foundation for targeting communication, tailoring mitigation and prioritising community support, including through any future community benefit programme. It would also enable the effectiveness of mitigation and engagement measures to be reviewed objectively rather than assumed.</p> <p>In SCC's view, the Applicant's characterisation of a monitoring framework as "formal" or "standalone" sets up a false tone. SCC has not requested a clinically based surveillance system or a programme reliant on diagnosing mental illness. Instead, SCC has consistently sought a proportionate approach, aligned with public health practice and with approaches adopted on comparable</p>	<p>relation to High Speed 2⁴, which will consider the extent to which individuals and communities exposed to the planning, construction and operation of High Speed 2 experience positive or negative mental health and wellbeing impacts, has been referenced in 6.10 Environmental Statement Chapter 10 – Health and Wellbeing [APP-192]. This is a significant piece of academic research which will likely provide an important body of evidence in the future. For the Norwich to Tilbury Project, the Applicant stands by its position that developing a health and wellbeing monitoring plan or framework of the nature suggested by SCC, which includes thresholds for potential mitigation, carries notable methodological, ethical and practical limitations, and risks being disproportionate to likely impacts anticipated for the Project.</p> <p>SCC makes reference to monitoring for other environmental disciplines such as noise, vibration and air quality effects. It is agreed that these are standard and accepted practices to identify deviations from expected conditions and inform responsive mitigation. From the Applicant's perspective, the difference between these types of monitoring and that proposed for mental health and wellbeing, relates to the fact that noise and air quality monitoring use a threshold-based approach (for example air quality is evaluated using legally binding concentration limit values and target values set by The Air Quality Standards Regulations 2010, and similarly, noise thresholds rely on specific standards set out in the Noise Policy Statement for England⁵). No similar threshold-based standards are available for mental health and wellbeing, making this a much more subjective area on which to base an approach to monitoring. The Applicant has set out an approach to ongoing engagement and</p>

⁴ Morley, K., et al (2024) Wellbeing Impact Study of High-Speed 2 (WISH2): Protocol for a mixed-methods examination of the impact of major transport infrastructure development on mental health and wellbeing

⁵ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (2010) Noise Policy Statement for England

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	<p>links. Health deprivation in this ward showed limited change, with chronic illness prevalence remaining broadly stable. Lexden and Braiswick ward has continued to perform relatively well in terms of general deprivation, consolidating its status as one of the less deprived areas in Colchester; marginal positive shifts in 2025 potentially reflect rising household incomes and stable access to healthcare. The Rural North ward displays a mixed picture: although some LSOAs have experienced small increases in income deprivation, potentially influenced by factors such as lower access to well-paid employment, others have benefitted. Health deprivation in Rural North has showed slight deterioration in a subset of LSOAs, where older populations and limited local service access have potentially contributed to higher morbidity scores.</p> <p>Overall, as previously noted in 8.4.1 Applicant's Comments on Relevant Representations [REP1-132], it is not considered that use of the updated dataset would result in material changes to the conclusions of the health and wellbeing assessment presented in 6.10 Environmental Statement Chapter 10 – Health and Wellbeing [APP-192] and no chapter updates are considered to be required as a result.</p> <p>2) Integration of local health and wellbeing strategies and Integrated Care System Joint Forward Plans</p> <p>As previously noted within 8.4.1 Applicant's Comments on Relevant Representations [REP1-132], local health and wellbeing strategies, Joint Strategic Needs Assessments and the health priorities they contain, have been used to inform the health and wellbeing assessment. Colchester City Council sits within Essex County Council, and the health priorities set out within the Essex Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy are already summarised in Table 10.1 on page 5 of 6.10 Environmental Statement Chapter 10 - Health and Wellbeing [APP-192]. For Essex, health priorities include improving mental health and wellbeing; healthy lifestyles – obesity and physical activity; levelling up health inequalities (addressing root causes such as poverty, education and housing); supporting long-term independence; alcohol and substance misuse; and health inequalities and the wider determinants of health. A review of Colchester City Council's Three-Year Plan 2023-26: A City fit for the Future⁵⁸ shows complementarity between the City Council's local health priorities and those of Essex County Council. The Three-Year Plan prioritises health and wellbeing as a cornerstone for sustainable community development, emphasising the creation of inclusive, healthy environments that support physical and mental wellbeing across all ages. Key objectives include improving access to quality healthcare services, promoting active lifestyles through enhanced green spaces and recreational facilities, and addressing social determinants of health such as housing, employment, and education. Mental health receives</p>	<p>large scale linear infrastructure projects which draw on existing data sources where possible, focused on communities and receptors most likely to experience impacts.</p>	<p>communication, with a commitment to develop a detailed Communications Strategy secured in the draft DCO. The Applicant disputes that the approach taken to ongoing engagement and communication is 'inherently reactive'. The detailed Communications Strategy will set out an approach to active community liaison, to ensure that residents and stakeholders are appropriately informed of upcoming construction activities and provided with meaningful and inclusive ways in which to respond/engage. This approach is intended to be <i>proactive</i>, helping people understand what is happening before it happens, rather than only responding to issues or problems once they have occurred.</p> <p>This is not to say that a robust complaints procedure should not also form part of the Applicant's approach. The Applicant is committed to further developing a detailed complaints management procedure, to be submitted at Deadline 6. A further commitment to analysing complaints by the nature of enquiry or issue, and sharing this information bi-monthly has been set out in the latest iteration of 7.2 Code of Construction Practice [Revision E].</p> <p>SCC references approaches adopted on comparable large scale infrastructure projects. We understand that projects such as Sizewell C have included occupational health monitoring, however, Sizewell C is a very different type of scheme with a significant workforce component in a small geographical area. The University of Suffolk was also commissioned to produce a Community Study, the purpose of which has been to understand how residents in the local area view the project and to monitor change over time; the baseline report published in December 2025⁶, whilst noting that the project is at an early stage, also emphasises that '<i>a consistent thread across the study is the desire for clearer communication, more accessible</i></p>

⁶ [Sizewell-C-Community-Study-Public-Report-brief-final.pdf](#)

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	<p>dedicated focus, with initiatives aimed at reducing stigma, increasing awareness, and improving early intervention and support services. The plan also seeks to tackle inequalities by focusing resources on deprived wards and communities experiencing poorer health outcomes, aligning with broader regeneration and economic inclusion strategies. Furthermore, the City Council aims to enhance community resilience by fostering social connectedness and supporting wellbeing through cultural and social activities.</p> <p>Colchester City Council also requests the integration of Joint Forward Plans into the Health and Wellbeing assessment. The Mid and South Essex Integrated Care System Joint Forward Plan⁵⁹ (refreshed for 2024-2029) outlines a five-year strategy for NHS partners to collaboratively meet local health needs and improve population health. Core ambitions centre on enhancing health outcomes through partnerships with local authorities, public health teams, social care and communities. Integration strategies emphasise community-based care, digital transformation, patient-centred pathways to address elective backlogs, cancer diagnostics and mental health investment. The Joint Forward Plan underscores the NHS system's capacity constraints and need for coordinated planning to manage potential health service pressures arising from new developments and proposals which have the potential to generate temporary demand spikes for primary care, mental health support, and emergency services due to construction-related disruptions, traffic, noise, or community anxiety. No significant health and wellbeing impacts have been identified for the Project in relation to these areas, although it is noted that community anxiety is likely to be heightened in wards in closest proximity to the Project route.</p> <p>It is not considered that inclusion of the specific documents suggested would result in material changes to the conclusions of the health and wellbeing assessment presented in 6.10 Environmental Statement Chapter 10 – Health and Wellbeing [APP-192] and no chapter updates are considered to be required as a result.</p> <p>3) Inclusive engagement measures for language-vulnerable communities</p> <p>The following wording has been added to 7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [REP2-014] at Deadline 3 (the Outline Code of Construction Practice is secured by Requirement 4 of the Draft Development Consent Order):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Applicant is committed to ensuring that all activities related to the Project are conducted with full transparency and respect for the health and concerns of local communities. A detailed Communication Strategy, including the approach to community liaison, will be developed as part of the final Code of Construction Practice and will include how we will engage with seldom heard and hard-to-reach groups, including those with linguistic vulnerabilities. The Applicant will liaise with Local Planning 		<p><i>information, and opportunities for residents to be heard in ways that feel meaningful</i>.</p> <p>The Applicant therefore considers that a proportionate approach to managing impacts on mental health and wellbeing comprises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a proactive approach to communication and community engagement during the pre-commencement and construction phases of the Project • a comprehensive and robust complaints system • opportunities presented by the community benefits fund being developed by the Applicant, for example, projects and activities that fit with the theme 'building a stronger and more inclusive community'.

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	<p>Authorities ahead of construction to agree timescales and implementation.</p> <p>On request, the Applicant will consider providing materials in alternative formats. The Applicant's approach is considered to be proportionate and appropriate, taking into account communication needs of local communities and setting out both digital and non-digital methods of communication to assist with harder-to-reach parties who may not have access to digital means and to address inequalities created through language.</p> <p>4) Consideration of cumulative mental health impacts through Mental Wellbeing Impact Assessment workshops</p> <p>The Applicant's position has not changed from that presented in 8.4.1 Applicant's Comments on Relevant Representations [REP1-132], in that it is recognised that people have concerns about the cumulative effects arising from overlapping Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects and other schemes in the local area and that adverse effects on mental health and wellbeing are likely to be relevant as a result of the scale of other development (for example significant residential or infrastructure development) and associated perceived effects on neighbourhood quality / sense of place / uncertainty during construction periods. It is not considered that holding specific mental wellbeing impact workshops would raise new or additional information to that presented in 6.10 Environmental Statement Chapter 10 – Health and Wellbeing [APP-192]. Measures to alleviate concerns about cumulative impacts will be focused on effective community communication and liaison for individual development proposals, ensuring that relevant communities clearly understand timelines and the nature of construction activities.</p> <p>Where further engagement may be beneficial relates to awareness-raising about electric and magnetic fields (EMFs) and proposals for targeted community engagement in relation to this matter (to allay concerns) are set out in response to question HWB 1.3.</p> <p>5) A robust Health and Wellbeing Monitoring Framework with enforceable commitments</p> <p>As set out in 8.4.1 Applicant's Comments on Relevant Representations [REP1-132], no significant health and wellbeing impacts have been identified in 6.10 Environmental Statement Chapter 10 – Health and Wellbeing [APP-192] and as such there is no requirement for monitoring measures.</p> <p>There is typically no clear, direct causal pathway linking large infrastructure construction to diagnosable mental health conditions in the general population. Distinguishing project-related impacts from those caused by unrelated social, economic, or personal factors is methodologically very difficult. For example in relation to mental wellbeing, any monitoring is likely to capture background mental health trends rather than, or in addition to, project-specific effects, making attribution and actionable conclusions unreliable. A formal, standalone health and wellbeing monitoring plan or framework which includes thresholds for</p>		

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	<p>potential mitigation carries notable methodological, ethical and practical limitations, and risks being disproportionate to likely impacts anticipated for the Project. It may, however, be appropriate to identify specific actions in addition to the above that could help with understanding community mental health over the pre-construction, construction and operation periods. This could include reviewing the number and type of complaints or concerns raised during construction works through the complaints procedure identified. Complaints / concerns could be categorised by theme, type of action and speed of escalation. This would help understand where further communication may be required with local communities.</p>		
<p>HW 1.13 Suffolk CC's, Babergh DC's and Mid Suffolk DC's joint local impact report – mental health monitoring Paragraph 17.3 of Suffolk CC's Joint LIR [REP1-178] notes "The absence of dedicated mental health monitoring limits the ability to identify, respond to and mitigate emerging adverse impacts, particularly for those living closest to the works and for vulnerable groups with fewer options for respite" This further underlines the concerns raised by Essex CC. This is further expanded upon in the following paragraphs in the LIR. The applicant is requested to provide a mental health monitoring plan with appropriate thresholds and potential mitigations if adverse impacts are forth coming. See question HW 1.11 and 1.12 above and HW 1.14 below.</p>	<p>The Applicant notes that various representations have been made in relation to potential mental health impacts as a result of the Project and associated requests for monitoring mental health outcomes over time, as a way of understanding, responding to and mitigating emerging adverse impacts. In the assessment of potential impacts on health and wellbeing presented in 6.10 Environmental Statement Chapter 10 – Health and Wellbeing [APP-192], it is noted that there are likely to be individuals across the Project route who experience some degree of impact on their mental health and wellbeing (for example anxiety or stress) due to either the construction or operation phase of the Project. This may be as a result of uncertainty about programme and timescales, cumulative impacts associated with other Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects, as a result of disruption associated with construction activities, or changes to the local environment once the Project has been developed. It is acknowledged that people living closest to the Project or particular vulnerable groups may experience effects differently. The Applicant has sought to reduce concern or uncertainty about the proposals through inclusive and transparent engagement with residents, communities and stakeholders throughout the development of the Project, as set out in 5.1 Consultation Report [APP-066]. The Project team will continue to engage with people potentially affected during progress of the Project, through regular communication including letters, phone calls and meetings.</p> <p>Ways to manage and/or mitigate potential mental health impacts have been identified by the Applicant and include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction phase mitigation for specific environmental effects (e.g. noise, air quality, landscape and visual impacts) has been identified and is included in 6.7 Environmental Statement Chapter 7 – Air Quality [APP-147], 6.13 Environmental Statement Chapter 13 – Landscape and Visual [APP-226], and 6.14 Environmental Statement Chapter 14 – Noise and Vibration [APP-256]. Construction mitigation is secured in 7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [REP2-014], 7.3 Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan [APP-309] and 7.6 Outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan [APP-329]. Best practice 	<p>Suffolk County Council [REP4-335] SCC (Public Health) has considered the Applicant's response to HW1.13 and reasserts its position that monitoring of mental health and wellbeing impacts is a necessary and proportionate component of the Projects construction and cumulative impact management.</p>	<p>The Applicant notes SCC's comments in relation to HW1.13 and the development of a mental health and wellbeing monitoring framework. The Applicant's position to this has been set out earlier in this document in relation to HW1.9 and is not repeated here.</p>

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	<p>measures and mitigation approaches have been identified by the Applicant in line with experience of other similar linear infrastructure projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective and timely communication about construction activities and timescales. The need for this is highlighted in 7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice Appendix E - Community Engagement and Public Information [APP-305], which confirms that an appropriate approach to community relations and communication with local residents will be required during the construction period. In response to HW 1.3, further wording is proposed to secure a commitment to preparation of a detailed Communications Strategy, which will include the approach to community liaison. This demonstrates the Applicant's commitment to ensuring that all activities related to the Project are conducted with full transparency and respect for the health and concerns of local communities • Proactive community engagement through the construction period will encourage open communication, build trust, and address concerns; establishing dedicated support channels, such as helplines or liaison officers, will enable residents to voice concerns and access guidance promptly. Information relating to a communication and complaint resolution is referenced further in HW 1.14 • As set out in the response to HW 1.12, in line with government guidance, the Applicant expects to invest more than £30 million to support communities near our Norwich to Tilbury proposals. We are currently developing our approach to community benefits, and in spring 2026, we plan to begin consulting on how the community benefit funds should be used. Throughout that consultation, we will engage with local communities and elected representatives to find out more about local priorities (for example mental health resilience has been highlighted by a number of stakeholders) and where community benefits could deliver long-lasting benefits. The feedback we receive will help shape and inform our approach to community benefits. Following the consultation, we will develop a community benefit programme to address key themes and priorities. <p>As set out in 8.4.1 Applicant's Comments on Relevant Representations [REP1-132], no significant health and wellbeing impacts have been identified in 6.10 Environmental Statement Chapter 10 – Health and Wellbeing [APP-192] and as such there is no requirement for monitoring measures. There is typically no clear, direct causal pathway linking large infrastructure construction to diagnosable mental health conditions in the general population. Distinguishing project-related impacts from those caused by unrelated social, economic, or personal factors is methodologically very difficult. For example in relation to mental wellbeing, any monitoring is likely to capture background mental health trends rather than, or in addition to,</p>		

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	<p>project-specific effects, making attribution and actionable conclusions unreliable. A formal, standalone health and wellbeing monitoring plan or framework which includes thresholds for potential mitigation carries notable methodological, ethical and practical limitations, and risks being disproportionate to likely impacts anticipated for the Project. It may, however, be appropriate to identify specific actions in addition to the above that could help with understanding community mental health over the pre-construction, construction and operation periods. This could include reviewing the number and type of complaints or concerns raised during construction works through the complaints procedure identified. Complaints / concerns could be categorised by theme, type of action and speed of escalation. This would help understand where further communication may be required with local communities.</p>		
<p>LUS 1.2 Best and most versatile agricultural land (BMV) and soils - 1</p> <p>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'.</p>	<p>In relation to this issue, the surveys undertaken have focused on the areas within the Order Limits where these potentially acid sulphate soils could be present, and have confirmed that, at least to 1.2 m bgl at the locations surveyed, these soils are not present.</p> <p>As stated in 6.6.A1 Environmental Statement Appendix 6.1 – Agricultural Land Classification Report [APP-139], the detailed Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) surveys were undertaken in line with the revised ALC guidelines (see 6.6 Environmental Statement Chapter 6 - Agriculture and Soils [APP-138] for reference). As presented in 6.6.A1 Environmental Statement Appendix 6.1 - Agricultural Land Classification Report [APP-139], the 1,877 auger bore locations were set out at 100 m intervals along the central alignment of the Project, with a plot density of one auger per hectare at wider areas (e.g. substations). These are the locations which were surveyed or where the Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) grade was predicted. These points were set out early in the Project to enable surveys to commence. As part of the iterative design process, the design was reviewed at a number of points to assess if survey locations needed to be added or changed. These reviews considered what was proposed in each location. For example, in some locations for third-party utility works there would be limited impact (e.g. no soil stripping, short-term access required) and as such surveys were not considered necessary, but the areas were covered by the predictive model. As such, the survey work undertaken focused on the key aspects where there was the greatest potential for impacts.</p> <p>Soil Alert 1: Acid Sulphate Peats and Alluvium (available on the LandIS website) identifies multiple soil series that may be acid generating. Of these, within the Order Limits, only the Wallasea 1 and Mendham Soil Associations are present, with the Wallasea 1 Soil Association comprising potentially acid sulphate alluvium soils and the Mendham Soil Association comprising potentially acid sulphate peats.</p> <p>Within the Order Limits, the Mendham Soil Association is only present across and near to the Waveney Valley, as shown on</p>	<p>Natural England [REP4-344]</p> <p>In response to the Examining Authority's questions to Natural England on best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land and soils, Natural England has advised that it has sought further input from its specialist soils advisers to inform a detailed position. While that specialist advice has not been available within the timescale for this examination deadline, Natural England were engaged throughout the development and implementation of the predictive Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) grading methodology, including ongoing consultation on its scope, application and precautionary nature. On that basis, Natural England has confirmed that it remains broadly content with the approach adopted to date, pending receipt of specialist input.</p> <p>Extent and nature of survey coverage</p> <p>The ES confirms that detailed ALC and soil surveys were undertaken over approximately 1,011 ha, representing 54% of the proposed survey areas within the Order Limits. These surveys were prioritised in areas of permanent infrastructure and wider Order Limits where land access was available, and were supplemented by soil pits and deeper augering (to ~2 m) at representative locations, including targeted sampling within the Waveney Valley floodplain, specifically to test for peat and potentially acid sulphate soils.</p> <p>For the remaining unsurveyed areas (approximately 856 ha), a predictive ALC and soil assessment was carried out on a 100 m (~1 ha) grid across the entire Order Limits, integrating:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National soil maps (NATMAP), • Geological mapping, • Desk-based soil association data, 	<p>The response from Natural England is noted and welcomed and is reflected in 5.9.13 Draft Statement of Common Ground - Natural England [REP4-081]. As noted by Natural England, in addition to the ALC surveys, detailed surveys were undertaken in those areas where peat had been encountered in the Waveney Valley, and as such, the assessment has not solely relied on ALC survey information. The project has accepted that the surveys undertaken to date do not fully rule out the potential presence of these soils, and has identified measures to manage this. To add further detail to this commitment, the outline Soil Resources Plan will be updated to include more detail on the approach to managing any potential occurrences of these soils.</p>

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	<p>6.6.F6 Environmental Statement Figure 6.6 - Soil Association Map [APP-146]. As stated in 8.4.6 Applicant's comments on submissions received at Procedural Deadline A [REP1-136], the Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) surveys within the Waveney Valley did not identify any acid-generating soils down to 1.2 m below ground level (bgl).</p> <p>The Wallasea 1 Soil Association is only present near Tilbury but is not identified within the Order Limits, as shown on 6.6.F6 Environmental Statement Figure 6.6 - Soil Association Map [APP-146]. Therefore, the potential for these materials to be encountered is limited.</p> <p>The detailed ALC 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 acid sulphate soils within the surveyed areas. Should any evidence of acid sulphate soils arise during construction, appropriate investigation and mitigation measures would be implemented in accordance with best practice. Any occurrences encountered during construction would be managed as required by 7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [REP2-014] (commitments GH02 and GH08) to include activities such as toolbox talks, isolation of areas and treatment/off-site disposal of acidic materials. In addition, emerging research and evidence will be reviewed to detail procedures for any testing required – in March 2026 a Special Issue of the European Journal of Soil Science titled 'New horizons for acid sulfate soils research' was published by the British Society of Soil Science (through the publishers Wiley).</p> <p>In relation to this issue, the surveys undertaken have therefore focused on the areas within the Order Limits where these potentially acid sulphate soils could be present, and have confirmed that, at least to 1.2 m bgl, they are not present. The Applicant recognises that ALC surveys are point-based and only sample soil profiles to a depth of 1.2 m; therefore, not all potentially acid-generating soils within the Order Limits may have been identified. However, as noted, any occurrences encountered during construction would be managed as required by 7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [REP2-014] (commitments GH02 and GH08) along with any additional measures from emerging research outputs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed survey results (used to refine and ground-truth the model), Professional soil science judgement. <p>The use of predictive ALC grading to supplement areas where access was restricted is a pragmatic solution, especially when grounded in MAFF's revised guidelines and supported by high-quality baseline data. While predictive grading cannot replicate the precision of field-based surveys, its application across the full draft Order Limits allows for a comparative analysis that can validate the model's reliability and identify any systematic over- or underestimation of BMV land. The commitment to complete outstanding surveys post-submission and pre-construction is a critical safeguard, ensuring that the Soil Management Plan (SMP) is informed by the most accurate and site-specific data available. This staged approach supports responsible soil handling and reinstatement practices, however currently, it should be recognised that this approach does not align with best practise in land use planning.</p> <p>Evidence relating to acid sulphate soils</p> <p>The specific ES statement referenced by the Examiner (Applicant response 8.4.6, p.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" is supported in Chapter 6 by the following evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Targeted deeper soil sampling in the Waveney Valley (a recognised higher-risk setting for such soils) explicitly tested for potential acid sulphate conditions and found none, identifying only organic-rich (peaty) soils. Soil associations mapped across the Project are predominantly calcareous or base-rich clayey and loamy soils, particularly in the eastern and southern sections, which geochemically reduces the likelihood of acid sulphate soil development. No jarosite or indicative sulphidic horizons were identified in either the detailed surveys or the targeted floodplain investigations. <p>Applicability of conclusions to unsurveyed areas</p> <p>It is acknowledged in the ES that predictive mapping "is not definitive" and has limitations compared to direct survey. However, several factors support reasonable confidence that the absence of acid sulphate soils can be cautiously extrapolated across the Order Limits:</p>	

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<p>LUS 1.4 BMV and soils - 2 At OFH1 (part 2) Pylons East Anglia Ltd spoke about the potential presence of acid sulphate soils and referred to the report submitted with their RR [RR-2973] by Dr David Dent. In Dr Dent's report, he notes: "The correct test for an acid sulphate soil is soil reaction (pH below 4,) iron hydroxide precipitation in drainage water and straw yellow mottles of jarosite in the soil itself. But in the case of potential acid sulphate soils (i.e. not yet disturbed and, therefore, not yet acid) it is necessary to, incubate soil samples for three months in oxidising conditions, recording soil reaction before and after. Alternatively, apply hydrogen peroxide and record to resulting soil reaction. A potential acid</p>	<p><i>[Applicant's note: the written question was addressed to 'Natural England [,] All local authorities [, and] Pylons East Anglia Limited' in PD-014, therefore an Applicant Response was not provided]</i></p>	<p>1. High survey coverage for a linear NSIP – 54% detailed survey coverage, supported by targeted deeper investigations, is relatively extensive and exceeds reliance on Provisional ALC mapping alone. 2. Representative sampling of highest-risk environments – floodplain and organic-rich contexts were specifically investigated. 3. Ground-truthing of predictive data – predictive outputs were checked against surveyed areas to assess under- or over-estimation. 4. Commitment to post-consent soil surveys – the ES clearly states that Soil Resource Surveys will be undertaken post-consent / pre-construction in unsurveyed areas to inform the final Soil Resource Plan (SRP). Conclusion on LUS1.2 While the conclusion on the absence of acid sulphate soils is formally limited to the surveyed areas, the combination of extensive field data, targeted investigation in sensitive settings, predictive modelling validated by Natural England, and secured pre-construction surveys provides a reasonable and precautionary level of confidence. Importantly, the ES does not rely on this conclusion alone, as further surveys are embedded as a future requirement before construction. Natural England [REP4-344] Natural England is not the statutory consultee in respect of land contamination matters, which are addressed through mitigation measures GH02 and GH08. Responsibility for regulating and advising on contaminated land risks lies instead with the Local Planning Authority and the Environment Agency, reflecting the fact that GH02 and GH08 are concerned specifically with the prevention, assessment and management of contamination pathways and risks during construction. Natural England advises on the protection of soils and Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land within the planning system, acting as a statutory consultee in specific circumstances set out in legislation. While Planning Authorities are responsible for applying Government planning policy, Natural England must be consulted on certain development plans, environmental assessments, and development proposals, including Environmental Impact Assessment developments, Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs), and minerals and waste schemes involving restoration to agriculture. Under the Development Management (Procedure) Order, Natural England is consulted on planning applications that conflict with an adopted development plan and involve, or may involve, the loss of</p>	<p>The response from Natural England is noted and welcomed and is reflected in 5.9.13 Draft Statement of Common Ground - Natural England [REP4-081]. As noted by Natural England, the commitments GH02 and GH08 are concerned with the prevention, assessment and management of contaminant pathways and risks. The Project has accepted that the surveys undertaken to date do not fully rule out the potential presence of these soils, and has identified measures to manage this. To add further detail to this commitment, the outline Soil Resources Plan will be updated to include more detail on the approach to managing any potential occurrences of these soils.</p>

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<p>sulphate soil will have an initial pH in the normal range and certainly greater than 4.0, but a pH below 3.5 after incubation or peroxide treatment. No chemical analyses of soil samples are reported in the National Grid documentation other than reaction to hydrochloric acid to assess carbonates".</p> <p>Explain your methodology for testing and identification for acid sulphate soils.</p>		<p>20 hectares or more of BMV land, often including large-scale or speculative developments. It also advises on minerals and waste applications restored to agriculture under Schedule 5 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, focusing on soil handling, restoration quality, and aftercare. For NSIPs, Natural England's approach aligns with national policy requirements, with early pre-application engagement playing a key role in influencing design and reducing impacts on BMV land and soils. Matters within Natural England's remit focus on the sustainable use, handling and restoration of soil resources, rather than contamination control per se. The commitments secured through GH02 and GH08 complement, but do not overlap with, Natural England's advisory role, as they provide a precautionary framework to ensure that construction activities do not give rise to contamination risks that could indirectly undermine soil quality, agricultural productivity or wider environmental receptors. Protection of BMV land is instead addressed through the Outline Soil Resource Plan and wider Code of Construction Practice commitments, which secure appropriate soil stripping, storage, handling, reinstatement and timing of works to maintain soil structure and long-term agricultural capability. Accordingly, while Natural England's interests in agricultural land and BMV soils are fully recognised and addressed elsewhere within the DCO framework, it is not the statutory consultee for the contamination-specific controls secured through GH02 and GH08, which fall within the remit of other regulatory bodies.</p>	
<p>LV 1.14 ES Appendix 13.5 National Landscape assessment study - 2</p> <p>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)</p> <p>The local authorities are asked whether they agree with this</p>	<p><i>[Applicant's note: the written question was addressed to 'All local authorities' in PD-014, therefore an Applicant Response was not provided]</i></p>	<p>Little Horkesley Parish Council [REP4-330]</p> <p>The social qualities of the Dedham Vale include the wide open historic landscapes which are untroubled by modern infrastructure. Little Horkesley is exceptional in that industrialisation has not reached the village, and these iconic views and landscapes must remain as they have been over hundreds of years.</p> <p>These views have been captured by artists such as Constable and Gainsborough and are a national treasure. National Grid has demonstrated that their proposed pylons, sealing end compounds and the EACN whilst not built within the Dedham Vale will be hugely visible from within it. They themselves say that up to 23 pylons will be visible from up to half of the vale and up to 35 pylons in places.</p> <p>This makes absolutely no sense!</p> <p>The views for people within the AONB must be as unspoilt as those viewing the AONB from outside the designated area.</p>	<p>The Applicant has provided responses to similar landscape and visual concerns made in response by other Interested Parties to LV 1.14 in pages 262 to 281 of 8.4.10 Applicant's Comments on Responses to ExQ1 [REP4-229]. The Applicant refers Little Horkesley Parish Council to that document.</p>

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<p>conclusion and provide reasoning if you do not.</p>		<p>The cannot be described as “minor” or “insignificant” damage. It is enormous and will destroy the most social qualities of the vale for all future generations.</p> <p>The route MUST be modified to ‘avoid altogether’ both the vale and its setting as required in planning policy specifically set out to protect it. ‘Even residual damage is unacceptable’.</p>	
<p>LV 1.18 Mitigation Several local authorities raise concerns over mitigation measures, both in terms of language and terminology used, and also the principal of mitigation which in many cases may not be effectively possible or achievable. In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mitigative planting should not fall into the category of ‘additional mitigation’ or compensation and is instead required and necessary mitigation. • The proposed time length for maintenance and after care for replacement/reinstatement landscaping is inadequate. • Mitigation in many cases is not possible or achievable and so under the mitigation hierarchy compensation is required. Compensation packages should be put in place as part of a package to offset landscape and visual effects of the proposed development. <p>Respond to such concerns.</p>	<p>Mitigative planting should not fall into the category of ‘additional mitigation’ or compensation and is instead required and necessary mitigation</p> <p>The Applicant confirms that any proposed mitigation whether referred to as ‘embedded, standard or additional’ is mitigation required to reduce environmental effects. The Applicant has also stated in 6.5 Environmental Statement Chapter 5 - EIA Approach and Method [APP-135] that each topic chapter of the Environmental Statement has identified proposed mitigation measures (which could fall under ‘Avoid’, ‘Prevent’ or ‘Reduce’) that are required to address potential significant adverse effects of the Project, following the mitigation hierarchy. Mitigation is categorised as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embedded mitigation measures • Standard mitigation measures • Additional mitigation measures <p>Mitigative planting that falls into the category of ‘additional mitigation’ is considered by the Applicant to be required and necessary mitigation. The consideration of additional mitigation measures is presented in Section 8.6 of 6.8 Environmental Statement Chapter 8 - Ecology and Biodiversity [AS-026] and confirms additional mitigation comprises measures over and above any embedded and standard mitigation measures to further reduce significant environmental effects. The Applicant confirms the ‘additional mitigation’ is considered appropriate and adequate, in terms of its nature and scale, to address potential effects and has reached agreement on this position with Natural England - see ID 3.3.17 in 5.9.13 Draft Statement of Common Ground - Natural England [REP1-034].</p> <p>7.4 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan [REP2-018] provides a clear definition: ‘Additional mitigation refers to measures implemented beyond the initial Project design to further reduce or manage environmental impacts identified during the planning or construction phases. These measures are bespoke to the specific site and its unique constraints, ensuring they address the particular challenges and sensitivities of the location effectively.’</p>	<p>Suffolk County Council [REP4-335]</p> <p>SCC considers that the adaptive aftercare period needs to include a temporal element, meaning that plants should have grown successfully for 5 years prior to handover; in areas, with a high failure rate the aftercare period needs to be re-set to the time of replacement planting.</p>	<p>The Applicant has committed to a five-year aftercare period for all planting outside the Environmental Areas and a 30-year aftercare period for planting within the Environmental Areas. The five-year aftercare period is considered sufficient for successful establishment of the reinstatement planting across the Project. Whilst the Applicant has stated that the aftercare period will be adaptive, this will not include the extension of the aftercare period beyond the period committed to in 7.4 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan [Revision E]. Where planting fails within the five-year period, the plants will be replaced. The five-year aftercare period is supported by BS 8545:2014+A1:2026⁷, in addition to other guidance such as the most recent Tree Council guidance⁸ and government guidance on how to look after newly planted trees⁹. It is important to clarify that, although the Applicant will not continue to maintain the planting outside the Environmental Areas after the five-year aftercare period, these areas will be returned to the landowners in their previous condition and maintained as they were previously.</p>

⁷ British Standards Institution (2026) BS 8545:2014+A1:2026 Trees from nursery to independence in the landscape – Code of practice

⁸ National Highways, The Tree Council (2025) Caring for newly planted trees

⁹ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (2021) Guidance: Maintain new trees after restocking

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	<p>The proposed time length for maintenance and after care for replacement/reinstatement landscaping is inadequate</p> <p>The five-year monitoring period for replacement planting (outside the Environmental Areas) is considered sufficient to ensure successful plant establishment. 7.4 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan [REP2-018] states the planting will be undertaken by suitably experienced contactors in line with British Standards and follow general best practice principles outlined in Section 9.2 of 7.4 Outline Landscape and Ecological and Management Plan [REP2-018]. For example, Section 11.2 of BS 8545:2014+A1:2026 states <i>'Post-planting management and maintenance is important if longevity in the landscape is to be achieved. A full young tree management programme with budgetary provision should be in place for all planting schemes. This management programme should be in place for at least 5 years.'</i> The Applicant's commitment to a five-year aftercare period adheres to the recommendation set out in the British Standard. Further justification for this length of time is provided in response to written question LV 1.4.</p> <p>An extended 30-year aftercare period would apply to new areas of habitat creation within Environmental Areas in line with commitments made within 7.1 Biodiversity Net Gain Report [APP-299]. Based on the advice given in Mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain in England A Guide (CIEEM, IEMA, CIRIA, 2024) only 'on-site significant enhancements' would be subject to be maintained for at least 30 years after the development is completed.</p> <p>Mitigation in many cases is not possible or achievable and so under the mitigation hierarchy compensation is required. Compensation packages should be put in place as part of a package to offset landscape and visual effects of the proposed development</p> <p>The Applicant has addressed the need for landscape compensation in 8.8.2 Applicant's Comments on Local Impact Reports [REP2-030] (see section 3.10) and the response to written question LV1.28.</p> <p>The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (the EIA Regulations) state in Regulation 14(2)(c) that an Environmental Statement must include: <i>'a description of any features of the proposed development, or measures envisaged in order to avoid, prevent or reduce and, if possible, offset likely significant adverse effects on the environment'</i>. The important points here being that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Environmental Statement must include a description of measures envisaged, but not that this must result in all significant effects being mitigated or offset • The words 'if possible' are inserted before the word 'offset'. <p>The EIA Regulations therefore do not treat offsetting (or the similar word 'compensation') in the same way as prevention or reduction.</p>		

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	<p>The Environmental Statement is fully compliant with the EIA Regulations; it clearly sets out measures incorporated to avoid, prevent, reduce and, if possible, offset likely significant effects. The above aligns with The National Grid (Bramford to Twinstead Reinforcement) Order 2024, where the Examining Authority and the Secretary of State were similarly satisfied that there is no requirement in policy to compensate all residual landscape and visual effects.</p> <p>The Applicant is also of the view that compensation is not required for every environmental effect, unless it is expressly referred to in National Policy Statement (NPS) EN-1 (2024). It is particularly noteworthy that none of the policies on landscape and visual effects or historic environment in EN-1 or EN-5 (2024) expressly mention compensation. This is in contrast to text on biodiversity in particular and offshore wind, for example, the following paragraphs in EN-1 (2024):</p> <p><i>'5.4.6 The British Energy Security Strategy committed to establishing strategic compensation for offshore renewables NSIPs, to offset environmental effects but also to reduce delays for individual projects. See paragraphs 2.8.276 – 2.8.283 of EN-3 for further information.'</i></p> <p>Or, for example, under the heading of Biodiversity and Geological Conservation, NPS EN-1 (2024) states (our emphasis):</p> <p><i>'5.4.35 Applicants should include appropriate avoidance, mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures as an integral part of the proposed development.'</i></p> <p><i>'5.4.42 As a general principle, and subject to the specific policies below, development should, in line with the mitigation hierarchy, aim to avoid significant harm to biodiversity and geological conservation interests, including through consideration of reasonable alternatives (as set out in Section 4.3 above). Where significant harm cannot be avoided, impacts should be mitigated and as a last resort, appropriate compensation measures should be sought.'</i></p> <p>Similarly for ancient woodland, ancient trees, veteran trees and other irreplaceable habitats:</p> <p><i>'5.4.53 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 and a suitable compensation strategy exists.'</i></p> <p>Also, compensation is required where woodland loss is unavoidable:</p> <p><i>'5.11.27 Existing trees and woodlands should be retained wherever possible. In the EIP, the Government committed to increase the tree canopy and woodland cover to 16.5% of total land area of England by 2050. The applicant should assess the impacts on, and loss of, all trees and woodlands within the project boundary and develop mitigation measures to minimise adverse</i></p>		

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	<p><i>impacts and any risk of net deforestation as a result of the scheme. Mitigation may include, but is not limited to, the use of buffers to enhance resilience, improvements to connectivity, and improved woodland management. Where woodland loss is unavoidable, compensation schemes will be required, and the long-term management and maintenance of newly planted trees should be secured.</i></p> <p>The above policy context for biodiversity and loss of woodland is not present in the same way for landscape and visual impacts or heritage. None of the policies above on landscape and visual or heritage effects in EN-1 or EN-5 (2024) state that residual impacts are required to be compensated if they cannot be mitigated in the way they do for biodiversity and loss of woodland.</p> <p>7.4 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan Appendix B - Ancient Woodland and Veteran Tree Strategy [APP-323] details the compensation and mitigation strategies for veteran trees and ancient woodland affected. The commitments already made by the Applicant in relation to Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), measures proposed to seek to further the purpose of the National Landscape</p> <p>and the 3:1 replanting ratio for individual trees are considered to provide an appropriate package of compensation and enhancement measures to be delivered by the Project.</p>		
<p>LV 1.28</p> <p>Coordinated masterplans</p> <p>In their LIR, Babergh DC, Mid Suffolk DC and Suffolk CC [REP1-178] request that coordinated masterplans be produced covering landscape, ecology, archaeology and rights of way in highly affected areas – suggesting that plans are produced for Bramford, Burstall and the Gipping and Waveney Valleys.</p> <p>The ExA consider there is merit in this request and ask that coordinated masterplans are produced for the following areas, and that built heritage is also included in the plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gipping Valley • Waveney Valley (including Snow Street, Roydon, Roydon Fen and Wortham Ling) 	<p>This question raises the potential for coordinated cross-cutting masterplans covering landscape, ecology, archaeology, heritage and rights of way. There is an issue of principle to be addressed which goes to the nature, extent, scope and legality of the masterplans as sought by the relevant Local Authorities. The ExA might not be aware that the same Local Authorities raised the same in principle point at the Bramford to Twinstead Reinforcement (BTNO) Examination where it was rejected by the ExA and Secretary of State.</p> <p>The Local Authorities are clear that they take the view that any residual adverse impact that will not be mitigated must be compensated or offset in full by an applicant.</p> <p>For completeness, the premise for the request for full compensatory provision by Babergh DC, Mid Suffolk DC and Suffolk CC in paragraph 13.224 of the Joint Local Impact Report [REP1-178] is quoted below:</p> <p><i>'The Councils consider that residual adverse impacts, that cannot be mitigated, will need to be compensated, by means of wider landscape restoration and a coordinated Landscape, Ecology, Archaeology, and Rights of Way Masterplan, in particular, but not exclusively, in areas which are disproportionately affected by energy infrastructure, such as Bramford, Burstall, and the Gipping Valley, and in sensitive areas, such as the Waveney Valley.'</i></p> <p>This strategic compensation masterplan approach is the same as that advanced by Babergh DC, Mid Suffolk DC and Suffolk CC</p>	<p>Suffolk County Council [REP4-335]</p> <p>SCC is confused by the Applicant's response and is hoping to further engage with the Applicant in this matter. With regards to compensation, SCC does not expect the Applicant, or even consider it possible, to compensate or offset any residual effect. This is not, contrary to the Applicant's understanding, SCC's position.</p> <p>However, SCC does consider that all residual effects should be part of the equation, and compensation should reflect the magnitude and multitude of residual effects and be of equal weight and distribution. While focussing compensation on key areas is supported, SCC does not agree that all other areas along the route can be ignored.</p>	<p>Notwithstanding the Applicant's position in relation to the requirement for landscape compensation set out in Section 8.2e of 8.5.7 Applicant's Written Summary of Oral Submissions to Issue Specific Hearing 2 [REP4-302], the Applicant has engaged with Suffolk County Council on the matter of compensation and provided details of potential opportunities in 8.4.12.2 Response to ISH2 Action Point 27 - Masterplans [Revision A].</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burstall & Bramford • Ardleigh & Little Bromley • Colne Valley (including Fordham, Ford Street, Aldham) • Great & Little Waltham • Ingatestone & Buttbury • Hutton/ Mountnessing/ Havering's Grove 	<p>and rejected by the ExA in the Bramford to Twinstead Examination (see paragraph 3.9.141 of the Bramford to Twinstead ExA Report⁸⁰ for full report of issues by ExA).</p> <p>It is important before any work on masterplans or other documents takes place that there is a correct understanding of what can and cannot be required of an individual applicant in the context of the Planning Act 2008 and relevant policy. In particular, the proposition from the Local Authorities that residual impacts of a proposal must always be offset by compensation in full (including by off-site landscape works) for such impacts is simply not part of current National Policy Statement (NPS) policy.</p> <p>The Applicant's case on this matter has already been set out in the application documents and restated in Sections 2.5 to 2.7 and 3.10 of 8.8.2 Applicant's Comments on Local Impact Reports [REP2-030]. In summary, the following principles apply:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The provision and securing of full compensation or offset for any harmful impact of the proposal by binding masterplans would have to be necessary to make the development acceptable and secured by a requirement (which would itself have to pass the tests of necessity). The spending of customer's money on such works would not be authorised as appropriate expenditure by Ofgem unless on a proper reading of the policy it was required in order that consent should be granted. 2. The relevant guidance in NPS EN-1 (2024) indicates that residual impacts for critical national priority (CNP) infrastructure (even significant residual impacts following the operation of the mitigation hierarchy) are in fact inevitable and should not generally be a reason for refusing a DCO application (see EN-1 including paragraphs 3.1.2 and 4.2.17). 3. In the Bramford to Twinstead ExA Report (paragraphs 3.9.196 and 3.9.197) it was specifically accepted by the ExA that compensation is in this regard to be treated differently to the other elements of the mitigation hierarchy. The ExA, addressing Suffolk CC's submissions on this very issue, concluded that (our emphasis added): <i>'The EXA understands the local authorities' concerns that some of the impacts of the Proposed Development on landscape and views cannot be fully mitigated but does not concur that this should automatically mean that some form of compensation must be provided.'</i> This rejection of the same essential case made now again in relation to masterplanning for compensation of all harms remains appropriate and proportionate. If all harmful impacts have to be addressed and compensated as argued, then NPS EN-1 and NPS EN-5 would say so in terms. 4. NPS EN-1 paragraph 4.1.7 provides that for CNP infrastructure <i>'it is likely that the need case will outweigh the residual effects not capable of being addressed by the application of the mitigation hierarchy'</i>. 5. So, residual effects are likely an inevitable consequence and expectation of a CNP proposal. The existence of such inevitable harm does not give rise by itself to a requirement for a 		

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	<p>widespread scheme of automatic 'compensation' or offsetting of that inevitable impact (see Bramford to Twinstead ExA Report paragraph 3.9.196) but does require such harm to be outweighed by the need case for the proposal.</p> <p>6. This is reflected in the fact that the only meaningful references in NPS EN-5 to compensation occur only in Section 2.14 in the context of a government-led and different commitment for what is properly called wider strategic compensation for landscape and other impact of multiple offshore/onshore transmission infrastructure in an area (see NPS EN-3 (December 2025) paragraph 2.8.234). This provision is still 'under development'. Its application to proposals such as the Project will depend on that development. But this is separate to the provision argued for by the Local Authorities and indeed would not be necessary if all residual impacts were required to be compensated in any event as argued by the authorities.</p> <p>7. Compensation IS required for DCO schemes where it is explicitly stated in policy to be required or needed (in terms of the mitigation hierarchy), e.g. woodland loss or compensation for loss or deterioration of ancient and veteran trees (NPS EN-1 Section 5) or biodiversity or specific habitat compensation (see The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and the requirement for compensatory provision). The nature and extent of the compensation is provided for by policy and statute. The Project complies with all of these provisions of policy and statute.</p> <p>8. There is no such requirement or need (as part of the mitigation hierarchy or in the NPSs, National Planning Policy Framework or at all) for all landscape or heritage impacts or other impacts to be automatically compensated for or offset as suggested by the Local Authorities. Neither is there any method of calculating or calibrating how such compensation is derivable or whether it is even appropriate. The operation of the mitigation hierarchy must be seen in the light of the inevitability and acceptability of some significant residual impact which falls to be balanced against the benefits of the proposal. Given the above, it is not surprising that there has been no DCO we are aware of where such 'compensation for all residual harm' masterplans have been imposed by way of DCO requirement or where landscape or heritage harms have been required to be the subject of full compensation (as opposed to mitigation) requirements.</p> <p>9. So, overall, there is no specific requirement for all residual harms to be automatically compensated as argued for by the Local Authorities. The fundamental underlying premise of the Local Authorities' case is thus incorrect. Such an approach would be inconsistent with the NPS EN-1, EN-3 and EN-5 provisions when read as a whole, would be disproportionate and not necessary to the grant of permission. Neither would it be consistent with the requirement and duties of the Applicant to provide an efficient and economical supply of electricity. It would also be inconsistent with the careful and unchallenged decision of the ExA and the Secretary of State in BTNO.</p>		

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	<p>10. In the present case, in any event, the Local Authorities do not produce or even sketch out the extent of suggested strategic masterplan works in broad outline to be considered.</p> <p>11. Such a requirement would also be inconsistent with the strategic mitigation principles being developed by and under NPS EN-3 by government and set out above. The suggestion that there be a coordination between Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects in the production of formal masterplans is an interesting one and the ExA will know that the interaction between projects is taking place and is reported in 8.4.3 Report on Interrelationship with Other Infrastructure Projects [REP1-134].</p> <p>12. The Applicant does not consider that the preparation of a coordinated binding compensation masterplan between schemes is workable in the present circumstances. This is due to the following factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Applicant does not have control over third-party land or schemes, nor certainty as to their delivery, timing, or detailed design. • Many neighbouring proposals remain at varying stages of development and are subject to change. • There is no policy or legislative requirement to produce a unified masterplan across multiple independently promoted schemes. • The Environmental Statement provides a robust and proportionate mechanism for assessing and presenting cumulative landscape and visual effects. • The government is working up a specific strategic compensation approach as signposted in NPS EN-3 (see above) because of the difficulties involved in a single applicant engaging in such an enterprise and the delays that might arise. <p>13. In these circumstances, the underlying premise supporting the nature and extent of coordinated cross-scheme/cross-cutting masterplans is not accepted. The content of the masterplans potentially to be produced are the subject of a significant disconnect between the Local Authorities and the Applicant as to what can and cannot be required of the Applicant by way of compensation requirements.</p> <p>The Applicant is clear that the approach adopted by the ExA for the Bramford to Twinstead Reinforcement is correct in principle.</p> <p>Continuing Engagement by the Applicant with the Relevant Authorities</p> <p>The Project proposes a range of mitigation, compensation, enhancement and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) measures as set out in the application documents and other submissions to the ExA. These can and will be set out by area as identified in the question and agreed with the relevant authorities if possible. Further, the Applicant is continuing to engage with the relevant Local Authorities and stakeholders, as to how these measures</p>		

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	<p>can be most effectively implemented and coordinated, including in relation to certain targeted locations as in the BTNO case (see paragraph 3.9.194). The Applicant will provide further updates to the ExA as these discussions progress.</p> <p>The Applicant's position on providing coordinated cross-cutting cross-scheme compensation masterplans for the areas identified is very clear. The underlying premise upon which such a masterplan is envisaged by the Local Authorities to be based, namely the full compensation for all harmful impact, is simply not accepted to form part of the legal or policy tests of acceptability.</p> <p>Whilst we have set out our reasons why such coordinating masterplans of the type envisaged by the Local Authorities here and in BTNO are not necessary or required, the Applicant is and will continue to engage constructively in further discussions with relevant authorities to understand more specifically what is being requested and how best to utilise the proposed BNG and 3:1 tree planting and other commitments in targeted locations and will report back on progress by Deadline 4.</p>		
<p>LV 1.29 Waveney Valley</p> <p>Provide further justification for the route and method chosen for traversing the Waveney Valley south of Roydon. Include in your justification consideration of other pylon methods where relevant and applicable, such as shorter pylons or T-pylons, and the potential impact of such methods in terms of landscape impacts. The contents of ES Chapter 3 [APP-127] are noted by the ExA regarding other reasons for choice of OHL over undergrounding in this location.</p>	<p>All alternative routes necessitate a crossing of the Waveney Valley and have been considered to both the east and west of the proposed alignment. Corridors and routes diverging further west interact with Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation and would have been longer so were not progressed. The routes considered and reasons for the selection of that taken forwards are set out in detail in Section 4.6 of 5.15 Design Development Report [APP-122]. In summary, other corridors/routes to the east (either closely paralleling the existing overhead line or passing further to the east) encounter barriers to development such that the Applicant's position is that they are not viable. Other corridors/routes further west present a different balance of effects to that of the proposed connection, and whilst community effects may be reduced this does not offset increased effects on ecological resources including peaty soils.</p> <p>The preferred corridor and route has been refined through field survey, data acquisition and informed by feedback with a series of adjustments to the east for the valley crossing and alignment to the south.</p> <p>The use of alternative pylon types or underground cable comes through application of the mitigation hierarchy and is sequentially applied if the effects arising from the standard lattice design are considered to be unacceptable in planning terms. It is the Applicant's position that the appropriate decision making basis is not that there is a reduction in effects through the use of T-pylon compared with lattice pylons, but that, in line with the mitigation hierarchy, the lattice pylon effects must be unacceptable in policy terms before T-pylons are considered. The area is not subject to national landscape designation so the presumption in National Policy Statement (NPS) EN-5 (2024) for the use of overhead line is not reversed.</p>	<p>Suffolk County Council [REP4-335]</p> <p>As stated in the Joint Suffolk LIR [REP1-178], SCC are seeking compensatory measures for the impacts on the Waveney Valley following the Applicant's progression to date through the Mitigation Hierarchy.</p>	<p>Notwithstanding the Applicant's position in relation to the requirement for landscape compensation set out in Section 8.2e of 8.5.7 Applicant's Written Summary of Oral Submissions to Issue Specific Hearing 2 [REP4-302], the Applicant has engaged with Suffolk County Council on the matter of compensation at the Waveney Valley and provided details of potential opportunities in 8.4.12.2 Response to ISH2 Action Point 27 - Masterplans [Revision A].</p>

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	<p>The Applicant also notes that the test against paragraph 2.9.23 of NPS EN-5 (2024) is not met, on the basis that landscape and visual effects are not widespread in this location, and neither are the effects arising from lattice pylons considered unacceptable in policy terms. In terms of landscape and visual effects, these are set out in 6.13 Environmental Statement Chapter 13 - Landscape and Visual [APP-226], with reasoning provided for the judgements of the levels of effect identified.</p> <p>The Waveney Valley is underlain by three Landscape Character Types (LCTs) / Landscape Character Areas (LCAs). The following landscape effects are identified during construction and operation, as set out in 6.13.A2 Environmental Statement Appendix 13.2 - Landscape Baseline and Assessment [APP-228]:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waveney Rural River Valley LCA (high sensitivity) - effects are identified as major and significant (adverse) within 0.5 km, moderate and significant (adverse) between 0.5 km and 1.5 km, and minor and not significant (adverse) elsewhere in the LCA (paragraphs 13.3.155 to 13.3.170). • Wooded Valley Meadowlands and Fens LCT (high sensitivity) - effects are identified as moderate and significant (adverse) within 0.5 km, minor and not significant (adverse) between 0.5 km and 1.5 km, and negligible and not significant elsewhere in the LCT (paragraphs 13.3.198 to 13.3.212). • Rolling Valley Farmlands and Furze LCT (medium sensitivity) - effects are identified as moderate-major and significant (adverse) within 0.5 km during construction, reducing to moderate and significant (adverse) during operation. Between 0.5 km and 1 km effects are identified as moderate and significant (adverse). Elsewhere in the LCT effects are identified as minor and not significant (adverse) (paragraphs 13.3.183 to 13.3.197). <p>The level of landscape effects reported in the assessment indicate that significant adverse effects are largely contained within approximately 0.5 km of the Project, generally reducing to not significant between approximately 0.5 km and 1.5 km, depending on local variations in landscape character.</p> <p>The following visual effects on Visual Receptor Areas (VRAs) are identified during construction and operation, as set out in 6.13.A3 Environmental Statement Appendix 13.3 - Visual Baseline and Assessment - Part 1 of 4 [APP-229]:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VRA A11 Fen Street - major and significant (adverse) within approximately 0.5 km, reducing to moderate and significant (adverse) between approximately 0.5 km and 1.5 km (from page 46). • VRA A12 Roydon and Diss - major and significant (adverse) within approximately 0.5 km, reducing to minor and not significant (adverse) between approximately 0.5 km and 1.5 km (from page 49). • VRA B1 Wortham - major and significant (adverse) within approximately 0.5 km, reducing to moderate and significant 		

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	<p>(adverse) between approximately 0.5 km and 1.5 km (from page 52).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VRA B2 Palgrave - major and significant (adverse) within approximately 0.5 km, reducing to moderate and significant (adverse) between approximately 0.5 km and 1.5 km (from page 56). <p>These assessments are supported by representative viewpoints where the following effects are identified in 6.13.A3 Environmental Statement Appendix 13.3 - Visual Baseline and Assessment - Part 1 of 4 [APP-229]:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Viewpoint 1.19 Bressingham Steam Museum – approximately 0.6 km from the Project, minor and not significant (adverse) visual effects during construction and operation (from PDF page 479). • Viewpoint 1.21 PRoW near Roydon Fen – approximately 0.6 km from the Project, moderate and significant (adverse) visual effects during construction and operation (from PDF page 484). • Viewpoint 2.01 Ling Road, Wortham Ling – approximately 0.4 km from the Project, moderate-major and significant (adverse) visual effects during construction and operation (from PDF page 490) • Viewpoint 2.03 PRoW Palgrave – approximately 0.8 km from the Project, moderate and significant adverse visual effects during construction and operation (from PDF page 494) <p>The level of visual effects reported in the assessment indicates that significant adverse effects are largely contained within approximately 0.5 km of the Project, noting that effects would not be significant from everywhere between approximately 0.5 km and 1.5 km. The level of effect would vary due to local variations in visual screening from factors such as landform, topography and intervening vegetation. The Applicant's position is that widespread landscape and visual consequences of the change are not reported at the Waveney Valley and thus paragraph 2.9.23 of NPS EN-5 is not engaged.</p> <p>Even if effects were at a level to engage consideration of the use of underground cable, the Applicant's position is that the combination of ground conditions, soils and ecology (including implications for the WaLOR Landscape Recovery Project – a project looking to renaturalise and restore wetland environments of the Waveney and Little Ouse rivers) create limitations and disadvantages to different methods of cable installation to make them far less preferred, and potentially incompatible with WaLOR objectives. The potential use of a tunnel broadly between the CSEs proposed for the WVA (at an additional estimated cost of over £100m more than underground cable installed by more conventional open cut trenching means) may overcome the disadvantages of other cable installation techniques but at a cost that the Applicant considers is not justified noting the policy (NPS EN-5 in paragraph 2.9.23 and following paragraphs) and</p>		

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	<p>mitigation hierarchy points raised above in the context of the Applicants regulatory duties on being economic and efficient. Likewise heritage effects arising from a standard lattice overhead line design solution are not unacceptable. The Applicant's assessment concluded less than substantial harm to the grade I listed Church of St Remigius on the northern edge of the valley, and while there is disagreement between the Applicant and Historic England on the level of less than substantial harm, Historic England do not disagree with the conclusion of less than substantial harm (for more detail on this please refer to the Applicant's Deadline 2 response to the Historic England's Written Representation, in 8.8.1 Applicant's Comments on Written Representations [REP2-029]). As less than substantial harm is concluded, this does not engage the provisions of NPS EN-1 (2024) paragraph 5.9.31. On this basis there is no reason to consider progressing up the mitigation hierarchy to consider other pylon types or other installation techniques and the Applicant's position is that the route and use of Overhead Line on Lattice Pylons is consistent with NPS EN-1 and EN-5.</p> <p>Nonetheless the potential to utilise low height pylons for the crossing of the Waveney Valley was considered in paragraph 4.6.11 of 5.15 Design Development Report [APP-122]. This previous consideration noted that changes of direction were expected to restrict low height lattice use to RG87 (now renumbered as RG86) and one or two pylons to the south, and also that whilst reducing height and visibility somewhat their use would not remove the limited visibility of the tops of pylons. It also noted that the different appearance from the more squat form along with the transitional wirescape from the different crossarm configurations may increase visual effects for users of recreational routes and may also increase the tree removal needed due to the wider span. On balance, low height lattice pylons were not preferred. T-pylons are further up the mitigation hierarchy and in this case bring additional disadvantages due to the need to maintain mobile work platform access in an area of floodplain and high water table and are similarly less preferred.</p>		
<p>SET 1.5 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</p>	<p>The Applicant has reviewed the documents where 'where practicable' has been used and has provided information on each term below.</p> <p>The Applicant notes that the definition of 'where practicable' was considered in the Sizewell C Project Examination. The definition provided to the examining authority by the applicant in that case was as follows:</p> <p><i>"Where Practicable' means that the action should be done unless the degree of risk in a particular situation cannot be balanced against the time, trouble, cost and physical difficulty of taking measures to avoid the risk. In practice this means that something that would avoid a significant impact must be done in almost all circumstances. It would only be acceptable not to take the</i></p>	<p>Essex County Council [REP4-328] ECC has undertaken a comprehensive review of whether it is appropriate to use 'where practicable'. This a is attached as Appendix D <i>[Applicant's note: reference to Appendix D here is incorrect and should instead refer to Appendix C in REP4-328]</i> Appendix C, ECC's Response on the various uses of "where practicable" in the mitigation measures (REP 3-074, SET 1.5) The appendix includes Essex County Council's response on the use of 'where practicable' in relation to proposed mitigation. It begins by addressing three general points before turning to specific items. The general points refer</p>	<p>Please refer to the Applicant's response to Action Point 2 in 8.4.12 Applicant's Comments on Post-Hearing Submissions and Interested Party Action Points [Revision A].</p>

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<p>of this term and your suggestions in regard to any alternative forms of wording.</p>	<p><i>relevant step if there would not be a significant impact as a result, and therefore the risk would be low</i>".</p> <p>This definition was accepted by the examining authority and the use of 'where practicable' was considered by the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero, following a consultation on the use of the term suggested by the examining authority, to be appropriate without any further amendments to the Order or further securing mechanisms. Further, use of the term 'where practicable' is common across many other consented DCO projects including the Bramford to Twinstead Project, the Lower Thames Crossing Project and the Gatwick Airport Northern Runway Project.</p> <p><i>[Applicant's note: table providing a justification of the use of 'practicable' has not been replicated here due to length and format, see REP3-074 for original]</i></p>	<p>to the Sizewell C definition, varying use of 'where practicable', and the use of the wording "the rest of the paragraph explains what will happen if this is not possible". The item-by-item analysis refers to 7.3 Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan, 7.6 Outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan, 7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice - the OCoCP commitments, 7.4 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan, and 7.5 Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and Outline WSI.</p>	

**Appendix A.
Applicant's
Comments on
[REP4-328]
Appendix D**

Appendix A Applicant's Comments on [REP4-328] Appendix D

Table A.1 Applicant's Comments on [REP4-328] Appendix D - ECC Highway Authority response to ExQ1 GEN 1.21 and Appendix E

Topic Matter	Mechanism of Agreement	Purpose of Agreement	ECC's Comments	Applicant's Response
Review of Monitoring	S106 Agreement	To secure funding for officer's to review information provided by the applicant and/or ongoing discussion	It is not clear that this funding would be included in the Framework Highways Agreement and so should be included explicitly in the s106 Agreement. Route adherence; HGV numbers; Pre- and post construction condition surveys; Junction operation (mitigation)	The Applicant agrees in principle to providing funding for the Council's costs relating to this activity. The Applicant will engage with Essex County Council (ECC) to agree appropriate drafting to be included within a legal agreement (such as a planning performance agreement) to be entered into between the parties.
Review of CWTP	S106 Agreement	To secure funding for officer's time in reviewing targets and measures with the applicant and ongoing discussions around suitable measures	It is standard practice that costs associated with officer's time in reviewing and discussing Travel Plans are included in s106 Agreements.	The Applicant agrees in principle to providing funding for the Council's costs relating to this activity. The Applicant will engage with ECC to agree appropriate drafting to be included within a legal agreement (such as a planning performance agreement) to be entered into between the parties.
Pre and Post Construction Condition Surveys	S106 Agreement	Administering requests for repairs to highway where condition survey shows issues	It is not clear that this funding would be included in the Framework Highways Agreement and so should be included explicitly in the s106 Agreement.	Recovery of costs such as these is provided for in the 'Extraordinary Traffic' provisions of the Framework Highways Agreement. The Applicant notes that it awaits substantive comments from ECC on the proposed agreement terms and would welcome a response.
Highway Checks	S106 Agreement	Observations of routes and impacts including liaison with Members, Parish Council, Contractor and Members of the Public	This work is outside of the standard workstream for inspections associated with access design costs. Additional funding is sought; should be included in the s106 Agreement.	The Applicant agrees in principle to providing funding for the Council's costs relating to this activity. The Applicant will engage with ECC to agree appropriate drafting to be included within a legal agreement (such as a planning performance agreement) to be entered into between the parties.
PROW Network Discussions	S106 Agreement	To allow for site meetings with the Contractor and queries/discussions in relation to design and implementation where PROW are affected	It is not clear that this funding would be included in the Framework Highways Agreement and so should be included explicitly in the s106 Agreement.	The Applicant agrees in principle to providing funding for the Council's costs relating to this activity. The Applicant will engage with ECC to agree appropriate drafting to be included within a legal agreement (such as a planning performance agreement) to be entered into between the parties.
Road Safety Review	S106 Agreement	To allow for officer time attending the drive through review of the PARs prior to construction	Officer time requires funding; should be included explicitly in the s106 Agreement.	The Applicant agrees in principle to providing funding for the Council's costs relating to this activity. The Applicant will engage with ECC to agree appropriate drafting to be included within a legal agreement (such as a planning performance agreement) to be entered into between the parties.
Structural Reviews	S106 Agreement	To allow for officer time on reviewing structures prior to construction	Significant structures team input expected; funding should be included explicitly in the s106 Agreement.	The Applicant agrees in principle to providing funding for the Council's costs relating to this activity. The Applicant will engage with ECC to agree appropriate drafting to be included within a legal agreement (such as a planning performance agreement) to be entered into between the parties.

**Appendix B.
Response to SCC
comments on 8.9.1
(A) Applicant's
Response to First
Written Questions –
Appendix A (Answer
to DCO 1.S8) [AS-090]**

Appendix B Response to Suffolk County Council comments on 8.9.1 (A) Applicant’s Response to First Written Questions – Appendix A (Answer to DCO 1.S8) [AS-090]

Table B.1 Response to SCC comments on 8.9.1 (A) Applicant’s Response to First Written Questions – Appendix A (Answer to DCO 1.S8) [AS-090]

Table Item	Service Area and/or Topic	Topic Referenced Paragraph or Item	SCC’s Comments	Applicant Response
10.1	(1) Prior to the submission of any detailed written scheme of investigation for approval, the undertaker must carry out archaeological evaluation works in accordance with the outline archaeological mitigation strategy and outline written scheme of investigation, unless otherwise agreed with the relevant planning authority following consultation with the relevant county planning authority and, if relevant, Historic England.	This drafting relates to host authority relevant representations to which the Applicant responded on pages 148, 213, 230, 331, 487 and 581 of the 8.4.1 Applicant’s Responses to Relevant Representations at Deadline 1 (with a revised version issued at Deadline 2) [REP2-023], which request explicit reference to a separate evaluation stage of archaeological work, before securing a detailed investigations stage as mitigation. For the purpose of the discussion draft, the Applicant has added a new paragraph (1) at the beginning of Requirement 5 (Archaeology). It expressly provides that the Applicant must carry out evaluation works in accordance with the OAMS and OWSI, unless otherwise agreed with the relevant authority in consultation with Historic England, where relevant. The Applicant is satisfied that this aligns with its proposed approach.	Evaluation works must follow the methodology set out in an approved OAMS and OWSI. A Detailed Written Scheme of Investigation for archaeological evaluation must be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the relevant planning authority and, where applicable, Historic England. However, the applicant’s proposed requirement wording does not provide for the submission and approval of Detailed Written Schemes of Investigation for the post-consent evaluation stage (covering both geophysical survey and trial trenching). The OAMS and OWSI do not specify the extent or location of the evaluation or the techniques to be applied, because the final construction layout is not yet known. Trial trench evaluation must target the areas affected by development for both pre-commencement works and construction; those details have not been finalised. To ensure the archaeological works are proportionate and effective, we have agreed that post-consent trial trenching will focus on areas of development impact to inform a subsequent programme of archaeological mitigation.	The Applicant has updated Requirement 5 in 3.1 Draft Development Consent Order [Revision E] to provide for the submission and approval of site-specific detailed written schemes of investigation for evaluation and trial trenching works.
10.2	(2) No stage of the authorised development may commence until either a preservation in situ management plan, or detailed written schemes of investigation of areas of archaeological interest relevant to that stage (if any), as identified within the outline archaeological mitigation strategy and outline written scheme of investigation or identified through evaluation work as set out in the outline archaeological mitigation strategy and outline written scheme of investigation, has been submitted to and approved by the relevant discharging planning authority in following consultation with the relevant county planning authority and, if relevant, Historic England.	This drafting relates to comments in host authority local impact reports to which the Applicant responded on pages 183–185 and 192 of 8.8.2 Applicant’s Comments on Local Impact Reports [REP2-030] . In response at Deadline 3, the Applicant has revised its definition of ‘relevant planning authority’ and has added a definition of ‘relevant county planning authority’. The Applicant has also accepted Suffolk County Council and Babergh and Mid Suffolk’s request to make reference to the ‘written scheme of investigation’ plural and this was incorporated into the 3.1 Draft Development Consent Order [REP2-004] at Deadline 2. Requirement 5 is now drafted such that approval of details is the responsibility of ‘the relevant planning authority following consultation with the relevant county planning authority and, if relevant, Historic England’.	SCCAS would recommend the following amendment to the requirement wording: (2) No stage of the authorised development and/or pre-commencement works may commence until either a preservation in situ management plan, or detailed written schemes of investigation of areas of archaeological interest for archaeological evaluation and/or archaeological mitigation relevant to that stage (if any), as identified within produced in accordance with the outline archaeological mitigation strategy and outline written scheme of investigation or identified through evaluation works set out in the outline archaeological mitigation strategy and outline written scheme of investigation , has been submitted to and approved by the relevant discharging planning authority in following consultation with the relevant county planning authority and, if relevant, Historic England. Any works that cause ground disturbance have the potential to significantly impact archaeological heritage assets, therefore, all works should be scoped within the requirement for the DWSIs. If the production of DWSIs and implementation of archaeological works, are appropriately timetabled, this should not adversely	The Applicant has adjusted this paragraph to clarify for consistency with 7.5 Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and Outline Written Scheme of Investigation [Revision B] (OAMS-OWSI) that a preservation in situ management plan would, if relevant, form part of a detailed written scheme of investigation as opposed to being separate. However, the Applicant has not made the further amendments proposed by the Council because it remains concerned that a blanket prohibition on intrusive site preparation works would prevent anything being done on site that would, even to the smallest degree, break the surface of the ground. This could include de minimis activities such as the erection of a fence post. Whilst the Applicant recognises the need to ensure that buried archaeology is suitably preserved, its position is that in the context of a project of critical national priority, a

Table Item	Service Area and/or Topic	Topic Referenced Paragraph or Item	SCC's Comments	Applicant Response
			impact delivery timetables. This would also remove the need to suggested requirement (5) (see below). The amendment adds in pre-commencement works, so DWSIs can be submitted post determination but prior to commencement of works, allowing the archaeological evaluation works and mitigation works to continue prior to the commencement of the authorised development. This will assist the applicant in maintaining their delivery schedules, whilst securing appropriate protections for the historic environment (archaeology). It also removes the need for the suggested requirement wording (1). For other NSIP projects in Suffolk, the ExA has requested that the SEAlink requirement wording includes pre-commencement works and Sizewell C DCO is for all terrestrial works	blanket prohibition is disproportionate and unnecessary. The Applicant considers that the measures set out in the updated OAMS-OWSI, together with its identification of priority areas and the extensive trial trenching that it has already carried out to date, would ensure the adequate protection of buried archaeology during pre-commencement works.
10.3	(4) Each detailed written scheme of investigation must be substantially in accordance with the outline archaeological mitigation strategy and outline written scheme of investigation and must identify areas where archaeological works are required and the measures to be taken to protect, record or preserve any significant archaeological remains that may be found and must include— (a) an assessment of significance and research questions; (b) the programme and methodology of site investigation and reporting; (c) the programme for post-investigation assessment; (d) proposals for providing for the analysis of site investigation and recording; (e) proposals for providing archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation; (f) nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the detailed written scheme of investigation; and (g) an implementation timetable.	The Applicant has accepted Suffolk County Council and Babergh and Mid Suffolk's request to make begin this paragraph with the word 'Each' instead of 'The'. This was incorporated into the 3.1 Draft Development Consent Order [REP2-004] at Deadline 2 and no further changes to this paragraph are proposed.	SCCAS welcome this amendment, as it provides clarity over multiple DWSIs required to deliver a programme of archaeological evaluation and archaeological mitigation.	Noted.
10.4	<u>(5) Intrusive site preparation works must not take place</u>	This drafting is proposed by Braintree District Council and Chelmsford City Council and also	Any works that cause ground disturbance have the potential to significantly impact archaeological heritage	Please refer to the Applicant's comments above regarding a blanket prohibition on

Table Item	Service Area and/or Topic	Topic Referenced Paragraph or Item	SCC's Comments	Applicant Response
	<p><u>until an archaeological or geoarchaeological written scheme(s) of investigation in accordance with the outline written scheme(s) of investigation as appropriate has been submitted to and approved by the relevant planning authority following consultation with the relevant county planning authority and, if relevant, Historic England. The archaeological or geoarchaeological written scheme(s) of investigation required under this sub-paragraph must be implemented as approved.</u></p>	<p>addresses a request raised by Essex County Council in its Local Impact Report [REP1-161] that the original Requirement 5(4) is replaced by wording that requires intrusive site preparation works to be carried out in accordance with an archaeological or geoarchaeological written scheme of investigation to be approved by the relevant authority. The Applicant has updated references to the relevant planning authority and consultation with the relevant county planning authority and Historic England to be consistent with 3.1 Draft Development Consent Order [Revision C]. The inclusion of a provision such as this is of great concern to the Applicant. It significantly and unacceptably limits the scope of pre commencement operations that can be carried out prior to commencement of the authorised development, despite those pre commencement operations having been assessed in the Environmental Statement. Furthermore, the OAMS and OWSI, together with the original Requirement 5(4) (pre commencement works to be carried out in accordance with the OAMS and OWSI), sufficiently control these works. In the context of a Project of critical national priority, the ability to carry out pre commencement operations which include ground investigations, is imperative to ensure that specified preparatory works can be carried out in parallel to the discharge of the pre-commencement Requirements. The restriction proposed by Essex County Council risks severely delaying the carrying out of preparatory works ahead of commencement of the authorised development. As the Applicant has noted previously, Annex 2 of the NESO Clean Power 2030 Report1 identifies that if the Applicant delivers the Project by the end of 2031 instead of by the end of 2030, the consumer would be exposed to additional constraints costs in excess of £2.5 billion. This equates to £7 million for every day that the energisation of the Project is delayed into 2031.</p>	<p>assets, therefore, all works should be scoped within the requirement for the DWSIs. If the production of DWSIs and implementation of archaeological works, are appropriately timetabled, this should not adversely impact delivery timetables. For other NSIP projects in Suffolk, the ExA has requested that the SEALink requirement wording includes pre-commencement works and Sizewell C DCO is for all terrestrial works.</p>	<p>any intrusive site preparation works. The Applicant has not included this proposed amendment.</p>
10.5	<p><u>(6) Unless otherwise agreed with the local planning authority— (a) No later than one year following the completion of the fieldwork specified in each site-specific written scheme of investigation, a site-specific post excavation assessment (PXA) for that site must be completed in accordance with the detailed written scheme of investigation and</u></p>	<p>This drafting has been proposed by Braintree District Council in its Local Impact Report [REP1-148]. As noted above, the Applicant considers that the Requirement as included in 3.1 Draft Development Consent Order [Revision C] sufficiently addresses these concerns by virtue of any detailed WSI needing to be substantially in accordance with the OAMS and OWSI. The Applicant notes that the existing drafting is consistent with that contained in the National Grid (Bramford to Twinstead Reinforcement) Order 2024. However, should the Examining Authority consider that further clarity is required, then the Applicant's position is that the</p>	<p>We believe that the AMS-OWSI and DWSIs between them provide sufficient detail for the production of the PXAs, however, 6(a) provides a timepoint to secure delivery of these documents, and therefore SCCAS support this. However, the OAMS-OWSI and DWSIs cannot provide sufficient detail for the Updated Project Design, as this is developed in response to the archaeology that is identified and excavated during the fieldwork phase. There needs to be a requirement to submit the UPD to ensure that it meets appropriate standards and provides an adequate representation of the further works required and costs involved, including analysis, publication, outreach and archiving.</p>	<p>Please refer to the updated Requirement 5 wording in 3.1 Draft Development Consent Order [Revision E] which sets out a process for post-excavation assessment, approval of an archaeological updated project design, post-excavation analysis, publication and archiving.</p>

Table Item	Service Area and/or Topic	Topic Referenced Paragraph or Item	SCC's Comments	Applicant Response
	<p><u>submitted to the local planning authority for approval.</u></p> <p><u>(b) No later than one year following the approval of the final site specific post excavation assessment, an archaeological updated Project design for all applicable sites, must be submitted to the local planning authority for approval. The archaeological updated Project design must be produced in general accordance with the detailed written scheme of investigation for each stage, include details of the scope of post-excavation analysis and publication and have regard to the site-specific research agendas set out in the site-specific written schemes of investigation.</u></p> <p><u>(c) Post excavation analysis and publication must be carried out in accordance with the approved archaeological updated Project design and provision made for the full archive to be submitted to the appropriate museum.</u></p>	<p>inclusion of paragraph (6)(a) of this discussion draft, together with paragraph (7) of this discussion draft, would be the clearest approach to adopt. The Applicant would note that the use of paragraph (6) and (7) together in their entirety would include some duplication, however, both provisions are included in this table for completeness.</p>	<p>This should also have a time point linked to it to ensure timely delivery. We therefore support the inclusion of 6(b). (b) No later than one year following the approval of the final site-specific post excavation assessment, an archaeological Updated Project Design for all applicable sites, must be submitted to the local planning authority for approval. The archaeological Updated Project Design must be produced in general accordance with the <u>Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and Outline Written Scheme of Investigation</u> and Detailed Written Schemes of Investigation for each stage, <u>and must</u> include details of the scope of post-excavation analysis, <u>publication, outreach and archiving</u> and have regard to the site-specific research agendas set out in the Detailed Written Schemes of Investigation. SCCAS are happy for the inclusion of 6(c), however, if 6(b) can be secured as worded above, 6(c) would be surplus to requirement, as post excavation analysis, publication and archiving should be detailed in an approved UPD. The approved UPD must be implemented as approved.</p>	
10.6	<p><u>(7) No later than two years after the completion of the construction phase of work, an Updated Project Design must be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The Updated Project Design must be in general accordance with the approved Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and Outline Written Scheme of Investigation, and relevant Detailed Written Schemes of Investigation, and set out</u></p>	<p>The Applicant notes that this provision, requested by Suffolk County Council and Babergh and Mid Suffolk in their combined Local Impact Report [REP1-178] is very similar to that proposed as parts (b) and (c) of paragraph (6) of this discussion draft. The two would not need to coexist and, as noted above, the Applicant would suggest that the drafting could reasonably and appropriately include paragraph (6)(a) and paragraph (7), with the timings for compliance being brought into alignment.</p>	<p>SCCAS would agree with the proposal from the applicant that 6(a) and (7) can be combined to provide delivery of post-excavation analysis, publication, outreach and archiving.</p>	Noted.

Table Item	Service Area and/or Topic	Topic Referenced Paragraph or Item	SCC's Comments	Applicant Response
	<u>scope for full post excavation analysis, publication, and address the site specific research agendas. Post excavation analysis and publication must be carried out in accordance with the approved Updated Project Design.</u>			
10.7	<u>(8) The full archaeological archive, both physical and digital, must be deposited to the relevant archaeological archive repository, for that County, in accordance with the approved archaeological Updated Project Design.</u>	The Applicant is content for this amendment to be included in a future draft of the 3.1 Draft Development Consent Order as this is standard practice.	SCCAS support the inclusion of this requirement.	Noted.
10.8	(4) All pre-commencement operations must be carried out in accordance with the outline archaeological mitigation strategy and outline written scheme of investigation, unless otherwise agreed with the relevant discharging authority in consultation with Historic England.	The Applicant is greatly concerned about the potential impact the proposed replacement of this provision (Requirement 5(4) in the 3.1 Draft Development Consent Order [Revision C]) with the text at new paragraph (5) of this discussion draft would have on the delivery of the Project. As noted above, the proposed replacement wording significantly and unacceptably limits the scope of pre commencement operations that can be carried out prior to commencement of the authorised development, despite those pre commencement operations having been assessed in the Environmental Statement. Furthermore, the OAMS and OWSI, together with the original Requirement 5(4) (shown deleted here for the purposes of this discussion draft), sufficiently control these works. In the context of a Project of critical national priority, the ability to carry out pre commencement operations which include ground investigations, is imperative to ensure that specified preparatory works can be carried out in parallel to the discharge of the pre-commencement Requirements. The restriction proposed by Essex County Council risks severely delaying the carrying out of preparatory works ahead of commencement of the authorised development. As the Applicant has noted previously, Annex 2 of the NESO Clean Power 2030 Report identifies that if the Applicant delivers the Project by the end of 2031 instead of by the end of 2030, the consumer would be exposed to additional constraints costs in excess of £2.5 billion. This equates to £7 million for every day that the energisation of the Project is delayed into 2031.	Any works that cause ground disturbance have the potential to significantly impact archaeological heritage assets, therefore, all works should be scoped within the requirement for the DWSIs. If the production of DWSIs and implementation of archaeological works, are appropriately timetabled, this should not adversely impact delivery timetables. For other NSIP projects in Suffolk, the ExA has requested that the SEALink requirement wording includes pre-commencement works and Sizewell C DCO is for all terrestrial works	Please refer to the Applicant's comments above regarding a blanket prohibition on any intrusive site preparation works. The Applicant has not made this proposed amendment.

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