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Norwich to Tilbury

Volume 8: Examination Documents

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Final Issue A

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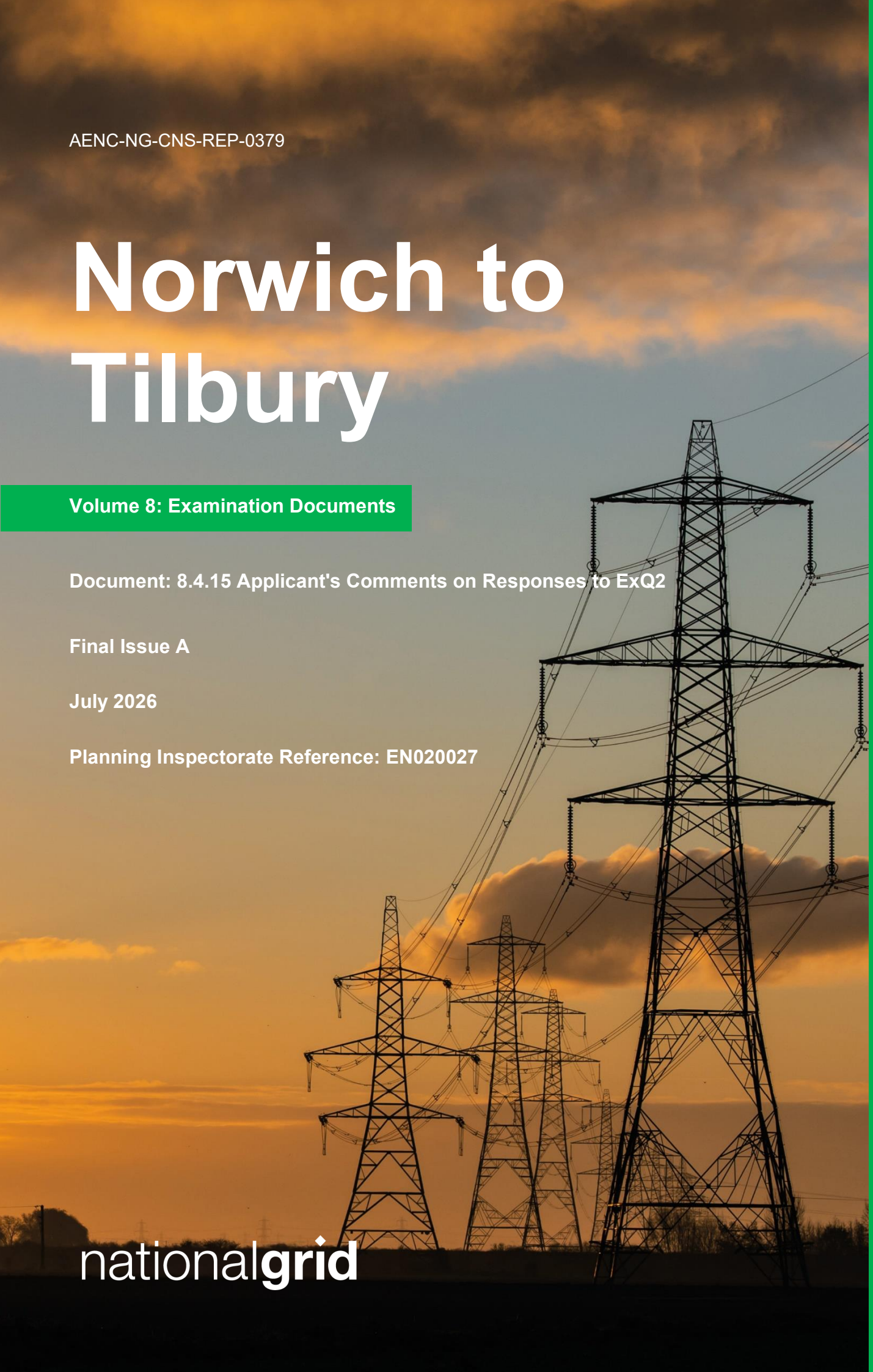

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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Document

1.1.1 This document provides the Applicant's comments on responses provided by Interested Parties (IPs) and Affected Parties (APs) to the Examining Authority's second written questions (ExQ2) **[PD-023]**. Responses were submitted at Deadline 5, 10 June 2026.

1.1.2 The Applicant has reviewed the responses to questions directed to other parties (or jointly to other parties and the Applicant) and provides comments where clarification, correction, or further context is necessary or helpful. The Applicant highlights that in some cases written questions directed solely to the Applicant have been responded to by other Interested Parties (IPs) and Affected Persons (APs); the Applicant has also responded to these in line with the approach described above. Where the Applicant has no comment, or the IP response only confirmed no comment or deferral of their response, the IP response has not been included.

1.1.3 The Applicant has identified two IP submissions that on review, appear to provide commentary on ExQ2 rather than direct responses to the question, for example by expressing support for the question or identifying other, related points of relevance to the question topic. These are primarily pages 7 to 9 of the Pylons East Anglia (PEA) response **[REP5-264]** and Appendix A of the Ardleigh Parish Council and Little Bromley Parish Council response **[REP5-227]**. These submissions also contain detailed appendices on topic-specific matters. The Applicant has therefore responded to these submissions in **8.4.14 Applicant's Comments on any Further Information or Submissions Received by Deadline 5 (Revision A)**.

1.1.4 This document also provides an update, where appropriate, on the Applicant's own response to ExQ2 as published in **8.9.2 Applicant's Responses to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]**, where the Applicant committed to providing such an update at Deadline 6.

1.2 Document Structure and Content

1.2.1 The first section of this document provides the Applicant's update on its own ExQ2 responses as described above.

1.2.2 The second part of this document is structured into the ExQ2 topics, with one table per topic. Where the Applicant's comments relate to more than IP response, the column is merged and the comments are not repeated. It should be noted that in several instances, the Local Authorities have submitted responses to ExQ2 that are identical or materially the same in terms of content. In these instances, to aid legibility for the reader and prevent duplication, only one ExQ2 response has been provided and the names of all authorities who submitted that response, or materially similar ones, are listed. On a precautionary basis, where responses are similar but raise a materially different point, this approach is not followed, or the point is highlighted as belonging to one authority only.

1.2.3 Appendices are provided for particularly lengthy or detailed ExQ2 responses.

- Appendix A: Norfolk County Council **[REP5-257]**, LLFA Review of Drainage Strategy
- Appendix B: Applicant's Comments on LV 2.18 Villages Against Pylons **[REP5-277]**
- Appendix C: Comments on Norfolk Gliding Club responses to GEN2.1 and SS2.8(b) **[REP5-259]**

2. Applicant Update on its Responses to ExQ2

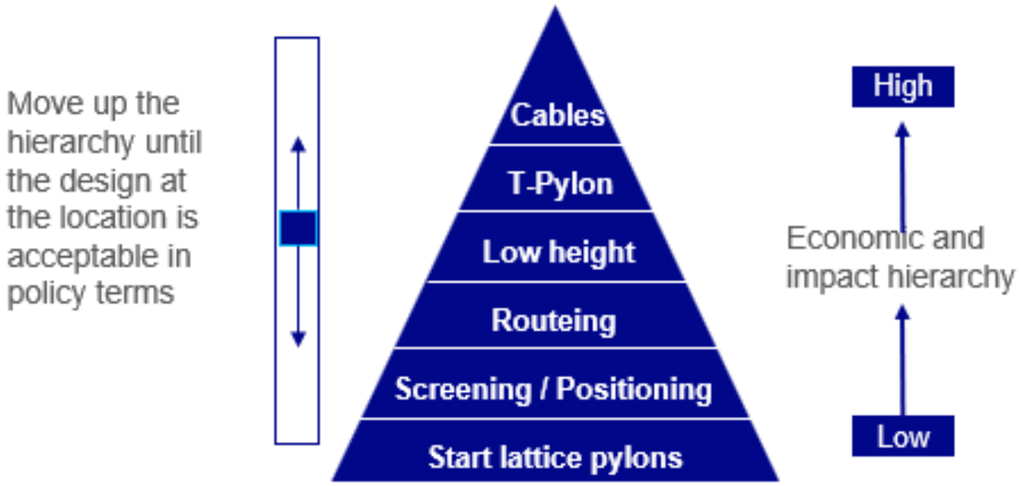
2.1 Overview

2.1.1 In a small number of its responses to ExQ2 in **8.9.2 Applicant's Responses to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]**, the Applicant committed to provide an update to its response at Deadline 6. This is provided below, with the Applicant's original response as set out at Deadline 5 and an update in the last column.

Reference	Question to	Question	Applicant's Responses at Deadline 5 [REP5-211]	Applicant's Update
GEN 2.5	The applicant	Cumulative Assessment – Inter-Project Effects ES Chapter 17 - Cumulative Effects - Response Update [REP4-163] provides an update to the inter-project cumulative effects assessment including other existing and, or approved developments that have been identified since 1 April 2025 and up to and including 31 January 2026. A further update to capture other existing and, or approved developments after the 1 February 2026 is proposed for deadline 7. Confirm the cut-off date that will be used for other development considered in the deadline 7 cumulative assessment. The applicant is asked to provide a further response update at deadline 6 (or provide reasoning why this is not necessary), with the final consolidated ES including cumulative assessment (clean and tracked change versions) provided no later than deadline 7.	The Applicant confirms that the cut-off date of 8 May 2026 will be used for the Deadline 7 revision of **6.17.1 Environmental Statement Chapter 17 - Cumulative Effects - Response Update [Revision B]**, to allow for submission at Deadline 7. Given the scale and size of the Project and the two week timescale between Deadline 6 and Deadline 7, the Applicant does not consider that an interim update would reasonably include any meaningful assessment and therefore proposes that a further response at Deadline 6 is not provided. Nonetheless, the Applicant will keep the position under review ahead of Deadline 6.	The Applicant will issue an update to **6.17.1 Environmental Statement Chapter 17 - Cumulative Effects - Response Update [REP4-163]** at Deadline 7.
DES 2.3	The applicant	Independent Design Review - 3 The processes undertaken regarding routing and siting are noted within the applicant's response to ExQ1 DES1.3 [REP3-074]. However, and notwithstanding the proposed transmission lines, the proposed development includes two new substations and extensions to two existing ones. Given the nature of substations, many of these such works may not constitute 'buildings', particularly those within the AIS substations or extensions and therefore may not be controlled through requirement 12 of the draft DCO [REP4-037]. Independent design review of such works would seem to help ensure that the substations are examples of good design as far as possible. Respond to this point generally and specifically for each proposed substation and extension (the answer regarding EACN may cross refer to the answer to DES 2.2).	The Applicant notes the wide definition of 'building' in article 2 and considers that the definition is sufficient to ensure that the requirement will result in the relevant buildings being constructed in accordance with the 7.16 DASSI [Revision C]. It is to be noted that Requirement 12 was always intended to apply to buildings in the traditional sense of that word, i.e. structures with walls and roofs, and not electrical circulatory equipment and structures such as gantries and related or associated electrical equipment that must meet certain performance and safety standards that drive their form and function as recognised in the National Policy Statement (NPS) EN-1 (2024) on fitness for purpose and functionality (paragraph 4.7.1 and 4.7.11) and EN-5 (paragraph 2.4.3 and 2.4.4). In that respect the Applicant would like to draw attention to the definitions under section 64 of the Electricity Act 1989 that provide a clear distinction on what amounts to 'electrical circulatory equipment' as opposed to a 'building' in the traditional sense and meaning of that word. Together electricity plant and electric lines comprise 'electrical circulatory' equipment:	Notwithstanding the definition of a 'building' in Article 2, Requirement 12 of the draft DCO now incorporates provisions to define permanent buildings. Furthermore, Section 5 of the DASSI has been updated to identify the elements of each substation to be submitted for review by the Design Review Panel. Updated versions of the draft DCO and the DASSI - **3.1 Draft DCO [Revision F]** and **7.16 Design Approach for Site Specific Infrastructure (DASSI) [Revision D]** - have been submitted into examination at Deadline 6.

Reference	Question to	Question	Applicant's Responses at Deadline 5 [REP5-211]	Applicant's Update
			• *"electrical plant" means any plant equipment, apparatus or appliance used for, or for purposes connected with the generation, transmission [distribution] or supply of electricity, other than:* a) an electric line; b) a meter used for ascertaining the quantity of electricity supplied to any premises; or c) an electrical appliance under the control of a consumer; • "*electric line" means any line which is used for carrying electricity for any purpose and includes, unless the context otherwise requires* a) any support of any such line, that is to say, any structure, pole or other thing in, on, by or from which any such line is or may be supported, carried or suspended; b) any apparatus connected to any such line for the purpose of carrying electricity; and c) any wire, cable, tube, pipe or other similar thing (including its casing or coating) which surrounds or supports, or is surrounded or supported by, or is installed in close proximity to, or is supported, carried or suspended in association with, any such line;' The definition under section 64 is fundamental to National Grid operations and responsibilities to meet our statutory duties under Part 1 of the Electricity Act 1989. This distinction is also of particular importance for Air Insulated Switchgear (AIS) substations that comprise of outdoor electrical circulatory equipment. The 7.16 DASSI [Revision C] confirms there is no scope to vary the colour and finish of the electrical equipment needed. Whilst some electrical plant and machinery need to be housed in a building for protection, these will be limited in number, comprise of smaller prefabricated buildings integrated within the wider open air electrical plant, machinery and apparatus. However, the Applicant is reviewing the terms of Requirement 12 alongside consideration of the matters raised above concerning the scope of Requirement 12 and the buildings it is expected to cover to establish if greater clarity can be provided on this issue above concerning which part of the authorised development should be subject to design review given the wide definition of 'building' in article 2, either in the Requirement 12 or the DASSI, or both. The Applicant will update the position by Deadline 6.	

Reference	Question to	Question	Applicant's Responses at Deadline 5 [REP5-211]	Applicant's Update
			[Remainder of response regarding the DASSI not replicated here as not relevant to the update – see REP5-211 for full response]	
LV 2.4	The applicant Suffolk County Council Essex County Council Babergh District Council Tendring District Council Dedham Vale National Landscape and Stour Valley Partnership	Link pillars 3 The ExA are considering how the siting and detailed design of the link pillars and compounds are secured and approved by the relevant discharging authority, bearing in mind requirement 12 relates only to buildings. a) The applicant is asked to provide an appropriate form of wording in the draft DCO and / or control documents. This should include (but not limited to) siting, colour, appearance, compound size, surface treatment, fencing appearance and dimensions, and maintenance access. b) Do the relevant discharging authorities have any views on how detailed design matters should be controlled and discharged?	As set out above in LV 2.2, the siting of joint bays and link pillars is influenced by many factors. Furthermore, as explained in **8.5.8 Applicant's Response to Issue Specific Hearing 2 Action Points [REP4-303]** (page 27), 'the link pillars are considered in the assessment within 6.13 Environmental Statement Chapter 13 - Landscape and Visual [APP-226] and accompanying appendices [APP-228 to APP-232 and APP-235]. The landscape and visual assessment related to the underground cables and associated link pillars is based on the description within paragraphs 4.9.13 to 4.9.16 of 6.4 Environmental Statement Chapter 4 - Project Description [APP-130]. The findings of the landscape and visual assessment are that the introduction of above ground link boxes along the underground cable route would form small components in some views. These would be locally perceptible as relatively discreet features.' a) The Applicant has updated the Design Approach for Site Specific Infrastructure (DASSI) to include the requested information and has re-issued the document at Deadline 5 (7.16 Design Approach for Site Specific Infrastructure (DASSI) [Revision C]). Section 5.6 of the DASSI outlines the design co-ordination for the link pillars, providing further details on: • Boundary treatment • Surface treatment • External colour of the link pillar cabinet. The DASSI is a certified document under Schedule 19 of the **3.1 Draft Development Consent Order [Revision E]**. The Applicant is considering appropriate requirement drafting to secure link pillar design matters and will provide an update at Deadline 6.	Requirement 12 of **3.1 Draft DCO [Revision F]** now incorporates provisions to define permanent buildings and link pillars, ensuring that the design details of the link pillars - where approval by the Local Planning Authority is required - are secured within the Requirement. The design details of the link pillars required to be approved comprise the following: a) Colour of control cabinet b) Ground surface treatment c) Fencing appearance.
LV 2.14	The Applicant	Mitigation hierarchy The applicant's response to various first written questions and confirmed at ISH2 considers that low height pylons are a 'step up' from the standard lattice pylons in the mitigation hierarchy, despite their price being in the same cost range (ExQ1 HE1.4 [REP3-074]) because of the generally additional consequences of the broader cross-arms of the lower pylons [REP4-302]. Provide further information on the differences between the two types of pylon and what	*[Relevant section of Applicant response extracted – please see REP5-211 for full response]* The Applicant is currently preparing a graphical representation of the 'step up' in mitigation hierarchy along similar lines as shown above (in a pyramid formation) for Deadline 6.	The Applicant has prepared the graphic representation below to illustrate, at a high level, the 'step-up' from standard lattice pylons and how this conceptually fits within one element of the mitigation hierarchy. It is important to note that this graphic focuses on a single aspect of the optioneering process, which forms only one part of the wider mitigation hierarchy followed by the Applicant.

Reference	Question to	Question	Applicant's Responses at Deadline 5 [REP5-211]	Applicant's Update
		differentiates them in the mitigation hierarchy. A graphical representation of the applicant's view of the mitigation hierarchy would also be useful in this respect.	 The mitigation hierarchy is a broad concept, and its precise application is considered in the context of the nature of the potential impacts being considered. The visual is provided to aid the description given to 'step up' from the standard lattice pylons.	Accordingly, it should be read alongside the more detailed explanations provided in the Applicant's other submissions regarding the mitigation hierarchy, the policy requirements that underpin it, and the way the Applicant has applied that hierarchy in each case.

3. General and cross-topic questions

Table 3.1 General and cross-topic questions

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
GEN 2.1	The applicant All interested parties	Final deadlines and statements of common ground (SoCG) The scale of the proposed development and volume of documentation submitted into the examination by all parties is considerable. The applicant and all interested parties (IPs) are reminded of the four remaining deadlines in the examination timetable and are referred to the Rule 8 letter dated 17 February 2026 [PD-011] which sets out what the ExA expects to receive at each deadline. • deadline 5: 10 June (the additional deadline 5A on 17 June is limited to certain responses only) • deadline 6: 7 July • deadline 7: 21 July • deadline 8: 4 August All parties are reminded that there is no need to resubmit comments which have already been made in earlier deadlines. If an IP continues to be dissatisfied with the unchanged response from the applicant, they should set out clearly those points in summary form in their final comments at deadline 7; there is no requirement to respond at every deadline unless new information has arisen which they wish to comment on. Cross-reference should be made to the examination library references where possible in all submissions. The ExA also reminds all parties of the importance of setting out matters which the parties agree on, and which they continue to disagree on. This can be set out in SoCGs or written summaries at the final deadline 8 (by 4 August 2026). The ExA expects SoCGs to be signed by both parties involved in each SoCG and urges the relevant IPs to engage in these so that their comments are accurately reflected within the documents.	**Basildon Borough Council** With regard to the following matters: i) Biodiversity Net Gain ii) Tree Replacement Planting Programme iii) National Landscape Duty (section 85) iv) Location-specific Compensatory Measures v) Abnormal Indivisible Loads Basildon proposes that these requests should form a bilateral or multi-party S106 agreement or S111 agreement, or other such hybrid agreement known as a Deed of Obligation. The Council considers that section 122(2) of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 and at paragraph 58 of the National Planning Policy Framework are the relevant policy tests, as below: • necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms; • directly related to the development; and • fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.	The Applicant notes Basildon Borough Council's comments. i) and ii) Whilst the Application originally proposed a s106 unilateral undertaking to secure offsite BNG and offsite tree planting subject to the 3:1 commitment, following further consideration the Applicant is proposing to secure these measures through **3.1 draft DCO [Revision F]** in the form of requirements. **3.1 Draft DCO [Revision F]** was updated at Deadline 6 to reflect this change. iii) A bilateral s106 agreement is being negotiated and finalised with Suffolk County Council in relation to the National Landscape duty. A draft unsigned copy of the agreement was submitted at Deadline 5 (**8.25 National Landscape – DRAFT – Agreement pursuant to section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 [REP5-224]**) and a further updated version at Deadline 6 (**8.25 National Landscape – DRAFT – Agreement pursuant to section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 [Revision B]**). iv) The Applicant's position in relation to the location-specific compensatory measures was set out in **8.4.12.2 Response to ISH2 Action Point 27 – Masterplans [REP5-199]** in addition to Appendix A of **8.9.2 Applicant's Responses to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]** and **8.5.12 Applicant's Written Summary of Oral Submissions and Responses to Action Points for Issue Specific Hearing 4 [Revision A]**. v) The Applicant is negotiating a separate legal agreement with Essex Police and Suffolk Constabulary for Police escorts of Abnormal Indivisible Loads (AILs).
		Norfolk Gliding Club *[Full response provided in* Appendix C *due to length]*	Please refer to Appendix C for the Applicant's response.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
GEN 2.2	The applicant All local authorities	**Legal Agreements** Further to first written question (ExQ1) GEN 1.21, the applicant provided a table (appendix E [REP3-074]) outlining the legal agreements requested to date by local authorities and setting out its comments, including on whether (or not) such an agreement would meet the relevant tests. All local authorities are invited to provide: further comments on appendix E [REP3-074], or if already done this, to signpost to the ExA where in the examination library your comments on such matters can be found. In particular, the ExA seeks comments from the local authorities on how they consider each of its requests would meet the relevant policy tests (including regulation 122 of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010). The applicant is asked to provide: • an update to the table of the requests • a summary of any ongoing agreements with local authorities which are being progressed, with expected time periods for completion • an update to the document 'Consents and licences required under other legislation' as necessary to include such other forms of agreement • updates to SoCG with local authorities as necessary to reflect agreement or non-agreement on the need for such agreements	**Braintree District Council** Braintree District Council responded to Appendix E, including matters of CIL compliance within its Deadline 4 response (REP4-323), Section 3.9.	The Applicant submitted **8.13 Outline Employment and Skills Plan [REP5-215]** at Deadline 5. The commitment to the preparation and submission of a Final Employment and Skills Plan, and to carrying out the Project in accordance with the Plan, is secured through a requirement within **3.1 Draft Development Consent Order (DCO) [Revision F]**.
			Chelmsford City Council Details on this are set out in CCC's LIR REP1 – 153, response to ExQ1 REP3 – 075, with detailed reference contained within CCC's response to ISH2 hearings, REP4 – 326. CCC outlined its expectations of legal agreements in answer to ExQ1 GEN1.21, The requests are • Biodiversity Net Gain • Tree Replacement Planting Programme • Skills, Training and Supply Chain • Location specific Compensatory Measures including Great and Little Waltham heritage compensation • Community Benefit CCC proposes that these requests should form a bilateral or multi-party S106 agreement or S111 agreement, or other such hybrid agreement known as a Deed of Obligation. The Council considers that section 122(2) of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 and at paragraph 58 of the National Planning Policy Framework are the relevant policy tests, as below: • necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms; • directly related to the development; and • fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development. CCC understands that the Applicant has voluntarily proposed the BNG schedule (thereby necessary). This has been proposed as a Unilateral Undertaking; however, the Host Authorities believe that this should be a multi-party agreement and that approval should be sought and that mechanisms could be introduced in the agreement to avoid over-complication regarding decision-making. Recognising that BNG is not (as yet) a requirement for NSIPs to deliver, CCC considers that at least 10% BNG should be sought if achievable to compensate for the adverse impacts experienced	The Applicant notes Chelmsford City Council's request for legal agreements and whilst we had shared detailed s106 unilateral undertakings in relation to offsite BNG and offsite tree planting with the Local Planning Authorities for their comment, following further consideration the Applicant is proposing to secure these measures through **3.1 draft DCO [Revision F]** in the form of requirements. **3.1 Draft DCO [Revision F]** was updated at Deadline 6 to reflect this change. The Applicant welcomes the Council's support for its BNG commitment and 3:1 replanting ratio for individual trees. Veteran trees would be compensated in accordance with **7.4 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan – Appendix B – Ancient Woodland and Veteran Tree Strategy [Revision C]**. The replanting ratio to compensate for the loss of any veteran tree would be 30:1 with further details provided within the final Ancient Woodland and Veteran Tree Strategy. The Applicant submitted **8.13 Outline Employment and Skills Plan [REP5-215]** at Deadline 5. The commitment to the preparation and submission of a final Employment and Skills Plan, and to carrying out the Project in accordance with the Plan, is secured through a requirement in **3.1 Draft DCO [Revision F]**. The Applicant's position in relation to the location-specific compensatory measures was set out in **8.4.12.2 Response to ISH2 Action Point 27 – Masterplans [REP5-199]** in addition to Appendix A of **8.9.2 Applicant's Responses to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]** and **8.5.12 Applicant's Written Summary of Oral Submissions and Responses to Action Points for Issue Specific Hearing 4 [Revision A]**. If development consent is granted, the Project would deliver a Community Fund of approximately £30 million. This funding would only become available following consent and once construction has started.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			on the environment as a direct result of the construction of the proposed development (thereby directly related). The metric of 10% BNG is an established precedent for projects of equal and lesser scale (thereby in scale and kind). The Tree Replacement Planting Programme has been proposed by the Applicant to replace any trees removed at a 3:1 ratio. CCC considers that vegetation removal and tree loss should follow the Mitigation Hierarchy, as identified in EN-1 (avoid, mitigate, compensate). CCC deems that the tree replacement planting programme represents mitigation compensatory measures (thereby necessary). As this schedule relates to replacing trees lost which must be removed if the proposed development is progressed, the Council considers this directly related to the proposed development (thereby directly related). The Council does not yet know how many trees will be removed and how many of those will be veteran trees /or ancient woodland, therefore any costing is subject to this confirmation, however, CCC supports the 3:1 proposal as forwarded by the Applicant with additional consideration for the loss of any veteran trees / ancient woodland to be agreed with the Applicant (thereby in scale and kind). CCC considers that the Applicant should endeavour to sign a legal agreement in regard to location-specific compensatory measures including Great Waltham and Little Waltham. The Council considers that these sensitive locations have experienced significant adverse in combination and/or cumulative effects and that compensation is the next step of the Mitigation Hierarchy to explore (thereby necessary and directly related). The Council has been engaging with the Applicant to justify its requests and explain the potential opportunities as the Council perceives them. CCC therefore awaits further dialogue with the Applicant to finalise proposals (thereby in scale and kind). Similarly, engagement is ongoing regarding Skills, Training and Supply Chain CCC has previously made its views known regarding the lack of suitable compensation for residents. Similarly appropriate landscape mitigation / compensation remains outstanding.	In line with UK Government guidance: • Community benefit funds are voluntary and policy-led • They sit outside the planning and consenting regime • They are not mitigation and are not used to justify or secure consent. As set out in the ExA's Rule 17 letter of 30 June 2026 **[PD-029]**, Community benefit funds are therefore distinct from: • Planning mitigation and obligations; and • The Employment and Skills Plan, where any employment or skills impacts and opportunities arising directly from the development would be considered through the planning process. Community funds instead provide additional, discretionary benefits, over and above what would ordinarily be delivered as part of the Project.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			Colchester City Council CCC have seen a draft Section 106 agreement. In brief, the requests are i) Biodiversity Net Gain ii) Tree Replacement Planting Programme iii) National Landscape Duty iv) Location-specific Compensatory Measures v) Abnormal Indivisible Loads CCC proposes that these requests should form a bilateral or multi-party S106 agreement or S111 agreement, or other such hybrid agreement known as a Deed of Obligation. The Council considers that section 122(2) of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 and at paragraph 58 of the National Planning Policy Framework are the relevant policy tests, as below: • necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms; • directly related to the development; and • • fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development. Concerning the BNG schedule, CCC understands that the Applicant has voluntarily proposed this schedule (thereby necessary). This has been proposed as a Unilateral Undertaking; however, the Host Authorities believe that this should be a multi-party agreement and that approval should be sought and that mechanisms could be introduced in the agreement to avoid over-complication regarding decision-making. Recognising that BNG is not (as yet) a requirement for NSIPs to deliver, the Council considers that at least 10% BNG (but ideally more) should be sought if achievable to compensate for the adverse impacts experienced on the environment as a direct result of the construction of the proposed development (thereby directly related). The metric of 10% BNG is an established precedent for projects of equal and lesser scale (thereby in scale and kind). The Tree Replacement Planting Programme has been proposed by the Applicant to replace any trees removed at a 3:1 ratio. The Council considers that vegetation removal and tree loss should follow the Mitigation Hierarchy, as identified in EN-1 (avoid, mitigate, compensate). CCC deems that the tree replacement planting programme represents compensatory measures (thereby necessary). As this schedule relates to replacing trees lost which must be	The Applicant notes Colchester City Council's comments. i) and ii) Whilst the Application originally proposed a s106 unilateral undertaking to secure offsite BNG and offsite tree planting subject to the 3:1 commitment, following further consideration the Applicant is proposing to secure these measures through **3.1 draft DCO [Revision F]** in the form of requirements. **3.1 Draft DCO [Revision F]** was updated at Deadline 6 to reflect this change. iii) A bilateral s106 agreement is being negotiated and finalised with Suffolk County Council in relation to the National Landscape duty. A draft unsigned copy of the agreement was submitted at Deadline 5, **8.25 National Landscape - DRAFT - Agreement pursuant to section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 [REP5-224]** and an updated version at Deadline 6 (**8.25 National Landscape - DRAFT - Agreement pursuant to section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 [Revision B]**). iv) The Applicant's position in relation to the location-specific compensatory measures was set out in **8.4.12.2 Response to ISH2 Action Point 27 – Masterplans [REP5-199]** in addition to Appendix A of **8.9.2 Applicant's Responses to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]** and **8.5.12 Applicant's Written Summary of Oral Submissions and Responses to Action Points for Issue Specific Hearing 4 [Revision A]**. v) The Applicant is negotiating a separate legal agreement with Essex Police and Suffolk Constabulary for Police escorts of Abnormal Indivisible Loads (AILs). The Applicant welcomes the Council's support for its BNG commitment and 3:1 replanting ratio for individual trees. Veteran trees would be compensated in accordance with **7.4 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan – Appendix B – Ancient Woodland and Veteran Tree Strategy [Revision C]**. The replanting ratio to compensate for the loss of any veteran tree would be 30:1, with specific details of the planting provided within the final Ancient Woodland and Veteran Tree Strategy.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			removed if the proposed development is progressed, the Council considers this directly related to the proposed development (thereby directly related). The Council does not yet know how many trees will be removed and therefore any costing is subject to this confirmation, however, CCC supports the 3:1 proposal as forwarded by the Applicant (thereby in scale and kind). The National Landscape Duty, as section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (as amended) dictates, is the requirement to "seek to further the purpose" of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty ("AONB"). As the project will traverse through the Dedham Vale AONB, the Council considers that this is required (thereby necessary and directly related). The Council has proposed a cost schedule based on the Management Plan of the National Landscape (thereby in scale and kind), for which the Applicant has accepted as an approach. CCC considers that the Applicant should endeavour to sign legal agreement in regard to location-specific compensatory measures in Essex as requested by ECC on behalf of all of the greater Essex host LPAs. CCC understands that discussions are underway with ECC to potentially deliver compensatory planting on ECC owned land across the County and CCC support this approach. The Council also understands that the Applicant is seeking to agree resourcing for police escorts for Abnormal Indivisible Loads, however, the Council seeks to ensure that obligations such as to undertake Structural Surveys on proposed routes are secured (thereby necessary and directly related). This matter does not requirement financial compensation, rather protection for the Local Highway Authority (thereby in scale and kind).	
			Essex County Council (ECC) **Brentwood Borough Council** *(defers to ECC)* ECC outlined its expectations of legal agreements in answer to ExQ1 GEN1.21, in the main body of its Deadline 4 submission and in respect of various highway matters, in Appendix D of the same submission [REP4 328] In brief, the requests are in respect of: i) Biodiversity Net Gain ii) Tree Replacement Planting Programme iii) Framework Highways Agreement	i) and ii) The Applicant notes the Councils' request for legal agreements and whilst we had shared detailed s106 unilateral undertakings in relation to offsite BNG and offsite tree planting with the Local Planning Authorities for their comment, following further consideration the Applicant is proposing to secure these measures through **3.1 draft DCO [Revision F]** in the form of requirements. **3.1 Draft DCO [Revision F]** was updated at Deadline 6 to reflect this change. The Applicant welcomes the Councils' support for its BNG commitment and 3:1 replanting ratio for individual trees. Veteran trees would be compensated in accordance with **7.4 Outline Landscape and**

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			iv) Abnormal Indivisible Loads v) Highway Management Contributions vi) Skills, Training and Supply Chain vii) Location specific Compensatory Landscape Measures including Dunton Hills Graden Village viii) Community Benefit ECC proposes that these requests should form a bilateral or multi-party S106 agreement or S111 agreement, or other such hybrid agreement known as a Deed of Obligation. The Council considers that section 122(2) of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 and at paragraph 58 of the National Planning Policy Framework are the relevant policy tests, as below: • necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms; • directly related to the development; and • fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development. Concerning the BNG schedule, ECC understands that the Applicant has voluntarily proposed this schedule (thereby necessary). This has been proposed as a Unilateral Undertaking; however, the Host Authorities believe that this should be a multi-party agreement and that approval should be sought and that mechanisms could be introduced in the agreement to avoid over-complication regarding decision-making. Recognising that BNG is not (as yet) a requirement for NSIPs to deliver, the Council considers that at least 10% BNG should be sought if achievable to compensate for the adverse impacts experienced on the environment as a direct result of the construction of the proposed development (thereby directly related). The metric of 10% BNG is an established precedent for projects of equal and lesser scale (thereby in scale and kind). The Tree Replacement Planting Programme has been proposed by the Applicant to replace any trees removed at a 3:1 ratio. The Council considers that vegetation removal and tree loss should follow the Mitigation Hierarchy, as identified in EN-1 (avoid, mitigate, compensate). ECC deems that the tree replacement planting programme represents mitigation (thereby necessary). As this schedule relates to replacing trees lost which must be removed if the proposed development is progressed, the Council	**Ecological Management Plan – Appendix B – Ancient Woodland and Veteran Tree Strategy [Revision C]**. The replanting ratio to compensate for the loss of any veteran tree would be 30:1 with specific details of the planting provided within the final Ancient Woodland and Veteran Tree Strategy. vi) The Applicant submitted **8.13 Outline Employment and Skills Plan [REP5-215]** at Deadline 5. The commitment to the preparation and submission of a final Employment and Skills Plan, and to carrying out the Project in accordance with the Plan, is secured through Requirement 15 in **3.1 Draft DCO [Revision F]**. vii) The Applicant's position in relation to the location-specific compensatory measures was set out in **8.4.12.2 Response to ISH2 Action Point 27 – Masterplans [REP5-199]** in addition to Appendix A of **8.9.2 Applicant's Responses to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]** and **8.5.12 Applicant's Written Summary of Oral Submissions and Responses to Action Points for Issue Specific Hearing 4 [Revision A]**. The Applicant has, however, welcomed the positive engagement that has been had with Essex County Council on the matter of landscape compensation and will continue this dialogue. viii) If development consent is granted, the Project would deliver a Community Fund of approximately £30 million. This funding would only become available following consent and once construction has started. We would be delivering the fund in accordance with the Government's guidance for transmission infrastructure[1], which makes it clear that Community Funds should sit outside the planning and consenting regime. The guidance sets out principles and expectations for community funds, but is not a statutory requirement, nor something that should be secured or conditioned through the consent process. In particular, the guidance sets out that: • Community funds must remain separate from the DCO and planning decision-making • They are not mitigation and cannot be used to justify or secure consent • Community benefits are voluntary and policy-led, rather than legally required. On that basis, and as set out in the rule 17 letter of 30 June 2026, the Applicant does not consider that a

[1] Community funds for transmission infrastructure (accessible webpage) - GOV.UK

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			considers this directly related to the proposed development (thereby directly related). The Council does not yet know how many trees will be removed and how many of those will be veteran trees, therefore any costing is subject to this confirmation, however, ECC supports the 3:1 proposal as forwarded by the Applicant with additional consideration for the loss of any veteran trees to be agreed with the Applicant (thereby in scale and kind). ECC considers that the Applicant should endeavour to sign a legal agreement in regard to location-specific compensatory landscape measures including Essex locations identified including Dunton Hills Graden Village, Great Bromley Hall Estate Woodland, Glebe Corner Ardleigh, Partridge Green Estate Woodland and Foxborough Farm . The Council considers that these sensitive locations have experienced significant adverse in combination and/or cumulative effects and that compensation is the next step of the Mitigation Hierarchy to explore (thereby necessary and directly related). The Council has been engaging with the Applicant to justify its requests and explain the potential opportunities as the Council perceives them. ECC therefore awaits further dialogue with the Applicant to finalise proposals (thereby in scale and kind). ECC understands that the Applicant is seeking to agree resourcing for police escorts for Abnormal Indivisible Loads, however, the Council seeks to ensure that obligations such as to undertake Structural Surveys on proposed routes are secured (thereby necessary and directly related). This matter does not requirement financial compensation, rather protection for the Local Highway Authority (thereby in scale and kind). In addition, ECC as the local highway authority seeks to ensure the submission of a Framework Highways Agreement for the project. This is currently being discussed with the Applicant and ECC is seeking to ensure certainty around its submission should this be agreed after the close of the examination (thereby necessary and directly related). Skills and Employment is also listed as ECC would like to secure a specific contribution for this issue. As set out in section 4.8 of its LIR [REP1-161], ECC feels any contribution towards Skills and Employment should be distinct from Community Benefits and therefore, subject to its own S106 obligation. In respect of the Community Benefit Fund, although it is recognised this is unrelated to the assessment of the DCO, ECC is of the opinion that there should be a link between Community Benefits and the DCO through a S111 agreement to secure the delivery of the benefit to the community.	s111 agreement is necessary or appropriate, or that there are any legal or consenting grounds to 'conjoin' the fund with the consented scheme. iii) The Applicant set out most recently in Table A.1 (page A18) of **8.9.2 Response to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]** that it will seek to negotiate a **Framework Highways Agreement** with the relevant authorities, provided it can be concluded before the end of the Examination. Recent engagement with the relevant authorities indicates that they are due to provide imminently to the Applicant their comments on the draft Framework Highways Agreement. iv) The Applicant is negotiating a separate legal agreement with Essex Police and Suffolk Constabulary for Police escorts of **Abnormal Indivisible Loads** (AILs). v) The Applicant set out most recently in Table A.1 (page A18) of **8.9.2 Response to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]** its position regarding extraordinary traffic and reimbursement of expenses.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			Tendring District Council (TDC) TDC set out its expectations for legal agreements in ExQ1 GEN1.21 [REP3-094]. In summary, these relate to: Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) • Tree replacement planting/mitigation/compensation • Skills, supply chain, employment and training • Highways works and improvements • Community wellbeing and Public Rights of Way (PROW) As requested by the ExA, TDC assessed each request against the relevant policy tests (including Regulation 122 of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010) in response to Action Point 22 [REP4-337]. These tests require obligations to be: – necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms; – directly related to the development; and – fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind. Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) The Applicant has voluntarily proposed a BNG schedule via a Unilateral Undertaking. TDC supports the principle but considers it should be secured through a multi-party agreement with appropriate governance mechanisms. Although BNG is not yet mandatory for NSIPs, TDC considers a 10% target appropriate to address environmental harm. This level aligns with established precedent and meets the policy tests. Tree Replacement Planting The Applicant proposes a 3:1 replacement ratio for trees removed. TDC supports this approach, noting it reflects the mitigation hierarchy in EN-1 (avoid, mitigate, compensate). While final costs depend on confirmed tree loss, the proposal is considered necessary, directly related, and proportionate. Other Measures For skills and training, highways works, and community/PROW improvements, TDC's detailed compliance with policy tests is set out in [REP4-337] (Action Point 22). National Landscape (NL – formerly AONB) Under Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, there is a duty to "seek to further" the purpose of the AONB. As the project passes through the Dedham Vale NL TDC considers mitigation and compensation measures necessary and directly related. The Council supports a cost schedule based on the National Landscape Management Plan, which the Applicant has accepted.	The Applicant provided a response to Tendring's comments provided previously in response to ExQ1 GEN 1.21 in Appendix A of **8.4.10 Applicant's Comments on Responses to ExQ1 [REP4-299]**. The Applicant welcomes the Council's support for the approach taken to BNG, offsite tree planting and the National Landscape duty, whilst noting the comments on the nature of the agreement for offsite BNG and offsite tree planting. Whilst the Application originally proposed a s106 unilateral undertaking to secure offsite BNG and offsite tree planting subject to the 3:1 commitment, following further consideration the Applicant is proposing to secure these measures through **3.1 draft DCO [Revision F]** in the form of requirements. **3.1 Draft DCO [Revision F]** was updated at Deadline 6 to reflect this change. The Applicant submitted **8.13 Outline Employment and Skills Plan [REP5-215]** at Deadline 5. The commitment to the preparation and submission of a final Employment and Skills Plan, and to carrying out the Project in accordance with the Plan, is secured through Requirement 15 in **3.1 Draft DCO [Revision F]**. In relation to community and Public Rights of Way improvements the Applicant provided a response to Tendring's comments on page A8/A9 of Appendix A of **8.4.10 Applicant's Comments on Responses to ExQ1 [REP4-299]**.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			Thurrock Council The Council has previously responded to this question in its responses to the Examining Authority's First Written Questions [REP3-088] at Deadline 3. As an update to the Council's previous response at Deadline 3, National Grid have provided land plans for compulsory acquisition however engagement and communications have been limited with National Grid's lands team. This has been raised with National Grid, and the Council is awaiting further engagement.	The Applicant provided a response to Thurrock's comments provided previously in response to ExQ1 GEN 1.21 in Appendix A of **8.4.10 Applicant's Comments on Responses to ExQ1 [REP4-299]**. The Applicant continues to engage proactively with the Council, including through ongoing Statements of Common Ground discussions and regular project meetings. As set out in **5.9.4 Draft Statement of Common Ground - Thurrock Council [REP5-087]**, this engagement has included a range of formal and technical interactions throughout the pre-application and Examination stages. Following the provision of land plans for compulsory acquisition, the Applicant is actively progressing further engagement with Thurrock Council's land interests on an individual and holistic basis, and will continue to work collaboratively with the Council's representatives to provide clarification, address queries, and support ongoing discussions.
			Suffolk County Council SCC outlined its expectations of legal agreement in answer to ExQ1 GEN1.21 [REP3-086]. BMSDC support the below. In brief, the requests are: i) Biodiversity Net Gain ii) Tree Replacement Planting Programme iii) National Landscape Duty (section 85) iv) Location-specific Compensatory Measures (including the Suffolk Locations identified below) v) Waveney Valley vi) Gipping Valley vii) Bramford and Burstall viii) Abnormal Indivisible Loads ix) Workforce Skills Training SCC proposes that these requests should form a bilateral or multi-party S106 agreement or S111 agreement, or other such hybrid agreement known as a Deed of Obligation. The Council understands that the Applicant's position, as set out in Appendix E of [REP3-074], is that the commitments for Biodiversity Net Gain and the 3:1 Tree Replacement Planting Programme should be secured by Unilateral Undertakings ("UU") because of the number of parties involved. SCC considers that this approach is unreasonable and ineffective. The Council has concerns that UUs will not secure mutual obligations for the Local Authorities, nor does the Council agree with the Applicant's rationale. SCC considers that	i) and ii) The Applicant notes Suffolk County Council's request for legal agreements and had shared detailed s106 unilateral undertakings in relation to offsite BNG and offsite tree planting with the Local Planning Authorities for their comment. Following further consideration, the Applicant is proposing to secure these measures through **3.1 draft DCO [Revision F]** in the form of requirements. **3.1 Draft DCO [Revision F]** was updated at Deadline 6 to reflect this change. iii) A bilateral s106 agreement is close to being finalised with Suffolk County Council in relation to the National Landscape duty, a draft unsigned copy of the agreement was submitted at Deadline 5 (**8.25 National Landscape - DRAFT - Agreement pursuant to section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 [REP5-224]**) and an updated version submitted at Deadline 6 (**8.25 National Landscape - DRAFT - Agreement pursuant to section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 [Revision B]**). iv), v), vi) and vii) The Applicant's position in relation to the location-specific compensatory measures was set out in **8.4.12.2 Response to ISH2 Action Point 27 – Masterplans [REP5-199]** in addition to Appendix A of **8.9.2 Applicant's Responses to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]** and **8.5.12 Applicant's Written Summary of Oral Submissions and Responses to Action Points for Issue Specific Hearing 4 [Revision A]**. The Applicant has, however, welcomed the positive

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			there can be a mechanism within such an agreement that specifies that only the Local Authority(ies) whose administrative area covers the land is affected should approve Biodiversity Net Gain measures. With regard to the Tree Replacement Planting Programme, SCC considers that a multi-party agreement would reduce the administrative burden on the Local Authorities (with all schedules captured in one agreement) and allow the Applicant to have the power to ensure that the funds were directed to the intended purpose(s). Therefore, SCC considers that a UU for these schedules would not sufficiently secure the relevant obligations and therefore proposes that all requested schedules should be captured in one multi-party S106/S111 legal agreement. The Council considers that paragraph 4.1.18 of EN-1 sets out the relevant policy tests, building on section 122(2) of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 and at paragraph 58 of the National Planning Policy Framework, as below: • relevant to planning; • necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms; • directly related to the development; and • fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development; • reasonable in all other respects. • Concerning the BNG schedule, SCC understands that the Applicant has voluntarily proposed this schedule. EN-1 paragraph 4.6.6 states "Energy NSIP proposals, whether onshore or offshore, should seek opportunities to contribute and enhance the natural environment by providing net gains for biodiversity, and the wider environment where possible". This has been proposed as a Unilateral Undertaking; however, the Host Authorities believe that this should be a multi-party agreement and that approval should be sought and that mechanisms could be introduced in the agreement to avoid over complication regarding decision-making. Recognising that BNG is not (as yet) a mandatory legal requirement for NSIPs to deliver (but is currently a matter for policy as above and so relevant to planning), the Council considers that 10% BNG should be sought if achievable to (a) meet the expectations of policy in paragraph 4.4.6 of EN-1 (thereby necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms),	engagement that has been had with Suffolk County Council on the matter of landscape compensation and will continue this dialogue. viii) The Applicant is negotiating a separate legal agreement with Essex Police and Suffolk Constabulary for Police escorts of Abnormal Indivisible Loads (AILs). ix) The Applicant submitted **8.13 Outline Employment and Skills Plan [REP5-215]** at Deadline 5. The commitment to the preparation and submission of a final Employment and Skills Plan, and to carrying out the Project in accordance with the Plan, is secured through Requirement 15 in **3.1 Draft DCO [Revision F]**. The Applicant welcomes the Council's support for its BNG commitment and 3:1 replanting ratio for individual trees. Veteran trees would be compensated in accordance with **7.4 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan – Appendix B – Ancient Woodland and Veteran Tree Strategy [Revision C]**. The replanting ratio to compensate for the loss of any veteran tree would be 30:1 with specific details of the planting provided within the final Ancient Woodland and Veteran Tree Strategy.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			(b) compensate for the adverse impacts experienced on the environment as a direct result of the construction of the proposed development (thereby directly related). The metric of 10% BNG is an established precedent for projects of equal and lesser scale (thereby related in scale and kind). SCC notes that BNG has been delivered by different routes in recent made energy DCOs, including via a multiparty legal agreement in Yorkshire Green grid upgrade (2024) between NGET and three separate local authorities, and via DCO requirements in Bramford to Twinstead grid upgrade (2024), Five Estuaries OWF (2025), and North Falls OWF (2026). SCC understands that there may be practical difficulties with use of a DCO requirement if some BNG provision is to be offsite and outside of the Order limits. Both DCO requirements and planning obligations in legal agreements have to be relevant to planning, necessary to make a development acceptable in planning terms, and reasonable in all other respects, if they are to be taken into account by the Secretary of State, and it can be reasonably concluded that the Secretary of State was satisfied that these tests were met for BNG provision in the cases of those other energy projects. Whilst each case turns on its own facts, SCC is clear that the tests are met for 10% BNG provision to be required in the case of this project. The Tree Replacement Planting Programme has been proposed by the Applicant to replace any trees removed at a 3:1 ratio. The Council considers that vegetation removal and tree loss should follow the Mitigation Hierarchy, as identified in EN-1 (avoid, mitigate, compensate). SCC deems that the tree replacement planting programme represents compensatory measures (thereby necessary). As this schedule relates to replacing trees lost which must be removed if the proposed development is progressed, the Council considers this directly related to the proposed development (thereby directly related). The Council does not yet know how many trees will be removed and therefore any costing is subject to this confirmation, however, SCC supports the 3:1 proposal as put forward by the Applicant (thereby related in scale and kind). The National Landscape Duty as section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (as amended) dictates is the requirement to "seek to further the purpose" of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty ("AONB"). As the project will	

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			unavoidably traverse through the Dedham Vale AONB, and the proposed undergrounding reduces but does not remove all adverse impacts (and imposes its own further impacts, especially as regards vegetation clearance, Link Pillars, and Cable Sealing End compounds), the Council considers that this compensation is required (thereby necessary and directly related). The Council has proposed a cost schedule based on the Management Plan of the National Landscape (thereby related in scale and kind), for which the Applicant has accepted as an approach. SCC considers that the Applicant should commit to sign legal agreement(s) in regard to location-specific compensatory measures including the Suffolk locations identified, i.e. the Waveney Valley (for landscape and visual amenity compensation) and Bramford/Burstall and Gipping Valley (for strategic landscaping and biodiversity connectivity improvements). The Council considers that these sensitive locations have experienced significant adverse in-combination and/or cumulative effects and that compensation is the next step of the Mitigation Hierarchy to explore (thereby necessary and directly related). SCC does not agree with the Applicant's interpretation of what was concluded by the ExA in the Bramford to Twinstead ExA Report. SCC set out its position in its remarks on 'compensation' in section 8.2 of its Post Hearing Submissions following ISH2 [REP4-336] to which reference should be made. NB there is a minor typo in the fifth paragraph of that text in that 'preferable' should be 'referable', and in the quotation from paragraph 3.9.197 of the Bramford to Twinstead ExA Report the words 'in this case' should have been highlighted in bold. SCC notes that the Applicant has repeated its misinterpretation of the SCC position in its comments on item 8.2e in [REP4-302] and SCC responds to the Applicant's further comments in its response to LV 2.16 (below). Notwithstanding this disagreement, the Council has been engaging with the Applicant to justify its requests and explain the potential opportunities as the Council perceives them. The Council has provided the Applicant with a written CIL Justification Statement for the request for Waveney Valley Landscape and Visual Amenity improvements and provided information regarding the request for Bramford and Burstall Strategic Landscaping. SCC therefore awaits further dialogue with the Applicant to finalise proposals (thereby in	

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			scale and kind). Suffolk County Council understands that the Applicant will be submitting at Deadline 5, in answer to ExQ2 LV 1.28, constraints and opportunities plans for these proposed locations. Whilst SCC understands that the Applicant maintains the position that these measures are not necessary (a view not shared by SCC), SCC and the Applicant are agreed on the principle of the approach (as identified on the opportunity plans). The Council understands that the Applicant is seeking to agree resourcing for police escorts for Abnormal Indivisible Loads, however, the Council seeks to ensure that obligations such as to undertake Structural Surveys on proposed routes are secured (thereby necessary and directly related). This matter does not requirement financial compensation, rather protection for the Local Highway Authority (thereby related in scale and kind). SCC and BMSDC have outlined in their Joint LIR [REP1 178], paragraphs 10.87 and 10.88, that a Section 111 legal agreement should be entered into that would provide workforce skills training. The proposed development will negatively impact upon the workforce availability to regional businesses and supply chains due to workforce displacement and churn (Table Item 8f of [REP1-178]), therefore, the Mitigation Hierarchy should be considered (thereby necessary and directly related). The Councils therefore propose that Applicant enters into such an agreement to commit to a structured investment in skills and training infrastructure with proportionate contributions to skills development (thereby related in scale and kind) to mitigate and compensation for these impacts. In the case of Suffolk, this could integrate with regional initiatives and training facilities and align with the Suffolk Regional Skills Coordination Function ("RSCF") to realise benefits via synergies.	
			Norfolk County Council The local authorities are seeking: i) Biodiversity Net Gain ii) Tree Replacement Planting Programme iii) National Landscape Duty (section 85) iv) Location-specific Compensatory Measures (including the Norfolk Locations identified below) a. Waveney Valley v) Abnormal Indivisible Loads Norfolk County Council (NCC) note that the National Landscape Duty and AILs are not relevant to Norfolk,	i) and ii) The Applicant notes Norfolk County Council's request for legal agreements and had shared detailed s106 unilateral undertakings in relation to offsite BNG and offsite tree planting with the Local Planning Authorities for their comment. Following further consideration, the Applicant is proposing to secure these measures through **3.1 draft DCO [Revision F]** in the form of requirements. **3.1 Draft DCO [Revision F]** was updated at Deadline 6 to reflect this change. iii) A bilateral s106 agreement is being negotiated and finalised with Suffolk County Council in relation to the National Landscape duty, a draft unsigned copy of the

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			but these requests will together form a multi party S106 agreement or S111 agreement, or other such hybrid agreement known as a Deed of Obligation. Section 122(2) of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 and at paragraph 58 of the National Planning Policy Framework are the relevant legal and policy tests, as below: • 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. **Biodiversity Net Gain** Concerning the BNG schedule, NCC notes that the applicant has voluntarily committed to net gain. It is necessary because paragraph 4.6.6 of the 2024 version of EN-1, in accordance with which this decision should be made, requires that energy NSIP proposals should seek opportunities to provide net gains for biodiversity. This has been proposed by the applicant in the form of a unilateral undertaking; however, the host authorities believe that this should be a multi-party agreement. The requirement to seek BNG arises because of impacts on habitats caused by the project at hand, so it is directly related. Ten percent is an established target of gain for projects of every size, including NSIPs. Because 10% is directly proportionate to habitat lost, the ask is intrinsically related fairly and reasonably in scale and kind. **Tree Replacement Planting Programme** The tree replacement planting programme has been proposed by the applicant to replace any trees removed at a 3:1 ratio. Vegetation removal and tree loss result in a policy requirement to follow the mitigation hierarchy, as identified in EN-1 (avoid, reduce, mitigate, compensate). The tree replacement planting programme represents compensatory measures as required by policy, which satisfies the necessity criterion. As this schedule relates to replacing trees lost which must be removed if the proposed development is progressed, this is directly related to the proposed development. NCC supports the 3:1 proposal as put forward by the applicant. A ratio means that the proportion of trees planted will always be directly proportional to the number of trees lost, which means the proposal is intrinsically fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.	agreement was submitted at Deadline 5 (**8.25 National Landscape – DRAFT – Agreement pursuant to section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 [REP5-224]**) and updated version submitted at Deadline 6 (**8.25 National Landscape – DRAFT – Agreement pursuant to section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 [Revision B]**). iv) The Applicant's position in relation to the location-specific compensatory measures was set out in **8.4.12.2 Response to ISH2 Action Point 27 – Masterplans [REP5-199]** in addition to Appendix A of **8.9.2 Applicant's Responses to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]** and **8.5.12 Applicant's Written Summary of Oral Submissions and Responses to Action Points for Issue Specific Hearing 4 [Revision A]**. The Applicant has, however, welcomed the positive engagement that has been had with Norfolk County Council on the matter of landscape compensation and will continue this dialogue. v) The Applicant is negotiating a separate legal agreement with Essex Police and Suffolk Constabulary for Police escorts of Abnormal Indivisible Loads (AILs).

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			Waveney Valley Landscape Compensation The applicant should provide location-specific compensatory measures including, in Norfolk, for the Waveney Valley. The argument for the necessity of compensation for the landscape impacts of the Norwich to Tilbury project on the Waveney Valley is set out fully in NCC's relevant representation at paragraphs 4.4-4.6, 10.16-10.17 and 10.19-10.21; in NCC's local impact report at paragraphs 11.24-11.32; and in SCC's LIR at Annex B. In summary, there is a clear policy imperative to provide compensatory measures. This arises from the general application of the mitigation hierarchy in EN-1, but also from the more specific context of landscape impacts on the Waveney Valley. The starting point, in policy terms, is that the mitigation hierarchy applies in relation to adverse impacts affecting the environment or biodiversity. This requires both the applicant and decision-maker to consider any measures to avoid, reduce, mitigate or compensate for such adverse impacts – see EN-1 paragraphs 4.1.5, 4.2.23, 4.2.24, 4.2.25, 4.3.4; and EN-5 paragraphs 2.1.1, 2.1.6, in particular: • Paragraph 4.2.24 of EN-1 states in terms that "Applicants must apply the mitigation hierarchy and demonstrate that it has been applied" (emphasis added); and this is echoed at paragraph 2.1.6 of EN-5. • Paragraph 4.2.25 of EN-1 further clarifies that "applicants should set out how residual impacts will be compensated for as far as possible" (emphasis added). • The mitigation hierarchy is further emphasised in the context of environmental effects (paragraph 4.3.4 of EN-1). • While there is clearly a general duty to apply the mitigation hierarchy, the councils acknowledge that how it is applied in each case (including in terms of compensation and the extent of it) will naturally vary. In the specific instance of the Waveney Valley, the question of appropriate and proportionate compensation must be understood against the following factors: • First, this was a case in which undergrounding was specifically considered for a section of the Waveney Valley. As per paragraph 2.9.24 of EN-5, the Applicant plainly recognised the "high potential for widespread and significant adverse landscape and/or visual impacts" along the Waveney Valley.	

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			• Second, it is common ground that (such undergrounding not being pursued) there are significant residual effects in landscape and visual terms. The specific mechanism of a planning obligation (rather than a requirement) is necessary because it is not possible to provide sufficient mitigation or compensatory measures within the footprint of the development itself. Only a compensatory planning obligation is capable of meeting the policy imperative. If the project did not provide landscape compensatory measures for the Waveney Valley, notwithstanding the significant residual adverse effects, it would be contrary to policy. It is therefore clear that landscape compensatory measures are necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms. The measures are proposed to be a contribution to interventions aimed at restoring the Waveney Valley at a landscape scale. The harm caused by the development in the Waveney Valley are significant residual effects in landscape and visual terms. The directness of the relationship is readily apparent. Interventions aimed at improving the very landscape that is harmed by the development are clearly directly related both causally and spatially to the development. The effects of overhead line infrastructure crossing the Waveney Valley will result in a significant adverse impact on the quality and value of the landscape character, visual and recreational amenity of the landscape, local heritage (such as the Grade I Listed St Remigius Church), and the Public Rights of Way (such as the Angles Way) in this location. The detrimental impact on the attractiveness of the area will thereby further result in socio-economic effects. There is no formulaic relationship between the capital cost of the development and the appropriate amount of landscape compensation, but it can be helpful to set out the context in coming to a judgement as to whether a given figure is proportionate. According to the funding statement [APP-063], the estimated capital cost of the development is approximately £895m at a 2020/21 cost base. The amount of funding requested is enough to make a tangible difference to the Waveney Valley landscape, as demonstrated by the example WaLOR and LOHP package, but it is not excessive or disproportionate within the context of the development, representing only approximately 0.2% of the total development cost. To provide further illustration, a fund of £5m would represent approximately 5.6%	

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			of the total development cost. The WVA, as described in paragraphs 5.4.47 to 5.4.58 of the 2024 Design Development Report, would have been an underground cable covering approximately 2km. Table D.2 of the 2023 Strategic Options Backcheck and Review provides a figure for the cost of a 2 circuit AC underground cable capable of carrying 6930MW of £39.89m per km. Roughly, without accounting for the cost of cable sealing end compounds, the WVA would have cost in the region of £79.78m if taken forward. The figure for the actual proposal, using the equivalent figures in Table D.2, would be £3.98m per km of overhead line or £7.96m in total, meaning that the saving to the development from the withdrawal of the WVA is in the region of £71.82m. The councils do not say that the withdrawal of the WVA results in a need to contribute a comparable figure in the form of compensation for the widespread and significant adverse landscape effects caused by the overhead line in the Waveney Valley. However, it is useful for the decision-maker to be aware of the cost of undergrounding against the cost of compensation measures, to inform their consideration of whether the proposed planning obligation is fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind. A £1.7m fund would represent around 2.4% of the value of the savings, while a £5m fund would represent around 7% of the savings. A wide range of figures could be considered fairly and reasonably related from this context, so it is important to consider the scale of the impacts which are being compensated for and the sensitivity of the landscape which is affected. Chapter 13 of the Environmental Statement (ES) indicates, and the councils agree, that the impact of the development will be major and significant (adverse) within 0.5km of the development reducing to moderate and significant (adverse) between 0.5km and 1.5km of the development for the Waveney Tributary Farmland and the Waveney Rural River Valley landscape character areas in Norfolk (see p. 43 of [APP-226]). On the Suffolk side of the Waveney, the ES assessment is that there is a moderate-major and significant (adverse) impact on the Wooded Valley Meadowlands Fens landscape character type within 0.5km and a moderate and significant (adverse) impact on the Rolling Valley Farmlands and Furze landscape character type. A map of these LCAs and LCTs is given in ES Figure 13.6.	

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
GEN 2.3	The Applicant	Cumulative Assessment – Methodology Environmental Statement (ES) Chapter 17 Cumulative Effects [APP-281] describes the methodology used to assess the significance of potential inter-project cumulative effects, with significance criteria set out in Table 17.6. ExQ1 GEN 1.26 sought justification of this assessment methodology and the applicant replied to this [REP3-074]. However, the ExA does not consider the applicant's response to be sufficient and is seeking further clarification on the following points: a) Explain the meaning of 'significant magnification' in Table 17.6 and how it has been applied to determine levels of cumulative effects. b) Table 17.6 of ES Chapter 17 indicates that only potentially wide-ranging effects could be Major (Significant). Is it possible that localised effects could also be Major (Significant), if the receptor or resource is particularly susceptible to change or highly valued for example? If so, identify any Major (Significant) localised effects. If not, explain why. c) In your response to ExQ1 GEN1.26 you refer to compliance with the methodology provided in the Scoping Report [APP-296]. The Scoping Report at 5.1.2 explains how the significance of effect is usually derived (combining the value of the receptor with the magnitude of the impact) but states that the cumulative effects assessment does not use this approach. In the absence of this approach explain how the conclusions on whether an inter-project effect is likely to be significant or not have been reached..d) In your response to ExQ1 GEN1.26 you indicate that the assessment undertaken is similar to inter-project cumulative effects assessments undertaken for other linear Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP). Provide specific examples of where this is the case and identify any similarities or differences between the projects and the approach taken. In addition, explain how the number and scale of other nearby projects that have been or are yet to be constructed at certain sites such as the proposed East Anglia Connection Node (EACN) and Tilbury North substations compares with those for other linear projects..e) Provide a table which summarises how best practice guidance has been applied in determining cumulative effects for each environmental topic considered in ES Chapter 17.	**Chelmsford City Council** CCC consider the localised effects within the Waltham Gap to be major significant. CCC has already extensively commentated on this matter, CCC's LIR REP1 – 153, response to ExQ1 REP3 – 075, and response to ISH2 hearings, REP4 – 326.	The Applicant notes the comment from Chelmsford City Council and also notes that the comment does not relate to inter-project cumulative effects or intra-project cumulative effects assessed within **6.17 Environmental Statement Chapter 17 - Cumulative Effects [APP-281],** as updated in **6.17.1 Environmental Statement Chapter 17 - Cumulative Effects - Response Update [REP4-163]**. Instead it relates to effects as a result of the Project within the 'Waltham Gap'. The Project, as described in **6.4 Environmental Statement Chapter 4 - Project Description [APP-130]** is assessed as a whole, and is not split into different components. The Applicant recognises that there will be significant effects on landscape and visual receptors at locations along the length of the Project, and extending to some distance from it, as explained within the assessment presented in **6.13 Environmental Statement Chapter 13 - Landscape and Visual [APP-226].** This includes the area between Little Waltham and Great Waltham, referred to by Chelmsford City Council as the 'Waltham Gap'. The effects on landscape character and visual receptors will affect a sequence of places and people along the length of the line, with the effects being described in relation to each of the assessment units (Landscape Character Types (LCTs) and Visual Receptor Areas (VRAs)). Effects will not typically be experienced as a whole, but the total effect on landscape character and visual receptors can be understood from the LVIA, by looking at all of its component parts, each of which is set out in detail. It is noted that overall, these effects will be significant, as would be expected for any project of this size and nature.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
GEN 2.4	The applicant All local authorities All IPs listed within the Report on interrelationship with other infrastructure projects	Report on interrelationship with other infrastructure projectstThe ExA notes that the latest cut-off date for other existing and approved developments in the cumulative assessment is currently 31 January 2026 (Environmental Statement (ES) Chapter 17 - Cumulative Effects - Response Update [REP4-163], see also question GEN 2.5 below). However, the final version of the interrelationship report [REP4-296] should include, as far as possible, the most up-to-date position relating to the progress of other approved and pending development proposals in a summary 'at a glance' document.tThe applicant is asked to:tensure its final interrelationship report to be submitted at deadline 7 is consistent with ES chapter 17 and [REP4-163]tinclude an indication of the location of Tasway Energy Park (DCO 17) in table 2.1 of the next version of the report (the ExA notes that this proposal is not included in the plans due to the infancy of its design development) and, if available, an indication of its submission date to the Planning Inspectorate.tAll local authorities, and IPs who are listed in the interrelationship report, are asked to:tReview the interrelationship report [REP4-296] and confirm if the updated position on approved and proposed developments is, to the best of your knowledge, accurate and to provide any further comments if you wish.	**Braintree District Council** The Council have reviewed the updated interrelationship report document (REP4-296). The Council notes that many of the updates provided by the Council in its deadline 2 response (REP2-033). However, the Council consider that the updated interrelationship report is still omitting key sites/applications. The first is Application Reference 23/00816/OUT which was allowed on appeal 1st August 2025. This is not mentioned anywhere within the Interrelationship Report despite specifically referring to it in our Deadline 2 Response (Paragraph 3.2.3). This should be included as it is before the cut-off point. The second is the Council's proposed 'Kings Dene' strategic allocation of 5000 homes. This will directly intersect with the project and can be found on Figure B of Appendix 2 of (REP1 148). While not an application nor a fully adopted allocation (now currently post Regulation 18), the Council consider that it should at least be acknowledged within the Interrelationship Report. Reference is made to application 21/03279/OUT which is still being considered by the Council, as set out in paragraph 3.3.32 of '8.4.3 Report on Interrelationship with Other Infrastructure Projects Final Issue – Revision B, May 2026, Planning Inspectorate Reference: EN020027'.	The Application Reference 23/00816/OUT will be included within the updated **8.4.3 Report on Interrelationship with Other Infrastructure Projects [Revision C]** and the Long List of Other Developments within the Cumulative Effects Assessment (**6.17.1 Environmental Statement Chapter 17 - Cumulative Effects - Response Update [Revision B])** that will be published at Deadline 7. The Emerging Allocation for the development of approximately 5,600 new homes, employment land and neighbourhood centres (Policy LPR 26 (KELV2209, KELV2208 and KELV2217)), including Application Reference 21/03579/OUT will also be included within **8.4.3 Report on Interrelationship with Other Infrastructure Projects [Revision C]** and the Long List of Other Developments within the Cumulative Effects Assessment that will be published at Deadline 7, as the Local Plan was published for consultation in March 2026 which was not captured within the cut-off date of 31 January 2026 for the update provided at Deadline 4.
			PACE Nano Energy Limited PACE Nano Energy Limited (company number 12645785) (PACE Nano) is a wholly owned subsidiary of Egg Power AssetCo Limited (company number 16485175) (Egg Power). Further to PACE Nano's Relevant Representation [RR 2789] and Written Representations [REP1-264] and [REP3-129], PACE Nano affirms that it does not have an in-principle objection to National Grid Electricity Transmission's (NGET) application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) for the proposed Norwich to Tilbury project (Proposed Development) but would like to reserve its position in the examination until the interface between the projects is settled commercially. PACE Nano submits this representation in response to the Examining Authority's Second Written Questions (ExQ2) [PD-023] issued on 22 May 2026. PACE Nano refers to ExQ2 reference GEN 2.4 which requests all local authorities and interested parties in the Interrelationship Report [REP4-296] (the Report) confirm if the position on approved and proposed developments is accurate and to provide any further comment. PACE Nano's Grange Solar Farm has	The Applicant will make amendments to Table 6.1 of **8.4.3 Report on Interrelationship with Other Infrastructure Projects [Revision C]** to be submitted at Deadline 7, to reflect PACE Nano Energy Limited's comments on the Project's interface with their skylark mitigation plots. The Applicant is engaging with PACE Nano Energy Limited on **8.3.23 Draft Statement of Common Ground - Pace Nano Energy [REP4-227]** and a side agreement, and has noted PACE Nano Energy Limited's request for engagement specifically on the interface between the Project and their mitigation. An update to **8.3.23 Draft Statement of Common Ground - Pace Nano Energy [REP4-227]** will be submitted at Deadline 7.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			been referred to as ID reference 'BMS63' in Tables 2.1 and 6.1 of the Report and is further detailed at paragraphs 3.3.12 to 3.3.15. PACE Nano confirms that NGET has had regard to its comments in its representation submitted at Deadline 3 [REP3-129] and has made accurate updates to paragraph 3.3.15 as to the status of negotiations between the parties. There has not been any engagement with NGET to date about the interferences between NGET's Proposed Development with PACE Nano's delivery of the mitigation/enhancement required under the Grange Solar Farm Planning Permission DC/22/02667 (the Planning Permission). PACE Nano welcomes engagement with NGET on this matter, and trusts that the below clarifications will inform discussions going forward. Table 6.1 (Interaction with Mitigation or Enhancement Measures of Other Projects) of the Report accurately identifies two key interfaces between the Proposed Development and its interaction with Grange Solar Farm's approved mitigation/enhancement obligations which are required to be delivered by PACE Nano through discharge of Conditions 8, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 15 of the Planning Permission. PACE Nano submits the following in respect of the two interfaces: 1. (Permissive path): PACE Nano confirms that, on its current alignment per the approved Ecological Enhancements plan no: 405A, which is appended to the BNG Plan (dated January 2026), the proposed permissive path would interact with NGET's Pylon RG92. PACE Nano is considering the layout of this permissive path and its potential realignment. PACE Nano invites NGET to engage in discussions regarding the alignment and location of the permissive path. 2. (Skylark mitigation): PACE Nano notes that the NGET Pylons identified in the Report with respect to skylark mitigation are incorrect. The Report refers to NGET Pylons RG93 – RG99, however, the pylons located in skylark mitigation areas are NGET Pylons RG93, RG94, RG96 and RG98. For the avoidance of doubt, PACE Nano notes that Pylons RG95 and RG967 are within PACE Nano's leased area but are not in skylark mitigation land, and Pylon RG99 is outside of the leased area. PACE Nano confirms that it has a large number of skylark mitigation area plots available to it to deliver the skylark mitigation and that while NGET Pylons RG93, RG94, RG96 and RG98 are in some of the skylark mitigation area plots, PACE Nano will still be able to discharge its mitigation in other plots available	

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			to it. PACE Nano reserves the right to make further submissions regarding its ability to deliver the mitigation/enhancement required under the Planning Permission. PACE Nano confirms that the parties' draft SoCG which was updated at Deadline 4 [REP4-227] reflects the latest commercial position. PACE Nano anticipates that the commercial agreement will be finalised and executed shortly. The parties will continue to keep the SoCG updated as negotiations in respect of the commercial agreement are finalised.	
			Chelmsford City Council CCC has reviewed the inter-relationship list. CCC's comments within ExQ1 – REP3 – 075 remain, apart from the following observations: • CH3 • Strategic Growth Site North Of Woodhouse Lane Broomfield Chelmsford Essex. CCC notes there was a typo in CCC's response on the application reference. It is 20/02064/OUT not 00/02064/OUT: 20/00264/DOC/1 – Condition 5 – Phasing plan received. Under consideration. • Application 26/00164/REM: - Amended plans have been received and the application remains under consideration. • • CH22 • 24/00695/FUL Land South East Of Banters Lane Business Park Banters Lane Great Leighs Chelmsford: Amended plans have been received, and the application remains under consideration. • CH24 • 23/01751/OUT Zone 2 Chelmsford Garden Community Beaulieu Parkway Chelmsford: Amended plans have been received, and the application remains under consideration. • CH26 • 23/00124/OUT Zone 3 Chelmsford Garden Community Beaulieu Parkway Chelmsford Application for Hybrid planning permission at Powers Farm, Chelmsford; The application was considered at Planning Committee on 26th May 2026 where it was agreed to extend the period for completing the Planning Framework Agreement, the CIL reinvestment Funding Agreement and the S106 Agreement by a further four months.to allow Officers time to negotiate, settle and complete the agreements.	The Applicant notes the comments from Chelmsford City Council, and relevant updates will be made in **8.4.3 Report on Interrelationship with Other Infrastructure Projects [Revision C]**, to be submitted at Deadline 7.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			NSIP Longfield Solar Farm (EN010118) 3.2.21 The submission and discharge of requirements remain ongoing. On non NSIP projects 3.3.30 Essex County Council – Chelmsford North East Bypass – Land North East of Greater Beaulieu Park Beaulieu Parkway Chelmsford (CH17 & ECC11), CCC defers to Essex County Council.	
			Colchester City Council CCC would like to reiterate that the preferred options sites in the Regulation 18 Draft Plan (a new Local Plan for Colchester) have not been included but this has been noted previously. Further to this it is noted that the site (NG Ref CO44) at Foxes Corner, CCC Ref: 250833 has a committee resolution to approve the subject to the signing of a Section 106 agreement.	Colchester City Council preferred options sites were included within **8.4.3 Report on Interrelationship with Other Infrastructure Projects [REP4-396]**, and therefore also will be included in **8.4.3 Report on Interrelationship with Other Infrastructure Projects [Revision C]**. Planning application ID CO44 is up to date.
			Port of Tilbury Port of Tilbury London Limited (PoTLL) has reviewed the updated Interrelationships Report [REP4-296] submitted at Deadline 4, and the updated ES Chapter 17 – Cumulative Effects – Response Update [REP4 163]. PoTLL makes the following observations on accuracy in the Interrelationship Report and adequacy in relation to cumulative assessment. As set out in PoTLL's response to the Examining Authority's (ExA's) first written questions [REP3-130], the Tilbury3 project did not appear to have been assessed cumulatively due to an error reporting on NGET's own Grain to Tilbury Tunnelling Project rather than Tilbury3. In its response, PoTLL also noted that the application for planning permission for Tilbury3 (25/00598/FUL) had been submitted on 14 May 2025, and that the cumulative assessment should be carried out against the application now it is available, rather than against the limited information available in the Scoping Report under reference (24/01023/SCO). ES Chapter 17 – Cumulative Effects – Response Update [REP4-163] The Response Update now includes, at ID TH70, the planning application for Tilbury3. This is listed in the updated Long List. However, TH70 has not been progressed for assessment on the basis that the development "was assessed in the original DCO submission" under TH38. The assessment of TH38 has been updated only minimally. The amendments now refer to Tilbury3 as a "small scale port development", (which is not an accurate description of the Tilbury3 major development application) rather than a "small-scale tunnel construction". Only the	The Applicant has previously assessed the Tilbury3 project on a worst-case basis when assessing the cumulative impacts for the Scoping Report application (TH38 (23/01502/FUL)). The Applicant has requested the technical specialists to review the environmental information provided in the full planning app for (TH70 (25/00598/FUL)) to confirm that the conclusions previously detailed for TH38 have not changed in light of further information. The Applicant does not anticipate any cumulative effects would arise from the Proposed Development and Tilbury3.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			assessment of Health and Wellbeing effects has been materially updated. PoTLL is mindful that its Scoping Report for Tilbury3 (TH38) did not present estimates for key metrics such as the likely construction workforce. The Scoping Report focuses on the baseline data collection and proposed methodology for the numerous environmental topics that were not proposed to be scoped out; for these topics, little-to-no project specific information was included in the Scoping Report. Complete information is, however, available in the submitted planning application (TH70). A review of the Environmental Statement for Tilbury3 would confirm that it is not at a "small-scale". Tilbury3 consists of four Development Zones totalling 40.57ha, plus a further 17.39ha of land outside the Development Zones. The construction period, from 2027 to 2031, is anticipated to create 1,688 construction jobs regionally, and contribute nearly £95million GVA to the local economy, plus further contributions to both at a national level. Whilst the Applicant utilised a 'cut-off' date of 1 April 2025 for the purposes of the cumulative assessment within its Environmental Statement, it is typical for applicants to continuously review planning applications for the purposes of updating that cumulative assessment. It is therefore disappointing that the Applicant has opted not to assess the full planning application for Tilbury3, despite the documents having been publicly available on the Thurrock Planning Portal since the application was accepted on 30 May 2025. A resolution to grant permission for Tilbury3 was made on 24 February 2026; this is the latest status that should be reported in the next iteration of the cumulative assessment. As set out previously, PoTLL does not anticipate any cumulative effects would arise from Tilbury3 and the Proposed Development; however it is concerned that, by not using the full application for assessment, there is insufficient evidence in Examination for the ExA to rely on this conclusion. By only assessing the limited information in the Tilbury3 Scoping Report, the Applicant has simply not assessed the Tilbury3 development as it is being brought forward, despite the full application documents having been available for almost a year as at Deadline 4. Interrelationships Report [REP4-296] The Interrelationships Report [REP4-296] has been updated to list the Tilbury3 Request for a Scoping Opinion (TH38) as a project, stating as its status "EIA required" and for the indicative construction and operation programmes, "Unknown". The full planning	

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			application, TH70, is not mentioned in the Interrelationships Report. PoTLL submits that the request for a scoping opinion (TH38) has been overtaken by the planning application made on 15 May 2025 (TH70). The Interrelationships Report should make reference only to TH70 to avoid confusion. PoTLL also notes that this would enable the Interrelationships Report to accurately report on the indicative construction phase of Tilbury3 (2027 to 2031) and the indicative start of operation. Conclusion PoTLL does not anticipate that any cumulative effects with Tilbury3 will be identified; however, this can only be confirmed through the cumulative assessment being updated to consider the complete environmental information provided with the Tilbury3 planning application (TH70). If this is not done, and the assessment of the information in the Tilbury3 Scoping Report (TH38) is relied upon, it is difficult to see how the ExA could have confidence that an adequate cumulative assessment has been undertaken and that effects will not arise from both projects. The cumulative assessment of the Tilbury3 project should therefore be updated to consider the complete environmental information submitted with the planning application (TH70). Additionally, the Interrelationships Report should be updated to refer only to the planning application for Tilbury3 (TH70), to avoid misrepresenting the status of the Tilbury3 project.	
			Suffolk County Council Having regard to the judgement in Pearce v Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and Norfolk Vanguard Ltd as interested party, BMSDC and SCC refer to the Brunfort 1.5GW BESS development, currently at EIA scoping stage as being reasonably foreseeable, as a customer of National Grid with a valid connection offer for Bramford substation, for consideration in the assessment of cumulative effects (BMSDC references DC/26/01910 and DC/26/01983).	The application will be included within the update in **8.4.3 Report on Interrelationship with Other Infrastructure Projects [Revision C]** and the Long List of Other Developments within the Cumulative Effects Assessment (**6.17.1 Environmental Statement Chapter 17 - Cumulative Effects - Response Update [Revision B]**) that will be provided at Deadline 7.

4. Design parameters and other details of the proposed development

Table 4.1 Design, parameters and other details of the proposed development

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
DES 2.4	The applicant	Design of temporary works and compounds Outline how the design of construction compounds will be controlled, particularly given the length of time that construction works will be ongoing. Are there any controls proposed on the height and stacking of site cabins and their colour, or on-site fencing for instance?	**Chelmsford City Council** CCC would request that colours are limited to neutrals - grey / dark green or black. Portacabins should not be stacked higher than two storeys.	The Applicant is committed to ensuring the contractors use a 'standard unified colour system' for the site cabins at the compound sites. **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]** now includes a new commitment under GG18: Details of the colour and material finishes of non-permanent buildings will be confirmed within the Final CoCP for information only. **6.4 Environmental Statement Chapter 4 – Project Description [APP-130]** explains the site cabins are limited to standard modular units up to two storeys in height. The Applicant is bound by the parameters set out in the Environmental Statement.
DES 2.5	The applicant All local authorities	Approach to scenarios The ExA notes the updates to the progress of a number of alternative design scenarios as noted in [REP4-310], and that a number of revised plans and documents are expected to be submitted at deadline 5, however it remains unclear when a number of the other alternative scenarios are likely to be confirmed for a number of reasons, including the progress of third party planning applications. • The applicant is asked to ensure that by deadline 7 those outstanding alternative scenarios which remain are fully reasoned and timescales given wherever possible for such matters to be resolved. • The local authorities are asked to review the Approach to Scenarios document [REP4-310], clarify their understanding of the scenarios which are reliant on third party planning applications, and to make other comments on the document where relevant to their area.	**Braintree District Council** The Council has reviewed the Applicant's Approach to Scenarios document [REP4-310] and considers that the only design scenario of direct relevance to land within the Braintree District is Table 2.5 (Mineral extraction site north-west of Kelvedon), which relates to potential interactions with a future minerals allocation. This scenario is understood to be dependent on the progression of third party minerals planning decisions and the Essex Minerals Local Plan process. In this respect, the Council considers that Essex County Council, in its capacity as Minerals and Waste Planning Authority, is best placed to provide detailed and substantive comments on this matter, and the Council therefore defers to ECC on issues relating to mineral safeguarding and the acceptability of the proposed approach.	Noted. The Applicant continues to engage with the developers of both potential projects and landowner to establish an appropriate arrangement within the Order Limits. The current status of Scenario 5 (Minerals Extraction site north-west of Kelvedon) is set out in **8.11 Approach to Scenarios [Revision D]**.
			Chelmsford City Council There are three design scenarios relevant to CCC. These are: **Scenario one: Table 2.6. Lions Hall Minerals Site east of the A131 and to the west of Lyonshall Wood Ancient Woodland (Section F)**	The Applicant has reviewed Chelmsford City Council's (CCC) response to the Examining Authority's Written Question DES 2.5 and has previously responded to the comments raised in **8.8.2 Applicant's Comments on Local Impact Reports [REP2-030]**.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			The Limits of Deviation (LoD) and Order Limits have been widened between TB128 and TB133 to allow flexibility to change the alignment to reduce effects on the Lions Hall Minerals Site. Scenario B would realign the overhead line to route southwards from TB128 midway down the west side of Lyonshall Wood before turning to the southwest to reconnect at TB133. By doing so, this reduces the sterilisation of the mineral extraction area. The Applicant proposes that the change to scenario B is taken forward. As stated in its LIR, CCC is concerned that the siting of the scenario B, would bring the proposal closer to the west side of Lyonshall Wood. In the absence od details plans and drawings, it is unclear whether the Applicant will be able to comply with the 15 metre buffer zones, required to protect woodland from development. Further, the siting of the woodland in such close proximity to the pylons, may lead to further harm to woodland as a result of pressure to prune, fell, maintain or destroy trees, woodland and hedgerow that may affect the day to day operation of the pylons. This could include matters not limited to leaf detritus, obscure branches and other such matters. As a consequence of moving the pylons closer to the woodland, residual and harmful impacts could occur upon ecology as a result of a loss of / damage to habitat. CCC therefore requests that scenario B is not taken forward. **Scenario two: Table 2.7 Chelmsford Bypass east of the A131 and to the west of Lyonshall Wood Ancient Woodland (Section F) (image/ access as above)** The Order Limits have been widened to facilitate an alternative haul road off the proposed Chelmsford Bypass new roundabout, should the Chelmsford Bypass progress, which would sever the currently proposed construction haul road that follows the overhead line alignment. CCC defers to ECC Highways Authority regarding the practicality of this. **Scenario three: Table 2.19 The Walthams and Standard Heights to the south of the River Chelmer (Section F)** Scenario B proposes replacing low height pylons between TB140 – TB142 with standard pylons and one pylon removed. The Applicants preference for Scenario B as it moves pylon away from residential property where the change back to standard height	Specifically, in relation to Scenario 6 (Lions Hall Minerals Site east of the A131 and to the west of Lyonshall Wood Ancient Woodland), the Applicant confirmed at Deadline 4 it would proceed with Option B. Updated **2.3 Works Plans – Section F [Revision C]** have been submitted at Deadline 6 and other application documents/plans, including **2.16 Trees and Hedgerows to be Removed and/or Management Plans – Section F [REP5-053]**, will be submitted at Deadline 7. The Applicant will adhere to relevant Project commitments (e.g. B02, B03, B07 & LV04) to avoid and minimise impacts to woodland. Lyonshall Wood would also be protected throughout the works, with a minimum exclusion zone of 15 m offset from the edge of the ancient woodland, to ensure no effects occur as a result of construction works (as per commitment B07 and B17 of **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]**). For Scenario 7 (Chelmsford Bypass east of the A131 and to the west of Lyonshall Wood Ancient Woodland), the Applicant continues to engage with Essex County Council about the programme for the construction of the Chelmsford Bypass. The Applicant has confirmed in **8.11 Approach to Scenarios [Revision D]** that flexibility needs to be retained until it has certainty of the construction programme of the bypass. In relation to Scenario 19 (The Walthams and Standard Heights to the south of the River Chelmer), the Applicant confirmed at Deadline 4 it was proceeding with Option B. Relevant application documents were updated to reflect this and submitted into the Examination at Deadline 5. The Applicant's confirmation of pylon selection and position south of the River Chelmer is set out in **8.8.2 Applicant's Comments on Local Impact Reports [REP2-030]**. The Project is therefore progressing with a section of four low height pylons to the north of the River Chelmer and reversion to standard lattice pylons to the south of the River Chelmer. Heritage effects will continue to result in less than substantial harm to the Grade I Langleys, and surrounding Grade II registered park and garden with Option B. The assessment presented within Section 11.7 of **6.11 Environmental Statement Chapter 11 - Historic Environment [Revision C]**, **6.11.A2 Environmental Statement Appendix 11.2 Historic Environment Assessment Tables**

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			pylons does not change the wider heritage assessment, including on Langleys Grade I listing building or the Grade II registered park and garden. Responds to feedback regarding close views from the former Windmill Pub. The Application documents will be submitted at Deadline 5. The proposed amendment to the south of Great Waltham indicates that TB141 could be omitted and TB140 and TB142 would move closer together and revert to full height (c.50m high) with the alignment of TB140-TB136 moving to the northwest. CCC identifies significant harms to designated heritage assets including Langleys Registered Park and Garden, Little and Great Waltham Conservation Areas, grade II listed buildings on Chelmsford Road. the grade II Balls Farmhouse and the grade I Church of St Mary and St Lawrence Great Waltham (as set out in Chelmsford City Councils Local Impact Report), as well as low levels of harm to other designated heritage assets in Great Waltham and Little Waltham. There are also significant harms to non-designated heritage assets (again, as set out in CCC's Local Impact Report). The amendment would result a reduction in harm to the setting of Windmill House, by moving the pylons away, reducing the level harm from high to moderate, for a non-designated heritage asset of local value. However, all other harms would be within the ranges identified. The amendment therefore fails to notably reduce the heritage harms and address CCC's concerns. The points raised in the City Councils Local Impact Report remain - that harm to designated and non-designated heritage assets is underestimated, and the mitigation proposed is inadequate.	**[Revision C]** and **6.11.A7 Environmental Statement Appendix 11.7 - Assessment of Harm to Designated Heritage Assets [APP-215]** has been undertaken based on the design shown on **6.4.F1 Environmental Statement Figure 4.1 - Proposed Project Design [REP4-109]** and **6.4.F2 Environmental Statement Figure 4.2 - Proposed Project Design - Permanent Features [REP5-106]**. 'Sensitivity testing' has been undertaken to determine if changes to low height pylons south of the River Chlemer would affect the assessment, as set out in Section 11.9, paragraph 11.9.16, of **6.11 Environmental Statement Chapter 11 - Historic Environment [Revision C]**. This sensitivity testing has confirmed that 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 [Revision F]** to restrict the LoD. The assessment in **6.11 Environmental Statement Chapter 11 - Historic Environment [Revision C]**, **6.11.A2 Environmental Statement Appendix 11.2 Historic Environment Assessment Tables [Revision C]** and **6.11.A7 Environmental Statement Appendix 11.7 - Assessment of Harm to Designated Heritage Assets [APP-215]** 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 – Section F [Revision C]**.
			Colchester City Council The three relevant area in the CCC host area are: Table 2.12 River Stour crossing west of Stratford St Mary (Section C) Table 2.13 Black Brook north of Langham (Section C) Table 2.14 Great Horkesley south of School Lane (west of Great Horkesley) (Section D) All of these areas have been drawn with an excessively wide order limit to allow for the design flexibility set out in the supporting text. There is no	The Applicant has noted Colchester City Council's comments on the Applicant retaining flexibility for Scenarios 12 (River Stour crossing west of Stratford St Mary), 13 (Black Brook north of Langham) and 14 (Great Horkesley south of School Lane (west of Great Horkesley). In relation to Scenario 4 (Flying Trade Group and Crown Quarry east and west of the A12), the Applicant has responded to the comments raised by Tendring District Council in more detail in the row immediately below. The Project alignment

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			relance on further agreement nor can CC see impacts on third party planning applications of note. Table 2.4 Flying Trade Group and Crown Quarry east and west of the A12 (Sections C and D) is being dealt with by Tendring DC in their response to this question which CCC have seen and clearly sets out the key risks around Scenario B. CCC agree with the points TDC have raised, particularly around the lack of detail on the revised alignment, the uncertainty in environmental assessment (including LVIA and heritage impacts), and the potential implications for the Dedham Vale National Landscape. The emphasis on ensuring a robust and transparent assessment, rather than relying on flexibility or deliverability arguments, is especially important.	presented on **6.4.F1 Environmental Statement Figure 4.1 – Proposed Project Design [REP4-109]** was assessed within Section 7 (Residual Effects) of each environmental topic chapter in the ES. Sensitivity testing was then undertaken within Section 9 (Sensitivity Testing) of each environmental topic chapter to ensure that any likely significant environmental effects arising from the flexibility represented by the Scenario were assessed.
			Tendring District Council (TDC) TDC has reviewed the Approach to Scenarios document [REP4-310], with particular regard to Table 2.4 (Flying Trade Group and Crown Quarry), which directly affects the Tendring area, and which is in a sensitive location relatively clseo to the southernmost boundary of the Dedham Vale National Landscape. The Council understands that the Applicant's scenario approach is intended to provide flexibility to address both engineering design matters and uncertainty arising from third-party developments. While TDC accepts that some degree of flexibility is necessary, it is concerned that scenarios linked to third-party planning applications introduce significant uncertainty in the assessment of environmental effects. Where a preferred option has now been identified, this must be supported by clear and proportionate environmental information demonstrating the impacts of that option pecifically, rather than relying on earlier envelope-based assumptions. In relation to Table 2.4, TDC notes that the Applicant has indicated a decision to progress 'Scenario B', involving the repositioning of the overhead line (OHL) to the north of the consented Flying Trade Group (FTG) warehouse and associated access changes. However, the precise line (of the relocated OHL 'north of the FTG warehouse) is rather unknown, and TDC has not been provided with sufficient information or assessment of this revised alignment, particularly between pylons T18 and T20. This represents a significant gap in the examination evidence. The	The Applicant confirmed at Deadline 4 it would proceed with Option B. Updated **2.3 Works Plans – Section C [Revision C]** and **2.3 Works Plans – Section D [Revision B]** have been submitted at Deadline 6 to reflect the reposition of the overhead lines within the Order Limits; and other application documents/plans will be submitted at Deadline 7 as a result of the change. The Project alignment presented on **6.4.F1 Environmental Statement Figure 4.1 – Proposed Project Design [REP4-109]** was assessed within Section 7 (Residual Effects) of each environmental topic chapter in the ES. Sensitivity testing was then undertaken within Section 9 (Sensitivity Testing) of each environmental topic chapter to ensure that the likely significant environmental effects arising from the flexibility represented by each Scenario was assessed. In relation to Scenario 4 (Flying Trade Group and Crown Quarry east and west of the A12), 'Scenario B' is within the Limits of Deviation for the Project and therefore assessed within Section 9 of each environmental topic chapter. Therefore, the Applicant disagrees there is a 'significant gap in the examination evidence'. Paragraph 13.9.23 within **6.13 Environmental Statement Chapter 13 – Landscape and Visual [APP-226]** concluded that both the alignment presented on **6.4.F1 Environmental Statement Figure 4.1 – Proposed Project Design [REP4-109]** and Scenario B '*would result in similar effects on landscape features and key characteristics, and*

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			Council is particularly concerned that the revised alignment may materially alter the relationship between the proposed infrastructure and nearby sensitive receptors, including residential properties along Wick Lane (some of these properties are listed buildings), and where impacts on outlook, visual amenity, and proximity have not been clearly demonstrated or appear to have been assessed. At present, there is insufficient detail regarding pylon locations, distances to dwellings, or visualisations to allow TDC to understand whether impacts would be greater than those previously assessed. As alluded to above there are also concerns and unknowns in relation to heritage assets and impacts along Wick Lane. The revised alignment has the potential to affect the setting of listed buildings and alter key views to and from these assets. The Council has not been made aware of updated heritage assessment or supporting visual material here, in this location, that have been provided to demonstrate that these impacts have been properly considered or would remain acceptable. From a landscape perspective, the proposed shift northwards is concerning as it would bring the OHL closer to the southern boundary of the Dedham Vale National Landscape. Given the elevated plateau characteristics of the receiving environment and the established intervisibility between parts of the Order Limits and the National Landscape, it is considered that this revised scenario potentially requires a more comprehensive and transparent assessment of potential effects. At present, it is unclear whether the landscape and visual implications of this alignment have been (or should be) fully tested in accordance with established good practice. Specifically, TDC has not identified any updated LVIA, or accompanying verified photomontages, that demonstrate the likely effects of the proposed change on views both from and towards the National Landscape. In the absence of such evidence, it is difficult to determine whether the revised alignment would avoid or materially reduce harm when compared to the previously assessed scheme, particularly if a route north of the consented FTG warehouse is being actively considered. Given the high sensitivity of this location and its proximity to a nationally designated landscape, the Council is concerned that there may be potential for increased	*therefore there would be no change to the significance of effects on landscape character'* and *'the design scenario would bring the overhead line closer to some visual receptors, but further from others. For both options there would be close views towards the overhead line for local community receptors including residents and people travelling on the A12. Overall, there would be no change to the significance of effects on visual receptors in VRAs C11 or C12'.* **6.11 Environmental Statement Chapter 11 – Historic Environment [Revision C]** concluded in the sensitivity testing that Scenario B would not result in different effects from those reported within the residual effects section of the ES chapter. The design of Scenario B would be developed through detailed design, however, the Applicant disagrees that any additional assessment is required for landscape and visual effects, heritage impacts, or residential amenity beyond those included within the ES.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			adverse effects. It is therefore important that these effects are robustly assessed, using appropriate viewpoints and visualisations, and that the findings are clearly set out to inform decision-making. Drawing on the Council's experience in matters subject to judicial review—particularly where the adequacy of consideration given to impacts on designated landscapes has been a central issue—it would be prudent for the Applicant to ensure that Scenario B is comprehensively assessed and clearly justified (if this has not already been done). This should include explicit reference to relevant national and local planning policy. Taking this approach would assist in providing confidence that the revised alignment has been properly evaluated and that the decision-making process is both robust and legally sound. More broadly, TDC is concerned that the justification for progressing Scenario B appears to rely heavily on agreement with the Flying Trade Group and associated access arrangements. While such agreements may support deliverability, they do not replace the need for a robust planning assessment of environmental effects. The planning balance must be based on the acceptability of impacts, not simply on whether an option can be delivered. This matter also highlights a wider issue with the Applicant's scenario approach. While refinement during Examination is anticipated, moving to a preferred option without equivalent environmental scrutiny risks undermining confidence in the assessment process. The Rochdale envelope approach should not be used to defer the assessment of materially different impacts arising from a revised alignment. In light of the above, TDC is concerned about the progression of Scenario B as set out in Table 2.4 at this stage. The Council considers that further information is required, including detailed design of the revised alignment, confirmed pylon locations, and updated environmental assessment covering landscape and visual effects, heritage impacts, and residential amenity. This should include specific consideration of impacts on the Dedham Vale National Landscape and a clear comparison with the previously assessed scenario. Until this information is provided and assessed, TDC considers that the decision to progress Scenario B is premature.	

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			Suffolk County Council SCC (Planning) and BMSDC note that there are none in Section B and three in Section C that relate to Suffolk. In each of these, the decision has been to retain flexibility into delivery. SCC and BMSDC recognise the current status of these and awaits further engagement.	Noted. The Applicant will continue to engage with Suffolk County Council and Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils.

5. Biodiversity, ecology and natural environment

Table 5.1 Biodiversity, ecology and natural environment

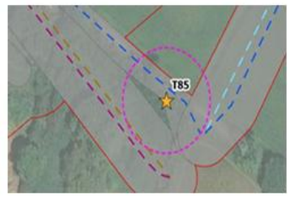
Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
BIO 2.1	The applicant All local authorities Norfolk Wildlife Trust Suffolk Wildlife Trust Essex Wildlife Trust	Assessment of biodiversity deficit In response to ExQ1 BIO 1.4 the applicant has stated that replacement planting and habitat creation is identified as embedded/ standard mitigation within the outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (outline LEMP). The applicant considers that with this in place there would be no 'biodiversity deficit'. To applicant: However, the ExA notes that as indicated in image 4.1 of ES Chapter 4 [APP-130] the overall construction programme, for example, for the Dedham Vale National Landscape the enabling works through to the initial energisation would take almost 4 years. Using this as an example and noting that up to a 120 metre (m) swathe of vegetation would need to be removed for the proposed underground cabling (and with a further 50m either side being "potentially affected") set out the worst-case scenario in time period from vegetation being removed to when you consider the replanted vegetation would reach a similar degree of maturity. Also, the applicant is requested to further explain its statement in response to BIO 1.4 that ES Chapter 8 [AS-026] has taken into account any short term temporary effects on ecological receptors – explain this with worked through examples, such as for hedgerow species and also for bats, to demonstrate how impacts on biodiversity have been assessed for this intervening period. To all local authorities and Wildlife Trusts: Set out your views on the potential for there to be biodiversity deficit and whether you consider this has been properly assessed in ES Chapter 8 and mitigated for by the applicant. Explain any outstanding concerns and what (if any) additional measures you would wish to see the applicant implement.	**Basildon Borough Council** **Brentwood Borough Council (BBC)** **Braintree District Council** *[Ecology comment only]* **Chelmsford City Council** **Colchester City Council** **Essex County Council** **Ecology** 1) There is a persistent assumption throughout the ES Chapter 8 that the planned reinstatement of impacted habitats will lead to an inevitable long term negligible effect – both for the habitats and the species associated with them. Two problems with that assumption are: It assumes that there will always be successful habitat reinstatement to an equivalent (or better) type and condition of habitat. New vegetation planting, be it trees, shrubs or grass mix, can have problems and setbacks. The 5- year management period proposed for the vegetation reinstatement efforts does not leave much scope for any failures that would need correction and care to assure safe establishment. 2) The impact assessments within the ES Chapter 8 are not transparent with respect to predicted residual impacts in the short and medium term. As ECC has stated before, within the ES Chapter 8, Table 8.23 (the Residual Effect column), does not ever clarify how long it is predicted to take for the magnitude of impact to degrade to a negligible level for the affected receptors. One could interpret from Table 8.23 that the application of mitigation will ultimately bring about a neutral outcome but miss recognising that there is a necessary period of recovery time which may be measurable in years. Providing transparency about the short – medium term impacts predictable for receptor species displaced from or otherwise denied previous resources, would enable a more inference-based examination of those assessments. That further clarity of argument would enable reviewers of the ES Chapter 8 to more informatively judge whether	Ecology 1) The Applicant maintains its position that a five-year management and monitoring period is sufficient to ensure successful establishment of replacement hedgerows and trees across the Project. Further detailed justification was provided by the Applicant in response to the ExA's First Written Question DCO1.S13 in **8.8.1.1 Addendum to Applicant's Comments on Written Representations [REP3-074]**. 2) **6.8 Environmental Statement Chapter 8 - Ecology and Biodiversity [AS-026]** has fully assessed the short-term, medium-term and long-term potential impacts on ecological receptors. The impact pathways that would lead to short-term or medium-term effects include effects on ecological receptors during construction, prior to any replacement planting, including killing/injury of protected species, collision risk, disturbance, hydrological changes, habitat loss and fragmentation/severance as set out within paragraph 8.7.4 of **6.8 Environmental Statement Chapter 8 - Ecology and Biodiversity [AS-026]**. For more detail and worked examples of how the impact assessment was undertaken, see the response to BIO 2.1 in **8.9.2 Applicant's Responses to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]**. The residual effects column within Table 8.23 of **6.8 Environmental Statement Chapter 8 - Ecology and Biodiversity [AS-026]** sets out the significant effect when taking into consideration all mitigation measures, including replacement planting. Green Infrastructure **6.8 Environmental Statement Chapter 8 - Ecology and Biodiversity [AS-026]** has fully assessed the short-term, medium-term and long-term potential impacts on ecological receptors. The assessment acknowledges that while replacement planting will provide adequate mitigation in the medium to long term, there may be short-term temporary effects on some ecological receptors. This includes assessment of short-term effects for foraging and commuting bats, nesting birds and invertebrates. Where short-term temporary effects have been identified, sufficient mitigation has been provided and set out in **7.4 Outline Landscape**

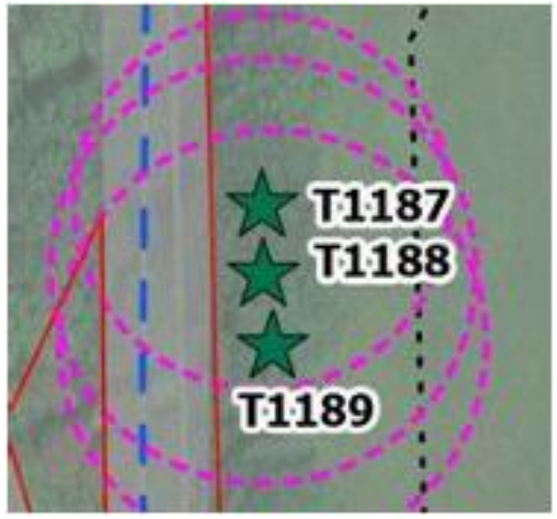
Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			or not certain long-term impact assessments do seem reasonable to assess as neutral Green Infrastructure We support the concerns set out above and adds the following. We consider that insufficient regard has been given to the temporal gap between habitat loss recovery and reinstatement, particularly in relation to ecological function and species use of habitats. While mitigation may deliver comparable habitats in the long term, the ES does not adequately assess the short- to medium-term deficit arising during establishment. In practice, habitats such as hedgerows and tree lines are unlikely to provide equivalent ecological function (e.g. for commuting bats, nesting birds, and invertebrates) for a number of years, and in some cases decades. The ES does ot clearly demonstrate how these interim effects on ecological receptors have been assessed or how significance has been attributed over this period. It is reasonable to expect a minimum of 10+ years before hedgerows and tree lines begin to provide comparable structure and connectivity, with longer timescales required to reach mature condition. We also note that the linear and extensive nature of the works increases the likelihood of cumulative temporary disruption to habitat connectivity, particularly in sensitive landscapes. For example, the loss of linear features may fragment bat commuting routes and reduce foraging opportunities over multiple seasons; the ES does not clearly assess these interim effects or their significance. More widely, species reliant on habitat continuity may experience displacement, reduced resources, and increased predation during recovery. We therefore considers that a short- to medium-term biodiversity deficit is likely, and that this has not been fully or transparently assessed within ES Chapter 8. Further clarity is required on recovery timescales, interim impacts on species, and measures to reduce temporal losses such as advanced planting, retention of key features where feasible, and longer-term management commitments. The proposed mitigation and management approach does not fully address the duration or extent of these interim effects. While we acknowledge that long-term reinstatement may reduce impacts, the current assessment does not fully demonstrate that a biodiversity deficit would be avoided over the lifetime of the project when temporal effects are taken into account.	**and Ecological Management Plan [Revision F]** and **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]**. This includes the provision of temporary artificial bat flyways to mitigate the potential temporary short-term fragmentation effect of foraging and commuting bats. Artificial bat flyways would be installed at key locations, as shown on **7.4 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan - Appendix E - Bat Flyway Locations [AS-048]**, each night during the active bat season from May to September inclusive, in order to maintain habitat connectivity for commuting and foraging bats in the short term. Further examples of how short-term effects have been assessed are provided within BIO 2.1 in **8.9.2 Applicant's Responses to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]**. The Applicant maintained that hedgerows can be created and achieve moderate condition within five years, in line with the BNG Statutory Biodiversity Metric guidelines. However, a hedgerow will start to provide habitat connectivity and be used by wildlife within the first year of planting, particularly when the vegetation is protected from deer browsing by guards and/or fencing that help to provide structure and encourage the growth of plants in the field layer. More details on expected establishment timings are provided within BIO 2.1 in **8.9.2 Applicant's Responses to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]**. Given the type and linear nature of the Project, the extent of habitat loss at any one location is limited. At green corridors such as hedgerows, impacts will be minimised as far as practicable. For the majority of the Project, impacts to a hedgerow will be limited to one gap of 12 m to facilitate the construction haul road, increasing to up to a maximum of 70 m for the 400 kV underground cables section. As identified above, mitigation measures have been implemented to avoid short-term effects such as fragmentation during construction. Most of the habitat removal is temporary. It is unclear why the respondent considers that small-scale temporary removal of habitat in any one location would lead to additional risk of predation. The Applicant ackowledges that it takes time for trees and hedgerows to reach maturity, but these habitats do not need to be mature to provide vegetated corridors of value to wildlife.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			Suffolk Wildlife Trust It is the view of Suffolk Wildlife Trust that this matter can be viewed from two perspectives; through Biodiversity Net Gain on the one hand and through impacts to species (which are not considered under Biodiversity Net Gain assessment) on the other. The Applicant will follow revised TCPA guidance, which Suffolk Wildlife Trust do not raise issue with, when undertaking their Biodiversity Net Gain assessment and using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric; this is confirmed within Document: 7.1 Biodiversity Net Gain Report. Therefore, where habitats are deemed to be 'lost' for the purposes of BNG, any delay in starting creation or enhancement must be considered within the Statutory Metric (i.e. using the delay in restoration/ creation function) and will require additional habitat creation or enhancement to compensate for the delay. The applicant has confirmed that delivering at least 10% net gain is not possible and onsite and will be securing an overall net gain by purchasing offsite Biodiversity Units. We support the Applicant's proposed approach to delivering offsite Biodiversity Net Gain through landscape scale habitat creation and enhancement in locations that Local Nature Recovery Strategies indicate will make a meaningful contribution towards strategic nature recovery. We are satisfied that, subject to the delivery of habitat reinstatement in accordance with the details provided in the Outline LEMP and requisite off-site Biodiversity Units being secured, there will not be a biodiversity deficit with respect to BNG. Separately from Biodiversity Net Gain, at a species impact level, Suffolk Wildlife Trust would agree that a short-term and localised biodiversity deficit may occur; this is most likely to occur where removal and reinstatement of habitat is planned. Until reinstated habitat, such as hedgerow, achieves equivalent maturity to temporarily removed habitat, the degree to which it supports use by species, such as foraging or commuting bats or nesting birds, is likely to be reduced compared with the removed habitat. The time it takes for reinstated habitat to achieve equivalent maturity and ecological function to removed habitat will be highly variable depending on the nature and condition of the original habitat it is replacing. This temporary deficit could be mitigated by creating habitat of equivalent ecological value and function nearby in advance of	The Applicant welcomes Suffolk Wildlife Trust's response regarding the appropriate assessment of impacts within **6.8 Environmental Statement Chapter 8 - Ecology and Biodiversity [AS-026]** and has no further comments. The Applicant does not consider it necessary to undertake post-construction monitoring as part of the DCO, as suggested by Suffolk Wildlife Trust. All mitigation measures proposed by the Project are tried and tested techniques, with their success proven through implementation on other projects.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			the impact (removal) occurring; however, given that medium to long-term biodiversity impacts are expected to be positive (taking into account habitats created or enhanced for BNG) in this instance Suffolk Wildlife Trust acknowledges that requiring such measures might not be proportionate. However, we have previously asked the Applicant to undertake additional monitoring during and post construction of species such as bats. Such monitoring would increase understanding and improve the knowledge-base needed to design successful future mitigation for the biodiversity deficit which occurs at this stage of similar projects. While such monitoring would not avoid or mitigate the short-term biodiversity deficit associated with this project, it could contribute to improved understanding and mitigation design for future projects. In our opinion this would offer wider conservation benefits which contribute to a suitable project legacy.	
			Suffolk County Council and Babergh District Council and Mid Suffolk District Council SCC (Ecology) and BMSDC believe that the likely biodiversity deficit has been sufficiently and reasonably assessed and mitigated within the ES. It will be essential, however, that in the execution of the mitigation and reinstatement of habitats, these are done in a timely fashion. The shorter the period of time where habitats are removed, or otherwise compromised, the less the likely impact upon ecological populations and the faster their recovery to pre-impact levels would likely be. In order to ensure that no temporary works would cause long term significant population impacts, the onus will be on the correct use of: i) pre-commencement ecological surveys to provide current understanding of habitats and populations; ii) appropriate implementation of construction works designed to minimise impacts e.g. appropriate soil storage; iii) appropriate implementation and provision of mitigation measures e.g. provision of temporary flyways for bats for the entire required period i.e. from removal of habitat until the replacement habitat can provide the requisite ecological functionality; and iv) reinstatement measures being implemented at the earliest possible opportunity i.e. as soon as	The Applicant welcomes the response from Suffolk County Council (SCC) and Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils (BMSDC) regarding the appropriate assessment of impacts within **6.8 Environmental Statement Chapter 8 - Ecology and Biodiversity [AS-026]**. The Applicant notes the Council's request that the habitats should be reinstated in as short a time period as possible and is in agreement that this is desirable to minimise impacts. Replacement planting would be undertaken at the earliest opportunity and no later than the first planting season following completion of construction activities on that stage, as set out within **7.4 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan [Revision F]**. i. The Applicant has committed to pre-commencement ecology surveys as identified in **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]** and **7.4 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan [Revision F]**. ii. **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice Appendix C - Outline Soil Resource Plan [APP-303]** identifies how soils are to be managed so that their value is retained. iii. Provision and implementation of mitigation is outlined in **7.4 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan [Revision F]**, including the

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			works are complete, not when the entire project is complete. The outline detail within the Outline COCP and LEMP indicate that suitable measures will be applied to meet the stated assessment that no biodiversity deficit would occur in the long term. In order to ensure that this is the case, the detailed proposals for the mitigation and enhancement of temporary habitat impacts will need to be scrutinised and agreed by the ECoW team and reported to the Ecology Working Group prior to commencement of works likely to cause any such impacts, as well as during their implementation.	installation of bat flyways, and secured by Requirement 4 of **3.1 Draft DCO [Revision F]**. iv. **7.4 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan [Revision F]** identifies '*Habitat reinstatement for all areas where works are considered temporary, would be undertaken at the earliest opportunity and no later than by the first available planting season after that part of the authorised development, to which the habitat reinstatement works apply, is first brought into operational use.*' The role of the Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) and Ecology Working Group is set out in **7.4 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan [Revision F]**. Replacement planting will be undertaken with support from the ECoW following the principles set out within **7.4 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan [Revision F]** secured through Requirement 4 of **3.1 Draft DCO [Revision F]**.
			South Norfolk District Council We note that DEZNZ will be responsible for discharging the Requirements of Norwich to Tilbury • Our response relates to [AS-026] EN020027-000639-6.8 Environmental Statement Chapter 8 - Ecology and Biodiversity Revision B Clean Version.pdf and its associated appendices. • Natural England are the statutory consultee for internationally and nationally designated sites. We note that Natural England, in their Statement of Common Ground (see REP4-082), agree with the conclusions of the EIA regarding Internationally Designated Sites, Nationally Designated Sites. • SNDC note that the latest iteration of the OLEMP [REP3-031] includes consideration of impacts and mitigation on Meadow Wood Nature Reserve CWS (See Table 5.4). Meadow Wood Nature Reserve CWS has however not been included in the ES, so it is not clear how mitigation can be proposed if impacts have not been adequately identified. This CWS is likely to be irreplaceable habitat and treated as such in the ES. • SNDC are in the process of responding to the SoCG.. Non Statutory Designated Sites - Meadow Wood Nature Reserve CWS • South Norfolk District Council remain concerned about the impacts to Meadow Wood Nature Reserve CWS. This site was designed by the Norfolk County Wildlife Site Partnership in March	As set out in Appendix A and B of **8.4.12 Applicant's Comments on Post-Hearing Submissions and Interested Party Action Points [REP5-194]**, the Applicant is proposing to draft the DCO such that the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) could discharge the DCO Requirements, should a DESNZ unit be established to do so. It is not currently confirmed that this would be the case and **3.1 Draft DCO [Revision F]** still allows for the relevant Local Planning and Highway Authorities to discharge requirements. Meadow Wood Nature Reserve While Meadow Wood Nature Reserve was not identified as a named County Wildlife Site (CWS) in the ecological assessment due to the designation of the site in March 2026, after submission of the development consent application, impacts to the habitats and species that the CWS supports have been fully assessed within **6.8 Environmental Stement Chapter 8 - Ecology and Biodiversity [AS-026]**. Please refer to BIO 1.3 in **8.9.1 Applicant's Responses to First Written Questions [REP3-074]** and GEN 1.6 in **8.4.10 Applicant's Comments on Responses to ExQ1 [REP4-299]** for further details. The potential future CWS designation was also acknowledged in the ES within the future baseline section, but under the name 'Site near Bunwell Hill' in the absence of citation information. The area has not been mapped as ancient woodland on the latest Natural England Ancient Woodland Inventory updates. Impacts to veteran trees, irreplacable habitat, have been considered separately in **6.13.A6 Environmental**

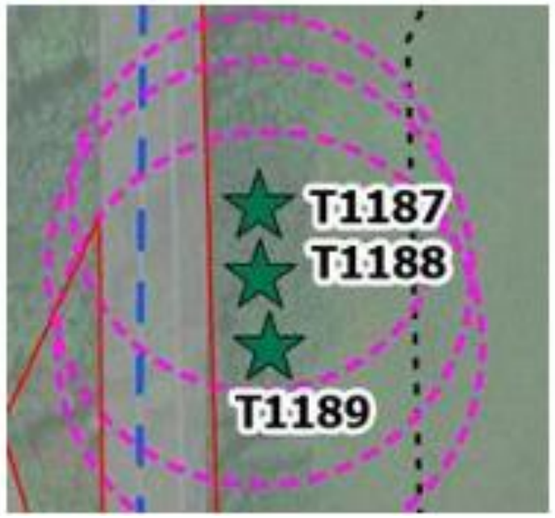
Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			2026 in response to the proposal (Targeted Consultation Norfolk 3 in easily 2025) after it became clear that the alternative route proposed by National Grid in this area would be likely more harmful than the original. • Surveys undertaken by National Grid did not identify the ecological importance of this site and having raised concerns in February 2025 National Grid did not undertake any additional survey work in this area. Chapter 8 of the ES has therefore not assessed impacts on this CWS and the AIA underplays the impacts as it does not identify or consider canopy cover. We do not agree that impacts in this area have been adequately assessed or sufficient consideration given to the mitigation hierarchy. • Pre-commencement works will result in the undergrounding of the existing over-head-line. The cable will necessitate works adjacent to veteran tree group VG404, and veteran tree T85– requiring works within approximately half of the RPA. Impacts on the canopy have not been considered as this is not shown (contrary to BS5837). It is not clear if such extensive works are survivable. (Please note an alternative route was suggested by Grae Piercy in April 2025 which would reduce the damage). It is requested that an alternative, less damaging route is considered for the undergrounding of the existing overhead line.  • In the absence of topographical surveys to inform the impact assessment the extent of impact on trees is likely to be underestimated – for example veteran trees T1187-T1189 are shown as not impacted despite the internal haul road passing within the RPA and beneath the canopy (the clearance required for a Cable Drum AIL delivery vehicle is 5 m high (see APP-310 EN020027-000188-7.3 Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan Appendix A - AIL Access Strategy.pdf). It is requested the OHL through CWS 2348 is undergrounded via HDD,	**Statement Appendix 13.6 - Arboricultural Impact Assessment AIA [APP-236]**. SNDC has misunderstood the extent of impacts to Meadow Wood Nature Reserve CWS in this response, which has since been explained in detail during a stakeholder meeting. The impacts will be limited to the oversail of the grassland section of the CWS, with some minimal tree impacts for electrical clearance. No ground breaking works will be undertaken within the CWS. **7.4 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan [Revision F]** was updated to include measures to protect Meadow Wood Nature Reserve CWS and the associated veteran trees. The Applicant maintains its position that there will be no significant residual effects on Meadow Wood Nature Reserve CWS. <u>Arboricultural Impact Assessment</u> The Applicant acknowledges the Council's comment relating to the AIA and reporting on canopy cover. Tables A13.6.2 and A13.6.3 of **6.13.A6 Environmental Statement Appendix 13.6 - Arboricultural Impact Assessment AIA [APP-236]** contain information on canopy cover impacts. Details of any onsite tree planting will be provided pursuant to Requirement 9 of **3.1 Draft DCO [Revision F]**, which will also need to be submitted to, and approved by, the relevant Local Planning Authority for that stage. <u>Pre-commencement works</u> The Council's comments relating to working near to veteran trees (canopies and root protection areas) are noted. The final Landscape and Ecological Management Plan is to be agreed with the Local Planning Authorities. Within this, **7.4 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan – Appendix B - Ancient Woodland and Veteran Tree Strategy [Revision C]**, Table 5.1 contains information to minimise impacts to veteran trees including targeted pruning and ground protection and will be updated at Deadline 7 as a result of design changes. This includes T1187-T1189 where root protection area encroachment is envisaged and alternative haulage road construction is proposed. Utility companies such as UK Power Networks follow the guidance within Street Works publication Volume 4 - Street Works UK Guidelines for the Planning, Installation and Maintenance of Utility Apparatus in

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			and measures are put in place to avoid the need for a haul road in this location – avoiding the impact on veteran trees. Failing that using helicopters to lift cable drums and install pylons should also be explored to avoid impacts to the canopy of these veterans which would likely need raising to accommodate the large lorries  • The citation includes reference to possible ancient wood pasture, and ancient oak pollards, historic pollards and coppice stools on the boundary ditches and ancient woodland indicator species. Ancient Woodland • In July 2025 Grae Piercy wrote to Natural England with the intention of registering Meadow Wood Nature Reserve CWS – which would appear to be ancient wood pasture - as ancient woodland. A TPO has also been placed on this area by South Norfolk District Council. As ancient wood pasture it is ancient woodland it would be of national importance. It is requested that greater consideration is given to Meadow Nature Reserve CWS and is likely ancient woodland status as irreplaceable habitat. • Where works impact irreplaceable habitats these habitats cannot be compensated for and there will be a biodiversity deficit. APP 323 Document: 7.4 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan Appendix B - Ancient Woodland and Veteran Tree Strategy. It is noted that Natural England are still in discussion with National Grid as to whether the proposed mitigation is adequate. South Norfolk	Proximity to Trees, this ensures undergrounding of services is carried out to industry best practice. Ancient Woodland The area has not been mapped as ancient woodland on the latest Natural England Ancient Woodland Inventory updates. For impacts to Meadow Wood Nature Reserve CWS, please refer to BIO 1.3 in **8.9.1 Applicant's Responses to First Written Questions [REP3-074]** and GEN 1.6 in **8.4.10 Applicant's Comments on Responses to ExQ1 [REP4-299]**. Natural England is in agreement with the contents of the latest **7.4 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan - Appendix B - Ancient Woodland and Veteran Tree Strategy [Revision C]**. White-clawed crayfish The Applicant acknowledges the presence of white-clawed crayfish in the wider River Tas catchment. BIO 1.15 in **8.4.13.1 Applicant's Response to Pylons East Anglia's Comments on its ExQ1 Responses [REP5-202]** provides further details. Mitigation measures have been included in **7.4 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan [Revision F]** and **Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]** following agreement within the Environment Agency. Wintering/passage birds Noted. Biodiversity Net Gain Onsite BNG is secured through Requirement 4 of **3.1 Draft DCO [Revision F]**, while the commitment and delivery of offsite BNG will be secured through an alternative commitment. The Applicant provided details in relation to the approach being taken to offsite BNG in response to ExQ2 BIO 2.14 in **8.9.2 Applicant's Responses to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]**. The Council's request to add Biodiversity Net Gain as a DCO requirement is noted. As identified in **7.1 Biodiversity Net Gain Report [APP-299]**, impacts to individual trees would be mitigated/compensated for separately and sit outside the BNG Report. National Grid is committed to delivering a 3:1 replacement planting ratio for individual trees, as detailed within **7.4 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan [Revision F]**. This approach is considered proportionate given the scale of the Project and would ensure no net loss to biodiversity, with net gain largely delivered offsite. As outlined within **7.1 Biodiversity Net Gain Report [APP-299]** the use of the 'maximum construction area'

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			District Council are not satisfied that all reasonable opportunities have been undertaken to avoid impacting irreplaceable habitat noting that the proposal will cause significant harm to veteran trees and Meadow Wood Nature Reserve CWS which surveys by NWT indicate is ancient wood pasture. • White Clawed Crayfish should be considered within the ES as they are present in the R. Tas - Norfolk Rivers Trust – Crayfish | Welcome to the Shotesham website. Wintering/passage birds • See comments to Bio 2.8 Biodiversity Net Gain • • Chapter 8 sets out National Grid commitment to delivering at least a 10% BNG but this commitment is not reflected by a requirement within the DCO as such there is no mechanism to quantify losses, or gains. It is requested the DCO is amended to include a • BNG Requirement. • With regards to the BNG baseline, and in line with best practice guidance, when discharging the requirement, all trees impacted need included within the baseline so they can be compensated accordingly (at the present time it is not clear how NG will replace individual trees and small groups of trees where the number of trees has not been quantified). In line with the BNG user guide all veteran trees and ancient trees should also be recorded as individual trees and not grouped (e.g. VG404 and VG 606). • Land within the 'maximum construction area' will be used as the baseline. Please can NG define what is meant by the 'maximum construction area' as it is unclear what this includes noting that the baseline has not been included for an area of archaeological trenching at RG 56 – Area 4. As this habitat is impacted it needs to be included within the baseline to ensure there is no biodiversity deficit. Arboriculture • It is requested that all potential/possible veterans (and notable trees) should be identified and treated as veterans until proven otherwise via an	includes all works areas but excludes any land not directly affected based on the design as presented in the DCO application. The use of a 'maximum construction area' is considered a proportionate approach for projects of this scale and in line with the recently published guidelines for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (June 2026)[2]. The Applicant can confirm the area of land around pylon RG056 and the associated compound to the east, which has been subject to archaeological trenching, has been included within the BNG baseline as part of the 'maximum construction boundary'. Arboriculture The Applicant detailed the arboricultural surveying methodology in Appendix J of **6.19 Scoping Report [APP-296]** and have applied the RAVEN 2 methodology for assessing veteran trees. • While T32 displays some features it did not meet the exceptional threshold to be reported as a veteran tree. The position of T32 is illustrated in **6.13.A6 Environmental Statement Appendix 13.6 - Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) Figure A13.6.1 - Arboricultural Impact Assessment [REP1-065]** and reported as unaffected. Comittment B03 in **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]** confirms that protective areas will be established using appropriate fencing and signage. • The Applicant acknowledges that the presence of fungal fruiting bodies are one of many features to be considered when determining veteran trees, however, signs of associated decay are usally visible without the presence of the fruiting body. • The Applicant's assessment methodology determined that T52 did not qualify as a veteran tree. The position of T52 is illustrated in **6.13.A6 Environmental Statement Appendix 13.6 - Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) Figure A13.6.1 - Arboricultural Impact Assessment [REP1-065]** and reported as unaffected. The Applicant confirms that the hierarchy to avoid impacts to veteran trees remains a primary consideration. Where impacts are to be minimised, any tree surgery is to be undertaken by VetCert approved contractors, see paragraph 5.5.3 of **7.4 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan - Appendix B - Ancient Woodland and Veteran Tree Strategy [Revision C]**. Comittment B03 in **7.2 Outline**

[2] Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (2026) *What to include in biodiversity net gain baselines for NSIPs*. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/what-to-include-in-biodiversity-net-gain-baselines-for-nsips

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			appropriate survey e.g T32 is a 'possible veteran'. T32 is not labelled on Figure A13.6.1 – Landscape and Visual Arboricultural Impacts Plan Overview) raising concerns that a. it is veteran but has not been adequately assessed and b) it could be impacted because it is not mapped. Lastly, if not veteran now it will be a veteran tree of the future and should protected as if it were a veteran tree. • Veteran tree surveys were undertaken at a time of year when fruiting bodies would not necessarily be present. Because of this it is likely that there are some trees that have not been correctly identified. It is requested that where trees (e.g. 52 and 53) which would appear borderline veteran that they are treated as veteran. • It is advised that there are now 9 TPOs (inc a 30m buffer) in Section A (South Norfolk) which need to be considered. • It is requested that further consideration is given to the locations of pylons RG20 and RG21 in that they should be re aligned to the west to avoid veteran tree T61 which is currently beneath the overhead line. • APP 032 Document: 7.4 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan Appendix B - Ancient Woodland and Veteran Tree Strategy sets out the compensation strategy for impacts to irreplaceable habitats. It needs to consider Meadow Wood Nature Reserve CWS which NWT have identified as potentially ancient wood pasture (Irreplaceable habitat). It is noted that NE have not yet agreed the strategy is adequate however SNDC maintain our concern that greater consideration should be given to avoiding the impacts in the first instance.	**Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]** confirms that protective areas will be established using appropriate fencing and signage.The Applicant confirms that T53 is reported as a veteran tree and is reported as not affected by the Project. • Schedule 14 of **3.1 Draft DCO [Revision F]** includes TPO records. The Applicant requests that any new TPO information is shared. • The Applicant confirms that during detailed design, impacts to trees will be minimised as far as practicable (see commitment GG14 in **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]**). Realignment options to pylons RG20 and RG21 will potentially have consequential impacts to other environmental constraints (including veteran trees). <u>Pre-commencement works</u> The Applicant does not agree that additional amendments to the draft DCO are necessary. In relation to pre-commencement operations, the concern raised does not reflect the controls already secured through **3.1 Draft DCO [Revision F]**. **7.4 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan [Revision F]** (the Outline LEMP) expressly applies to pre-commencement operations. Paragraph 1.1.8 confirms that all pre-commencement operations (as defined in Article 2(1) of the draft DCO) must be carried out in accordance with the Outline LEMP. This is secured by way of compliance with Requirement 4 of the draft DCO that ensures all pre-commencement operations are carried out in accordance with the Outline LEMP. Paragraphs 1.2.5 and 1.2.6 further confirm that the Outline LEMP applies to works undertaken by National Grid, UK Power Networks and any appointed contractors, including third-party utility works. As such, any pre-commencement undergrounding works undertaken pursuant to the DCO must comply with the environmental controls and mitigation measures secured through the Outline LEMP. The Applicant also does not agree that pre-commencement works could proceed on the basis of outdated ecological or arboricultural information. The Outline LEMP expressly recognises that time may elapse between the baseline surveys undertaken for the Environmental Statement and construction activities. Paragraph 6.1.2 therefore requires pre-construction surveys to be undertaken where species presence or activity may have changed. Paragraph 6.1.3 further requires the results of those surveys to be used to determine whether mitigation measures need to be

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			   <u>Pre-commencement Works</u> • Undergrounding of the OHL will be undertaken as part of pre-commencement works2 including the undergrounding within the Waveney Valley. These works will be undertaken by third party providers (including UKPN) prior to detailed ecological and arboricultural surveys being completed. Habitat losses associated with these will therefore not be adequately surveyed (to establish the baseline) or mitigated and compensated to the point of no net loss as there is no mechanism (e.g. a Requirement) to secure this as part of the DCO. It is requested the DCO is amended to ensure that ecological and arboricultural surveys are undertaken and use to inform the design of pre commencement works. Vegetation removal can be carried out under pre-commencement works before the detailed design had been finalised likely resulting in the	amended and requires the Final LEMP to be updated to reflect the survey findings where necessary. If further update was required by way of a final LEMP then pre-commencement operations in that location would not be able to take place. The Outline LEMP contains numerous commitments for updated surveys immediately prior to construction activities, including bat surveys (paragraph 6.1.4), nesting bird surveys (paragraphs 6.1.21 and 6.1.22), kingfisher surveys (paragraph 6.1.26), water vole surveys (paragraph 6.1.34), otter surveys (paragraph 6.1.36), badger surveys (paragraph 6.1.41) and invasive species surveys (paragraph 7.10.3). In relation to arboriculture, paragraph 7.1.2 requires an Arboricultural Method Statement to be produced following detailed design and agreed with the relevant local planning authority before construction activities commence. Paragraph 8.2.3 further commits that, following detailed design and prior to construction, relevant surveys of arboricultural features that may be affected will be undertaken to ensure tree and hedgerow removal is reduced as far as practicable. The concern that pre-commencement works could result in unnecessary habitat loss before the design has been informed by up-to-date survey information is therefore not accepted. The DCO framework requires pre-commencement operations to comply with the Outline LEMP (paragraph 1.1.8), requires updated ecological surveys and review of mitigation where necessary (paragraphs 6.1.2 and 6.1.3), and requires further arboricultural assessment following detailed design (paragraphs 7.1.2 and 8.2.3). The application of the mitigation hierarchy is also embedded within the Outline LEMP. Paragraph 1.1.7 confirms that the Project will seek to '*avoid, minimise, mitigate and compensate*' effects in accordance with the mitigation hierarchy. Paragraph 2.1.1 explains that the Project design has evolved through an iterative process whereby environmental constraints have been avoided or impacts reduced where practicable, while paragraph 7.1.1 confirms that vegetation will be retained wherever practicable and that construction activities will be micro-sited to avoid impacts on ecologically important features. Consequently, any pre-commencement works must be informed by updated survey information and undertaken in accordance with an established avoid–minimise–mitigate–compensate approach. Accordingly, the Applicant considers that the DCO framework secures (by way of compliance with

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			unnecessary loss of habitats when, for example, bell mouths are scoped out. DCO • As submitted the DCO does not specifically require the Discharge of the Requirements to be based on the detailed design and completed/updated ecology/arb reports. Based on previous experience it is requested that the DCO be amended to require: copies of the updated ecology and arboricultural reports to be provided, along with details of the assured design when discharging the LEMP and CoCP for each stage/substage3 so that, for example, the LEMP and CoCP can demonstrate how the ecological mitigation hierarchy has been followed and the there is no biodiversity deficit and a net gain can be achieved. Flyways • Bat 'flyways' (as shown in App-326, and 6.1.14 of the oLEMP) were identified based on the presence of static bat detector locations, however not all hedges/hedges with trees and watercourses were surveyed with a static detector. To avoid fragmenting habitat for bats it is requested that all hedges/lines of trees/hedges with trees/water courses/woodland edges are assumed to be a flyway and used by foraging and commuting bats, rather than just those surveyed as the absence of survey data for these features does not mean they are not important for bats. Flyways should be placed on these features too. It is requested the NG confirm how long the 'flyways' will be in use for (e.g. until vegetation is established?). APP-299 7.1 Biodiversity Net Gain Report (Final Issue A) Para 3.4.4. advises that that where practicable vegetation would be trimmed or cut to stump rather than full removal. Please note that where trees are 'cut to stump' for visibility they need to be considered as lost as many species do not coppice, and the success of coppicing depends on the age. Unless consideration is given to whether the management measures are appropriate, SNDC remain concern that impacts are not going to be adequately compensated.	Requirement 4 of the **Draft DCO [Revision F]**) an iterative process whereby pre-commencement works are informed by detailed design, informed by updated survey information, and delivered in accordance with the mitigation hierarchy. Bat flyways The bat survey scope was agreed with Natural England in advance of surveys being undertaken, as included within **5.9.13 Draft Statement of Common Ground - Natural England [REP4-081]**. Automated static detector surveys have been undertaken in locations where effects on bats are anticipated because of severance/ fragmentation of habitat, temporary/ permanent removal of vegetation and/or indirect effects arising from light and noise of temporary construction (i.e., haul roads, access tracks, temporary construction compounds) and/or operational use of permanent assets (i.e. substations, CSE compounds, permanent access roads for substations/CSE compounds). Full details of the bat activity surveys are included in **6.8.A10 ES Appendix 8.10 Bat Activity Report [AS-036]**. The artificial bat flyways are proposed at key locations where the survey data have indicated a high usage feature by foraging/commuting bats, as shown on **7.4 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan - Appendix E - Bat Flyway Locations [AS-048]**. This will ensure that connectivity is maintained the during the construction phase. On completion of the construction phase, the vegetation would be reinstated, and the temporary flyway removed. Replacement planting of the linear features is considered a medium to long term (more than five years) mitigation measure. Once the hedgerow planting is in place, bats will be able to navigate along and forage over this planting; it does not need to be 'mature' to fulfil this function, and it will not be necessary to maintain the artificial bat flyways post-construction. These mitigation measures are set out in **7.4 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan [Revision F]**.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			Thurrock Council The Council agrees that the proposed development is unlikely to result in a meaningful biodiversity deficit. The Council notes that the majority of the proposed development within Thurrock is located on arable land and modified grassland habitats which are identified as having relatively low biodiversity value within the Applicant's biodiversity metric assessment. The Council welcomes the Applicant's commitment to reinstate woodland, hedgerows, scrub and grassland habitats following construction and notes the proposed biodiversity enhancement measures within the Environmental Areas. The Council is satisfied that the proposed mitigation, habitat reinstatement and habitat creation measures are capable of delivering biodiversity enhancement within Thurrock and raises no objection to the Applicant's conclusions in relation to biodiversity deficit.	The Applicant welcomes Thurrock Council's response and agreement with the conclusions of **6.8 Environmental Statement Chapter 8 - Ecology and Biodiversity [AS-026]**.
BIO 2.4	Natural England	District level licensing approach for great crested newt (GCN) In response to the ExA's EXQ1 BIO 1.18, the applicant in [REP3-074] has stated that a signed Impact Assessment and Conservation Payment Certificate for GCN has been obtained from Natural England and that you have signed it, confirming that the applicant will apply for a GCN District Level Licensing. Please either provide a copy of this or confirm that you are satisfied with the applicant's approach in relation to GCN.	**Natural England** **District level licensing approach for great crested newt (GCN)** Natural England is satisfied with the approach being taken by the applicant.	The Applicant has nothing further to add. The agreement on the GCN District Level Licensing approach is noted within **5.9.13 Draft Statement of Common Ground - Natural England [REP4-081]**.
BIO 2.7	Natural England	Applicability of NatureScot best practice guidance In its response to ExQ1 BIO 1.12 the applicant in [REP3-074] has cited guidance from NatureScot, 2017, updated 2025, 'Recommended bird survey methods to inform impact assessment of onshore windfarms', that in turn is referenced as being broadly similar in terms of survey requirements and methodology in the NatureScot, 2025, guidance 'Assessment and mitigation of impacts of power lines and guyed meteorological masts on birds', to justify its approach to not specifically surveying for, in particular, farmland bird species. Comment on the applicant's approach and the applicability of NatureScot's guidance in relation to the location and nature of this proposed development, such as an energy grid connection project in eastern England.	**Natural England** **Applicability of NatureScot best practice guidance** In its response to ExQ1 BIO 1.12 the applicant in [REP3-074] has cited guidance from NatureScot, 2017, updated 2025, 'Recommended bird survey methods to inform impact assessment of onshore windfarms', that in turn is referenced as being broadly similar in terms of survey requirements and methodology in the NatureScot, 2025, guidance 'Assessment and mitigation of impacts of power lines and guyed meteorological masts on birds', to justify its approach to not specifically surveying for, in particular, farmland bird species. Comment on the applicant's approach and the applicability of NatureScot's guidance in relation to the location and nature of this proposed development, such as an	The NatureScot guidance is produced by Scottish Nature Agency but it is recognised as the most appropriate guidance for assessing such impacts across the UK. There is no guidance available for survey methodology to assess impacts of overhead lines on birds in England specifically.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			energy grid connection project in eastern England. Natural England does not routinely provide detailed advice relating to survey methodology and has provided standing advice to support decision making bodies in assessing survey requirements.1 With regards to this project, the applicants work has been viewed and assessed by Natural England's bird specialists who have not raised concerns either with the survey methodology or with the conclusion drawn. However, it should be noted that our comments in this regard relate only to designated species associated with international and national designated habitat sites (i.e. Special Protection Areas, Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Ramsars). Farmland bird populations that are not qualifying features of a designated site were not considered by us either in preapplication or during the examination and are not considered to fall within our core remit. We broadly endorse NatureScots' work and, in principle, we consider that it is appropriate to apply their guidance in the absence of other appropriate instruction, however, other representors may be better placed to comment on this matter given our lack of previous involvement.	
BIO 2.8	All local authorities Norfolk Wildlife Trust Suffolk Wildlife Trust Essex Wildlife Trust	Monitoring the effects on birds In response to ExQ1 BIO 1.13 regarding the use of bird diverters the applicant in [REP3-074] states that ES Chapter 8 [AS-026] and the Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) Report [APP-082] predict no significant adverse effects on birds during operation of the proposed development either with or without mitigation and therefore additional monitoring or adaptive management is not considered necessary or proportionate. Do you agree with the applicant's comments in this regard, if not then please explain why and set out what additional monitoring and (if necessary) adaptive management you would wish to see secured.	**Basildon Borough Council** **Brentwood Borough Council (BBC)** **Chelmsford City Council** **Colchester City Council** **Essex County Council** We acknowledge that the submitted ES Chapter 8 considered the issue with appropriate survey effort and reasonably concluded a negligible risk to the effect on birds. With respect to the route through Essex, We do not disagree with the NG/Arcadis assessment or their conclusions.	The Applicant welcomes the Council's agreement with our survey effort, assessment of effects and mitigation with repect to birds.
			Braintree District Council The Council has reviewed the Applicant's response to ExQ1 BIO 1.13 regarding the use of bird diverters and associated monitoring. The Council's Ecological Advisor has considered the relevant Environmental Statement chapter and supporting HRA and notes that no significant concerns were previously raised in relation to bird strike risk within Braintree District. On this basis, and having regard to the survey effort undertaken and the conclusions presented, the Council agrees that the assessment reasonably concludes that the risk to birds during the operational phase would be negligible, both with	The Applicant welcomes the Council's agreement with our assessment of effects and mitigation with repect to birds.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			and without mitigation. Accordingly, the Council does not consider that additional monitoring or adaptive management measures are necessary or proportionate in this instance.	
			Thurrock Council The Council agrees with the Applicant's conclusion that additional monitoring or adaptive management measures are not required. The Council notes that no qualifying species associated with the Thames Estuary and Marshes Special Protection Area (SPA) were recorded within the relevant survey areas. Whilst assemblage species and a number of collision risk species were identified during surveys, these were recorded in relatively low numbers and do not alter the overall conclusions of the assessment. The Council further notes that the sections of the Proposed Development located south of Tilbury North Substation predominantly utilise existing pylons and therefore do not materially increase the potential risk of bird collisions. In addition, north of Tilbury North Substation, the proposed new pylons are generally located away from the areas where collision risk species were principally recorded Having regard to the information submitted, the Council is satisfied that the proposed Development is unlikely to result in a likely significant effect on the Thames Estuary and Marshes SPA. On this basis, the Council does not consider that additional bird monitoring or adaptive management measures are currently justified.	The Applicant welcomes the Council's agreement with our assessment of effects and mitigation with repect to birds.
			Suffolk Wildlife Trust Suffolk Wildlife Trust discussed this matter with the applicant prior to Deadline 3, raising our concerns which were outlined in our response to ExQ1; the applicant proposed to take this query to their specialist ornithology team. Feedback from this query was provided to us on 5th June 2026, with the Applicant giving rationale as to why diverters are not proposed directly to the south of the River Waveney, in the area illustrated on Page 3 of our response to ExQ1. Given the timing of the Applicant's response to our concerns, we have not had time to adequately review our position. If additional monitoring of the crossing to assess whether the area of bird diverters should be increased is viable, then Suffolk Wildlife Trust would support its inclusion; our understanding is that such	Noted. The Applicant does not consider further diverters or monitoring are necessary for the reasons given in **8.9.2 Applicant's Responses to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]** in response to written question BIO 2.10.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			monitoring would be notably difficult. Therefore, our preference is a precautionary approach which sees the installation of diverters at construction phase alongside the main area of diverters proposed in the Waveney Valley.	
			South Norfolk District Council The conclusion of 'no significant adverse effects' of the shadow HRA relates to the Stour and Orwell Estuaries SPAs and Ramsar site, rather than impacts on birds in the River Waveney area. It is a matter of fact that birds will collide with the earth wire and conductors. [REP3-074] advises that bird diverters are proposed at two locations including over the River Waveney in South Norfolk -between pylons RG87 and RG88 (see Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan, Appendix F – Bird Diverter Locations [APP-327]). The use of bird diverters at the R. Waveney is precautionary because works associated with Waveney and Little Ouse Recovery Project (WaLOR) are expected to improve habitat in this area and become more suitable for waterbirds in the future. The effectiveness of bird diverters at preventing collision risk by birds varies depending on the type of diverter used (with the flapper flight diverter performing best in one study4) but it is wildly accepted that flight diverters generally lower mortality rates (one study suggests by 52% compared with unmarked spans (see 1)). A proportion of birds will continue to collide with the spans even with the use of bird diverters. We would suggest that National Grid are asked to provided further details with regards to: which type of bird diverter will be used; how close they will be placed (e.g. every 5 m); and details of maintenance. We would also seek clarification as to whether bird diverters will be placed on the ground wire as well as conductors. With regards to monitoring Bird Strike Indicators could be used to monitor bird collisions assuming they can be installed and replaced without causing additional damage to habitats (see 5.10.2. Measures to reduce risks caused by powerlines - Biodiversity & infrastructure handbook). Because birds will hit the conductors and earth wires the aims of the monitoring would need to be clear e.g. at which threshold would remedial action be taken, and what would this look like (e.g. increasing the density of the diverters). The cost of monitoring bird collision in the two	Specific details on bird diverters will be agreed at the detailed design stage. However, they will consist of a combination of bird diverters and coloured spacers. The Applicant has provided a comprehensive response to this matter previously and the Applicant does not consider further diverters or monitoring are necessary for the reasons given in **8.9.2 Applicant's Responses to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]** in response to written question BIO 2.10. The Applicant retains its stance that operational monitoring of bird populations is not necessary, as the proposed bird diverters are appropriate and proportionate to mitigate the risk of collision. The assessment has identified that the level of risk has been suitably addressed through embedded design and mitigation measures, and there is no evidence to indicate a residual risk that would warrant further monitoring.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			proposed locations would not be significant, and should further mitigation be required because habitats along the R. Waveney becomes more suitable for water birds, any measures would serve to further reduce bird mortality.	
			Norfolk County Council NCC agree with the applicant.	The Applicant welcomes the Council's agreement with our approach to mitigation with repect to birds.
			Suffolk County Council and Babergh District Council and Mid Suffolk District Council SCC (Ecology) and BMSDC believe that the use of bird diverters as a precautionary approach to prevent future bird strikes is a positive measure allowing for future changes in avian populations in the Waveney valley area. The WALOR project has aims to improve the habitats of the area in such a way that in the future a greater number of bird species with potential to collide with power lines may occur and/or pass through the location of the route. The importance of these populations and/or the protection the populations will have cannot be speculated on at this time. The best approach to ensure that future collision risk is not a significant impact on bird populations during the operational phase, is to perform periodical reviews through the operational phase by the ECoW and Ecology Working Group based on information regarding population observations at the time of the review. Once this information has been assessed and discussions have taken place, recommendations for the necessity to alter collision risk mitigation, or not, can be made at that time. The Councils believe that the first such review should be undertaken by the Ecology Working Group, 5 years from commencement of construction works.	The Applicant has provided a comprehensive response to this matter raised by Suffolk County Council in the ExA response BIO 2.10 in **8.9.2 Applicant's Responses to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]** and retains its stance that operational monitoring of bird populations is not necessary, as the proposed bird diverters are considered appropriate and proportionate to mitigate the risk of collision. The assessment has identified that the level of risk has been suitably addressed through embedded design and mitigation measures, and there is no evidence to indicate a residual risk that would warrant further monitoring.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
BIO 2.15	Five Estuaries and North Falls Offshore Wind Farms	Impact of the proposed development on Five Estuaries and North Falls Offshore Wind Farms The ExA notes that the Order granting approval for the North Falls Offshore Wind Farm was made by the Secretary of State on 14 May 2026. As indicated by the applicant in Table 6.1 of the Report on Interrelationship with Other Infrastructure Projects [REP4-296] the proposed development would potentially impact on the mitigation/enhancement/BNG measures that have been proposed for some other projects. In relation to both Five Estuaries and North Falls Offshore Wind Farms the applicant states in Table 6.1 that "The Project interacts with the … mitigation area, but sufficient coordination is secured between the two projects to minimise any impacts." Five Estuaries and North Falls are requested to provide comments on this.	**Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm** Five Estuaries is content that appropriate levels of cooperation are secured through a private tripartite cooperation agreement between the parties. This covers the proposed interactions of the Applicant's proposed Ardleigh Road widening and operational drainage works on Five Estuaries' mitigation and enhancement area. Co-operation between Five Estuaries and the Norwich to Tilbury Project has taken place in line with good practice and the policy considerations in the Energy NPS' particularly EN-5 which requires that "2.14.2 the construction planning for the proposals has been coordinated with that for other similar projects in the area on a similar timeline;". Particularly, Five Estuaries, National Grid and the North Falls Offshore Wind Farm project have been co-operating since the announcement of the grid connection points in 2022 with the objectives of reducing cumulative impacts particularly in relation to traffic and transport (including for construction traffic and site access), landscape and visual and operational noise. Reciprocal protective provisions have been agreed between both parties and are included in the respective DCO's. These provisions provide each undertaker sufficient protection from overlapping development consent and compulsory acquisition powers providing sufficient assurance to each Examining Authority and the Secretary of State that each DCO can be granted as sought, as demonstrated by the granting of the Five Estuaries and North Falls DCOs.	The Applicant welcomes the comments from Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm and looks forward to the continued engagement.

6. Draft Development Consent Order

6.1 Draft Development Consent Order – General

Table 6.1 Draft Development Consent Order – General

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
DCO 2.G2	All local authorities	DCO General 2 In light of the applicant's response to ExQ1 **[REP3-074]**, question SET 1.5, and the Secretary of State's decision letter for The North Falls Offshore Wind Farm Project dated 14 May 2026, especially paragraphs 4.192 to 4.194 (inclusive), do you have any further comment in regard to the use of the term "where practicable" or any variant of that term.	**Basildon Borough Council** **Chelmsford City Council** **Colchester City Council** **Essex County Council** [The Council] has reviewed the Applicant's response to ExQ1 (REP3-074, SET 1.5) together with the Secretary of State's decision letter for the North Falls Offshore Wind Farm Project (14 May 2026), in particular paragraphs 4.192 4.194 and whilst acknowledging a degree of flexibility is often necessary in the detailed design and construction of nationally significant infrastructure projects, [The Councils] does have concerns regarding the uncertainty its use creates. [The Council] would therefore, reiterate the following comments made at D4 REP4 328]. First, the Applicant relies on a definition of "where practicable" accepted in the Sizewell C examination: 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", and that "it would only be acceptable not to take the relevant step if there would not be a significant impact as a result, and therefore the risk would be low". [The Council] considers that even taken at face value, that test would require, before each departure from a mitigation measure, an evidenced balancing exercise tied to the risk of a significant impact, and a record of that exercise. Nothing in the dDCO or in the OCoCP secures any such balancing exercise, evidences it, or makes it auditable. If the Applicant therefore wishes to rely on the Sizewell C definition, then the Sizewell C definition needs to be (a) written into Article 2 of the dDCO as a defined term, and (b) accompanied by an enforceable procedural mechanism that delivers what the definition promises.	The Applicant has set out its position in its submissions in **8.9.1 Applicant's Responses to First Written Questions [REP3-074]**, where the Applicant removed the term 'where practicable' (or similar) from a number of commitments. Where the term was not removed from a commitment, the Applicant provided a justification for its use in Appendix G of **8.9.2 Applicant's Response to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]**. The Applicant does not intend to repeat these submissions here, but reiterates its previous submissions that the Secretary of State did not consider it necessary for the definition of 'where practicable' to be further secured through the DCO or any other mechanism and ECC's differing view that the phrase is imprecise or unnecessary fails to be considered in the further context that LPA approval of relevant control documents is to be sought pursuant to Requirement 4 of the DCO.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			Second, the Applicant's explanations show that "where practicable" is doing different work in different places, which is itself the problem. Within the same response, "where practicable" is variously said to mean: a) "it may not be physically possible" (a technical-impossibility test); b) "we will look at whether it is appropriate or feasible" (an Applicant judged discretion); c) "the landowner may have requirements/ask for something unreasonable" (a third-party-driven exception); d) "key aspect is H&S" (a safety override); e. "detailed design has not occurred and therefore specific plant has not been identified" (an information-deficit point that should be resolved before discharge, not preserved as a permanent discretion); and e) "Project critical activities needing to take place" (a programme-priority override). If a single phrase is being asked to carry six different meanings, it is by definition imprecise. Instead, a more precise phrase is needed for each situation. Third, the Applicant's repeated formula "the rest of the paragraph explains what will happen if this is not possible" undermines the need for the phrase. If the surrounding text already specifies what happens when the measure is not possible, then either (i) "where practicable" is redundant (because the consequence is already secured) and should be deleted, leaving the measure as an unqualified obligation with a defined fallback, or (ii) "where practicable" is doing extra work over and above the specified fallback, in which case the Applicant should explain what that work is, and the LPA should have a role in policing it. [The Council] believes the Applicant cannot have it both ways. A detailed analysis of the varied meanings of the term 'where practicable' was provided in Appendix C of ECC's Deadline 4 response [REP4-328]	
			Braintree District Council **Brentwood Borough Council** The Council has reviewed the Applicant's response to ExQ1 (REP3-074, SET 1.5) together with the Secretary of State's decision letter for the	The Applicant has set out its position in its submissions in **8.9.1 Applicant's Responses to First Written Questions [REP3-074]**, where the Applicant removed the term 'where practicable' (or similar) from a number of commitments. Where the term was not removed from a commitment, the Applicant provided a justification for its

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			North Falls Offshore Wind Farm Project (14 May 2026), in particular Paragraphs 4.192–4.194. The Council notes that the Secretary of State accepted the use of the term "where practicable" in that case where it was supported by a clear justification table and where the assessment was based on a robust worst-case scenario, including instances where mitigation may not be delivered in full. The Council also notes the approach taken in the Sizewell C decision, which clarifies that "where practicable" requires mitigation to be delivered in almost all circumstances, with departure from such measures only justified where there would be no significant impact and the associated risks are low. As such, despite previous issues raised about the lack of precision of the term "where practicable", the Council does not object in principle to the use of the wording, recognising that a degree of flexibility is often necessary in the detailed design and construction of nationally significant infrastructure projects. However, the Council considers that such wording must be applied in a tightly controlled and justified manner. In this regard, the Council accepts the use of "where practicable" only in those specific instances where the Applicant has provided a clear and reasoned justification (as set out in the table within REP3-074). The Council does not consider it appropriate for this term to be used more broadly across the DCO or its control documents without equivalent justification. In terms of some detailed comments on some of the provisions set out in Table 1 Justification for the use of 'practicable' • GG08 – While the Council recognises that a degree of flexibility may be necessary during construction, it notes that a number of the features referenced within GG8 (including trees, hedgerows, watercourses and archaeological assets) are already subject to more detailed and enforceable control through other certified documents and DCO Requirements. – For example, the protection of trees and vegetation would ordinarily be secured through approved Landscape Ecological Management Plans and associated arboricultural method statements, while	use in Appendix G of **8.9.2 Applicant's Response to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]**. The Applicant does not intend to repeat these submissions here, but reiterates its previous submissions that the Secretary of State did not consider it necessary for the definition of 'where practicable' to be further secured through the DCO or any other mechanism and ECC's differing view that the phrase is imprecise or unnecessary fails to be considered in the further context that LPA approval of relevant control documents is to be sought pursuant to Requirement 4 of the DCO.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment

archaeological are controlled through Requirement 5 requiring the submission and approval of a Written Scheme of Investigation. In this context, the use of the phrase "where practicable" within GG8 risks creating ambiguity as to whether these protections are subject to a lesser standard than that secured elsewhere within the DCO framework.

  - The Council therefore considers that, where such overarching commitments are included within the Outline Code of Construction Practice, they should clearly cross-refer to and be consistent with the relevant approved plans and requirements which secure detailed mitigation. This would ensure that flexibility is appropriately framed within an enforceable hierarchy of controls, and does not inadvertently dilute the level of protection afforded to important environmental and heritage receptors.

- LV04
  - The Council has also reviewed commitment LV04 within the Outline Code of Construction Practice in relation to the retention and replacement of landscape features. While the Council recognises that it may not be practicable to retain all existing landscape elements during construction, it notes that Requirement 9 of the draft DCO requires the submission and approval of a reinstatement planting plan, which provides a clear and enforceable mechanism for landscape replacement and mitigation.
  - In this context, the Council considers that the use of the phrase "where practicable" in LV04 risks creating ambiguity as to whether replacement planting is a mandatory requirement or subject to discretion. The Council's understanding is that reinstatement planting is secured through Requirement 9 and should therefore be delivered in accordance with the approved details, rather than being qualified by a general practicability test.
  - The Council therefore considers that LV04 should clearly cross-refer to Requirement 9 and the approved reinstatement planting

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment

plan, in order to ensure consistency within the DCO framework and to confirm that the delivery of landscape mitigation is not diluted. This would ensure that any necessary flexibility in retaining existing features is appropriately balanced by a firm and enforceable commitment to replacement planting.

- NV11
  - The Council has also reviewed commitment NV11 relating to the enclosure of continuous noisy plant. While the Council recognises that detailed design has not yet been finalised and that some flexibility is necessary, it notes that this measure forms a key component of construction noise mitigation, particularly in relation to identified noise-sensitive receptors within the District.
  - In this context, the use of the wording "where practicable and efficacious" introduces a significant degree of flexibility, which when combined with reliance on Best Practicable Means, risks creating uncertainty as to whether this mitigation will be consistently implemented. The Council's Local Impact Report (REP1-148) has already highlighted concerns that the repeated use of such qualifying language may result in variable application of mitigation measures, with potential consequences for nearby receptors.
  - The Council therefore considers that, for primary mitigation measures such as noise control, greater certainty is required. In particular, it should be demonstrated that the relevant construction noise limits can be achieved irrespective of whether acoustic enclosures are ultimately employed, and that reliance on practicability does not result in exceedances of assessed impacts.
  - Without such clarification, the Council remains concerned that the current wording could allow key mitigation to be reduced or omitted, thereby undermining confidence that the assessed worst-case noise impacts have been appropriately controlled.

Furthermore, the Council emphasises the importance of ensuring that, in all cases where

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			mitigation is subject to a "where practicable" qualification, the Environmental Statement has assessed a robust worst-case scenario, including the potential for mitigation not to be delivered in full. The Council therefore seeks confirmation that such worst-case assumptions have been consistently applied across the Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan, Outline Code of Construction Practice, Outline Traffic Management Plan, Public Rights of Way Management Plan, and Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy. Where this cannot be demonstrated, the Council considers that additional clarification or assessment may be required to ensure the full extent of potential impacts has been properly examined.	
			Tendring District Council (TDC) TDC has considered the use of the term "where practicable" and raises the following concerns. Firstly, the Applicant relies on the Sizewell C definition, which implies that any departure from mitigation should only occur following an evidenced balancing exercise demonstrating no significant impact. However, neither the draft DCO nor the Outline CoCP secures, records, or makes such an exercise auditable. If this definition is to be relied upon, it should be clearly defined in Article 2 of the draft DCO and supported by an enforceable mechanism. Secondly, TDC is concerned that "where practicable" is being used inconsistently to cover a wide range of circumstances, including physical constraints, design uncertainty, landowner requirements, health and safety considerations, and programme pressures. Using a single phrase in this way creates uncertainty and lacks precision. Each circumstance should instead be addressed through clearly defined and specific wording. Thirdly, the Applicant's position that the surrounding text already explains what happens where compliance is not possible undermines the need for the phrase. Either the term is redundant and should be removed, leaving a firm obligation with a defined fallback, or it introduces additional flexibility, in which case this must be clearly explained and appropriately controlled, including a role for the local planning authority.	The Applicant has set out its position in its submissions in **8.9.1 Applicant's Responses to First Written Questions [REP3-074]**, where the Applicant removed the term 'where practicable' (or similar) from a number of commitments. Where the term was not removed from a commitment, the Applicant provided a justification for its use in Appendix G of **8.9.2 Applicant's Response to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]**. The Applicant does not intend to repeat these submissions here, but reiterates its previous submissions that the Secretary of State did not consider it necessary for the definition of 'where practicable' to be further secured through the DCO or any other mechanism and ECC's differing view that the phrase is imprecise or unnecessary fails to be considered in the further context that LPA approval of relevant control documents is to be sought pursuant to Requirement 4 of the DCO.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			Overall, TDC considers that the current use of "where practicable" lacks clarity and enforceability, and risks weakening the effectiveness of mitigation.	
			Suffolk County Council SCC notes the point raised originally by the Essex authorities and supports their position. SCC and BMSDC have considered the relevant paragraphs of the North Falls decision letter and considers the analysis regarding "where practicable" is relevant to the circumstances in that decision letter and is not drafted in such a way to suggest it is intended to bind all future instances where an applicant seeks to include such language in control documents.	The Applicant has set out its position in its submissions in **8.9.1 Applicant's Responses to First Written Questions [REP3-074]**, where the Applicant removed the term 'where practicable' (or similar) from a number of commitments. Where the term was not removed from a commitment, the Applicant provided a justification for its use in Appendix G of **8.9.2 Applicant's Response to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]**. The Applicant does not intend to repeat these submissions here, but reiterates its previous submissions that the Secretary of State did not consider it necessary for the definition of 'where practicable' to be further secured through the DCO or any other mechanism and ECC's differing view that the phrase is imprecise or unnecessary fails to be considered in the further context that LPA approval of relevant control documents is to be sought pursuant to Requirement 4 of the DCO.
			Thurrock Council The Council's position on the Applicant's use of the term "where practicable" was previously set out in its Deadline 4 submission, Appendix B – Written Post-Hearing Submission for WC 27.04 [REP4-339]. The Council considers that the term "where practicable" introduces a degree of flexibility which could weaken the effectiveness of a commitment if not supported by clear justification and evidence. The Council's position remains that the use of "where practicable", or similar phraseology, within the draft Development Consent Order and associated control documents is unacceptable.	The Applicant has set out its position in its submissions in **8.9.1 Applicant's Responses to First Written Questions [REP3-074]**, where the Applicant removed the term 'where practicable' (or similar) from a number of commitments. Where the term was not removed from a commitment, the Applicant provided a justification for its use in Appendix G of **8.9.2 Applicant's Response to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]**. The Applicant does not intend to repeat these submissions here, but reiterates its previous submissions that the Secretary of State did not consider it necessary for the definition of 'where practicable' to be further secured through the DCO or any other mechanism and ECC's differing view that the phrase is imprecise or unnecessary fails to be considered in the further context that LPA approval of relevant control documents is to be sought pursuant to Requirement 4 of the DCO.
			Norfolk County Council In line with the North Falls Offshore Wind Farm Project decision letter, it would be helpful for the applicant to confirm whether actions to be undertaken "where practicable" (or any such equivalent) have been factored into the worst-case scenario assessments within the ES and HRA. In particular, it would be useful to understand if the failure to take such action(s) (because it were not considered practicable) would have any impact on the conclusions of the environmental assessments.	This detail is provided in Appendix G of **8.9.2 Applicant's Response to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]** in blue bold text in each row for each instance of the use of 'where practicable'.

6.2 Draft Development Consent Order – Articles

Table 6.2 Draft Development Consent Order – Articles

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
DCO 2.A4	Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils	Articles 48 During ISH2 (Day 1, Part 4) **[EV9-007]** Babergh and Mid Suffolk DCs indicated they have concerns in relation to Article 48 (Defence to proceedings in respect of statutory nuisance), but would be making those in writing at deadline 4. Please direct the ExA to where within your deadline 4 submissions you have raised these concerns or submit your concerns in response to this question.	**Suffolk County Council** BMSDC did not make a D4 submission on this matter. The DCO suggests that the applicant should not be subject to actions in respect of statutory nuisance. Control and mitigation measures in respect of noise, vibration, dust and light can reduce the likelihood of a statutory nuisance however, they may not completely exclude the possibility of action being taken under the provisions of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. It is therefore not accepted that there should be a defence against proceedings in respect of statutory nuisance as, if all measures and controls suggested by the applicant are in place, there should be no reason to be exempt from investigation and potential statutory nuisance action.	As set out in paragraph 3.52 of **3.2 Explanatory Memorandum [Revision F]**, section 158 of the Planning Act 2008 confers statutory authority for the purposes of providing a defence in statutory nuisance generally. Article 48 (defence to proceedings in respect of statutory nuisance) is based on article 7 of the general model provisions and amends the section 158 statutory defence in relation to noise only and provides the circumstances in which the undertaker will have the benefit of the defence. This provision is appropriate for inclusion in the Order to ensure that nuisance claims are considered in the context of the effects of this Project of critical national priority.

6.3 Draft DCO – Schedules

Table 6.3 Draft DCO – Schedules

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
DCO 2.S1	Anglian Water	Schedules 3 – General The ExA has noted the applicant's response to ExQ1 **[REP3-074]** at question 1.S4 where it notes Anglian Water's position where, if agreement on non‐domestic water supply is not reached during the examination period, it considered a requirement for a Water Resources Assessment (WRA) should be included in the Draft DCO. In the applicant's response it stated a requirement is not necessary, giving the following reasons: • The provision of non-domestic water supply is regulated through separate statutory regimes and consenting processes, including Water Connections Agreements, which would be required prior to the supply of mains water; • The applicant Consents and Licences Required Under Other Legislation **[REP4-053]** already makes clear that applications for Water	**Anglian Water** domestic purposes – meaning that there is a legal obligation to supply water to all household properties as well as any domestic requirements of non-household properties. However, there is no statutory obligation to supply water for non-domestic demand which includes water use for industrial processes or construction activities, particularly where it might put at risk our ability to supply water for domestic purposes. This means that due to supply constraints as a result of abstraction reduction, we are having to decline requests for non-domestic water that exceed 20m3/day – the exception for this being Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects where we will review a Water Resources Assessment to consider whether we will be able to meet demand. As explained in our response to ExQ1 [REP3-114], at that time the Applicant's initial WRA was being	The Applicant notes Anglian Water's response and the agreement in principle that the non-domestic water resource can be made available for the construction phase of Norwich to Tilbury within Anglian Water's supply area. The Applicant is currently considering the water efficiency and water reuse proposals to minimise the non-domestic water requirements of the development and will submit these as part of the relevant water connection application.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
		Connections Agreements required by the Water Industry Act 1991 would be submitted by the appointed Main Works Contractor(s) to Anglian Water, should development consent be granted and prior to relevant works; and • Anglian Water's published Non-Domestic Water Requests Policy 26 applies independently of the DCO and, where requests exceed 20 m³/day for NSIPs, requires a WRA to be completed as part of the water supply approval process. The applicant points out that the inclusion of such a DCO requirement would duplicate existing regulatory processes and would not be necessary or proportionate. Furthermore, it advises it has submitted a draft WRA to Anglian Water for feedback, prior to the submission of all WRA's requested by Anglian Water for each temporary and permanent connection to proposed infrastructure where the WRA threshold is met. The applicant intends to further define the connection requirement and complete submission of all required WRAs by Deadline 6. The applicant considers the existing commitments in the outline CoCP **[REP3-025]** and seeking to secure Water Connections Agreements under other legislation provide sufficient and appropriate control. Would Anglia Water like to respond?	evaluated through our internal review process. Since this time, we have confirmed to the Applicant that in principle, the non-domestic water resource can be made available for the construction phase of Norwich to Tilbury within Anglian Water's supply area. Our response indicated that we would like to work with the Applicant to ensure that water efficiency and other mitigation measures such as water reuse, would be implemented, whilst not impeding the construction phase. Anglian Water is aware of the commitment (W16) for the water supply needs of the project in the outline Code of Construction Practice [REP3-025]. This commitment does indicate that this will include mitigation such as measures to 'encourage' efficient water use. Anglian Water would also suggest that water reuse measures should be incorporated to help reduce the use of potable (drinking quality) water for non-domestic purposes such as dust-suppression and wheel-washing. We welcome the Applicant's intention to further define the connection requirements and complete submission of all required WRAs by Deadline 6. In summary, we can confirm the non-domestic water demands of the project have been approved by Anglian Water in principle, for the purpose of satisfying the matter raised through our Relevant Representation [RR-0216]. However, requests are still subject to water efficiency and water reuse proposals being submitted to Anglian Water as part of each water connection application via our online customer portal, following DCO approval, to demonstrate that the non-domestic water requirements of the development through the construction phase are kept to a minimum. Under the water connection request process, Anglian Water reserves the right, upon receipt of formal applications for water connections, to assess the water efficiency and water reuse credentials of each site, prior to a daily volume (m3/day) of non-domestic water being ultimately agreed	
DCO 2.S3	The applicant All local authorities	Schedules 3, Requirement 4 (Construction Management Plans) 1 Complaints procedure under the Outline CoCP secured by Requirement 4 Thurrock Council in its deadline 4 submission **[REP4-339]**, as well as a number of other County/ Local Authorities raises concerns in regard to the complaints management process. It considers the	**Basildon Borough Council** We are aware of Appendix E of the Outline OCoCP "Community Engagement and Public Information" which provides a section on the Complaints Procedure and outlines what the Complaints Procedure Plan will look to include once developed by the Mains Contractors. This would presumably take place either if the DCO is granted consent or as part of the final version of	The Applicant has submitted a revised **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice Appendix E - Community Engagement and Public Information [Revision C]**. This includes a more detailed Complaints Procedure, produced with reference to the complaints procedure detailed in the Lower Thames Crossing DCO.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
		current complaints management process, as detailed in the updated outline CoCP **[REP3-025]** to be "…too basic." It highlights that although it includes contact details and requires complaints to be logged, it is lacking in significant areas. These include, but are not limited to defined response times; defined escalation procedures, requirements related to ongoing communication with complainants; identifying persons/parties with clear responsibility for resolving issues; and transparency through shared recording with the local authorities. The ExA requests: i) the applicant addresses these concerns raised and updates the complaints management process by incorporating them into a revised/updated complaints management process. The local authorities are to provide draft wording for a complaints management process it/they would be satisfied with.	the OCoCP. The content of this document provides further detail on the elements we would expect to see including: • Where (e.g. dedicated telephone line and project website) and how to log a complaint and to whom • Timeframe for response to complaints • Potential solutions / remedies available to address complaints • Who to contact in the event that the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome. It also highlights that minor issues will be handled primarily by the Mains Works Contractors and that escalations for major issues will be dealt with by National Grid. We would encourage the Applicant to mirror the complaints procedure detailed in the Lower Thames Crossing DCO. It is the Council's view that this procedure has worked well within the borough. It includes the provision of a Highways England Customer Contact Centre which consists of a phone line, email and website contact facility. The Contact Centre also endeavours to provide a response to enquiries and complaints within 10 working days. Subject to the provision of the information outlined above, and provided that development, delivery, appropriate communication to residents about the Complaints Process, and ongoing monitoring of the effectiveness of this Complaints Procedure Plan are secured through the DCO processes, we are satisfied with the arrangements. We are also satisfied that these measures will be delivered to a satisfactory level, with agreement from the relevant departments within the Council. On this basis, we are assured that there will be clear mechanisms for residents to raise concerns and have them addressed in a timely manner. Given the above, we do not consider it necessary to provide any draft wording for the contents of a Complaints Process Plan at this time.	
			Braintree District Council The Council considers that the complaints management process secured through the Outline Code of Construction Practice should be strengthened to provide a clear, structured and enforceable mechanism for managing community concerns during construction. The following draft wording is provided to address the concerns raised:	Please refer to the Applicant's comment on Basildon Borough Council's response above.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			• A detailed Complaints Management Procedure must be submitted to and approved by the relevant planning authority as part of the Construction Environmental Management Plan (pursuant to Requirement 4) prior to commencement of any authorised development. The approved procedure must include as a minimum: a) Clear contact arrangements, including a 24-hour telephone helpline, email address and online reporting mechanism; b) A requirement to acknowledge receipt of all complaints within 3 (or similar) working days; c) A requirement to provide a substantive response within 5 working days, or where this is not possible, an interim update explaining the actions being taken and anticipated timescales for resolution; d) Identification of a named Community Liaison Officer or similar role responsible for managing complaints and acting as the primary point of contact; e) A clear escalation procedure, including escalation to senior project management and notification to the relevant Local Planning Authority where complaints are not resolved within agreed timescales or are of a significant or recurring nature; f) Ongoing communication requirements with complainants, including updates on investigation findings and actions taken, until the complaint is formally closed; g) Maintenance of a complaints register recording the nature of the complaint, date received, actions taken, outcome, and date of closure; h) A requirement to share the complaints register with the relevant Local Planning Authority at regular intervals (to be agreed), and to make records available upon request; i) Clear links between complaints and mitigation measures, including triggers for site inspections, monitoring (including noise and vibration where relevant), and implementation of additional mitigation where necessary; j) A requirement to review complaints periodically to identify trends or recurring issues, and to implement corrective actions where appropriate.	

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			The Council considers that this level of detail is necessary to ensure that complaints are managed consistently and effectively, and to provide confidence that the mitigation measures relied upon in the Environmental Statement will be delivered in practice.	
			Brentwood Borough Council (BBC) BBC understands that since a recent meeting (May 13th) between Thurrock District Council and National Grid on this matter, Appendix E of the OCoCP has advanced to now provide a more developed section on the Complaints Procedure and outline what the Complaints Procedure Plan will seek to include once developed by the Main Contractors, which would presumably take place either if the DCO is granted consent or as part of the final version of the OCoCP. BBC supports the ECC position in encouraging the Applicant to more closely mirror the complaints procedure detailed in the Lower Thames Crossing DCO, one that has been found to work well and that includes the provision of a Highways England Customer Contact Centre which consists of a phone line, email and website contact facility. The Contact Centre also endeavours to provide a response to enquiries and complaints within 10 working days. BBC considers that subject to the provision of the relevant information set out in the OCoCP and provided that development, delivery, appropriate communication to residents about the Complaints Process, and ongoing monitoring of the effectiveness of this Complaints Procedure Plan are secured through the DCO processes, it would be satisfied with the proposed arrangements and comfortable that there will be clear mechanisms for residents to raise concerns and have them addressed in a timely manner. BBC therefore does not independently or collaboratively propose any draft wording for the contents of a Complaints Process Plan.	Please refer to the Applicant's comment on Basildon Borough Council's response above.
			Essex County Council ECC has raised the issue regarding complaint handling processes within its Statement of Common Ground – part 3.6.7 and the need for this process to have defined response times and escalation routes; and accessible communication options for residents experiencing digital exclusion (paper copies, community notice boards). ECC's	The Applicant has submitted a revised **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice Appendix E - Community Engagement and Public Information [Revision C]**. This includes a more detailed Complaints Procedure, produced with reference to the complaints procedure detailed in the Lower Thames Crossing DCO. In addition, the Applicant can confirm it has followed the same approach as North Falls Offshore Wind Farm and

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			position on this matter has now moved forward and has been superseded following Thurrock Council's recent meeting with National Grid on 13th May 2026 (post Deadline 4). At the time the Examining Authority received concerns regarding the complaints procedure, there was little to no easily available information relating to development of a complaints procedure. ECC is now aware of and has reviewed Appendix E of the Outline OCoCP "Community Engagement and Public Information" which provides a section on the Complaints Procedure and outlines what the Complaints Procedure Plan will look to include once developed by the Mains Contractors. This would presumably take place either if the DCO is granted consent or as part of the final version of the OCoCP. The content of this document provides further detail on the elements ECC would expect to see including: • Where (e.g. dedicated telephone line and project website) and how to log a complaint and to whom • Timeframe for response to complaints • Potential solutions / remedies available to address complaints • Who to contact in the event that the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome. It also highlights that minor issues will be handled primarily by the Main Works Contractors and that escalations for major issues will be dealt with by National Grid. ECC would encourage the Applicant to mirror the complaints procedure detailed in the Lower Thames Crossing DCO. It is ECC's view that this procedure has worked well. Furthermore, it includes the provision of a Highways England Customer Contact Centre which consists of a phone line, email and website contact facility. The Contact Centre also endeavours to provide a response to enquiries and complaints within 10 working days. Subject to the provision of the information outlined above, and provided that development, delivery, appropriate communication to residents about the Complaints Process, and ongoing monitoring of the effectiveness of this Complaints Procedure Plan are secured through the DCO processes, ECC would be satisfied with the arrangements and that there will be clear mechanisms for	Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm in relation to an operational noise protocol. The Applicant submitted an updated version of the Onshore Substations Operational Noise and Outline Noise Complaints Protocol ('the Protocol') it jointly prepared and agreed with Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm and North Falls Offshore Wind Farm at Deadline 4 (see Appendix B.2 of **8.4.3 Report on Interrelationship with Other Infrastructure Projects [REP4-296]**). The Protocol confirms that the Applicant, in respect of the Norwich to Tilbury Project and both offshore wind developers, would include a requirement within their respective DCOs for the control of noise during operational stage. Requirement 14(2) of the Norwich to Tilbury draft DCO **[Revision F]** states that '*Prior to commencement of operation of Work No. 8 (East Anglia Connection Node Substation), a noise investigation protocol must be submitted to and approved by the relevant planning authority*'.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			residents to raise concerns and have them addressed in a timely manner. Given the above, ECC do not propose any draft wording for the contents of a Complaints Process Plan at this time. ECC would also highlight the importance of securing an agreed noise protocol to investigate any complaints arising from operational noise given the concentration of infrastructure development in proximity to the proposed EACN i.e. development associated with North Falls and Five Estuaries. It is noted that the recent decision in respect of North Falls contained the following as part of Requirements 17 Prior to the commencement of operation of Work No. 11, a noise investigation protocol must be submitted to and approved by the discharging authority. The protocol must set out a process for the investigation of cumulative operational noise from the proposed National Grid substation and the Five Estuaries substation as and when one or both becomes operational. ECC would recommend this approach for Norwich to Tilbury as an additional requirement.	
			Tendring District Council (TDC) TDC has reviewed Appendix E of the Outline CoCP (Community Engagement and Public Information), which identifies the principles of a future Complaints Procedure to be developed by the Main Works Contractor(s) in accordance with Requirement 4. In summary the Outline CoCP confirms that complaints will be logged in a register, with responses and actions recorded, and that a contact mechanism for the public will be provided, alongside general community liaison commitments. While these are positive baseline elements, TDC maintains that the current approach remains insufficiently developed and does not adequately address the concerns previously raised by TDC and many other local authorities. In particular: • The Outline CoCP does not set clear or enforceable response times for acknowledging, investigating and resolving complaints. • Although escalation between contractors and National Grid is referenced, TDC cannot see a clearly defined process, thresholds, or	Please refer to the Applicant's comment on Basildon Borough Council's response above.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			independent oversight, leaving complaints in the dark around which organisation will deal with the complaint if its escalated. • While responsibilities sit broadly with the Main Works Contractor(s), there is no single, clearly identifiable accountable party for complaint resolution from the perspective of the complainant. • There is limited provision for keeping complainants informed throughout the lifecycle of a complaint. TDC is also particularly concerned by the distinction between "minor" and "major" issues, which is referenced but not defined. The absence of clear criteria introduces subjectivity, whereby matters considered "minor" by the Applicant or contractor may in fact be significant to affected residents. No mechanism is identified for how such classifications are determined or challenged. Furthermore, TDC reiterates its long-standing concern regarding the cumulative impact of multiple NSIPs within a significantly constrained geographic area (including Norwich to Tilbury, North Falls, Five Estuaries, and forthcoming projects such as the Tarchon Interconnector). During the peak construction period (anticipated between 2027–2032), affected communities—particularly in the Ardleigh/Little Bromley Area (ALBA) area—are likely to experience overlapping works delivered by different promoters, contractors and workforces. In this context, the current approach: • places an unreasonable burden on residents and parishes to identify which project is responsible for a given issue (these communities and parishes are already unreasonably burdened with multiple DCOs processes at various stages); and • risks creating a fragmented and ineffective complaints landscape, undermining confidence and accessibility. TDC therefore considers that a more coordinated, user-focused and transparent complaints system is essential, potentially including cross-project alignment or a single, clearly signposted access point for communities. Finally, TDC does not consider it appropriate, or proportionate, for the Council to provide detailed	

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			draft wording for a complaints management process under the complex circumstances. The scale, complexity and cumulative nature of the proposed infrastructure delivery in this area of the district of Tendring is unprecedented, and there is no directly comparable example in the UK that TDC can reliably draw upon. Instead, the Council strongly recommends that the Applicant: • undertakes a thorough review of comparable large-scale infrastructure programmes, particularly where multiple schemes interact within a defined geography; • clearly identifies examples of best practice (e.g. Lower Thames Crossing) and clearly explains why those approaches were effective; and • brings forward a comprehensive, clear, enforceable and fully worked complaints management process, which directly addresses the concerns raised by local authorities and is proportionate to the scale and complexity of the Project. In summary, TDC expects the Applicant to take responsibility for developing a robust, transparent and fit-for-purpose complaints procedure, rather than relying on host authorities to define one in what is, effectively, uncharted territory.	
			Suffolk County Council SCC (Highways) would expect the Applicant to follow the established complaints process. Whilst SCC acknowledges that there are differences between NG and the LHA, the Council have included a link below to SCC's process for the ExA's consideration. https://www.suolk.gov.uk/asset-library/corporate comments-compliments-and-complaints-policy.pdf SCC (Highways) would strongly recommend the Applicant's complaints procedure is submitted to the planning inspectorate for consideration by the Secretary of State.	Please refer to the Applicant's comment on Basildon Borough Council's response above.
			South Norfolk District Council Requirement 21 of the consented Hornsea Project Three DCO stated that a Noise Management Plan was required with details of a Noise Complaints Procedure. SNDC, from experience, have found that this has been appropriate and effective for the handling of Noise Complaints.	Please refer to the Applicant's comment on Basildon Borough Council's response above.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			Thurrock Council **Chelmsford City Council** *[defer to Thurrock]* The Council notes that its previous concerns have been considered through subsequent discussions with the Applicant and through the information now provided with Appendix E of the Outline CoCP relating to Community Engagement and Public Information. The Council notes that Appendix E set outs the framework for the future Complaints Procedure Plan and includes provision for the methods by which complaints may be submitted, response times, potential remedies and escalation procedures, where complainants remain dissatisfied with the outcome of the of an investigation. The Council further notes that minor complaints would be managed by the Main Works Contractor(s), with more significant matters escalated to National Grid where appropriate. The Council would encourage the Applicant to mirror the complaints procedure detailed in the Lower Thames Crossing DCO. It is the Council's view that this procedure has worked well within the borough. It includes the provision of a Highways England Customer Contact Centre which consists of a phone line, email and website contact facility. The Contact Centre also endeavours to provide a response to enquiries and complaints within 10 working days. Subject to the matters identified within Appendix E being secured through the Development Consent Order process, together with appropriate communication of the complaint's procedure to local communities and ongoing monitoring of its effectiveness, the Council is satisfied with the proposed arrangements. On this basis, the Council does not consider it necessary to propose additional draft wording for the Complaints Procedure plan at this stage.	Please refer to the Applicant's comment on Basildon Borough Council's response above.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
DCO 2.S4	The applicant Suffolk Wildlife Trust	Schedules 3, Requirement 4 – (Construction Management Plans) 2 WaLOR Project - Embedded, standard and additional mitigation measures secured by the outline CoCP secured by Requirement 4. SWT in its deadline 4 submission **[REP4-373]** states the response in Document: 8.8.1 Applicant's Comments on Written Representations, that "The Applicant's Main Works Contractor(s) would seek to engage with the WaLOR project team during detailed design development, to reduce any potential for conflicts between the two projects" is not sufficient. It seeks a commitment that the Main Works Contractor(s) engaging with the WaLOR project team during detailed design development, to avoid any potential for conflicts between the two projects. It seeks the strengthening of the outline LEMP to ensure communication and coordination is guaranteed and that the detailed design and implementation of works by the applicant's Main Works Contractor(s) is compatible with the WaLOR project's planned river and floodplain habitat restoration works where the location of these overlaps with the Norwich to Tilbury project. The applicant is asked to amend the outline LEMP accordingly or explain, in full, why you consider such an amendment is not necessary. SWT are asked to provide a form of wording for potential inclusion within the outline LEMP, which adequately addresses your concern, in the absence of applicant's failure to adequately satisfy the ExA in this regard.	**Suffolk Wildlife Trust** Suffolk Wildlife Trust has discussed this matter with the Applicant and understand that wording which addresses our concern by formalising the requirement for liaison with the WaLOR Project team during detailed design is to be included in an updated Outline LEMP. This wording confirms that ongoing consultation will be undertaken by both the Main Works Contractor(s) and UK Power Networks for works between pylons RG84 and RG89, to ensure compatibility between the projects from both an engineering and programme perspective. The Applicant has also shared an updated Statement of Common Ground with Suffolk Wildlife Trust that includes a commitment that the Main Works Contractor, including UK Power Networks, will consult with the WaLOR Project team on relevant detailed design parameters to ensure that construction and operational elements of the Norwich to Tilbury Project do not constrain delivery of WaLOR objectives, including river restoration, floodplain processes and long-term habitat creation.	The Applicant welcomes Suffolk Wildlife Trust's comment on this topic. As detailed in the Applicant's response to DCO 2.S4 in **8.9.2 Applicant's Responses to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]**, the Applicant can confirm that Section 9.9 of **7.2 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan [Revision F]** has been updated to strengthen the wording around engagement between the Applicant's Main Works Contractor(s), UK Power Networks and the WaLOR project team during detailed design.
DCO 2.S5	The applicant Suffolk Wildlife Trust	Schedules 3, Requirement 4 (Construction Management Plans) 3 The formation of an Ecology Working Group is referenced in the updated outline LEMP **[REP3-030]** that is secured by Requirement 4 SWT in its deadline 4 submission **[REP4-373]** highlights the role of an Ecology Working Group. It has previously mentioned an Ecology Advisory Group in its deadline 1 submission **[REP1-278]**. The deadline 4 submission states the role of such a group must be strengthened within the DCO and it seeks to ensure such a group has a formal role in advising on the development and delivery of the LEMP, including any required adaptive	**Suffolk Wildlife Trust** Following conversation with other ecology stakeholders, including affected Local Authorities Wildlife Trusts, Suffolk Wildlife Trust are happy to support the wording for an Ecology Working Group (which may also include Landscape consideration) proposed and submitted by Suffolk County Council at Deadline 5.	The Applicant welcomes Suffolk Wildlife Trust's response on this topic. As detailed in the Applicant's response to DCO 2.S5 in **8.9.2 Applicant's Responses to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]**, the Applicant can confirm that the remit of the Ecology Working Group within **7.4 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan [Revision F]**, submitted at Deadline 5, has been updated to broadly align with Suffolk Wildlife Trust suggested text within paragraph 2.3.1 of **[REP1-278]**.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
		management, as opposed to a group which would primarily receive updates from the applicant. Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils also make reference to the Tilbury Ecological Working Group and the need for the outline CoCP and outline LEMP to be updated. SWT advises it has provided a draft of a document to the applicant related to a proposed DCO requirement for an Ecology Working Group, as part of its submission documents and urge this to be used as a blueprint for the group. The ExA seeks clarification from SWT as to where within its submissions this document can be located. Is it referring to paragraph 2.3.1 of **[REP1-278]** or is referring to another document? The applicant is asked for its response to the document referred to by the SWT, along with a form of wording for inclusion within the draft DCO and/ or outline LEMP securing such a commitment to an Ecology Working Group or a detailed explanation as to why such a commitment is not required. SWT – Provide a form of wording for potential inclusion within the outline DCO and/ or the outline LEMP, which adequately addresses this matter, in the event the applicant fails to adequately satisfy the ExA in this regard.		
DCO 2.S6	The applicant All local authorities	Schedules 3, Requirement 4 (Construction Management Plan) 4 Noise and Vibration Thurrock Council in its deadline 4 submission **[REP4-347]**, along with other County/ Local Authorities, raises concerns in regard to the applicant's approach to noise and vibration monitoring, alleging it is not sufficiently developed and there is no clear or structured strategy for dealing with such matters. The Council highlights: there is no commitment to routine monitoring: no use of simple baseline checks like listening tests; no clear triggers for more detailed monitoring; and no defined thresholds for action or reporting requirements. The ExA requests the applicant to address these concerns raised and updates the outline CoCP to set out a clear and structured strategy regarding noise and vibration monitoring and complaints procedure.	**Chelmsford City Council** **Basildon Borough Council** The revised Noise and Vibration Management Plan (NVMP) includes a more detailed monitoring procedure; however, routine noise monitoring is still not proposed. Monitoring is only identified in response to complaints or where specific requirements are secured through a Section 61 consent. Given the scale and duration of the proposed works, CCC considers that a proactive monitoring strategy is necessary in addition to any complaint-led monitoring. Further clarification is also required regarding the circumstances and types of activities for which Section 61 prior consent applications are anticipated, as this is currently unclear. The general monitoring methodology is broadly acceptable. However, Section 4.6.7 states: "If the location is free-field, then the levels will be corrected to façade by the addition of 3 dB." This appears to be incorrect. Free-field measurements would not normally require correction where the intention is to report	The Applicant acknowledges that the wording of **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice Appendix F – Outline Noise and Vibration Management Plan [REP4-170]** is not sufficiently clear on this point and this has been updated at Deadline 6 **[Revision C]** to align with the commitments set out in **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]**. In accordance with commitment NV05 of **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]**, monitoring proposals during construction will be determined by the Main Works Contractor(s) through detailed assessments, documented within the NVMP and agreed with the relevant Local Planning Authorities prior to construction under Requirement 4 of **3.1 Draft DCO [Revision F]**. While monitoring may form part of any Section 61 agreement, this will not be the sole mechanism for securing monitoring requirements. For clarity, the intent of not undertaking routine monitoring is to avoid unnecessary monitoring where there is no material benefit. Given the scale of the Project, extensive sections of the works are located away

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
		Local authorities are asked to collaborate and provide and agreed draft wording for the outline CoCP to set out a clear and structured strategy regarding noise and vibration monitoring and complaints procedure.	free-field noise levels. CCC considers that routine noise monitoring should be undertaken throughout key construction phases. As a minimum, a permanent monitoring location should be established within the construction site boundary and, where reasonably practicable, at the nearest representative noise-sensitive receptor(s). Whilst CCC recognises that installation at a receptor may not always be possible due to access, security or ownership constraints, alternative arrangements should be agreed with the relevant local authority. The use of both on-site and receptor-based monitoring would assist in identifying whether elevated noise levels are attributable to construction activities associated with the Project or arise from other external sources, such as road traffic or unrelated industrial activities. Monitoring should be undertaken and managed by a suitably qualified and competent acoustic specialist. The outline CoCP/NVMP should also specify: • the proposed monitoring locations; • trigger levels for further investigation; • corrective actions to be implemented where exceedances are identified; and • reporting arrangements to the relevant local authority. All monitoring data, exceedances, investigations, complaints, and corrective actions should be recorded and retained in an auditable log. Records should be made available to the relevant local authority upon request and periodic monitoring reports should be provided at an agreed frequency throughout the construction period.	from sensitive receptors, such that noise and vibration do not represent a material issue or constraint. In these locations, monitoring is therefore not generally required in principle. However, noise and vibration monitoring will be undertaken where it provides a material benefit, with the need, scope and methodology agreed through consultation with the relevant Local Planning Authority. Additionally, the Applicant agrees that the requirement in **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice Appendix F – Outline Noise and Vibration Management Plan [REP4-170]** to correct monitored noise levels to façade noise by the addition of 3 dB, will be removed at Deadline 6.
			Braintree District Council The Council provide some wording below which could be added to the CoCP to address the inadequacies highlighted by Thurrock: *Monitoring of any noise complaints and reporting to the contractor for immediate investigation. Letters should be sent to sensitive receptors prior to undertaking of works to allow a route for complaints to be made, this will allow the contractor to act as soon as a concern is raised.* *On receipt of a complaint, noise monitoring will be undertaken. Relevant noise monitoring equipment and measures will be implemented, which would*	The Applicant acknowledges the proposed wording and notes the respective construction noise thresholds and associated time periods. Specific text regarding monitoring proposals will be agreed with the relevant Local Planning Authorities in the detailed Noise and Vibration Management Plan via Requirement 4 of **3.1 Draft DCO [Revision F]**.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			be placed adjacent to the site boundary closest to the complainant's property. The action value/ threshold will be set in line with limits described in BS5228-1 *Noise threshold Limits* • *Category A threshold LAeq,T Weekday Daytime (0700 – 1900) and Saturdays (0700 – 1300) - 65dB.* • *Category A threshold Evening and Weekends – 55dB* • *Night-time (2300 – 0700) – 45 dB* *Noise Trigger Levels In order to ensure the works being undertaken are not adversely affecting nearby receptors, the trigger levels set out below will be implemented to notify the site team on the potential noise limit exceedances of the works:*	

Trigger Level	Actions
Below threshold	*None*
Equals threshold level or within less than 5 dB above the threshold	*Review BPM currently used, implement temporary mitigation measures if not already in use.*
Greater than or equal to 5dB above threshold.	*Stop works and review primary cause of trigger, review and adjust mitigation.*

	Brentwood Borough Council (BBC) BBC acknowledges that the revised Noise and Vibration Management Plan (NVMP) includes a more detailed monitoring procedure, but that routine noise monitoring is still not proposed. Monitoring is only identified in response to complaints or where specific requirements are secured through a Section 61 consent. Given the scale and duration of the proposed works, BBC considers that a proactive monitoring strategy is necessary in addition to any complaint-led monitoring. In conjunction with Thurrock and other Essex LPA's, BBC considers that routine noise monitoring should therefore be undertaken throughout key construction phases. As a	The Applicant acknowledges that the wording of **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice Appendix F – Outline Noise and Vibration Management Plan [REP4-170]** is not clear on this point and this has been updated at Deadline 6 **[Revision C]** to align with the commitments set out in **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]**. In accordance with commitment NV05 of **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]**, monitoring proposals during construction will be determined by the Main Works Contractor(s) through detailed assessments, documented within the NVMP and agreed with the relevant Local Planning Authorities prior to construction under Requirement 4 of **3.1 Draft DCO [Revision F]**.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			minimum, a permanent monitoring location should be established within the construction site boundary and, where reasonably practicable, at the nearest representative noise sensitive receptor(s). Whilst BBC recognises that installation at a receptor may not always be possible due to access, security or ownership constraints, alternative arrangements should be agreed with the relevant local authority. BBC considers that further clarification is also required regarding the circumstances and types of activities for which Section 61 prior consent applications are anticipated, as this is currently unclear. BBC considers that the use of both on-site and receptor-based monitoring would assist in identifying whether elevated noise levels are attributable to construction activities associated with the Proposed Development or whether they arise from other external sources, such as road traffic or unrelated industrial activities. Monitoring should be undertaken and managed by a suitably qualified and competent acoustic specialist. The outline CoCP/NVMP should also specify: i) the proposed monitoring locations; ii)trigger levels for further investigation; iii) corrective actions to be implemented where exceedances are identified; and iv) reporting arrangements to the relevant local authority. BBC also considers that all monitoring data, exceedances, investigations, complaints, and corrective actions should be recorded and retained in an auditable log. Records should be made available to the relevant local authority upon request and periodic monitoring reports should be provided at an agreed frequency throughout the construction period. BBC supports the wording below proposed by ECC in collaboration with other Essex authorities and which could be added to the CoCP to address the inadequacies highlighted by Thurrock: *Monitoring of any noise complaints and reporting to the contractor for immediate investigation. Letters should be sent to sensitive receptors prior to undertaking of works to allow a route for complaints to be made, this will allow the contractor to act as soon as a concern is raised.* *On receipt of a complaint, noise monitoring will be undertaken. Relevant noise monitoring equipment and measures will be implemented, which would be placed adjacent to the site boundary closest to the complainant's property. The action value/*	While monitoring may form part of any Section 61 agreement, this will not be the sole mechanism for securing monitoring requirements. For clarity, the intent of not undertaking routine monitoring is to avoid unnecessary monitoring where there is no material benefit. Given the scale of the Project, extensive sections of the works are located away from sensitive receptors, such that noise and vibration do not represent a material issue or constraint. In these locations, monitoring is therefore not generally required in principle. However, noise and vibration monitoring will be undertaken where it provides a material benefit, with the need, scope and methodology agreed through consultation with the relevant Local Planning Authority. Additionally, the Applicant agrees that the requirement in **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice Appendix F – Outline Noise and Vibration Management Plan [REP4-170]** to correct monitored noise levels to façade noise by the addition of 3 dB, will be removed at Deadline 6. The Applicant acknowledges the proposed wording and notes the respective construction noise thresholds and associated time periods. Specific text regarding monitoring proposals will be agreed with the relevant Local Planning Authorities in the detailed Noise and Vibration Management Plan via Requirement 4 of **3.1 Draft DCO [Revision F]**.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			threshold will be set in line with limits described in BS5228-1 *Noise threshold Limits* • Category A threshold LAeq,T Weekday Daytime (0700 – 1900) and Saturdays (0700 – 1300) - 65dB. • Category A threshold Evening and Weekends – 55dB • Night-time (2300 – 0700) – 45 dB *Noise Trigger Levels In order to ensure the works being undertaken are not adversely affecting nearby receptors, the trigger levels set out below will be implemented to notify the site team on the potential noise limit exceedances of the works:*	

Trigger Level	Actions
Below threshold	*None*
Equals threshold level or within less than 5 dB above the threshold	*Review BPM currently used, implement temporary mitigation measures if not already in use.*
Greater than or equal to 5dB above threshold.	*Stop works and review primary cause of trigger, review and adjust mitigation.*

Colchester City Council The Council provide some wording below which could be added to the CoCP to address the inadequacies highlighted by Thurrock: *[refer to text above "Monitoring of any noise complaints……" ending with the Noise Trigger Levels Table]*	The Applicant acknowledges the proposed wording and notes the respective construction noise thresholds and associated time periods. Specific text regarding monitoring proposals will be agreed with the relevant Local Planning Authorities in the detailed Noise and Vibration Management Plan via Requirement 4 of **3.1 Draft DCO [Revision F]**.
Tendring District Council (TDC) TDC acknowledges that the revised Outline Noise and Vibration Management Plan (NVMP) includes some additional detail in respect of monitoring methodology. However, the overarching approach remains largely reactive, with monitoring primarily triggered by complaints or secured through Section 61 prior consent. This is not considered proportionate to the scale, duration and	The Applicant acknowledges that the wording of **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice Appendix F – Outline Noise and Vibration Management Plan [REP4-170]** is not clear on this point and this has been updated at Deadline 6 **[Revision C]** to align with the commitments set out in **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]**. In accordance with commitment NV05 of **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]**,

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			geographical extent of the proposed construction activities, especially in the ALBA area. In particular, TDC maintains that the current approach fails to establish a clear, structured and proactive monitoring strategy. There is still: • inadequate commitment to routine or baseline monitoring; • no defined triggers for escalation to more detailed monitoring; and • no clearly stated thresholds for intervention, reporting or enforcement. Given the scale of works and the intensity of activity anticipated within Tendring—particularly within the ALBA area and along sensitive rural routes such as the country lanes between Little Bromley and Ardleigh—TDC considers that a proactive monitoring regime is essential, rather than reliance on complaint-led mechanisms alone. Further clarity is also required regarding the anticipated use of Section 61 consents, including: • which activities they are expected to cover; and • how they will interact with the wider monitoring and mitigation framework. The general monitoring methodology set out in the NVMP is broadly acceptable; however, TDC notes a technical concern at paragraph 4.6.7, which states that free-field measurements will be corrected to façade by the addition of 3 dB. This appears incorrect where noise levels are intended to be reported as free-field values, and requires amendment. TDC considers that the Outline CoCP/NVMP should be strengthened to require routine monitoring throughout key construction phases, including: • at least one permanent monitoring location within the construction corridor in Tendring at an agreed location; • monitoring along agreed locations on PAR30 and other sensitive routes; and • monitoring, where reasonably practicable, at representative noise sensitive receptors. Where direct receptor monitoring is not feasible due to access, ownership or security constraints,	monitoring proposals during construction will be determined by the Main Works Contractor(s) through detailed assessments, documented within the NVMP and agreed with the relevant Local Planning Authorities prior to construction under Requirement 4 of **3.1 Draft DCO [Revision F]**. While monitoring may form part of any Section 61 agreement, this will not be the sole mechanism for securing monitoring requirements. For clarity, the intent of not undertaking routine monitoring is to avoid unnecessary monitoring where there is no material benefit. Given the scale of the Project, extensive sections of the works are located away from sensitive receptors, such that noise and vibration do not represent a material issue or constraint. In these locations, monitoring is therefore not generally required in principle. However, noise and vibration monitoring will be undertaken where it provides a material benefit, with the need, scope and methodology agreed through consultation with the relevant Local Planning Authority. Additionally, the Applicant agrees that the requirement in **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice Appendix F – Outline Noise and Vibration Management Plan [REP4-170]** to correct monitored noise levels to façade noise by the addition of 3 dB, will be removed at Deadline 6. The Applicant acknowledges the proposed wording and notes the respective construction noise thresholds and associated time periods. Specific text regarding monitoring proposals will be agreed with the relevant Local Planning Authorities in the detailed Noise and Vibration Management Plan via Requirement 4 of **3.1 Draft DCO [Revision F]**.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			alternative arrangements should be agreed with the relevant local authority. The use of both on-site and receptor-based monitoring is necessary to distinguish construction-related noise from other background sources and provide a robust evidence base for enforcement and mitigation. In addition, the Outline CoCP/NVMP must clearly define: • monitoring locations (to be agreed with the relevant LPA); • trigger levels for further investigation; • threshold levels for intervention; • corrective actions to be implemented where exceedances occur; and • reporting arrangements, including frequency and format. Monitoring should be undertaken by a suitably qualified and competent acoustic specialist. All monitoring data, exceedances, complaints, investigations and corrective actions must be recorded within a comprehensive, auditable log. This information should be made available to the relevant local authority on request, with periodic monitoring reports submitted at an agreed frequency throughout the construction period. In summary, TDC considers that a clearly defined, proactive and enforceable monitoring and reporting framework—integrated with a robust complaints procedure—is essential to ensure effective management of noise and vibration impacts and to provide reassurance to affected communities.	
			Essex County Council ECC acknowledges that the revised Noise and Vibration Management Plan (NVMP) includes a more detailed monitoring procedure; however, routine noise monitoring is still not proposed. Monitoring is only identified in response to complaints or where specific requirements are secured through a Section 61 consent. Given the scale and duration of the proposed works, ECC considers that a proactive monitoring strategy is necessary in addition to any complaint-led monitoring. In conjunction with Thurrock and Essex LPA's, ECC considers that routine noise monitoring should therefore be undertaken	The Applicant acknowledges that the wording of **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice Appendix F – Outline Noise and Vibration Management Plan [REP4-170]** is not clear on this point and this has been updated at Deadline 6 **[Revision C]** to align with the commitments set out in **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]**. In accordance with commitment NV05 of **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]**, monitoring proposals during construction will be determined by the Main Works Contractor(s) through detailed assessments, documented within the NVMP and agreed with the relevant Local Planning Authorities prior

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			throughout key construction phases. As a minimum, a permanent monitoring location should be established within the construction site boundary and, where reasonably practicable, at the nearest representative noise-sensitive receptor(s). Whilst the Council recognises that installation at a receptor may not always be possible due to access, security or ownership constraints, alternative arrangements should be agreed with the relevant local authority. Further clarification is also required regarding the circumstances and types of activities for which Section 61 prior consent applications are anticipated, as this is currently unclear. The use of both on-site and receptor-based monitoring would assist in identifying whether elevated noise levels are attributable to construction activities associated with the Proposed Development or arise from other external sources, such as road traffic or unrelated industrial activities. Monitoring should be undertaken and managed by a suitably qualified and competent acoustic specialist. The outline CoCP/NVMP should also specify: i) the proposed monitoring locations; ii)trigger levels for further investigation; iii) corrective actions to be implemented where exceedances are identified; and iv) reporting arrangements to the relevant local authority. It is also considered that all monitoring data, exceedances, investigations, complaints, and corrective actions should be recorded and retained in an auditable log. Records should be made available to the relevant local authority upon request and periodic monitoring reports should be provided at an agreed frequency throughout the construction period. In collaboration with other Essex authorities, ECC proposes some wording below which could be added to the CoCP to address the inadequacies highlighted by Thurrock: Monitoring of any noise complaints and reporting to the contractor for immediate investigation. Letters should be sent to sensitive receptors prior to undertaking of works to allow a route for complaints to be made, this will allow the contractor to act as soon as a concern is raised. On receipt of a complaint, noise monitoring will be undertaken. Relevant noise monitoring equipment and measures will be implemented, which would be placed adjacent to the site boundary closest to the complainant's property. The action value/	to construction under Requirement 4 of **3.1 Draft DCO [Revision F]**. While monitoring may form part of any Section 61 agreement, this will not be the sole mechanism for securing monitoring requirements. For clarity, the intent of not undertaking routine monitoring is to avoid unnecessary monitoring where there is no material benefit. Given the scale of the Project, extensive sections of the works are located away from sensitive receptors, such that noise and vibration do not represent a material issue or constraint. In these locations, monitoring is therefore not generally required in principle. However, noise and vibration monitoring will be undertaken where it provides a material benefit, with the need, scope and methodology agreed through consultation with the relevant Local Planning Authority. The Applicant acknowledges the proposed wording and notes the respective construction noise thresholds and associated time periods. Specific text regarding monitoring proposals will be agreed with the relevant Local Planning Authorities in the detailed Noise and Vibration Management Plan via Requirement 4 of **3.1 Draft DCO [Revision F]**.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			threshold will be set in line with limits described in BS5228-1 Noise threshold Limits • Category A threshold LAeq,T Weekday Daytime (0700 – 1900) and Saturdays (0700 – 1300) - 65dB. • Category A threshold Evening and Weekends – 55dB • Night-time (2300 – 0700) – 45 dB Noise Trigger Levels In order to ensure the works being undertaken are not adversely affecting nearby receptors, the trigger levels set out below will be implemented to notify the site team on the potential noise limit exceedances of the works:	

Trigger Level	Actions
Below threshold	None
Equals threshold level or within less than 5 dB above the threshold	Review BPM currently used, implement temporary mitigation measures if not already in use.
Greater than or equal to 5dB above threshold.	Stop works and review primary cause of trigger, review and adjust mitigation.

South Norfolk District Council

2022 No. 1070 Infrastructure Planning- A47/A11 Thickthorn Junction Development Consent Order (TR010037) SNDC advise that Requirement 4 of the A47/A11 Highways DCO included a Noise Complaints Procedure within the Environmental Management Plan which the Council have found appropriate and effective for the handling of noise complaints and recommend similar wording to the below extract taken from the Construction Dust, Noise, and Vibration Management Plan dated 01 October 2024. 'In line with REAC G7, all stakeholder enquiries and feedback received will be captured on the National Highways Complaints Relationship Management (CRM) database and Skanska's equivalent system, ensuring response timescales are met. The Skanska Stakeholder Manager will be responsible for managing the stakeholder action tracker/database and will work closely with the integrated project teams. They will seek, monitor, and record feedback from customers and stakeholders which will be used to develop appropriate actions. The effectiveness of these actions will be reviewed against customer needs and satisfaction levels.

Stakeholder related issues, risks, and opportunities will be captured on a suitable Risk and Opportunity Register. Regular discussions regarding risk and opportunity any possible solutions will be held with the National Highways communications manager and escalated where necessary. More details are provided in the

The Applicant acknowledges the proposed wording. Specific text regarding monitoring proposals and ongoing stakeholder engaement will be agreed with the relevant Local Planning Authorities in the detailed Noise and Vibration Management Plan via Requirement 4 of **3.1 Draft DCO [Revision F]**.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			Construction Communications Strategy (document reference HE551492-SKAG-EPC-000-PL-ZH-00001) appended to the EMP at Annex B.2.'	
			Thurrock Council The Council notes that the revised Noise and Vibration Management Plan include a more detailed monitoring procedure. However, routine noise monitoring is not currently proposed, with monitoring generally identified in response to complaints or where specific requirements are secured through a Section 61 consent. Given the scale and duration of the Proposed Development, the Council considers that a proactive monitoring strategy should be implemented in addition to complaint-led monitoring. The Council considers that further clarification is required for circumstances and activities for which Section 61 prior consent applicants are anticipated, as this remains unclear from the current documentation. Whilst the general monitoring methodology is broadly acceptable, the Council notes that paragraph 4.6.7 states that where monitoring is undertaken in a free-field location, levels will be corrected to façade levels through the addition of 3dB. The Council considers that this approach requires clarification, as free-field measurements would not ordinarily require correction where the intention is to report free-field noise levels. The Council considers that routine noise monitoring should be undertaken during key construction phases, both within the construction site and where reasonably practicable, at representative noise sensitive receptors. Where monitoring at receptors is not possible due to access or other constraints, alternative arrangements should be agreed with the relevant local authority. The Council further considers that monitoring data, exceedances and corrective actions should be recorded and retained within an auditable log and made available to the relevant local authority upon request.	The Applicant acknowledges that the wording of **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice Appendix F – Outline Noise and Vibration Management Plan [REP4-170]** is not clear on this point and this has been updated at Deadline 6 **[Revision C]** to align with the commitments set out in **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]**. In accordance with commitment NV05 of **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]**, monitoring proposals during construction will be determined by the Main Works Contractor(s) through detailed assessments, documented within the NVMP and agreed with the relevant Local Planning Authorities prior to construction under Requirement 4 of **3.1 Draft DCO [Revision F].** While monitoring may form part of any Section 61 agreement, this will not be the sole mechanism for securing monitoring requirements. For clarity, the intent of not undertaking routine monitoring is to avoid unnecessary monitoring where there is no material benefit. Given the scale of the Project, extensive sections of the works are located away from sensitive receptors, such that noise and vibration do not represent a material issue or constraint. In these locations, monitoring is therefore not generally required in principle. However, noise and vibration monitoring will be undertaken where it provides a material benefit, with the need, scope and methodology agreed through consultation with the relevant Local Planning Authority. Additionally, the Applicant agrees that the requirement in **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice Appendix F – Outline Noise and Vibration Management Plan [REP4-170]** to correct monitored noise levels to façade noise by the addition of 3 dB, will be removed at Deadline 6.
DCO 2.S10	The applicant All local authorities	Schedules 3, Requirement 7 (Construction Hours) The local authorities are maintaining their concerns in regard to this requirement, especially in terms of the core working hours of 07:00–19:00 on weekdays and 07:00–17:00 on saturdays, sundays and bank holidays, together with additional start-up	**Basildon Borough Council** **Chelmsford City Council** **Colchester City Council** **Essex County Council** **Tendring District Council**	The Applicant has commented extensively on the justification for the proposed working hours, including responses to DCO 1.S10 in **8.9.1 Applicant's Responses to First Written Questions [REP3-074]** and DCO 2.S10 in **8.9.2 Applicant's Responses to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]**. These responses provide the evidence that the core working hours are

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
		and close-down activities outside these hours. The ExA notes the applicant's extensive response to ExQ1 **[REP3-074]** at question DCO 1.S10, especially at pages 210 and 211, where it states in relation to just removing sundays or bank holidays/ other public holidays "Should these scenarios be modelled, it is anticipated that the energisation date on the baseline construction programme would remain largely unchanged." The ExA has noted all the justifications put forward by the applicant, as well as the applicant's final sentence in this question where it states "…removal of sundays and/or bank holidays and public holidays from the core working hours would not represent a neutral change; rather, it would reduce flexibility and introduce unnecessary risk on the timely delivery of the project." The applicant is asked to model the scenarios of removing: • just sundays • just bank and other public holidays • sundays and bank and other public holidays and then confirm whether the energisation date on the baseline construction programme would remain largely unchanged in relation to each of those scenarios. The ExA asks the local authorities to collaborate and provide a single form of wording for this requirement that they consider to be a reasonable compromise that collectively satisfies the concerns being raised in regard to this requirement, so this can assist in informing a discussion at ISH3 into the draft DCO. The wording submitted should include, but not be limited to, the core construction hours specified, start and close down activities and the operations that may take place outside of those core working hours.	The proposed construction hours are overly extensive and do not provide sufficient respite for local residents and communities and any other sensitive receptors, particularly in relation to weekend and extended working. The proposed hours, including working on Sundays, Bank Holidays and extended Saturday periods, combined with start up and close-down activities outside core periods, would materially increase the duration and intensity of disturbance experienced by residents. In the absence of clear and robust evidence demonstrating that noise effects outside standard construction hours would not give rise to significant adverse impacts, works including piling and deliveries should be restricted to "normal" construction hours as identified in BS 5228-1 (07:00–19:00 Monday to Friday, 07:00–13:00 on Saturdays, with no working on Sundays or Bank Holidays). These hours reflect established good practice in balancing construction activity with the protection of residential amenity and align with the application of the ABC assessment methodology. In this context, the Council considers that the position put forward represents a reasonable and proportionate approach, particularly given that more restrictive hours are often applied to other forms of development. Furthermore, BS 5228-1 identifies increased sensitivity during evenings, weekends and other non-standard working periods, which is consistent with wider health-based guidance, including that published by the World Health Organisation, emphasising the importance of reduced noise exposure during periods of rest and recuperation. The Council therefore considers that the proposed extension of working into these more sensitive periods would be likely to increase the risk of significant adverse effects, particularly where reliance is placed on Best Practicable Means, which are not fixed or guaranteed at the DCO stage (see response to ExQ2 NV2.2). The Council also notes an inconsistency within the Applicant's justification. It is stated that the removal of Sunday and Bank Holiday working would be unlikely to materially affect the energisation date, whilst also suggesting that such restrictions would introduce a risk to delivery. In the absence of clear, quantified and robust	necessary to avoid material delay to the construction programme. Additionally, 8.5.11 Applicant's Written Summary of Oral Submissions and Response to Action Points for Issue Specific Hearing 3 [Revision A] provides further justification and details regarding the impact to the construction programme if Sundays and bank/public holidays were to be restricted. The Applicant does not agree with the statement that the proposed hours would materially increase the duration and intensity of disturbance experienced by residents. The assessment within **Volume 6: Environmental Statement [APP-123 to APP 298]** is based on a set of parameters, including the core working hours for the construction phase of the Project. **6.14 Environmental Statement Chapter 14 - Noise and Vibration [APP 256]** assessed the impact to sensitive receptors from noise and vibration during the construction phase. The assessment concluded that with the embedded mitigation and controls set out in **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]**, including the use of temporal restrictions particularly at weekends, significant effects from noise and vibration during the construction phase are not anticipated. Large areas of the project are located away from noise sensitive receptors, and many of the proposed construction activities will not generate notable levels of noise, and therefore we do not agree a blanket restriction is justified. However, we do acknowledge that there are a small number of locations where certain noise generating activities are close to sensitive areas, and these will require temporal restrictions. These restrictions will be agreed with the local authority via commitment NV05 in 7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F] and discharged by the relevant planning authority under Requirement 4. As stated in DCO 1.S10 in **8.9.1 Applicant's Responses to First Written Questions [REP3-074]** the core working hours permit, but do not require, working on Sundays and bank holidays. The flexibility to operate across seven days is essential to maintain programme certainty and continuity for certain construction activities and minimise disruption to local communities and businesses. Limiting the working week would inevitably prolong the overall construction period, leading to extended exposure to construction impacts. <u>Activities outside core working hours</u> Any activities undertaken outside core construction hours remain subject to the controls and mitigation measures set out in **7.2 Outline Code of Construction**

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			evidence to support extended working hours, the Council considers that a precautionary approach should be adopted. In this regard, the Council has reviewed the justification for extended construction hours in the Bramford to Twinstead DCO and notes that the acceptance of Sunday and Bank Holiday working in that instance was based on clear and specific evidence demonstrating that such working formed a necessary part of the critical path for delivery of the project. The Examining Authority identified that certain construction activities were sequential and could not reasonably be interrupted, and that removing Sunday working would result in measurable delays to the programme, with implications for network delivery and compliance requirements. The Council does not consider that a comparable justification has been provided for the Norwich to Tilbury project. Unlike Bramford to Twinstead, there is no clear evidence that extended working is necessary to avoid material delay, nor has the Applicant quantified the programme consequences of restricting working hours. As such, the Council considers that the approach taken in the Bramford to Twinstead DCO should be regarded as project-specific, reflecting particular construction and programme constraints, rather than establishing a general precedent for extended working hours. On this basis, the Council considers that construction hours should align with standard BS 5228-1 working periods, with any departures from these hours subject to prior approval and supported by a robust, site-specific noise assessment demonstrating that relevant thresholds would not be exceeded at sensitive receptors. This would provide an appropriate and proportionate balance between project delivery and the protection of residential amenity. In light of the above, Basildon supports ECC's suggested wording which has been informed by precedent DCOs: *Construction hours* *(1) Subject to sub-paragraphs (2) - (5) work may only take place between the hours of 07.00 and 19.00 Monday to Friday and 08.00 and 13.00 on Saturdays, and may not occur on Sundays, bank holidays and other public holidays (the core*	**Practice [Revision F]**. These controls include provisions relating to noise management, lighting, environmental protection and monitoring, ensuring that any out-of-hours activity is appropriately managed and minimised. Per commitment NV05 in Table 6.1 of **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]** the Main Works Contractor(s) will conduct detailed construction noise and vibration assessments to determine whether any additional measures, including site-specific BPM, may be required. The construction noise and vibration assessments, including details of proposed mitigation measures and monitoring, will be submitted to the relevant Local Planning Authority. The assessments will demonstrate how 'significant adverse effects' will be avoided where reasonably practicable, and how adverse effects will be mitigated and minimised. No 'significant adverse effects' from construction noise and vibration are expected or reasonably foreseeable. In the unlikely event that they arise, appropriate mitigation and controls would be implemented in consultation with the relevant Local Planning Authority, including through Section 61 consent as necessary via commitment NV03. <u>Percussive piling and HGV deliveries</u> The hours proposed for percussive piling works and HGV deliveries are already restricted beyond that of the core working hours proposed. No percussive piling works or HGV deliveries are permitted on Sundays, bank holidays or other public holidays. The Applicant considers that these restrictions are proportionate, reflecting the higher potential for disturbance associated with these activities while ensuring that appropriate controls are in place to protect local amenity. <u>Start-up and close-down activities</u> The Applicant has commented on start-up and close-down activities in DCO 1.S10 in **8.9.1 Applicant's Responses to First Written Questions [REP3-074]**. It is not considered that the inclusion of the wording '*general works that will not create an audible disturbance to local residents including but not restricted to*' as suggested would be enforcable through the DCO as the wording is open to interpretation. Start up and close down activites will be subject to assessment against the applicable construction noise threshold for potential significant effects for that period, as per the 'ABC' method described in Annex E.3.2 of BS 5228-1:2009+A1:2014 – Part 1: Noise[3]. The Main Works Contractor(s) will identify and implement specific mitigation measures for all

[3] British Standards Institute (2014) BS 5228-1:2009+A1:2014 Code of practice for noise and vibration control on construction and open sites – Part 1: Noise

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			working hours), unless otherwise approved by the relevant planning authority *(2) No piling operations may take place outside of the hours of 08:00 to 18:00 Monday to Friday and 08:00 to 13:00 on Saturday with no piling operations taking place on Sunday and* *Bank Holidays.* *(3) Subject to sub-paragraph (5), unless otherwise agreed with the local highway authority, no HGV deliveries may be made to site outside of the hours of 0700 to 1900 Monday to Friday and 0800 to 1300 on Saturdays.* *(4) The following operations may take place outside the core working hours— (a) trenchless crossing operations including at landfalls and beneath highways, railway lines, woodlands, nature reserves, Sites of Special Scientific Interest or watercourses;* *(b) the installation and removal of conductors, pilot wires and associated protective netting across highways, railway lines or watercourses;* *(c) the jointing of underground cables excluding cable cutting;* *(d) the continuation of any work activity commenced during the core working hours to a point where they can securely and or safely be paused;* *(e) any highway works requested by the highway authority to be undertaken on a Saturday or Sunday or outside the core working hours;* *(f) the testing or commissioning of any electrical plant installed as part of the authorised development including undertaking of any identified corrective activities;* *(g) the completion of works delayed or held up by severe weather conditions which disrupted or interrupted normal construction activities that the undertaker and its contractor agree forms the critical path for the accepted construction programme. In such cases, the undertaker must, as soon as practicable, notify the relevant planning authority of the disruption or interruption and explain why that work could not be completed within the core working hours referred to in sub-paragraph (1);* *(h) activity necessary in the instance of an emergency where there is a risk to persons or property; (i) security monitoring;*	construction works, including start-up and close-down activities, in consideration of these thresholds to avoid significant adverse effects and reduce adverse effects as per commitment NV05 within Table 6.1 of **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]**. It is therefore not considered nessessary to include a noise limit within the DCO for these activities. Suggested core working hours The local authorities have suggested a reduction of the core working hours as specified in Requirement 7 of **3.1 Draft Development Consent Order [Revision F]**. As the Applicant has presented in DCO 1.S10 in **8.9.1 Applicant's Responses to First Written Questions [REP3-074]**,DCO 2.S10 in **8.9.2 Applicant's Responses to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]**, and **8.5.11 Applicant's Written Summary of Oral Submissions and Response to Action Points for Issue Specific Hearing 3** Appendix A **[Revision A]** restricting the core working hours could result in a delay to the energisation date which would lead to additional costs being borne by British energy bill payers, at a rate of approximately £7 million per day. The Applicant considers that there should be clear and evidenced reasons for having project-wide blanket restrictions to the working hours because the law requires restrictions are necessary and proportionate, based on evidence as set out in section 120 of the Planning Act 2008. The majority of the construction phase will take place in rural areas where there are few receptors and no likelihood of noise or disturbance. Targeted mitigation, secured through **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]** and Requirement 4 of **3.1 Draft Development Consent Order [Revision F]**, is proposed in the very small number of areas where there is the potential for a significant effects. There is no evidence that there is likely to be unacceptable impacts on human health. Therefore, there is no justification for a blanket restriction in terms in terms of impacts on human health based on the proposed working hours as presented in **6.14 Environmental Statement Chapter 14 Noise and Vibration [APP-256]**. The assessment is based on the proposed working hours and internationally accepted thresholds. It accepts and delivers temporal restrictions where they are justified, which are secured through **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]**, which would be enforced by the Local Planning Authorities.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			(j) non-intrusive surveys; *(k) intrusive surveys;* *(l) oil processing of transformers or reactors in substation sites;* *(m) delivery to the transmission works of abnormal loads and any highway works requested by the highway authority to be* *undertaken outside the core working hours; and* *(n) mechanical and electrical installation works within buildings once erected and enclosed* *(5) Works outside core working hours are subject to a 50dBA noise limit will apply at the nearest noise-sensitive receptors for start-up and close down activities up to one hour either side of the core working hours.* *(6) The core working hours exclude:* *(a) start up and close down activities up to 1 hour either side of the core working hours* *(b) administrative and clerical activities up to 1 hours either side of the core working hours. (7) The severe weather conditions referred to in sub-paragraph 3(g) means any weather which prevents work from taking place during the core working hours referred to in sub-paragraph (1) by reason of physical incapacity (whether for reasons of visibility, ground conditions, power availability, site access or otherwise) or being contrary to safe working practices.* Start UP / Close Down start-up and close down activities" means general works that will not create an audible disturbance to local residents including but not restricted to: a) arrival and departure of workforce and staff at site and movement to and from places of work; b) general refuelling of plant; c) site inspections and safety checks; d) site meetings inspections and walkovers; e) site clean-up (site housekeeping that does not require the use of plant); f) general site maintenance; and g) low key maintenance and safety checking of plant and machinery.	In addition, to this, the Project is a largely linear infrastructure project. The construction of the overhead line in particular, would be from pylon to pylon and line by line, where works are undertaken in a given location and then move to the next section. This is explained in further detail in **8.5.11 Applicant's Written Summary of Oral Submissions and Response to Action Points for Issue Specific Hearing 3** Appendix A **[Revision A]**. Therefore, the argument posed by the local authorities that there is a need for blanket restrictions due to respite from constant construction activities, is therefore less applicable and less convincing.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			Braintree District Council Notwithstanding the Council's concerns, should the Examining Authority (ExA) be minded to allow additional flexibility to the Applicant to reduce risk, it may be appropriate to require a site specific prior approval process facilitated through Requirements. Any prior approval shall be supported by a robust, site-specific noise assessment demonstrating that relevant thresholds at sensitive receptors would not be exceeded at these extended periods, thereby providing justification for any proposed departure.	The Applicant has responded to the other points raised by Braintree District Council in the response to Basildon Borough Council (DCO 2.S10). Requiring prior approval for works outside of the hours suggested by the local authorities could prove impractical. **8.5.11 Applicant's Written Summary of Oral Submissions and Response to Action Points for Issue Specific Hearing 3** Appendix A **[Revision A]** provides details on the construction activities involved in the project in relation to working hours and shows that timely decision-making is essential to ensure continuity. The Applicant considers that the controls in **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]** including commitments NV01, NV02, NV03, NV04 and NV05 provide the necessary measures to ensure appropriate site-specific mitigation is in place without the need to impose a blanket restriction on the core working hours.
			Brentwood Borough Council (BBC) Where the applicant considers that works outside these core hours are necessary, these should be managed through the Section 61 prior consent process under the Control of Pollution Act 1974. This would enable out-of hours activities to be justified on a case-by-case basis and require the applicant to demonstrate that Best Practicable Means (BPM) will be employed to minimise noise and disturbance. The Section 61 process would also provide BBC with an appropriate level of oversight and allows any necessary controls, restrictions or mitigation measures to be tailored to the specific works proposed.	The Applicant has responded to the other points raised by Brentwood Borough Council in the response to Basildon Borough Council (DCO 2.S10). Requiring prior approval for works outside of the hours suggested by the local authorities could prove impractical. **8.5.11 Applicant's Written Summary of Oral Submissions and Response to Action Points for Issue Specific Hearing 3 [Revision A]** provides details on the construction activities involved in the project in relation to working hours and shows that timely decision-making is essential to ensure continuity. The Applicant considers that the controls in **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]** including commitments NV01, NV02, NV03, NV04 and NV05 provide the necessary measures to ensure appropriate mitigation is in place for works outside the core working hours without the need to impose a blanket restriction.
			Suffolk County Council SCC (Public Health) maintains its position, as stated in Table Item 1.2 of SCC's Comments on Submission received at Deadline 3 [REP4-335] that the construction working hours proposed by the Applicant, are not appropriate to safeguard public health. These hours would expose communities to prolonged and continuous exposure to noise, vibration, construction traffic and general disturbance, with limited opportunity for predictable respite.	The Applicant has responded to the initial points raised by Suffolk County Council in the response to Basildon Borough Council (DCO 2.S10) and further justification for the working hours proposed is within **8.5.11 Applicant's Written Summary of Oral Submissions and Response to Action Points for Issue Specific Hearing 3 Appendix A [Revision A**]. The Applicant acknowledges SCC's concern regarding the concentration of existing and proposed NSIPs within Suffolk and the potential for cumulative effects arising from overlapping or sequential construction activities but does not agree that the existence of other NSIPs within

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			SCC (PROW) considers that prolonged construction hours will give no respite to PROW users, from the noise, flashing lights and movements from construction vehicles. This includes works on and adjacent to the PROW. This is especially pertinent to horse riders on bridleways. Many PROW are used for health and wellbeing, as well as recreation, and used by visitors to the area contributing to tourism. The prolonged hours on Sundays and Bank Holidays may mean PROW may change their routes and/or habits, which will be detrimental to them. No mitigation has been put forward to address this. From a public health perspective, the provision of regular and predictable periods of respite is essential to protect mental wellbeing, sleep quality and overall quality of life. SCC maintain that extended daily working periods proposed by the Applicant, together with weekend and Bank Holiday working, are likely to contribute to heightened stress, anxiety and a reduced sense of control for affected communities. These effects are likely to be felt most acutely by vulnerable groups, including older people, disabled residents and those without access to private transport, and risk exacerbating existing health inequalities. SCC further emphasises that these concerns must be considered in the context of cumulative impacts. Suffolk is experiencing and is expected to continue to experience a high concentration of NSIPs. The potential for overlapping construction activity and sequential disruption across multiple schemes materially increases the likelihood of sustained adverse effects on community wellbeing. The establishment of appropriately restricted construction working hours is a critical mitigation measure, not only for this project but also in setting an appropriate and consistent approach for future infrastructure development in the county. Proposed requirement Notwithstanding the above, SCC and BMSDC recognise the Examining Authority's request for local authorities to seek a reasonable compromise position. Whilst it has not been possible to attain a cross-local authority position ahead of ExQ2 deadline submission, SCC and BMSDC are willing to engage constructively with other host authorities on the matter, with a view to securing meaningful protection for community health and wellbeing. In particular, the Councils considers that any compromise must	Suffolk justifies the imposition of restrictive working hours on the Project. Construction programmes, methodologies, locations, receptors and mitigation requirements vary significantly between projects and should be considered on their individual merits. The construction activities on the Project are largely linear and transient and would not occur simultaneously across the full extent of the route for the duration of the construction programme. Construction activities would progress along the route as works are completed, meaning that receptors would typically experience construction activity for a defined period before works move on to the next section. There would be periods of higher and lower intensity working within individual geographical areas, rather than continuous construction activity throughout the construction programme. The Applicant notes comments made in relation to PROW users and associated impacts relating to noise and construction activities. Impacts on PROW within Suffolk are assessed in **6.15 Environmental Statement Chapter 15 – Socio-economics, Recreation and Tourism [Revision B]**, with the majority of impacts being short-term and either minor adverse or negligible and not significant. Information relating to how individual PROW are managed during construction is presented in **7.6 Outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan [REP5-163]**, including information about indicative durations of management regime. An assessment of potential impacts on physical activity as a result of the Project is presented in **6.10 Environmental Statement Chapter 10 – Health and Wellbeing [Revision B]**. This notes that, while there is the potential for disruption to recreational routes or areas of open space which may affect opportunities for physical activity as a result of construction activities, health effects are likely to be negligible or minor adverse and not significant. The duration of effects that may potentially affect people's ability to be physically active (e.g. closures of PROW) are generally short-term, with rapid reversal / diversions in place. Alternative routes and provision of recreational areas are generally available for use for the period over which effects are predicted to last. In relation to comments made about heightened stress, anxiety and reduced sense of control for affected communities, an assessment of impacts on mental health and wellbeing is presented in **6.10 Environmental Statement Chapter 10 – Health and Wellbeing [Revision B]**. This highlights the role of community relations and communication with local residents during the construction period and notes that certain groups,

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			retain clear limits on weekend and Bank Holiday working. Notwithstanding the above, the Councils are aware of the draft requirement that Essex County Council intends to propose and SCC and BMSDC confirm it would be content for ECC's drafting (which is similar to that proposed by SCC and BMSDC in the Joint LIR [REP1-178] at paragraphs 14.58 to 14.68) to be incorporated into the DCO. For completeness, the requirement, as drafted by ECC, is set out below – *Construction hours* 1. Subject to sub-paragraphs (2) - (5) work may only take place between the hours of 07.00 and 19.00 Monday to Friday and 08.00 and 13.00 on Saturdays, and may not occur on Sundays, bank holidays and other public holidays (the core working hours), unless otherwise approved by the relevant planning authority 2. No piling operations may take place outside of the hours of 08:00 to 18:00 Monday to Friday and 08:00 to 13:00 on Saturday with no piling operations taking place on Sunday and Bank Holidays. (3. Subject to sub-paragraph (5), unless otherwise agreed with the local highway authority, no HGV deliveries may be made to site outside of the hours of 0700 to 1900 Monday to Friday and 0800 to 1300 on Saturdays. 4. The following operations may take place outside the core working hours— (a) trenchless crossing operations including at landfalls and beneath highways, railway lines, woodlands, nature reserves, Sites of Special Scientific Interest or watercourses; (b) the installation and removal of conductors, pilot wires and associated protective netting across highways, railway lines or watercourses; (c) the jointing of underground cables excluding cable cutting; (d) the continuation of any work activity commenced during the core working hours to a point where they can securely and or safely be paused; (e) any highway works requested by the highway authority to be undertaken on a Saturday or Sunday or outside the core working hours; (f) the testing or commissioning of any electrical plant installed as part of the authorised development including undertaking of any identified corrective activities; (g) the completion of works delayed or held up by	such as older people, might be more vulnerable. **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]** includes commitments specifically related to communication and community liaison, including Commitment GG36 which states that the Applicant is committed to the preparation of a detailed Communications Strategy as part of ensuring that all activities related to the Project are conducted with full transparency and respect for the health and concerns of local communities. The Applicant considers that restricting the Project's core working hours would not necessarily reduce cumulative effects and could, in some circumstances, prolong the overall construction period, thereby extending the duration over which communities are exposed to construction-related impacts.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			severe weather conditions which disrupted or interrupted normal construction activities that the undertaker and its contractor agree forms the critical path for the accepted construction programme. In such cases, the undertaker must, as soon as practicable, notify the relevant planning authority of the disruption or interruption and explain why that work could not be completed within the core working hours referred to in sub-paragraph (1); (h) activity necessary in the instance of an emergency where there is a risk to persons or property; (i) security monitoring; (j) non-intrusive surveys; (k) intrusive surveys; (l) oil processing of transformers or reactors in substation sites; (m) delivery to the transmission works of abnormal loads and any highway works requested by the highway authority to be undertaken outside the core working hours; and (n) mechanical and electrical installation works within buildings once erected and enclosed 5. Works outside core working hours are subject to a 50dBA noise limit will apply at the nearest noise-sensitive receptors for start-up and close down activities up to one hour either side of the core working hours. 6. The core working hours exclude: (a) start up and close down activities up to 1 hour either side of the core working hours (b) administrative and clerical activities up to 1 hours either side of the core working hours. 7. The severe weather conditions referred to in sub paragraph 3(g) means any weather which prevents work from taking place during the core working hours referred to in sub paragraph (1) by reason of physical incapacity (whether for reasons of visibility, ground conditions, power availability, site access or otherwise) or being contrary to safe working practices. 8. In this requirement, "start-up and close down activities" means general works that will not create an audible disturbance to local residents including but not restricted to: a) arrival and departure of workforce and sta at site and movement to and from places of work; b) general refuelling of plant; c) site inspections and safety checks;	

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			d) site meetings inspections and walkovers; e) site clean-up (site housekeeping that does not require the use of plant); f) general site maintenance; and g) low key maintenance and safety checking of plant and machinery.	
			Thurrock Council The Council maintains its previously stated position regarding construction hours and continues to support the approach agreed between the affected local authorities. The Council notes that its position remains consistent with that previously submitted during the examination. The Council considers that construction hours should reflect the need to protect residential amenity and should remain consistent with the approach normally applied through the Council's powers under the Control of Pollution Act 1974. The Council also considers that any activities undertaken outside approved core working hours should be clearly defined within the relevant management plans and subject to appropriate controls to minimise impacts on nearby residents and other sensitive receptors. The Council notes that the Applicant has requested to model alternative construction scenarios, including the removal of Sunday and Bank Holiday working. The Council will review the outcome of the assessment and any associated draft wording as part of the ongoing examination process. The Council will continue to work with the other affected local authorities and the Applicant in seeking agreed wording for Requirement 7 as the examination progresses.	The Applicant has responded to comments on activities taking place outside core working hours within the response to Basildon Borough Council (DCO 2.S10).
			Norfolk County Council Construction activity should be limited to Saturday mornings only (07:00–12:00), with no working on Sundays or Bank Holidays. This has been the case for all NSIPs in Norfolk so far, including the Norfolk Vanguard and Norfolk Boreas DCOs.	The Applicant has responded to comments on reducing the proposed core working hours within the response to Basildon Borough Council (DCO 2.S10).
DCO 2.S11	All local authorities	Schedule 3 – Requirements 8 (Retention and removal of trees, woodland and hedgerows) The ExA asked in ExQ1 DCO 1.S12 **[PD-014]** why arboricultural protection measures, such as	**Braintree District Council** The Council has reviewed the Applicant's response in relation to the securing of arboricultural protection measures through the	The Applicant agrees with Braintree that Requirement 4 insofar as it relates to the Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan and Requirement 8 ought

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
		arboricultural method statements, tree protection plans and root protection areas are not clearly defined and being secured prior to construction as part of this requirement. The applicant responded **[REP3-074]** "…The submission of an Aboricultural Method Statement is secured through the outline LEMP and requirement 4 of the draft DCO. The outline LEMP states 'All construction elements likely to impact on retained trees will be addressed within an Arboricultural Method Statement to be produced following detailed design and agreed with the relevant Local Planning Authorities prior to construction activity commencing. The Arboricultural Method Statement will include protection measures including tree protection fencing, as discussed in Section 7.3. and illustrated in a Tree Protection Plan'. Therefore, whilst the Arboricultural Method Statement is not secured through requirement 8, it is secured through requirement 4 and full details will be provided within the final LEMP(s) prior to the stage of works commencing." The ExA seeks comments from the local authorities on the applicant's reply or, if you have already responded to this matter, signpost where you have provided a response on this matter.	Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) and Requirement 4. While the Council acknowledges that an Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) can appropriately form part of the LEMP and be secured through that mechanism, it does not consider that this approach fully addresses the concerns raised. In particular, the Council considers that there remains a lack of clear alignment between Requirement 8 (which governs the retention and removal of trees, woodland and hedgerows) and the LEMP/Requirement 4 process (which in part is proposed to govern how retained trees are to be protected during construction). These elements are intrinsically linked and should be read together to ensure that decisions regarding tree retention, removal, and protection are coherent, deliverable and enforceable. As currently drafted, the separation of these controls risks a situation whereby tree retention is approved under Requirement 8 without sufficient certainty at Examination stage that such retention is feasible or can be implemented without unacceptable impacts during construction. As the Council set out in its response to ExQ1 DCO 1.S11 [REP3 091], the Bramford to Twinstead NSIP protect has had repeated issues when seeking to discharge its retention and removal requirement for the above reasons. Owing to the above, the Council's position remains as set out in its response to ExQ1 DCO 1.S11 [REP3-091]. The Council would also take this opportunity to remind the ExA that we consider that the current level of arboricultural information submitted with the application is inadequate as set out in our Local Impact Report (REP1-148) Section 9.	to be read together. However, the Applicant does not agree with the risks presented by the Council. Requirement 8 is structured as a staged requirement, meaning that a plan showing retention and removal must be submitted prior to commencement of the relevant stage. Paragraph (2) specifies the details that must be submitted and paragraph (3) explicitly states that the plan must be in accordance with the OLEMP or the final LEMP (if approved) and also in accordance with **2.16 Trees and Hedgerows to be Removed or Managed Plans - Sections A to H [REP4-029 - REP4-033, REP5-053, REP4-035 and REP5-057]**. That stage of the development must then be carried out in accordance with the approved plan. In relation to the adequacy of information submitted with the application for development consent, the Applicant is satisfied that sufficient information was provided to enable the Local Planning Authority to understand the level of protection to be provided as set out in **8.8.2 Applicant's Comments on Local Impact Reports [REP2-030]**. **6.13.A6 Environmental Statement Appendix 13.6 Arboricultural Impact Assessment [APP-236]** makes reference to tree protection measures in section 13.1.7 and signposts the reader to **7.4 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan [Revision F]** for further information.
			Brentwood Borough Council (BBC) **Colchester City Council (CCC)** **Essex County Council (ECC)** **Tendring District Council (TDC)** [The Council] considers that the removal and retention of trees and hedgerows as a result of this Project being implemented is a sensitive issue given the open landscape and rural areas through which it will pass. [The Council] therefore supports the ECC position that an Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) is a critically important document providing reassurance on the detail regarding the trees and hedgerows to be removed, the trees and	The Applicant disagrees with the alleged lack of clarity. The Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) will form part of the final Landscape and Ecological Management Plan as stated in paragraph 7.1.2 of **7.4 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan [Revision F]** and will be agreed with the relevant LPAs prior to construction commencing. Requirement 8 is structured as a staged requirement, meaning that a plan showing retention and removal must be submitted prior to commencement of the relevant stage. Paragraph (2) specifies the details that must be submitted and paragraph (3) explicitly states that the plan must be in accordance with the OLEMP or the final

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			hedgerows to be retained and, for those trees/hedgerows being retained, the necessary tree/hedgerow protection measures. [The Council] recognises that the AMS forms part of and is secured through the OLEMP in the current draft of the DCO, but given the breadth of the OLEMP, [The Council] is supportive of the ECC view that the current drafting does not provide sufficient clarity around whether the AMS is to be discharged under Requirement 4 or Requirement 8, nor does the current approach make it easy to monitor and track progress around discharge. [The Council] therefore considers that the discharge route for the AMS needs to be clarified and that it should be approved pursuant to Requirement 8, which relates to the retention and removal of trees, woodland and hedgerows. [The Council] is of the view that the ExA give consideration to including reference at Part iii) of Requirement 8 to the need for the AMS to form part of any submission pursuant to Requirement 8.	LEMP (if approved) and also in accordance with **2.16 Trees and Hedgerows to be Removed or Managed Plans - Sections A to H [REP4-029 - REP4-033, REP5-053, REP4-035 and REP5-057]**. That stage of the development must then be carried out in accordance with the approved plan. It is not agreed that the current approach makes it difficult to monitor and track progress around discharge. Both the final Landscape and Ecological Management Plan(s) under Requirement 4 and retention and removal details under Requirement 8 are discharged by the Local Planning Authority, therefore they will have all the appropriate information available to monitor and track progress around the discharges. Both documents must be submitted and agreed pre-commencement, so the timings of the submissions are the same. The Applicant also intends to submit these documents together.
			Chelmsford City Council CCC's full response to the quality of the arboricultural information supplied is set out within its LIR REP1-153, response to ExQ3 REP3– 075, with detailed reference contained within CCC's response to ISH2 hearings, REP4 – 326. CCC consider the level of information to be inadequate. It is unclear how the Arboricultural Method Statements would sit within the Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP). It is presumed these would be attached as an appendix. The nature of Arboricultural Method Statements (AMS) is that they would likely be multi-faceted site specific documents containing bespoke information relating to trees. Given the nature of the construction and the phased time frames for implementing the Project, it is likely that individual AMS's would need to be submitted over an extensive and rolling period requiring numerous requirement submissions. Given the LEMP is a multifaceted, mutli-appendiced document, from CCC's experience of discharging other NSIP requirements, it is expected that there would be numerous and extensive approaches to part discharge requirement 4. From a practical and procedure perspective, CCC consider that this process would be extremely challenging and complicated, particularly with regard to the	Please refer to the Applicant's response to BCC, CCC, ECC and TDC above.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			monitoring and discharge of the requirement. For simplicity, CCC would request that it would be more straightforward to discharge the AMS under requirement 8.	
			Thurrock Council The Council considers that sufficient arboricultural information should be secured prior to the commencement of construction works in areas where retained trees and hedgerows may be affected by the Proposed Development. As a minimum, the Council would expect the submission of a Tree Survey identifying individual trees, groups of trees and hedgerows together with their associated Root Protection Areas. The Council would also expect an Arboricultural Impact Assessment identifying those trees and hedgerows to be removed and assessing any impacts on retained vegetation. The Council further considers that an Arboricultural Method Statement should be prepared setting out tree protection measures, construction methodologies with Root Protection Areas, non-dig construction techniques and details of tree works required as part of the Proposed Development. The Council considers that all arboricultural information should be prepared in accordance with BS5837:2012 and secured through the relevant DCO requirements and associated management plans.	The existing Arboricultural Impact Assessment **6.13.A6 Environmental Statement Appendix 13.6 - Arboricultural Impact Assessment AIA [APP-236]** contains details of the impacts to trees and groups of trees. **6.13.A6 Environmental Statement Appendix 13.6 - Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) Figure A13.6.1 - Arboricultural Impact Assessment [REP1-065]**) provides information on trees and their root protection areas together with impacts to hedgerows. The Applicant's commitment GG31 in **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]** makes reference to the production of Arboricultural Method Statements and Tree Protection Plans. Within Appendix J of **6.19 Scoping Report - including appendices B to K [APP-296]** the Applicant detailed how the baseline arboricultural information would be collected and reported. In respect of the need to secure details before commencement, please refer to the Applicant's response to BCC, CCC, ECC and TDC above.
			Suffolk County Council SCC (Landscape) and BMSDC are broadly content that paragraph 7.1.2 of the outline LEMP sufficiently secures not only the provision of an Arboricultural Method Statement ("AMS") and Tree Protection Plan ("TPP"), but also that these must be agreed with the relevant LPA. There is however concern with regards to the timing and logical placement. Ideally detailed and complete Tree and Hedgerow Surveys should be informing the detailed design with the aim to reduce tree and other vegetation loss. In particular, vegetation losses for temporary works should be avoided as far as possible. This includes accesses, haul roads and compounds, but also any surveys, which may incur vegetation loss. Based on this detailed design, stage specific updated Trees and Hedgerows to be Removed and or Managed Plans will then need to be	The Applicant welcomes SCC and BMSDC's comments that they are content that **7.2 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan [Revision F]** secures the AMS and Tree Protection Plans.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			produced. However, these appear to stand independently from the outline LEMP and are governed by Requirement 8 rather than Requirement 4. As the AMS and the tree protection would emerge out of these Trees and Hedgerows to be Removed and or Managed Plans, as well as out of the detailed design, it would seem logical to link the tree protection plans to these plans rather than to the LEMP and secure them specifically through additional wording in Requirement 8. In this context, the Councils query what is intended for Appendix A Arboricultural Impacts Plan of the outline LEMP [REP4-176 and REP4-177] and how this relates to the Trees and Hedgerows to be Removed and or Managed Plans. With regards to the timeline, SCC and BMSDC consider that the detailed design, the Trees and Hedgerows to be Removed and or Managed Plans, the AMS and TPPs would ideally need to be agreed prior to pre-commencement works to avoid unnecessary vegetation clearance. The Councils accept that this may not always be realistic but would seek re-assurance from the Applicant that vegetation clearance at per-commencement stage is kept to the absolute minimum required to enable pre commencement works and required surveys.	
			South Norfolk District Council SNDC accept that these will be secured with the detailed design stage of the project.	The Applicant welcomes this comment.
			Norfolk County Council Details of root protection areas, tree protective fencing and other measures to be outlined within an arboricultural method statement are required to determine the level of impact. Without this information it is not possible to ascertain if impact is acceptable, if design alternatives are required or if mitigation is necessary. This is particularly important with regard to trees adjacent to the highway or PROW which have a high landscape value. The full impact of the development on trees and woodlands needs to be quantified prior to finalising the LEMP. The AMS will outline measures to avoid harm to trees suitable for retention. This will quantify the impact to trees, especially in the 'affected managed' and 'potentially affected' categories.	The Applicant's commitment GG31 in **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]** makes reference to the production of Arboricultural Method Statements and Tree Protection Plans. The Applicant confirms this will be developed following detailed design. The Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) and Tree Protection Plans will form part of the final Landscape and Ecological Management Plan(s) as stated in paragraph 7.1.2 of **7.4 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan [Revision F]** and will be agreed with the relevant LPAs prior to construction commencing.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
DCO 2.S12	All local authorities The applicant	Schedule 3 – Requirements 13 (Decommissioning) Braintree DC, in its response to ISH2 Action Points **[REP4-323]**, considers the DCO should include '…a clear obligation on the undertaker… to remove any equipment or infrastructure that becomes obsolete, in order to avoid unnecessary long-term impacts on landscape, heritage and residential amenity." The ExA would seek clarification from Braintree DC or any local authority: i) how the relevant planning authority would determine equipment/ infrastructure has become obsolete; ii) whether the removal of such equipment/ infrastructure should be within a specified/ fixed period of time from it becoming obsolete, for example 6 months; and iii) whether some form of control over the decommissioning of such obsolete equipment/ infrastructure, such as a written scheme of decommissioning to be submitted to the relevant planning authority for its approval, should be included within the requirement. The ExA also asks the applicant to comment on this matter.	**Basildon Borough Council** **Braintree District Council** **Chelmsford City Council** **Essex County Council** **Tendring District Council** **Suffolk County Council** *[defer to Braintree District Council]* Requirement 13 (Decommissioning) has been reviewed and maintains its position, as previously set out in its submissions, that the current drafting does not provide sufficient certainty that obsolete infrastructure will be removed in a timely or consistent manner. In response to the Examining Authority's specific questions: i) The Council does not consider that it would be appropriate or practicable for the relevant planning authority to determine when equipment or infrastructure has become operationally obsolete. This is a matter which sits entirely within the control and knowledge of the undertaker. The responsibility for identifying obsolete infrastructure should therefore rest with the undertaker and be secured through a clear and enforceable obligation within the DCO [as per Local Impact Reports]. ii) The Council considers that the removal of obsolete equipment should be subject to a defined timeframe, in order to ensure that redundant infrastructure does not give rise to unnecessary long-term impacts on landscape character, heritage assets and residential amenity. A fixed period is considered appropriate, and it is considered that a period of up to 12 months from the point at which the relevant part of the authorised development becomes operational, or from the point at which specific infrastructure becomes obsolete, would be reasonable and consistent with other DCO precedents such as Requirement 13 of Sizewell. iii) The Council considers that the decommissioning of obsolete infrastructure should be controlled through the submission and approval of a written scheme of decommissioning and land restoration. This should include details of the infrastructure to be removed, the timing of removal, restoration measures, and aftercare arrangements. The Council is of the opinion that such a scheme should be submitted to the relevant	The Applicant acknowledges the concerns raised by Braintree District Council regarding the retention and eventual removal of infrastructure that is no longer required for operational purposes. As the licensed electricity transmission owner, National Grid is subject to statutory duties and licence obligations requiring it to develop, maintain and operate an efficient, coordinated and economical transmission system. Decisions regarding the retention, replacement, refurbishment, decommissioning or removal of assets are therefore subject to ongoing technical, operational, safety, environmental and regulatory assessment throughout the life of the network. In response to the Examining Authority's specific questions: i) The Applicant does not consider that the Local Planning Authority would be best placed to determine whether transmission equipment or infrastructure has become operationally obsolete. Such determinations require detailed technical, operational and network planning assessments and are intrinsically linked to the undertaker's statutory responsibilities and licence obligations. Infrastructure that is no longer in active use for a particular purpose may nevertheless continue to serve an operational, resilience, maintenance, safety, contingency or future network function. The Applicant therefore considers that such matters are most appropriately determined through its established asset management and regulatory processes. ii) The Applicant does not consider that a specified or fixed period for removal would be appropriate. The circumstances surrounding any future decommissioning activity will vary depending on the nature of the asset and the operational, engineering, environmental and land management considerations applicable at that time. A fixed timeframe could unnecessarily constrain the undertaker's ability to manage the transmission network safely and efficiently. Where infrastructure is formally decommissioned and its removal is considered appropriate, the Applicant would progress such activities having regard to the relevant circumstances and applicable statutory and regulatory requirements. iii) The Applicant does not consider that any additional form of control over the decommissioning of such infrastructure is necessary. Requirement 13 already provides a mechanism for the decommissioning of the authorised development, including approval of the relevant details by the Local

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			planning authority for approval prior to the commencement of decommissioning works. More fundamentally, the Council considers that the current drafting of Requirement 13 is reactive and discretionary, in that it provides a mechanism for decommissioning but does not impose a clear obligation to remove infrastructure which is no longer required. The Council therefore considers that an additional or revised requirement should be included within the DCO to secure the following: • A mandatory obligation on the undertaker to identify and remove any pre-existing equipment within the Order Limits which is not required to enable, facilitate or support the authorised development, or any other ongoing operational use by the undertaker; • A requirement for such equipment to be removed within a defined period (for example, within 12 months of completion of the relevant part of the authorised development), in accordance with an approved land restoration scheme; • A mandatory obligation on the undertaker to notify the relevant planning authority as and when any part of the authorised development or associated infrastructure becomes obsolete; and • A requirement for decommissioning and restoration of such obsolete infrastructure to be carried out in accordance with Requirement 13 (or equivalent), following approval of a written scheme. The Council also considers it important that the Applicant clearly identifies, at this stage, any existing undertaker equipment within the Order Limits that is not required as part of the proposed scheme but is intended to remain, together with justification for its retention. This would assist the Examination in understanding the extent of potential residual infrastructure and ensuring that unnecessary impacts are avoided. Overall, the Council considers that without these additional safeguards, there remains a risk that obsolete infrastructure could persist within the landscape for an extended period, contrary to the principles of good design, environmental protection and effective land restoration.	Planning Authority prior to the commencement of decommissioning works. The Applicant therefore considers that appropriate controls are already secured through **3.1 Draft DCO [Revision F]**. The Applicant is committed to acting as a responsible infrastructure owner and operator and will continue to review its assets throughout their operational life. However, the Applicant considers that the existing drafting of Requirement 13, together with the wider statutory and regulatory framework governing the operation of the electricity transmission network, provides an appropriate and proportionate approach. Accordingly, the Applicant does not consider that additional notification requirements, fixed removal periods or approval mechanisms are necessary.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			Thurrock Council The Council's position on decommissioning and the removal of obsolete infrastructure has previously been set out within its response to Issue Specific Hearing 2 (ISH2) [REP4-339]. That position remains unchanged. The Council continues to support inclusion of appropriate provisions within the Development Consent Order to ensure that infrastructure which is no longer required is removed and that any associated restoration requirements are secured where necessary.	
DCO 2.S13	All local authorities	Schedule 4 – (Discharge of Requirements) Schedule 4(3) - Fees The ExA notes the applicant's responses to ExQ1 **[REP3-074]**, question DCO1.S20 related to fees and asks the local authorities if they wish to raise anything in regard to this matter, especially: a) paragraph 3(1)(a) of Schedule 4 (discharge of requirements) to the Draft DCO already providing for the application fee for the discharge of conditions to be such fee as is prescribed under the relevant regulations and the drafting in paragraph 3(1)(b) providing for an alternative figure or arrangement that would apply in the absence of there being a prescribed fee b) the term "per request" having the same meaning as in the Town and Country Planning regime, meaning that the fee would be per application for consent (i.e. more than one consent could be sought in one application) and not for each individual discharge of requirement or consent contained in an application for approval. It is noted the applicant has used the term 'per request', which as far as the ExA can see is not used in the Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications, Deemed Applications, Requests and Site Visits) (England) Regulations 2012. The term 'Each Request' is used. The ExA invites all local authorities to comment on this should they wish.	**Basildon District Council** The Council has reviewed the Applicant's approach to fees under Schedule 4 and notes that whilst the proposed wording seeks to align with the Town and Country Planning (Fees) Regulations, the discharge of requirements under a DCO is materially different from the discharge of planning conditions under the TCPA regime. In particular, the Council does not consider it appropriate to apply a "per request" approach where a single application may cover multiple discharge items. Given the scale, complexity and resource implications associated with discharging DCO Requirements, each consent sought often requires separate and detailed technical assessment, regardless of whether they are submitted within a single application or across multiple submissions. The use of a "per request" formulation therefore risks under-recovering the true cost of assessment and placing an unreasonable burden on local planning authority resources, particularly in the context of statutory timescales for determination. The Council therefore considers that fees should be calculated by reference to the number of individual discharge items or consents being sought, rather than on the basis of a single application covering multiple matters. This would better reflect the level of work involved and ensure that the discharge of requirements process is adequately resourced and deliverable.	The use of the term 'per request' is consistent with other recently made DCOs, including The National Grid (Bramford to Twinstead Reinforcement) Order 2024, The National Grid (Yorkshire Green Energy Enablement Project) Development Consent Order 2024 and the draft Sea Link Development Consent Order. As previously explained in **8.9.1 Applicant's Responses to First Written Questions [REP3-074]**, the term 'per request' has the same effect as under the Town and Country Planning regime, namely that the fee is payable per application for approval, such that a single application may seek approval for more than one Requirement or consent where appropriate, rather than requiring a separate fee for each individual Requirement or consent included within that application. In practice, the Applicant notes that on the Bramford to Twinstead Reinforcement project, the discharge of Requirements has typically been undertaken through separate applications for individual Requirements, with the fee being paid in respect of each application. The Applicant anticipates that it would adopt a similar approach, however, there may be circumstances where it is more appropriate to group discharges into a single application (for example for small, less complex matters with similar subject matter). The Applicant therefore considers it necessary and appropriate that the drafting follows convention in this regard and allows flexibility for more than one matter to be included within a single application. This would align with the clear intention of Regulation 16 of The Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications, Deemed Applications, Requests and Site Visits) (England) Regulations 2012. The Applicant therefore considers that the existing drafting provides an appropriate mechanism for the payment of discharge fees and that no amendment to **3.1 Draft Development Consent Order [Revision F]** is necessary.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			Brentwood Borough Council (BBC) BBC notes that dDCO paragraph 3(1)(a) of Schedule 4 (discharge of requirements) provides for the application fee for the discharge of conditions to be such fee as is prescribed under the relevant regulations and the drafting in paragraph 3(1)(b) providing for an alternative figure or arrangement that would apply in the absence of there being a prescribed fee. BBC also notes that the fee for any application to discharge a requirement of the DCO must be updated annually to reflect the basic costs of the discharging authority and ensure any fee payable remains in line with aforementioned fee Regulations or the latest planning fee guidance at the time of submission, and so has no further comment to make on this matter. With respect to the use of the term "per request", BBC understands that this term has been used in previous DCO examples, but considers the use of the term 'each application' would be clearer, more precise and more consistent with the wording of the Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications, Deemed Applications, Requests and Site Visits) (England) Regulations 2012, although this may not inhibit the seeking of discharge of multiple requirements with the use of either term. In light of the above and with the aim of securing the most efficient processing of requirement discharge from the limited resources of the local authority, BBC would prefer for requirements to be discharged singularly, as this makes it more viable to consider and determine efficiently. BBC recognises that the Applicant is aware of the resources context of local authorities and burden being placed upon them, and is currently engaging with BBC and other Councils along the route to discuss future funding to support the post-consent discharge of requirements processes, but any agreed PPA agreed will sit outside of the DCO.	By referring in general terms to 'such fee as may be prescribed', Schedule 4 to **3.1 Draft Development Consent Order [Revision F]** already accounts for the annual increase in the application fee and the Applicant does not consider it necessary to make further amendments. Please refer to the Applicant's response to Basildon District Council and Suffolk County Council.
			Chelmsford City Council CCC disagrees with the Applicant regarding the payment of annual fee increases permitted in the Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications, Deemed Applications. The Longfield Solar Farm DCO provides this provision, where part 5 of schedule 15 states: *Fees 5.—(1) Where an application is made to the relevant planning authority for written consent,*	By referring in general terms to 'such fee as may be prescribed', Schedule 4 to **3.1 Draft Development Consent Order [Revision F]** already accounts for the annual increase in the application fee and the Applicant does not consider it necessary to make further amendments. Please refer to the Applicant's response to Basildon District Council in relation to the use and interpretation of the term 'per request'.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			agreement or approval in respect of a requirement, the fee prescribed under regulation 16(1)(b) of the Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications, Deemed Applications, Requests and Site Visits) (England) Regulations 2012(a) (as may be amended or replaced from time to time) is to apply and must be paid to the relevant planning authority for each application. As these regulations are amended yearly to reflect fee increases, it follows that the application fee is also increased on a yearly basis. It is considered that the approach taken on Longfield is an example of good planning practice and CCC does not consider there is any strong reason for not following this precedent. The current planning fee for the Longfield NSIP requirement is set this year at £309.00, By their nature, planning fees on NSIP requirements are generally low given, covering the Councils administration fees, rather than the technical and professional output required to consider and determine whether the requirement is acceptable within the content of the DCO. Given the low planning fee and wider context of the Applicant's persistent reluctance to provide reasonable and acceptable compensation for the proposal which is set out elsewhere within CCC's LIR and other documents, CCC find extremely disappointing that that the accepted approach to the yearly increase in planning fees is being challenged too. As a minimum fees should cover basic administration costs and uprated in accordance with standard national procedures. The Project is one of the biggest infrastructure projects being considered within planning in England and CCC is perplexed why the Applicant considers it is should not be subject established planning fees and regulations. Technical costing should have been factored into the budgeting and viability assessment for the Project. With regard to the use of the term 'per request' CCC would prefer if requirements were discharged singularly and separately as this makes it easier to process and consider them (see comments relating to DCOS 2 above). The approach is broadly consistent with the approach used on the Longfield Solar Farm DCO where the Applicant generally submits requirements separately for ease of discharge.	

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			Colchester City Council Noting the level of work involved, it is clear to CCC that the fee should be 'each request' to avoid one small fee for multiple requirements. The latter would result in a significant burden on already stretched LPA's.	Please refer to the Applicant's response to Basildon District Council in relation to the use and interpretation of the term 'per request'.
			Essex County Council ECC acknowledges that the current drafting in paragraph 3(1)(a) of Schedule 4 (discharge of requirements) to the dDCO (Revision D) already provides for an application fee when applying for the discharge of requirements, to accord with that prescribed under the Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications, Deemed Applications, Requests and Site Visits) (England) Regulations 2012 ECC also recognises that the drafting in paragraph 3(1)(b) provides an alternative figure or allows for an arrangement with the Applicant for a bespoke fee. Nevertheless, ECC is of the opinion that the fee for any application to discharge a requirement of the DCO must be updated annually to reflect the basic costs of the discharging authority and ensure any fee payable remains in line with aforementioned fee Regulations or the latest planning fee guidance at the time of submission. ECC recognises that the term 'per request' has been used in previous DCO examples but considers the term 'each application' is clearer, more precise and more consistent with the wording of the Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications, Deemed Applications, Requests and Site Visits) (England) Regulations 2012. As such, its use would be ECC's preference. However, ECC accepts that both terms have essentially the same meaning in that a fee would be required for each application submitted and that each application submitted could seek the discharge of multiple requirements. • From the perspective of efficient processing of any submitted Requirement, ECC would prefer (and it is understood this is also the opinion of a number of relevant discharging authorities with a greater involvement in the discharge of requirements), if requirements were discharged singularly as this makes it easier to consider and determine efficiently. The approach is broadly consistent with the approach used on the Longfield Solar Farm DCO where for ease, the Applicant generally submits requests separately. If this is not the approach, ECC considers this would	The Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications, Deemed Applications, Requests and Site Visits) (England) Regulations 2012 (the '2012 Regulations') set out the fees prescribed under sections 303 and 333(2A) of the 1990 Act, to which the Applicant refers in paragraph 3(1)(a) of Schedule 4. The 2012 Regulations were amended by the Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications, Deemed Applications, Requests and Site Visits) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2023 (the '2023 Regulations'). The 2023 Regulations inserted Regulation 18A into the 2012 Regulations. Regulation 18A is 'fees payable on or after 1st April 2025' and it provides for increases in fees in line with Consumer Prices Index or 10% (whichever is lower). The increase applies in respect of an application that is made on or after the fee change date (i.e. 1 April of the relevant year from 2025 onwards). By referring in general terms to 'such fee as may be prescribed', Schedule 4 to **3.1 Draft Development Consent Order [Revision F]** already accounts for the annual increase in the application fee and the Applicant does not consider it necessary to make further amendments. The Applicant has also updated paragraph 3 of Schedule 4 to refer to the amended Infrastructure Planning (Fees) Regulations 2010, which allow planning authorities to publish a schedule of fees, and charge those fees, for their involvement in NSIP projects. Please refer to the Applicant's response to Basildon District Council and Suffolk County Council in relation to the use and interpretation of the term 'per request'.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			place even greater importance on the comments regarding annual fee increase consistent with The Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications, Deemed Applications, Requests and Site Visits) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2023. ECC would point to the fact the discharge of requirements involves detailed and complex submissions involving considerable technical and professional resource and fees need to be proportionate to the time and effort required and to ensure there is adequate resources available to the discharging authority. ECC does acknowledge the Applicant is currently engaging with councils to discuss future funding to support the post consent discharge of requirements processes but that any PPA agreed would sit outside of the DCO.	
			Suffolk County Council a) General SCC's and BMSDC's position on paragraph 3 (fees) of Schedule 4 (discharge of requirements) to the draft DCO [REP4-038] is set out in paragraphs 14.74 to 14.80 of its Local Impact Report [REP1-178]. Subject to what follows, SCC and BMSDC maintain that position. (a) paragraph 3(1)(a): as stated in paragraph 14.79 of the LIR [REP1-178] (and in subsequent documents) SCC and BMSDC consider it would be preferable if the applicant and SCC and BMSDC entered into a planning performance agreement ("PPA") for the full recovery of SCC's and BMSDC's costs in discharging any application under the Order. In the LIR, SCC and BMSDC stated that paragraph 3(1) should be recast to provide that no application can be made until an appropriate PPA is in place. The Applicant's comments on the Local Impact Reports [REP2-030] includes the following text in reply to paragraph 14.79 of SCC and BMSDC's LIR [REP1-178] – "The Applicant has been, and is committed to, collaborative working and proposes to enter into post-consent planning performance agreements that are intended to work alongside the provisions of the draft Development Consent Order to facilitate this. The Applicant would reimburse the host authorities for reasonably and properly incurred costs in progressing the agreed workstreams, as it has done for the Application Stage planning performance agreements". SCC and BMSDC have yet to receive the draft PPA and would encourage the Applicant share this as soon	In relation to paragraph 3 (fees) of Schedule 4 (discharge of requirements) the Applicant comments as set out below. The Applicant reiterates its commitment to collaborative engagement with host authorities on post-consent matters, including entering into post-consent planning performance agreements (PPAs) with host authorities. The Applicant has prepared a draft post-consent planning performance agreement to be shared with the relevant planning authorities to deal with matters relating to post-consent working, including cost recovery. However, making entry into a PPA a pre-condition to making any application to discharge requirements under the Order is disproportionate and inappropriate. The discharge of requirements process must, in the manner of other made DCOs, be capable of operating from the moment the DCO is granted. It is noted that the Applicant sought to enter into PPAs in relation to its DCO application with all host authorities prior to submission of that application in August 2025. However, notwithstanding ongoing engagement, the Applicant continues to await comments on a number of them. Adding a procedural gateway wholly dependent on the timescales of PPA negotiations with host authorities materially risks unnecessary delay to a project of critical national importance aligned with the government's Clean Power 2030 target, and is contrary to the public interest. For these reasons, it is also considered disproportionate and inappropriate for the Secretary of State, following the Examination, to amend paragraph 3 to provide that no application can be made until an appropriate PPA is in place. The Applicant agrees with SCC and BMSDC that it would better capture the intent of the paragraph 3 for the

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			as possible, although note that engagement has begun. On a drafting point, and notwithstanding the precedents, it seems to SCC and BMSDC that, as currently drafted, the undertaker could still pay the prescribed fee (under paragraph 3(1)(a)) even if a PPA were entered into (under paragraph 3(1)(b)). This is because a fee must be paid under the arrangements described in paragraph 3(1)(a)) or under those described in paragraph 3(1)(b). While, as currently drafted, a PPA would seem capable of trumping the fee of £298, it would not seem capable of trumping the prescribed fee. In the light of this, SCC and BMSDC would suggest that paragraph 3(1) is amended as follows – "3. —(1) Where an application is made to a relevant authority for any consent, agreement or approval required by a requirement (including consent, agreement or approval in respect of part of a requirement), **unless a bespoke arrangement has been agreed between the applicant and relevant authority and legally secured** a fee must be paid to the relevant authority as follows—(a) such fee as may be prescribed (under sections 303 and 333(2A) of the 1990 Act for the discharge of conditions attached to a planning permission); or (b) a fee of £298 per request ~~unless a bespoke arrangement has been agreed between the applicant and relevant authority and legally secured".~~" This drafting is proposed on the basis that a PPA will be entered into before the application for development consent is granted. If no PPA is entered into, SCC and BMSDC would request that the Secretary of State amends paragraph 3 to provide that no application can be made until an appropriate PPA is in place. b) "per request": The answer to DCO 1.S20 in the Applicant's Responses to First Written Questions [REP3-074] – "The term "per request" will have the same meaning as in the Town and Country Planning regime, meaning that the fee would be per application for consent (i.e. more than one consent could be sought in one application) and not for each individual discharge of Requirement or consent contained in an application for approval". SCC and BMSDC disagree with this statement because subordinate legislation is not constructed in this way. Section 11 of the Interpretation Act 1978 ("IA 1978") concerns how subordinate legislation is constructed and states – "Where an Act confers powers to make	'bespoke arrangement' carve-out (e.g. PPAs) to be effective in relation to both fee routes, and the Applicant's proposed revised drafting is set out further below. The Applicant notes SCC and BMSDC's reference to section 11 of the Interpretation Act 1978 in relation to the interpretation of 'per request' in paragraph 3(1)(b). That section simply limits the need for subordinate legislation to needlessly replicate defined terms in the relevant parent Act; it does not alter the fact that paragraph 3 of Schedule 4 bears (on the face of the draft DCO) the same meaning, as a question of fact, that equivalent wording in the TCPA regime bears for the same situation, the discharge of planning conditions being the direct equivalent of Requirements. That meaning is that 'per request' encompasses an application that seeks consent, agreement or approval in respect of more than one Requirement, just as a single request under the TCPA regime can cover more than one condition. The Applicant's position mirrors that applied consistently across equivalent DCOs, including other National Grid DCOs. Regulation 16 of the Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications, Deemed Applications, Requests and Site Visits) (England) Regulations 2012 (the 2012 Regulations) provides that, where a request is made to a local planning authority for written confirmation of compliance with 'a condition or conditions', a fee of £298 is payable 'for each request'. The deliberate use of 'a condition or conditions' makes explicit that a single request, attracting a single fee, may encompass compliance with more than one condition. Comparable DCOs (including Bramford to Twinstead, Yorkshire Green and Richborough) adopt the same 'per request' formulation as paragraph 3(1)(b), reflecting the consistent and understood industry position that this language operates in the same manner as Regulation 16. Though the Applicant does not agree that the TCPA approach, as captured in those DCOs, is insufficiently explicit on the face of the draft DCO, to the extent that SCC and BMSDC remain concerned, the Applicant is content to remove references to 'request' entirely (itself a remnant from the 2012 Regulations and its intent of multiple conditions being capable of inclusion in a single request/application) and amend the drafting of paragraph 3(1)(b) to make it even clearer that a single 'application', the term otherwise used in Schedule 4 instead of 'request' may relate to the discharge of one or more Requirements. The Applicant's proposed revised drafting, further mirroring the Regulation 16, is set out below.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			subordinate legislation, expressions used in that legislation have, unless the contrary intention appears, the meaning they bear in the Act". Here, section 114(1)(a) of the Planning Act 2008 ("PA 2008") confers powers on the Secretary of State to make an order granting development consent (i.e. a DCO) and since section 117(4) of the PA 2008 applies, the order must be contained in a statutory instrument, which is subordinate legislation. By section 11 of the IA 1978, expressions used in a DCO have the meaning they bear in PA 2008, unless the contrary intention appears in the DCO. The expression "per request" is not defined in the PA 2008 and so that expression would have its ordinary meaning i.e. every time the applicant asked for something to be done, the fee would be payable.	The reference to regulation 12A of the Infrastructure Planning (Fees) Regulations 2010 has been added to paragraph 3(1)(a) because, with effect from 8 June 2026, host local authorities have been added as prescribed public authorities able to charge fees for relevant services, which may include post-decision and implementation stage services such as the discharge of requirements: '3.—(1) Where an application is made to a relevant authority for ~~any~~ one or more consent, agreement or approval required by a requirement (including one or more consent, agreement or approval in respect of part of a requirement), unless a bespoke arrangement has been agreed between the applicant and relevant authority and legally secured, a fee must be paid to the relevant authority as follows— (a) where a fee may be charged under regulation 12A of the Infrastructure Planning (Fees) Regulations 2010 (fees in relation to the provision of relevant services) such applicable fee for the application or, where no such fee may be charged, such applicable fee for the application as may be prescribed ~~(~~under sections 303 and 333(2A) of the 1990 Act for the discharge of conditions attached to a planning permission~~)~~; or (b) a fee of £298 ~~per request unless a bespoke arrangement has been agreed between the applicant and relevant authority and legally secured~~ for each ~~request~~ application.'
			Thurrock Council The Council maintains its previously stated position that fees associated with the discharge of requirements should increase annually in accordance with the Town and Country Planning fee regime and that this should be reflected in the drafting of the dDCO. The Council remains concerned that the Applicant's proposed approach does not fully align with the established Town and Country Planning fee regime. The Council considers that local planning authorities should not be placed at a financial disadvantage when processing applications made pursuant to the DCO and that the costs of administering and determining such applications should be appropriately recovered. The Council notes the Applicant's proposed alternative arrangement under paragraph 3(1)(b), whereby a fixed fee of £298 would apply unless a bespoke agreement has been secured with the	Please refer to the Applicant's responses to Basildon District Council and Suffolk County Council.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			relevant planning authority. The Council considers that fee recovery should not be contingent upon the negotiation and agreement of a separate contractual arrangement and that an appropriate fee mechanism should be secured through the DCO itself. The Council welcomes the Examining Authority's observation regarding the use of the term "per request" and considers that the drafting should instead align with the statutory terminology of "each request" used within the relevant Town and Country Planning Regulations. The Council considers that this amendment would provide greater clarity and reduce the potential for disputes regarding the interpretation and application fees.	
DCO 2.S16	Braintree District Council	Schedule 19 - Certified Documents The applicant responded at ExQ1 **[REP3-074]** at DCO 1.S25 to Braintree DC's request to include supplemental environmental statements to the list of certified documents where it advises '…the definition of environmental statement in Article 2 (interpretation) includes any supplemental or additional information and any environmental statement submitted for the purposes of complying with and/or discharging the requirements…' As such the applicant's position is that the proposed change is not necessary. Braintree DC is asked to respond and advise whether it is now satisfied with regard to this matter.	**Braintree District Council** The Council notes the Applicant's clarification that the definition of "environmental statement" within Article 2 encompasses any supplemental or additional environmental information, including material submitted for the purposes of complying with or discharging requirements. This provides a degree of reassurance and addresses, in part, the Council's earlier concern. However, the Council considers that it remains important to ensure, through the DCO mechanism, that all such post-examination environmental information is formally captured within the suite of certified documents. This would provide greater clarity and certainty for regulators, contractors and the public as to the status of environmental information relied upon in the delivery of the scheme. On this basis, while the Council acknowledges the Applicant's position, it considers that an explicit mechanism or confirmation should be secured to ensure that any subsequent environmental information is appropriately certified and readily identifiable.	The purpose of certification is to document the definitive version of a particular document at the time of grant of development consent. It is not intended to apply to future documents that are, for example, submitted to discharge requirements. Should documents be submitted to host authorities in support of an application to discharge a DCO requirement, those documents will be held on the planning portal by the relevant planning authority in the usual way. Should the Application submit documents to DESNZ to discharge a DCO requirement (if a specialist unit should be set up following the publication of the Nuclear Regulatory Review 2025) the Applicant is currently exploring options around establishing a 'register of requirements' which would provide for an electronic form of documents to be available publicly. This is being considered for a future update to the Draft DCO. The Applicant would also be able to provide an electronic copy upon request.

7. Historic environment

Table 7.1 Historic environment

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
HE 2.2	The applicant	Mitigation hierarchy – Great and Little Waltham The applicant's reasoning towards the mitigation hierarchy is noted in various written and oral submissions. The proposed line between Great and Little Waltham north of the river Chelmer is currently proposed to be constructed with low height pylons. The answer to ExQ1 HE1.4 [REP3-074] states that adverse effects were reduced to a level considered acceptable by the introduction of these pylon types. The applicant is asked to provide justification for the reasoning for not selecting T pylons along this section of the route – what level of adverse effects required or justified the use of low height pylons but not T pylons?	**Chelmsford City Council** Earlier proposals for full height pylons resulted in a moderate level of less than substantial harm to the setting Langleys grade I listed house. The low height pylons reduce the impact on views from the house and its immediate setting, resulting in a low level of less than substantial harm. A moderate level of harm remains to Langleys grade II Registered Park and Garden. This is common ground between NG and CCC. CCC identify a greater level of harm to Great Waltham and Little Waltham Conservation Areas and other designated and non-designated heritage assets within the vicinity (as identified in CCC's LIR), most notably the grade I listed Church of St Mary and St Lawrence, grade II listed Chatham House, Balls Farm and Lace Cottages and the non-designated WWII defences. CCC do not consider the use of T-pylons has been adequately explored by the Applicant. T pylons have a simple and elegant form, as well as a lower height, which is considered to reduce their impacts. Whilst permanent maintenance tracks are required, overall the impact is still considered to be reduced.	The Applicant's position in respect of the mitigation hierarchy is clear and is aligned with its duties under NPS EN-5 (2024) and under the Electricity Act 1989. This requires a design to be considered to be unacceptable in order to progress to the next level of the hierarchy. The Applicant's position is that the combination of standard and low height lattice pylons is not unacceptable. With regard to effects on landscape and visual receptors and heritage assets, the Applicant considers lattice pylons to be more appropriate in the vicinity of Great and Little Waltham. Although the reduction in height of T-pylons would reduce visibility in longer distance views, where there are layers of vegetation between the viewer and the Project, in close views the solid monopole structures would have a greater degree of visual contrast with the landscape than lattice pylons, especially against a darker backdrop of trees and landform. In contrast, the lattice tower structures are more transparent, given the steelwork is relatively slim.
HE 2.3	The applicant	Grouping of heritage assets The applicant's answer to ExQ1 HE1.8 [REP3-074] confirms the approach taken to harm caused to heritage assets and in particular notes the approach taken where the significance of individual assets is informed by its relationship with other assets, using the example of the Roydon Hall complex. Comments regarding the 'density' of heritage assets in the applicant's answers to the Historic Environment Rule 17 letter points 1 and 4 are also noted [REP4-318]. The applicant is asked: a) Has any consideration been taken of wider groupings – for instance groups of heritage assets within Ardleigh, Ford Street or Great Waltham? b) Could relationships between assets, whether functional such as the Vicarage and Church in Ardleigh, or locational through shared ages and architectural styles specific to the locality raise the	**Chelmsford City Council** CCC consider the groups of vernacular buildings in Great Waltham and Little Waltham set within a rural setting have a group value and the harm to their settings is therefore magnified. This is also the case for the non-designated WWII defences at Great Waltham, which are bisected by the proposed route.	The Applicant notes the comments from Chelmsford City Council regarding groups of vernacular buildings in Great Waltham and Little Waltham, and the non-designated WWII defensive features. The Applicant confirms that such relationships and spatial groupings have been taken into account within the assessment through the contribution that these assets make to one another's setting and significance as explained in **8.4.10.1 Applicant's Comments on Pylons East Anglia Response to ExQ1 [REP4-300]** and **8.8.2 Applicant's Comments on Local Impact Reports [REP2-030]** and as further set out in **8.9.2 Applicant's Responses to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]**. In these instances, assets may be experienced as part of a wider historic grouping or landscape; however, as set out in **8.9.2 Applicant's Responses to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]**, this does not elevate their collective heritage value

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
		importance of the whole rather above the individual level? If so, how might this be affected by the proposed development?		beyond that of the individual assets, nor does it create a separate group receptor. The potential for effects arising from changes to these relationships has been assessed through the impact on setting at an asset-by-asset level. Accordingly, whilst the presence of groups of assets may inform how significance is experienced, this does not result in additional or magnified effects beyond those already identified in the assessment. Effects on such assets, including the WWII defensive features at Great Waltham, have been appropriately considered within the established methodology.
HE 2.4	The applicant	Assessments across multiple assets The applicant's answer to point 3 of Historic Environment Rule 17 letter [REP4-318] concerns the setting of heritage assets. Leaving aside the matter of construction, the ExA questions your response in relation to the operation and management phase. While visibility is an important way in which one will experience an asset, intangible elements of setting, which include historic relationships between places and harm that is compounded over a wider historic townscape or landscape area, also require proper assessment. This is referred to in 'The Setting of Heritage Assets Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition)' (Historic England, 2017) (GPIP 3) in several instances, such as the mention of "qualitative issues such as the importance of quiet and tranquillity as an attribute of setting, constraints on access such as remoteness or challenging terrain, and the importance of the setting to a local community". The table on p.13 of GPIP 3 also notes possible effects of development as including the change to general character (industrialising) of a setting. While it is acknowledged that these elements will not be relevant to every assessment, there are groups of assets that would benefit from a deeper understanding of historic interconnections, tranquillity and remoteness and industrialisation of the general character. The applicant is asked to provide further detail on how these have been assessed and how this additional assessment might affect the concluded level of harm.	**Chelmsford City Council** CCC consider the separation between the two historic villages of Great Waltham and Little Waltham is significant and forms part of the setting to the Conservation Areas and groups of designated and non-designated buildings. This rural isolation would be diminished, with a change to the character of the landscape with industrial scale features. As set out within GPIP3 a change to landscape character, skylines, tree cover, land use and management are all relevant. Similarly, the isolated rural setting of other heritage assets will be impacted upon and change how they are experienced as groups (as set out within CCC LIR), including at Goodmans Farm, Stonage Farm, Chatham Hall, Balls Farm, Southwoods Farm, Copfold Hall and St Marys Church Buttsbury.	The Applicant notes Chelmsford City Council's comments regarding the separation of Great Waltham and Little Waltham, and the role of rural isolation and wider landscape character in the setting of assets in these areas, as well as at locations such as Goodmans Farm, Stonage Farm, Chatham Hall, Balls Farm, Southwoods Farm, Copfold Hall and St Mary's Church, Buttsbury. As set out in **8.9.2 Applicant's Responses to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]**, the assessment has considered both visual and non-visual aspects of setting, including openness, rural character, historic relationships between places, and the way in which assets are experienced within the wider landscape. This includes consideration of how the Project may introduce change to the perception of these environments, for example through effects on tranquillity, remoteness and landscape character. These factors have been taken into account within the assessment of setting and reflected in the reported magnitude of impact and level of harm on an asset-by-asset basis. The Applicant does not consider that these effects give rise to a materially greater level of harm than that already identified in the assessment within the ES.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
HE 2.5	The applicant	Vibration The applicant's answer to points 5 and 6 of the Historic Environment Rule 17 letter [REP4-318] provides the regulatory background in terms of British Standards and vibration effects. While noting that BS 5228-2 specifies that buildings of historical value should not be assumed to be more sensitive, vibration effects in this instance have been raised by various IPs, including local councils. Given this, should Commitment H07 in the outline code of construction practice [REP4-164] be widened to specifically include the 33 listed buildings deemed to be subject to a greater than negligible magnitude of impact from vibration without mitigation?	**Chelmsford City Council** CCC consider that listed buildings and non-designated heritage assets with a greater than negligible impact should be included.	The Applicant considers that this matter has already been addressed in **8.9.2 Applicant's Responses to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]**. In summary, whilst some buildings are identified as experiencing a greater than negligible impact, this relates to human perception rather than structural effects, with predicted vibration levels remaining well below thresholds for even cosmetic damage. On this basis, the Applicant does not consider it necessary or proportionate to include these assets within Commitment H07.
HE 2.8	Pylons East Anglia Limited	Scoped out Heritage Assets The applicant responded to your ExQ1 response at [REP4-300]. In particular, the ExA notes its response to queries you had about properties that were scoped out of assessment including, but not limited to, Grindle House, Canes Farmhouse, The Grange, Godbolts Farm. In each instance the applicant has reviewed its approach and found its assessment appropriate and proportional. Bearing in mind the agreed principles on scoping out heritage assets found in paragraphs 3.11.1 to 3.11.6 of the ES Appendix 11.1 – Historic Environment Baseline Report [APP-209], do you have additional comments on heritage assets that have been scoped out of the assessment?	**Pylons East Anglia Appendix H** The Applicant's approach to scoping out The Grindle House, Canes Farmhouse, Godbolts Farmhouse/Farmstead and The Grange is not consistent with the agreed methodology for the historic environment assessment and is not supported by the level of evidence required to justify exclusion from further assessment. Chapter 11 of the ES confirms that the scope of the historic environment assessment was informed by the 2022 EIA Scoping Report, the Scoping Opinion, and consultation with relevant consultees, and that the scope is summarised in Appendix 5.2, with National Grid's responses to the Planning Inspectorate's comments provided in Appendix 5.1. It also confirms that the assessment of built heritage includes setting and indirect effects, and crucially, that the methodology was informed by Historic England's Good Practice Advice 3 – The Setting of Heritage Asets. Against that agreed framework, the key issue that Pylons East Anglia has with the scoping out of these listed buildings is not whether the Applicant repeatedly cites GPA3, referred to site visits, or stated that the assessment is "proportionate and appropriate", but whether the information actually presented provides a clear, reasoned and evidence-led justification for scoping these assets out. In accordance with the Scoping Opinion published by the Planning Inspectorate on 14 December 2022, scoping out is only appropriate where sufficient information demonstrates that likely significant effects would not arise and where the reasoning is clearly explained in the ES. Yet in each of these four	The Applicant acknowledges the comments raised by Pylons East Anglia regarding the scoping out of heritage assets, including The Grindle House, Canes Farmhouse, Godbolts Farmhouse/Farmstead and The Grange. The Applicant's position on this matter has been set out previously in **8.4.10.1 Applicant's Comments on Pylons East Anglia Response to ExQ1 [REP4-300] and 8.17 Response to Rule 17 Letter – Historic Environment [REP4-318]**. As previously noted, the methodology for the assessment and scoping of heritage assets, including the approach to setting and indirect effects, has been undertaken in accordance with **6.11.A1 Environmental Statement Appendix 11.1 - Historic Environment Baseline Report [Revision B]** and relevant guidance, including Historic England's Good Practice Advice 3 (GPA3)[4], and has been agreed with Historic England and the Local Planning Authorities (with the exception of Chelmsford City Council). The assessment has not been limited to views alone and has included consideration of the wider setting of assets, informed by site visits, baseline data, and use of visualisations where appropriate. This includes consideration of historic relationships, rural landscape context and the contribution made by surrounding land to the significance of heritage assets. With regard to farmsteads and rural assets, the Applicant confirms that the contribution made by their wider agricultural setting has been considered, including historic and functional relationships with the

[4] Historic England (2017) *The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition).*

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			cases, whilst the Applicant identifies that setting makes an important contribution to significance (namely historic farmstead relationships, coherence of associated buildings, wider agricultural landscape context, group value, and historical/functional associations) NGET moves directly to the conclusion that the setting is confined to the immediate farmyard, curtilage or "immediate landscape", and does not extend to the Order Limits. This reasoning is flawed and Pylons East Anglia would contend that the conclusions are asserted (with the purpose of scoping out as many heritage assets as possible) rather than demonstrated, as required by the Planning Inspectorate and Historic England. For The Grindle House, Canes Farmhouse and The Grange, the Applicant's assessments expressly acknowledge that the surrounding agricultural landscape and associated historic relationships make a considerable contribution to significance, yet they provide no substantive analysis of how that setting has been geographically or functionally established, nor why it should stop short of the Order Limits. For Godbolts Farmhouse/Farmstead, the assessment similarly recognises the importance of the surviving historic farmstead group, relationship with the potential DMV, and agricultural context, and even acknowledges the possibility of views towards the Project yet still concludes - without evidential analysis - that the setting does not extend to the Order Limits. In each case there is an absence of any robust explanation of intervisibility, key views, spatial relationships, experiential character, historic landscape continuity, as required by GPA 3, or the extent to which intervening features genuinely sever the contribution made by setting, as opposed merely to filtering or moderating it. That omission is material. The Applicant states that the ES assesses setting and indirect effects on built heritage and identifies GPA3 as part of the guidance informing the assessment. The agreed scoping basis therefore requires more than a bare subjective statement that setting has been considered: it requires sufficient evidence to explain why no realistic potential for likely significant effect arises. Merely stating that setting is "restricted" to the farmyard or immediate landscape, or that modern development has already affected value, is not an adequate substitute for a staged assessment of the contribution made by the wider setting and whether change within that setting may affect significance. Furthermore, existing development	surrounding landscape. However, the assessment has identified, through professional judgement and available evidence, that in these cases the contribution to significance from the setting does not extend to the Order Limits in a way that would give rise to likely significant effects. On this basis, the scoping out of these assets is considered to be proportionate and consistent with the agreed methodology. The Applicant does not agree that the conclusions are unsupported. The assessment has been undertaken using appropriate sources of information, including site visits, aerial imagery and viewpoint assessment, and has applied the agreed methodology proportionately. The Applicant therefore remains confident that the approach to scoping is robust and that sufficient information has been provided to justify the exclusion of these assets from detailed assessment.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			does not, of itself, define or truncate the extent of setting; nor does enclosure by hedges, roadside character, or partial screening justify excluding wider rural context from consideration where that wider context is itself recognised as contributing to significance. This is especially true in relation to farmhouses and farmsteads which, by their very nature, have a wider setting than many heritage assets due to the historic and functional relationship with the wider agricultural landscape. In addition, the Applicant has consistently failed to assess how the land (on which the infrastructure will be constructed) currently contributes to the significance of the listed buildings, in contravention of Local Policy for all councils along the route, the NPPF and GPA 3 step 2. The Applicant's Comments on Pylons East Anglia Response to ExQ1 does not overcome any of these failings. The Applicant's repeated phrase that the five-step GPA3 approach was followed (which is debateable) and that site visits, aerial imagery or viewpoint work were undertaken, does not resolve the fundamental deficiency that the conclusions for these four assets (and thousands of other assets beyond 250m of the proposed route) has been based upon insufficient information and analysis. The issue is not lack of reference to guidance, but lack of demonstrable application of that guidance in a way that justifies the scoping out of the majority of assets prior to the EIA being undertaken. Pylons East Anglia would reiterate that, in accordance with the agreed principles (Scoping Opinion: Proposed East Anglia Green Energy Enablement (GREEN) Case Reference: EN020027), heritage assets may only be scoped out where the information provided justifies that approach and where the ES clearly explains the reasoning. On the evidence presented for these four assets, that threshold has not been met. In consequence, the scoping out of The Grindle House, Canes Farmhouse, Godbolts Farmhouse /Farmstead and The Grange (and a large majority of other assets) is premature and unsupported. The assessments do not provide a sufficiently robust understanding of the extent of setting, nor a clear and reasoned justification for their settings stopping short of the Order Limits. Furthermore, the applicant's assessment fails to engage with the exceptional scale of the proposed infrastructure and the consequences this has for heritage setting and significance. The height, mass and extensive visibility of the pylons would introduce a dominant and	

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			intrusive presence within the landscape, fundamentally altering the way in which heritage assets are experienced in their surroundings and, through that change to setting, causing a materially greater degree of harm to their significance than would typically arise from a standard application. Pylons East Anglia would again assert, therefore, that these assets should not have been scoped out of further assessment, and a proportionate but properly evidenced assessment of likely setting effects is required in accordance with the agreed scoping methodology as stated in Chapter 11 of the ES, and Historic England's GPA3.	
HE 2.9	Pylons East Anglia Limited	International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) Guidance In Appendix A of your response [REP4-369] you refer to heritage guidance as laid down by ICOMOS. The ExA are aware of ICOMOS and ICOMOS-UK guidance and consider that this has been incorporated into English planning policy through the National Planning Policy Framework and also into the Good Practice Advice in Planning (GPIP) guidance provided by Historic England. GPIP3 is particularly relevant in this case. If there is any additional ICOMOS or ICOMOS-UK guidance that you feel should be taken into consideration in relation to the setting of heritage assets, please submit it into the application.	Pylons East Anglia Appendix H The Examining Authority is respectfully invited to have regard to relevant ICOMOS guidance in assessing the effects of the Norwich to Tilbury project on the setting of heritage assets, particularly insofar as those effects arise cumulatively across an extensive landscape. The project comprises approximately 180 km of new transmission connection, including around 159 km of new overhead line carried on approximately 509 pylons, many of them substantial steel lattice structures typically in the order of 40–50 m in height, such that the scheme is not a localised intervention but a repeated and extensive physical presence across a very wide geographic area. That scale matters in heritage terms because the principal issue is not simply whether an individual pylon is visible from an individual asset, but whether the repeated introduction of tall vertical infrastructure across a broad swathe of countryside alters the wider surroundings that contribute to significance. NGET's own Historic Environment chapter recognises that the assessment must address setting and indirect effects on built heritage and setting effects on designated historic landscapes, and it links that assessment to shared heritage/LVIA viewpoints, demonstrating that the project's effects are understood by the applicant itself to operate at a landscape scale rather than solely at the level of isolated site-by site change. In that context, ICOMOS is directly relevant. It states that setting is the immediate and extended environment that contributes to significance and distinctive character, and that this includes not only physical and visual relationships but also wider cultural, historical and	The Applicant acknowledges Pylons East Anglia's comment and as explained within **8.9.1 Applicant's Responses to First Written Questions [REP3-074]** page 300, the assessment methodology was developed in accordance with relevant professional guidelines such as International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments for Cultural World Heritage Properties[5]. The Applicant does not agree with the suggestion that cumulative or landscape-scale effects on the historic environment have not been appropriately assessed. As previously set out in **8.17 Response to Rule 17 Letter – Historic Environment [REP4-318]**, the assessment has identified that the Project results in effects to the settings of multiple heritage assets along the route, reflecting the linear nature and scale of the proposed development. This has been assessed in the following parts of the Environmental Statement and the wider Historic Environment assessment: **6.11 Environmental Statement Chapter 11 - Historic Environment [Revision C]** **6.11.A1 Environmental Statement Appendix 11.1 - Historic Environment Baseline Report [Revision B]** **6.11.A2 Environmental Statement Appendix 11.2 - Historic Environment Assessment Tables [Revision C]** **6.11.A7 Environmental Statement Appendix 11.7 - Assessment of Harm to Designated Heritage Assets [APP-215]**

[5] ICOMOS (2011) Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments for Cultural World Heritage Properties

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			other contextual associations. It further explains that significance may derive from meaningful relationships with broader surroundings and from processes that have developed cumulatively and organically over time. That guidance is particularly apt to Norwich to Tilbury because this proposal would introduce not one change, but a sequence of repeated overhead line structures through large areas of rural landscape in multiple local authority areas. In such circumstances, the harm to the historic environment is not adequately answered by a narrow, asset-by-asset visibility exercise alone; rather, the effect of the scheme must be understood in terms of how a widespread corridor of pylons, associated works and their enduring visibility can incrementally erode the contribution that open rural and agricultural landscapes, long views, uncluttered skylines, and tranquil settings makes to countless conservation areas, scheduled monuments, listed buildings of all grades, registered parks and gardens and non-designated heritage assets. ICOMOS provides that planning decisions should include provisions to control the impact of incremental or rapid change on settings, and identifies significant skylines, sight lines and adequate distance from new development as key matters in avoiding inappropriate visual and spatial encroachment. It also states that the individual and cumulative impacts of change and transformation on settings must be monitored and managed, because incremental as well as rapid change can substantially or irretrievably affect the authentic contribution that setting makes to significance. That is precisely the concern raised by Pylons East Anglia. The project's length, the number of pylons, and the repeated punctuation of the skyline and encroachment on the wider countryside mean that cumulative harm may arise not only from the effect of one structure on one asset, but from the repeated alteration of the wider historic environment over distance, changing the rural context into an infrastructure corridor. This is the kind of extensive and recurring change that international guidance recognises as capable of causing harm to setting even where any individual component is assessed as limited in isolation. The more recent UNESCO/ICCROM/ICOMOS/IUCN Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context also supports that approach and is relevant even beyond World Heritage Sites. UNESCO states that the 2022 guidance can be used for all types of heritage places with proposed development, and	**6.17 Environmental Statement Chapter 17 - Cumulative Effects [APP-281]**. The Applicant has also explained that the assessment has been undertaken on an asset-by-asset basis, as required by the National Planning Policy Framework and NPS EN-1, with the effect on the significance of each heritage asset identified individually. The overall position, including the fact that multiple assets are affected, is then taken into account as part of the planning balance. Therefore, the methodology applied already considers setting, including wider contextual relationships where relevant, and cumulative effects have been assessed (**6.17.1 Environmental Statement Chapter 17 - Cumulative Effects - Response Update [REP4-163]**) proportionately through the Environmental Impact Assessment. Accordingly, the Applicant considers that cumulative effects on the historic environment, including landscape-scale change, have been appropriately assessed and no further assessment is required.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			Historic England explains that it represents the most up-to-date reference for impact assessment in this field and is capable of informing assessment within existing national processes, including EIA and standalone heritage assessments. Its relevance here relates to the need for impact assessments to identify risks and alternatives before decisions are made, and should not fail to capture wider or harder-to-detect effects. That is particularly important for long linear infrastructure, where harm may emerge through the aggregation of many interventions across a broad area rather than through a single dramatic effect in one location. UNESCO has specifically highlighted the need for impact assessment tools that address such pressures and has recognised the importance of assessing cumulative impacts in relation to large-scale development around heritage places. This concern is reinforced by the earlier ICOMOS Heritage Impact Assessment guidance, which warned that standard EIA-style approaches may be inadequate if they treat heritage as a set of separate receptors without sufficiently assessing the place as a whole and the relationships between its attributes. That guidance expressly observed that, in such circumstances, cumulative impacts and incremental adverse changes may more easily pass undetected. Applied to Norwich to Tilbury, the implication is clear. A methodology that considers heritage assets in a piecemeal way, or which scopes out assets without fully examining how the broad sweep of overhead line infrastructure alters wider rural context, risks understating the true effect of the scheme. For a project of this scale, the cumulative heritage effect lies not merely in isolated points of intervisibility between each heritage asset and the project, but in the repeated and extensive industrial change to the landscape in which heritage assets are experienced and understood. Accordingly, the ExA is invited to treat the ICOMOS material as persuasive support for a significance-led and landscape-aware approach to setting, one that properly addresses cumulative harm arising from the extensive distribution, scale and repeated visibility of the pylons proposed as part of the Norwich to Tilbury project. That guidance supports the proposition that, for major linear infrastructure of this kind, conclusions on setting and significance are not robust unless they expressly address and provide an understanding of the consequences of incremental and cumulative landscape change over the route as a whole.	

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
HE 2.13	All local authorities	Updated version of the outline AMS/ outline WSI The ExA is aware that, as referenced by the applicant in [REP4-298] an updated version of the outline AMS/ outline WSI [APP-328] is due to be submitted at deadline 5. However, the applicant has indicated that this updated document would be shared with the local authorities for review at deadline 4. Please provide any initial views (and without prejudice to any formal comments you may wish to make on the submitted version at deadline 6) on the updated version of the outline AMS/ outline WSI that you might have.	**Basildon Borough Council** **Brentwood Borough Council** **Chelmsford City Council** **Colchester City Council** **Essex County Council** **Tendring District Council** Comments from ECC on the revised OAMS/OWSI have been provided directly to the Applicant (as requested) to enable them to make the required changes before the document is submitted at deadline 6. A main point of disagreement is with the sudden inclusion of mitigation areas within the revised OWSI. The agreement of mitigation areas cannot be concluded until full reporting has been completed on all evaluation areas and the full reports reviewed by the local authority. This is not the case for many of the sites that have been listed as requiring mitigation and only interim reports are available to review, this is not sufficient evidence on which to determine mitigation. Details of archaeological mitigation areas should be provided post consent in the Detailed Written Schemes of Investigations and agreed with the local planning authority and Historic England where relevant. It was requested that the areas that remain to be evaluated are clearly illustrated within the OWSI as a figure. Figure 1 includes the locations of completed geophysical survey and archaeological trial trenching along the whole route. Figure 1 was requested to identify the location of the geophysical and archaeological trial trenching areas that need to be completed in order to provide a comprehensive evaluation of the areas where there may be impact on archaeological remains. An indicative trial trench plan should have been included, and it should also indicate areas where geoarchaeological evaluation may be required to complete the geoarchaeological and paleoenvironmental assessment of the scheme. Previous comments from ECC have not been fully addressed on the sections covering geoarchaeological and paleoenvironmental assessment: 5.3.22 Geoarchaeological and palaeolenvironmental assessment. This section fails to make it clear if there is potential for any other areas of the route that have not undergone GI monitoring to have an impact on geoarchaeological or paleoenvironmental deposits. This will not just be restricted to river valleys. The GI monitoring	Comments from ECC were received in advance of Deadline 5 and were addressed in the updated version of **7.5 Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and Outline Written Scheme of Investigation [REP5-161]** submitted at Deadline 5. Where the Applicant has a response besides the updated document this is provided below. Since Deadline 5 ECC has provided a small number of additional comments on **[REP5-161]** and these will be addressed, with the intention to agree the final updates to the document with ECC prior to Deadline 7. Regarding mitgation areas, references to these in Appendix B and Figure 2 of **[REP5-161]** have been retained, but the document has been edited to reflect the mitigation areas are as proposed by the Applicant and are indicative at this time. The Applicant wishes to provide information to the LPAs on progress with consideration of mitigation in the priority areas to enable detailed conversations to be held and demonstrate that mitigation is being considered and that there is a mechanism in place to identify areas where it will be applied. It is not the Applicant's intention to bypass the LPAs; the Applicant fully expects their input into finalising the indicative mitigation areas and Detailed Written Schemes of Investigation. The Applicant has provided further assessment reports for the priority areas in Essex for their review and will continue to do so as they are completed. Regarding Figure 1, the Applicant believes Figure 1 illustrates clearly where the Phase 2 geophysics has and has not been completed. It also clearly illustrates that none of the Phase 2 trenching has begun yet. Figure 1 is not of a scale suitable to show trench plans either for Phase 1 (Priority) nor Phase 2. The Phase 1 Priority trench plans can be found in the Archaeological Contractor's interim reports and, where completed, the assessment reports **6.11.A5 Environmental Statement Appendix 11.5 - Trial Trenching Results Report [AS-078 and APP-213]**. The Phase 2 trench plans are currently with the LPAs for review. The locations for further geoarchaeological and palaeoenvironmental evaluation are in development and will be defined in the appropriate Detailed Written Schemes of Investigation.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			(Appendix 11.6) covered all river valleys and an area of Tilbury in its assessment. However, Tendring and Colchester also contain sediments of high geoarchaeological potential. Tendring contains former Thames terrace sediments which could include Palaeolithic archaeological remains and Pleistocene floral and faunal remains of high significance due to age and rarity. In Braintree District lacustrine sediments of high geoarchaeological potential are recorded near Kelvedon/Feering. Similar deposits recorded at Marks Tey in Colchester have been identified as having high potential for containing palaeolenvironmental information. In Kelvedon these deposits have been recorded at depths of 1.2m which means they may be impacted by pylon bases. The sections covering geoarchaeological assessment still lack clear understanding of what will actually be carried out as part of the geoarchaeological assessment. A clear statement on what further evaluation will take place is required including evaluation in areas of impact that have not yet been assessed. At present the only method proposed for mitigation of geoarchaeological and palaeolenvironmental remains are boreholes. It is possible that there may be more appropriate mitigation strategies, such as test pits or trenches, specifically in areas where early prehistoric remains may also be present.	
			Suffolk County Council SCC (Archaeological Service) has provided its comments on these in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 to this document.	The Applicant acknowledges the comments regarding the Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and Outline Written Scheme of Investigation. Comments from SCC were received in advance of Deadline 5 and were addressed in the updated version of **7.5 Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and Outline Written Scheme of Investigation [REP5-161]** submitted at Deadline 5.
			Thurrock Council The Council has reviewed the updated Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy (AMS) and Outline Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) submitted by the Applicant and notes that comments have been provided to the Applicant to enable amendments to be made prior to Deadline The Council remains concerned by the inclusion of archaeological mitigation areas within the revised Outline WSI at this stage. The Council considers that agreement of mitigation areas should be informed by completion of	Please see response to Essex County Council above.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			archaeological evaluation works and review of the associated reporting. For a number of locations, only interim information is currently available, and the evidence base is therefore insufficient to support agreement of mitigation requirements. The Council considers the details of archaeological mitigation should be secured through the Detailed Written Schemes of Investigation and agreed with the relevant local planning authority and Historic England where appropriate. The Council has also requested that the remaining areas requiring geophysical survey and archaeological trial trenching are clearly identified within the Outline WSI, together with indicative plans showing locations where further archaeological evaluation may be required. The Council notes previous comments relating to geoarchaeological and paleoenvironmental assessment have not yet been fully addressed and therefore considers that further work remains necessary before the archaeological mitigation strategy can be finalised.	
			Norfolk County Council There have been many drafts of the AMS/OSWI. NCC have provided comments on the applicant, which have been taken up. Suffolk CC, Essex CC and Historic England have been taking the lead due to specific impacts on specific parts of the scheme in their areas. There is confidence from all parties that a final version of the AMS/OSWI can be agreed.	The Applicant notes this response.

8. Health and wellbeing

Table 8.1 Health and wellbeing

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
HW 2.1	The Applicant	Communication Strategy In your response to **ExQ1 HW1.9 [REP3-074]** in relation to Colchester City Council's Local Impact Report (point 5 – a robust health and wellbeing monitoring framework with enforceable commitments) amongst other matters you state: "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". The suggestions put forward would appear to be applicable across the range of points raised on this issue by a number of local authorities. However, there are no commitments included in the outline **CoCP [REP4-164]** or commentary related to such matters in its **Appendix E [REP4-168]**. The ExA are of the view that appropriate commitments in the outline CoCP or commentary in Appendix E to set out such approaches would be necessary to bring the suggestions into effect and ensure there were appropriate enforceable commitments in the DCO documentation. The applicant is asked to update either the outline CoCP or appendix E to include suitable wording to bring into effect your suggested actions. If not explain why not.	**Suffolk County Council** SCC (Public Health) welcomes the ExA's recognition of the importance of monitoring health and wellbeing impacts, and its suggestion that appropriate commitments should be secured within the CoCP. SCC has consistently emphasised throughout the examination that there is a lack of a clearly defined mechanism to monitor the projects impacts on health and wellbeing. Monitoring is an important component of mitigation in its own right. Particularly in the context of a large scale and prolonged construction programme where impacts on communities may evolve over time and may not be fully predictable at the point of assessment. As set out in SCCs previous submissions, including [RR-3520], health and wellbeing projects associated with NSIPs are often influenced by factors such as uncertainty, perceived loss of control, and cumulative pressures, and therefore require a responsive and iterative approach rather than a fixed set of mitigation measures. This is particularly important in Suffolk, where multiple NSIPs are either ongoing or anticipated, increasing the risk of cumulative and interacting projects on affected communities. SCC considers that the CoCP should include a commitment to the development and implementation of a Health and Wellbeing Monitoring Framework, to be secured prior to the commencement of construction and maintained throughout the construction phase. The framework should establish an appropriate baseline and enable the detection of change over time, drawing on a combination of quantitative indicators and qualitative community feedback. This should include as a minimum, the use of existing population level data alongside locally specific primary data collection to understand lived experience, including factors such as stress, sleep disturbance, perceived control and trust in the project. It is suggested that monitoring should not be limited to periodic reporting, but should form part of an adaptive management approach, whereby findings are reviewed at defined intervals and used to inform the refinement of mitigation measures. This should include clearly defined	We acknowledge SCC's point that health and wellbeing projects associated with NSIPs are often influenced by factors such as uncertainty, perceived loss of control, and cumulative pressures. These impact areas have been identified and assessed in **6.10 Environmental Chapter 10 – Health and Wellbeing [Revision B]** and in **6.17 Environmental Chapter 17 – Cumulative Effects [APP-281]** and **6.17.1 Environmental Statement Chapter 17 - Cumulative Effects - Response Update [REP4-163]**. SCC states that '*a responsive and iterative approach rather than a fixed set of mitigation measures*' should be developed in order to ensure that *'mitigation remains responsive to real world impacts, rather than being fixed at the point of consent'*. In response to stakeholder comments, the Applicant has provided greater certainty with respect to aspects such as community liaison and communication during the pre-commencement and construction phases through the inclusion of commitments relating to preparation of a detailed Communications Strategy and a comprehensive complaints procedure in **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]**. Although secured ('fixed') within **3.1 Draft DCO [Revision F]**, there does remain an element of flexibility in terms of how these documents will be developed and the situations they may be required to adapt to. As stated in previous responses, the Applicant does not consider there to be a need for the development and implementation of a Health and Wellbeing Monitoring Framework beyond, at this stage, those aspects relating to communication and complaints procedures. As previously stated, this is because no significant health and wellbeing impacts have been identified in **6.10 Environmental Statement Chapter 10 – Health and Wellbeing [Revision B]**. The Applicant understands SCC's concern about aligning approaches with those of other projects operating within overlapping geographic areas or timeframes, particularly in relation to the identification of cumulative or interacting effects and reducing duplication of engagement activity. This is not

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			reporting and governance arrangements, with regular review points during construction and a mechanism for escalation where monitoring indicates deteriorating wellbeing outcomes or disproportionate impacts on particular communities or groups. The purpose of such an approach is to ensure that mitigation remains responsive to real world impacts, rather than being fixed at the point of consent. Given the likelihood of cumulative impacts arising from multiple NSIPs within Suffolk, SCC also considers it important that the CoCP includes a commitment to align, where practicable, monitoring approaches with those of other projects operating within overlapping geographic areas or timeframes. This would support the identification of cumulative or interacting effects, reduce duplication of engagement activity, and minimise consultation fatigue for affected communities, whilst improving transparency and consistency in reporting. Governance arrangements should include a mechanism for joint review of monitoring outputs with the relevant	practicable for a variety of reasons, including evolving construction programmes, the range of organisations involved and project-specific requirements. Additional measures required to mitigate cumulative effects have been identified as appropriate in **6.17 Environmental Chapter 17 – Cumulative Effects [APP-281]** and **6.17.1 Environmental Statement Chapter 17 - Cumulative Effects - Response Update [REP4-163]**.

9. Land use and soils green infrastructure

Table 9.1 Land use and soils green infrastructure

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
LUS 2.2	The applicant	Green Belt - 1 In response to LUS1.10 in [REP3-074] you refer to paragraph 3.9.40 of the Yorkshire Green project report (EN020024) to justify that pylons and lines are engineering works. However, you only quote the first sentence and do not reference the second sentence of that paragraph which goes on to state: "In order to benefit from the exception under NPPF para 150, development must also preserve the openness of the Green Belt and not conflict with its purposes". Whilst the ExA for that NSIP identified the works as engineering operations, they did not accept that they benefitted from the exception in paragraph 150 of the NPPF, and indeed in subsequent paragraphs concluded there would be harm to openness and the purposes of the greenbelt and that the exclusion did not apply. The local authorities maintain their position that these works would be inappropriate development, whilst you maintain your position that even if concluded that they are inappropriate very special circumstances exist to outweigh any harm. This is a similar position as was arrived at in Yorkshire Green and National Grid in its final position statement, as recorded at paragraph 3.9.39 of Yorkshire Green Report which stated: "(g)iven the parties agree that elements of the development in the Green Belt would be inappropriate, albeit for differing reasons, National Grid is content for the ExA and the Secretary of State to proceed on the basis that all new development forming part of the Project in the Green Belt is inappropriate, without needing to reach any view as to why that is the case". The applicant is asked whether it is in a position to reach a similar conclusion and provide this to the examination. If not please explain your reasoning.	**Chelmsford City Council** CCC maintains its position regarding inappropriateness as set out in its LIR, REP1 – 153, response to ExQ1 REP3 – 075, with detailed reference contained within CCC's response to ISH2 hearings, REP4 – 326.	The Applicant notes this feedback from Chelmsford City Council. The Applicant's position on Green Belt is set out in response to ExQ2 LUS 2.2 in **8.9.2 Applicant's Responses to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]**.
LUS 2.3	Thurrock Council	Green Belt - 2 In the applicant's response to Local Impact Reports [REP2-030], at paragraphs 3.14.23 - 3.14.25 and in its response to ExQ1 LUS1.13 [REP3-074] it argues that the land associated with the Tilbury North	**Thurrock Council** The identification of Grey Belt land is a matter for the local planning authority and should be undertaken in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2025 and associated Planning Practice Guidance. 2.15.2 The Council is currently	The Applicant notes this feedback from Thurrock Council. The Applicant has no further comment to add having previously stated its view of the Tilbury North Substation potential status as Grey Belt within **8.8.2 Applicant's Comments on Local Impact Reports [REP2-030]**, at

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
		Substation and the two associated cable sealing end compounds are Grey Belt land. Thurrock Council is asked to comment and confirm whether you consider the land to be Grey Belt, explaining your reasoning.	preparing a Green Belt Assessment as part of the evidence base supporting the emerging Thurrock Local Plan. However, this work does not form part of the Council's adopted evidence base. 2.15.3 Under the adopted Development Plan, the land remains designated as Green Belt. Accordingly, the Council does not agree that the land should presently be treated as Grey Belt land for the purposes of the examination. Any future change to the status of the land would be subject to the statutory plan making process and consideration of supporting evidence published through the emerging Local Plan process.	paragraphs 3.14.23 - 3.14.25 and in its response to ExQ1 LUS1.13 in **8.9.1 Applicant's Responses to First Written Questions [REP3-074]**.
LUS 2.4	The applicant All local authorities	Green Belt - 3 With reference to paragraph 5.11.38 of NPS-EN1 can the applicant and local authorities identify any Local Green Spaces that have been designated in Local Plans that would enjoy the same protection as Green Belt through which the proposed development would pass, and confirm whether these areas should be given the same protection as green belt in the consideration of this application. If not please explain your reasoning.	**Braintree District Council** The Council do not have any land which enjoys the same protection as Green Belt through which the proposed development would pass.	The Applicant notes this response and that the conclusion accords with its own assessment.
			Brentwood Borough Council (BBC) BBC can confirm that there are no Local Green Spaces enjoying the same protection as Green Belt through which the proposed development would pass.	The Applicant notes this response.
			Chelmsford City Council The route does not cross through any areas of Local Green Space which benefit from the same protection as Green Belt, as defined in paragraph 5.11.38 of NPS-EN1.	The Applicant notes this response and that the conclusion accords with its own assessment.
			Colchester City Council The following Local Green Spaces are designated in neighbourhood plans, with justification included in the relevant neighbourhood plan: • Lorkin Daniell Field, West Bergholt Neighbourhood Plan • Poors Land, West Bergholt Neighbourhood Plan • Marks Tey Parish Council Recreation Ground, Marks Tey Neighbourhood Plan • Colne Park Estate Play Area and Recreation Ground, Marks Tey Neighbourhood Plan • Pond and seating area by Little Tey Church, Marks Tey Neighbourhood Plan The proposed development does not appear to directly pass through these sites, however.	The Applicant notes this response and that the conclusion accords with its own assessment.
			Tendring District Council (TDC) TDC confirms that, based on its adopted Local Plan and the emerging Local Plan at the time of writing,	The Applicant notes this response.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			there are no designated Local Green Spaces, Local Nature Reserves, Strategic Green Gaps or Safeguarded Open Spaces within the administrative area of TDC that would be directly intersected by the proposed development. This position is made on the basis of currently adopted and draft policy designations only and should not be interpreted as an absence of locally valued green infrastructure, informal open space, or land of environmental or community importance that may nonetheless be affected by the Proposed Development, as previously set out by TDC in its LIR and other relevant submissions.	
			Suffolk County Council The development passes through the plan areas of the following made Neighbourhood Plans: i. East Bergholt ii. Copdock and Washbrook iii. Sproughton iv. Stowupland v. Mendlesham vi. Diss and District All of these Neighbourhood Plans include locally designated Local Green Spaces, which should be a orded the same protection as Green Belt, in accordance with NPS EN-1 and NPPF paragraphs 108, 153, 154 and 155. However, SCC (Planning) and BMSDC confirm that the development does not pass through any of the designated spaces.	The Applicant notes this response and that the conclusion accords with its own assessment.
			Thurrock Council The Council notes that the adopted Development Plan for Thurrock does not include any designated Local Green Spaces. 2.16.2 The emerging Thurrock Local Plan is at an advanced stage of preparation and is expected to be published in accordance with the Council's Local Development Scheme. However, no designated Local Green Spaces currently form part of the adopted Development Plan.	The Applicant notes this response.

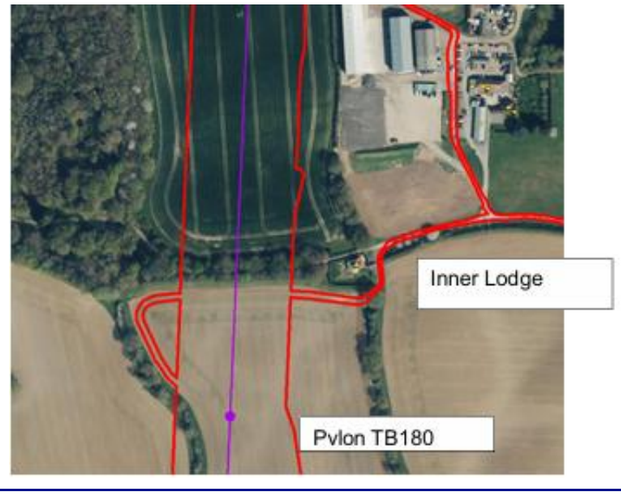
10. Landscape and visual

Table 10.1 Landscape and visual

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
LV 2.4	The applicant Suffolk County Council Essex County Council Babergh District Council Tendring District Council Dedham Vale National Landscape and Stour Valley Partnership	Link pillars 3 The ExA are considering how the siting and detailed design of the link pillars and compounds are secured and approved by the relevant discharging authority, bearing in mind requirement 12 relates only to buildings. a) The applicant is asked to provide an appropriate form of wording in the draft DCO and / or control documents. This should include (but not limited to) siting, colour, appearance, compound size, surface treatment, fencing appearance and dimensions, and maintenance access. b) Do the relevant discharging authorities have any views on how detailed design matters should be controlled and discharged?	**Dedham Vale National Landscape and Stour Valley Partnership** In response to the Examining Authority's written questions 2 the Dedham Vale National Landscape and Stour Valley Partnership wish to make the following comment to question LV 2.4. The Partnership considers that when undertaking detailed design of link pillars and compounds sufficient weight should be given to National Landscape guidance relating to use of colour in design and the National Landscape lighting guide-attached to this submission *[DVNL&SVP include 'Guidance on the selection and use of colour in development ']*	Requirement 12 of the draft DCO (**3.1 Draft DCO [Revision F]**) now incorporates provisions to define permanent buildings and link pillars. In this requirement, the design details of link pillars required to be approved comprise the following: • Colour of control cabinet • Ground surface treatment • Fencing appearance.
			Essex County Council **Suffolk County Council** **Colchester City Council** **Tendring District Council** [The Council] of the link pillars includes, but is not limited to, siting, colour, appearance, compound size, surface consider that the detailed design matters for the link pillars should be submitted to and approved by the relevant discharging authority, secured by a Requirement (as drafted below): 12A. Design of link pillars 1. No stage of the authorised development may commence until the design details of the link pillars have been submitted to and approved by the relevant planning authority. In this requirement, the design details treatment, fencing appearance and dimensions, and maintenance access details. 1) The authorised development must be carried out in accordance with the approved design details of the link pillars. [The Council] further consider that the structures should be of a receding colour which blends with the environment and that screen planting is required to embed the structures and associated fencing into the surroundings and to reduce the adverse visual effects.	Requirement 12 of the draft DCO (**3.1 Draft DCO [Revision F]**) has been amended in general accordance with the suggested drafting. Requirement 12 of the draft DCO (**3.1 Draft DCO [Revision F]**) now incorporates provisions to define permanent buildings and link pillars. In this requirement, the design details of link pillars required to be approved comprise the following: • Colour of control cabinet • Ground surface treatment • Fencing appearance.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
LV 2.13	The Applicant	Residential Visual Amenity Assessment – 2 In the updated RVAA [REP4-148] Table A13.4.3, the following properties have been amended as not triggering Stage 4 assessment, although they have been included in the Stage 4 assessment, as per the original RVAA [APP-233]. • F5 (Albion House) • F13 (Larks Lodge and Annexe) • F32 (Inner Lodge) In addition, F14 (Rievers) has been noted in Table A13.4.3 as not triggering Stage 4 assessment, whereas in the original RVAA [APP-233] it did trigger Stage 4, although it was not taken forward to this stage assessment. Explain these discrepancies and update the document.	CCC requests clarity on this matter. F5 – Albion House The aerial photograph shows the siting of Albion House in relation to pylon TB138. CCC consider that the pylon (TB138 as shown in purple) would be visible from both ground and upper storey elevations due to its height. As shown on the below photograph, the landscape surrounding Albion House and Chatham Hall bungalow is open, with limited landscape screening, meaning that visibility would be high, with limited filtering from screening. CCC maintains a stage 4 assessment should be undertaken. Photograph of open fields to north west of Chatham Hall Lane with Albion House to SE and Chatham Hall to NW, Pylon TB138 would be located centrally within these fields. CCC disagrees that the Project "would not have such an unpleasant, overwhelming or unavoidable effect on the views that the effect on visual amenity would be unacceptable" and considers that the effects experienced by affected receptors would not be perceived to be acceptable.	F5 – Albion House and F32 – Inner Lodge As presented in the methodology (paragraph 13.2.22) of **6.13.A4 Environmental Statement Appendix 13.4 - Residential Visual Amenity Assessment Part 1 [REP5-126]** only a '*high magnitude of effect would trigger the more detailed Step 4 of the RVAA*'. This accords with paragraph 5.3 of Landscape Institute Guidance Note (LI TGN) 2/19 Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA). Table A13.4.3 of **6.13.A4 Environmental Statement Appendix 13.4 - Residential Visual Amenity Assessment Part 1 [REP5-126]** concludes that the changes to the residential visual amenity experienced at properties F5 (Albion House) and F32 (Inner Lodge) as a result of the Project (along its centre line or when taken to its proposed Limits of Deviation) would not be of sufficient extent to be classified as a 'high magnitude of effect'. This was reasoned following a consideration, in the round, that the Project: would not be the key defining feature of views experienced from the properties; would be sufficiently far away from the properties; and would be filtered in views from the properties by existing vegetative screening. F13 – Windmill House The Applicant confirmed at Deadline 3 through **8.11 Approach to Scenarios [REP3-063]** (now superseded by **[REP5-212] Revision D**) the decision to proceed with Scenario B, with two standard height pylons to the south of the River Chelmer, as opposed to the three low height pylons originally proposed. This was communicated to CCC, alongside the Applicant's intention to secure this decision through updated Works Plans, planned to be submitted into the examination on or before Deadline 6. Subsequent to this, at Deadline 5 the Applicant submitted updated **2.3 Works Plans - Section F [REP5-019 Revision C]** and has provided the updated grid reference and GIS file for TB141 to CCC. As presented in Table A13.4.57 of **6.13.A4 Environmental Statement Appendix 13.4 - Residential Visual Amenity Assessment Part 1 [REP5-126]**, a Step 4 assessment has been carried out on property F10 Windmill House (mistakenly referenced as property F13 in the Response from Chelmsford City Council). This was prepared in line

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			F13 – Windmill House The aerial photograph shows the siting of Windmill House in relation to pylon TB141. The Applicant has not provided CCC with an accurate GIS file showing the revised placement of pylon TB141. Although the movement of TB141 is welcomed in principle on amenity grounds, CCC maintain its position that a 45 metre high pylon would be visible from both ground and upper storey elevations due to its height. As shown on the following photographs, the landscape surrounding Windmill House is open, with limited landscape screening, meaning that visibility would be high, with limited filtering from screening. The pylons would be visible within the streetscene and from views along the CCC Chelmsford Road. CCC maintains a stage 4 assessment should be undertaken. 	with Landscape Institute Guidance Note (LI TGN) 2/19 Residential Visual Amenity Assessment. This assessment concludes that the effect on visual amenity (whilst large in magnitude) would not bring about such an overbearing and dominant impact on the views from the property that the 'residential visual amenity threshold' would be breached. This is based on the tests set out in paragraph 13.2.26 of **6.13.A4 Environmental Statement Appendix 13.4 - Residential Visual Amenity Assessment Part 1 [REP5-126]**, whereby the Project would: not block the only available view from the property, not be overwhelming in views in all directions from the property, not be unpleasantly encroaching, and not be inescapably dominant in views from the property.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			View South West along Chelmsford Road towards pylon TB141. View of open fields south west of Windmill House CCC disagrees that the Project "would not have such an unpleasant, overwhelming or unavoidable effect on the views that the effect on visual amenity would be unacceptable" and considers that the effects experienced by affected receptors would not be perceived to be acceptable. The pylons as permanent, motionless industrial features would not be perceived by surrounding receptors to be visually permeable structures, and would be noticeable and prominent in the undeveloped, open views from Windmill House. F32 Inner Lodge  	

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			The aerial photograph shows the siting of Inner Lodge in relation to pylon TB180. As shown on the following photograph, the landscape is open with fields sloping downhill towards the valley. The fields are open with some bounding by trees and hedges with limited screening to pylon TB180. Open agricultural fields are bounded by trees and hedgerows, with limited landscape screening towards pylon TB180. CCC maintains a stage 4 assessment should be undertaken. View of the entrance to Cophold Hall facing west to river Vally and Inner Lodge CCC disagrees that the Project "would not have such an unpleasant, overwhelming or unavoidable effect on the views that the effect on visual amenity would be unacceptable" and considers that the effects experienced by affected receptors would not be perceived to be acceptable. The pylons as permanent, motionless industrial features would not be perceived by surrounding receptors to be visually permeable structures, and would be noticeable and prominent in the undeveloped, open views from Inner lodge.	
LV 2.14	The Applicant	Mitigation hierarchy The applicant's response to various first written questions and confirmed at ISH2 considers that low height pylons are a 'step up' from the standard lattice pylons in the mitigation hierarchy, despite their price being in the same cost range (ExQ1 HE1.4 [REP3-074]) because of the generally additional consequences of the broader cross-arms of the lower pylons [REP4-302]. Provide further information on the differences between the two types of pylon and what differentiates them in the mitigation hierarchy.	**Chelmsford City Council** CCC considers that whilst the low height pylons at the Great Waltham/Little Waltham gap would reduce the impacts on views from Langleys and its immediate setting, the wider stance and heavier structure of the low height pylons means that they have a greater visual presence and therefore have an equal or greater impact in other respects. CCC maintains its position that the mitigation proposed for the Walthams, even with the latest amendment, is inadequate.	The Applicant disagrees with CCC's position which does not apppear to reflect the specific circumstances of this section where height is important to respond to the heritage effects. The Applicant's position is as set out in response to question HE 2.2.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
		A graphical representation of the applicant's view of the mitigation hierarchy would also be useful in this respect.		
LV 2.16	All local authorities	Mitigation and compensation - 1 Point 8.2e [REP4-302] states that the applicant considers it has provided sufficient mitigation and that the residual impacts are vastly and substantially outweighed by the public benefits of the proposed development, and that consequently further compensation for landscape and visual effects would be disproportionate. The local authorities, particularly Suffolk County Council, are asked to provide views on this statement, referring to the Bramford to Twinstead examination report where relevant. Any other IP may also respond if they wish.	**Norfolk County Council** NCC strongly disagrees with the applicant about the requirement for additional compensation and takes issue with the applicant's characterisation of our position. Contrary to the applicant's written summary of oral submissions to ISH2, it is not the case that Norfolk County Council considers that all residual impacts after mitigation should be fully compensated. As highlighted in our own post-hearing submission [REP4-332], there is a need for "additional compensation and landscape led restoration projects within the Waveney Valley" [emphasis added]. Paragraph 4.2.25. Norfolk County Council's position is also entirely consistent with the Bramford to Twinstead examination report. NCC is not asking for "automatic" compensation but instead seeking compensation based on a proper understanding of the policy position and factual context that arises in the Waveney Valley	The Applicant's position in relation to the location-specific compensatory measures was set out in **8.4.12.2 Response to ISH2 Action Point 27 – Masterplans [REP5-199]** and **8.5.12 Applicant's Written Summary of Oral Submissions and Response to Action Points for Issue Specific Hearing 4 [Revision A].** The Applicant considers that the Project already incorporates appropriate mitigation, compensatory, enhancement and furtherance measures. The Applicant has, however, welcomed the positive engagement that has taken place with Norfolk County Council on this matter as detailed in our response to ExQ2 LV 2.17 b) in **8.9.2 Applicant's Responses to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]** and will continue to engage with the Council.
			Braintree District Council **Chelmsford City Council** **Colchester City Council** **Essex County Council** **Brentwood Borough Council** **Tendring District Council** While acknowledging the Bramford to Twinstead examination report, [the Council] would refer to the 2024 version of NPS EN-1, which is the version against which this project falls to be assessed, which makes clear that Applicants for CNP infrastructure should "demonstrate that all residual impacts are those that cannot be avoided, reduced or mitigated" and that they should "set out how residual impacts will be compensated for as far as possible" (Paragraph 4.2.11-12). That is reinforced by Paragraph 4.3.4 which again requires the Applicant to "show how any likely significant negative effects would be avoided, reduced, mitigated or compensated for". The same points are reiterated in paragraph 2.1.6 of EN-5. It is considered therefore that compensation is an inherent part of the mitigation hierarchy which needs to be applied to the Project. The Council acknowledges that Paragraph 4.2.25 of the 2025 version of EN-1 (which is a material	The Applicant's position in relation to the location-specific compensatory measures was set out in **8.4.12.2 Response to ISH2 Action Point 27 – Masterplans [REP5-199]**. The Applicant has, however, welcomed the positive engagement that has taken place with some Local Planning Authorities on this matter as detailed in our response to ExQ2 LV 2.17 b) in **8.9.2 Applicant's Responses to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]**. The Applicant's current position in relation to the discussions on provsion of landscape compensation was set out at ISH4 (agenda item 5.2) and is also set out in **8.5.12 Applicant's Written Summary of Oral Submissions and Response to Action Points for Issue Specific Hearing 4 [Revision A].** Notwithstanding the Applicant's position engagement with ECC is continuing in relation to this matter. .

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			consideration) states that "compensation, by definition, does not reduce an adverse effect resulting from a development", but it does still go on to confirm that "applicants should set out how residual impacts will be compensated for as far as possible", so there is no significant shift from the position under the 2024 version of EN-1. It is accepted that the presence of the projects overhead powerlines cannot be fully mitigated, and there will be a residual impact (which will fall to be weighed in the overall planning balance against the public benefits of the project). However, as set out in Paragraph 4.10.43 of ECC's Local Impact Report [REP1-161], a case exists for a strategic landscape compensation package to offset harm as far as possible in line with the mitigation hierarchy consistent with NPS-EN1. To this end, ECC on behalf of Essex authorities, have been in discussion with the Applicant looking at ways in which this landscape and visual compensation could be linked to the adopted Local Nature Recovery Strategy and delivered at a strategic level in addition to any replacement or mitigation planting. This approach is the subject of ongoing discussions with the Applicant and progress will be reflected in the Council's Statement of Common Ground. *[Applicant note: whilst otherwise the same response, Colchester refer to a draft Section 106 agreement, rather than SoCG]*	
			Chelmsford City Council CCC refers to LIR REP1 – 153, response to ExQ1 REP 3 – 075 and response to ISH2 hearings, REP4 – 326.and respectively disagrees with the Applicants position. CCC notes that on other proposals that have more acceptable impacts such as the Longfield Solar Farm DCO, compensation has been provided in the form of a Skills and Benefit Fund and wider Community Fund, both of which have been secured by an appropriate S106 Agreement, with additional compensatory landscaping and screening provided as standard. In planning terms, the Norwich to Tilbury Project is significantly more harmful than the Longfield Solar Farm proposal. Compensation was provided in line with Government guidance and effects fully mitigated. The Applicant states that there "can be no necessary requirement for full compensation of all inevitable residual harms and impacts. ". Whilst CCC would welcome full	The Applicant notes the additional comments provided by Chelmsford City Council in relation to the Skills and Benefit Fund and wider Community Fund provided by Longfield Solar Farm. In relation to skills and employment, the Applicant submitted **8.13 Outline Employment and Skills Plan [REP5-215]** at Deadline 5. The commitment to the preparation and submission of a final Employment and Skills Plan, and to carrying out the Project in accordance with the Plan, is secured through a requirement in **3.1 Draft DCO [Revision F]**. In terms of community benefits, please see Applicant's response to community benefit funding in **8.30 Response to Rule 17 Letter received 30 June 2026** submitted at Deadline 6.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			compensation of all residual harms and impacts, CCC observes that the 'compensation' offered is very little to non existent across the Project.	If development consent is granted, the Project would deliver a Community Fund of approximately £30 million. This funding would only become available following consent and once construction has started. The Applicant would be delivering the fund in accordance with the Government's guidance for transmission infrastructure[6], which makes it clear that community funds are voluntary and policy-led (non-planning); sit outside the planning and consenting regime; and are not mitigation and are not used to justify or secure consent. The guidance sets out principles and expectations for community funds, but is not a statutory requirement, nor something that should be secured or conditioned through the consent process. On that basis, the Applicant does not consider that a s106 agreement is necessary or appropriate, or that there are any legal or consenting grounds to 'conjoin' the fund with the consented scheme.
			Thurrock Council The Council feel mitigation and compensation proposals are not clearly set out and have asked for clearer details on landscape proposals in relation to mitigation and compensation to be provided. 2.17.2 There is a quantity of vegetation to be removed along the route of the line and changes to the proposed ancient woodland compensation planting (required due to the Lower Thames Crossing DCO) due to the proposed substation. The mitigation and compensation for the landscape and visual effects should be clearly set out to understand if this is sufficient.	The Applicant has clarified the position in relation to the different mitigation, compensatory, enhancement/furtherance measures proposed in response to ExQ1 BIO 1.41 in **8.9.1 Applicant's Responses to First Written Questions [REP3-074]**. The Applicant has also met with Thurrock Council to discuss the Project during which further explanations of the measures proposed were provided and interactions with Lower Thames Crossing discussed. Where the Lower Thames Crossing's ecological compensation is permanently affected by the Project, alternative compensation sites have been provided. Natural England has accepted this approach, as detailed in matter 3.2.38 in **5.9.13 Draft Statement of Common Ground - Natural England [REP4-081]**. The Applicant would also wish to draw Thurrock Council's attention to updated **7.4 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan Appendix D – Outline Landscape Proposals [Revision C]** which provides details of the landscape proposals around Tilbury North Substation and CSE compounds.

[6] Department for Energy Security & Net Zero (2025) *Community Funds for Transmission Infrastructure: Guidance*

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			Suffolk County Council SCC (Landscape) and BMSDC disagree with the Applicant in this matter and considers that the project as it is currently presented falls short in its provision for landscape mitigation and compensation for host communities. The starting point is the guidance in paragraph 4.1.5 of EN 1 on how the Secretary of State should undertake the overall planning balance between the adverse impacts and the benefits of energy NSIPs. The second bullet point in that advice is clear that the potential adverse impacts should take into account measures proposed to avoid, reduce, mitigate, or compensate for adverse impacts, 'following the mitigation hierarchy'. The mitigation hierarchy is only 'followed' if all component parts of it are applied, including (critically in this context) the expectation in para 4.2.11 that 'Applicants must apply the mitigation hierarchy' and in para 4.2.12 that 'Applicants should set out how residual impacts will be compensated for as far as possible.' The Applicant has wrongly inferred from para 4.2.15 – 4.2.17 of EN-1 that because some 'residual impacts' are likely for any NSIP, so there is no need to consider compensating for those impacts, even where that is possible, and that the residual impacts are simply left to form part of the overall planning balance, to be weighed against need and any benefits. SCC considers that this is not the proper interpretation of EN-1. Para 4.2.15 (which addresses the CNP policy) is very clear that the policy on residual impacts only applies 'after the mitigation hierarchy has been applied'. A similar point is made in para 4.2.14, that the CNP policy is to be applied once the applicant has demonstrated that 'the requirements set out above have been met'. Those requirements include requirements in paras 4.2.11 and 4.2.12 of EN-1 (as above). Whilst compensation does not remove or reduce an impact (which is why it is at the bottom of the mitigation hierarchy), it is still a part of the mitigation hierarchy and should be provided 'as far as possible'. SCC remains of the view that meaningful compensatory/offsetting measures are indeed possible for the residual landscape impacts of the proposal. What the Applicant seeks to do, in effect, is to 'bypass' the requirement of the mitigation hierarchy to 'compensate, as far possible', and to simply push the unmitigatable (but potentially compensatable) residual impacts on to the final planning balance, where in most cases the CNP policy will ensure that	The Applicant responded to the points raised by SCC on policy terms in ISH4 and refers to **8.5.12 Applicant's Written Summary of Oral Submissions and Response to Action Points for Issue Specific Hearings 4 [Revision A]** submitted at Deadline 6. In relation to embedded mitigation and suggested amendments made by the Councils during the pre-application period, the Design Development Reports for the Project **[APP-358, APP-359 and APP-122]** provide an explanation for not only the main changes in route alignment, infrastructure siting and technology following consultations but also address the changes requested which did not lead to a design change. Responses to the Councils' requests are contained within these documents. Whilst the Applicant acknowledges that tree replanting cannot occur in some locations due to infrastructure constraints, the commitment of 3:1 replanting for individual trees and to 10% BNG with wider environmental and societal benefits, will ensure that the trees lost are replanted and compensated and there is no overall loss of biodiversity. The Councils' comments on the delivery mechanism for the trees is noted. Tree planting associated with the 3:1 commitment will be prioritised in the Order Limits which is a commitment made in **7.4 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan [Revision F]**. Following a review, offsite planting is now proposed to be secured by a requirement in **3.1 Draft DCO [Revision F**] which has been updated at Deadline 6. The Applicant has provided **8.28 Outline Offsite Planting Delivery Scheme [Revision A]** to provide further information on the offsite tree planting. The Applicant notes the Councils' comments regarding the planting proposals at Wenham CSE compound. The design provided in **7.4 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan - Appendix D: Outline Landscape Proposals [Revision C]** is indicative at this stage. The final landscape designs will be submitted to and approved by the relevant Local Planning Authorities as part of the final Landscape and Ecological Management Plan(s). The Applicant is however engaging with the Council on this matter. The Applicant's position in relation to the location-specific compensatory measures was set out in **8.4.12.2 Response to ISH2 Action Point 27 –**

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			they are outweighed by need for/benefit of the project. This approach would be to distort the mitigation hierarchy and make the provision of compensatory/offsetting measures not a question of considering what is realistically possible, given the particular residual impacts, but an optional extra that an applicant may choose to engage with or not, as it sees fit. The Councils do not consider that this is a proper application of the policy on the need to apply the mitigation hierarchy as set out in EN-1. The Councils agree that the project provides public benefits. However, the benefits are distributed over a much wider area, while the host communities, which will experience the long-term/ permanent significant residual adverse landscape and visual effects of the project will benefit no more than communities who will enjoy the benefits of the project without experiencing the harm. SCC has set out its comments on the findings of the Bramford to Twinstead ExA Report in [REP4-336] and above in response to GEN 2.2. In short, SCC does not say that 'all' residual impacts must be 'automatically' or 'fully' compensated for, and a case-by-case assessment is required of the extent to which compensation for the particular residual impacts is possible (including the proportionality of any compensation in that exercise). Embedded mitigation SCC and BMSDC consider that the adverse effects of the scheme could have been further reduced and/or in some areas avoided, if SCC's and BMSDC's change requests presented to the Applicant in the pre-application period had been taken on board. Replacement planting SCC and BMSDC consider that the Applicant's commitment to 3:1 tree replacement planting (as referred to in answer to GEN 2.2 above) to be essentially 'making good', as far as possible. Where full replacement planting is not achieved, BNG will be eroded. Replacement planting includes the replacement of each removed mature tree with three new trees. Compensatory planting As it will not be possible to plant all replacement trees in the locations they were removed from, new areas of planting will be required, some of which will be outside the DCO limits. Beyond the commitment to plant these trees, which is welcomed by SCC, there is currently no strategic delivery mechanism that	**Masterplans [REP5-199]** and **8.5.12 Applicant's Written Summary of Oral Submissions and Response to Action Points for Issue Specific Hearing 4 [Revision A]**. The Applicant has, however, welcomed the positive engagement that has taken place with Suffolk County Council and Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils on this matter as detailed in our response to ExQ2 LV 2.17 b) in **8.9.2 Applicant's Responses to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]**, and will continue these discussions as confirmed at ISH4.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			would maximise the potential benefits of the trees for landscape restoration and visual enhancement. Mitigative planting This is limited to planting around CSE compounds. In this regard, the Councils would welcome further engagement with the Applicant in order to achieve agreement on the outline proposals for Wenham CSEC, as expressed in the SoCG meeting on 2 June 2026. SCC is concerned that if the current proposals form part of the DCO then there will be insufficient room for improvement/changes/additions post-consent, as the detailed design would need to accord with the DCO- secured outline. The Council awaits explanation from the Applicant regarding their interpretation. The Councils are currently not content with the proposals at Wenham CSEC but considers that agreement could be achieved and that its change requests are reasonable and proportionate. Strategic landscape compensation and restoration SCC and BMSDC note the conclusions in the Bramford to Twinstead Examining Authority's Recommendation Report (paragraphs 3.9.196 to 3.9.197) with regards to landscape compensation. As stated in [REP3-085], neither NPS EN-1 nor SCC (Landscape) expect that all residual effects can be removed. However, SCC and BMSDC consider that for those residual eff ects, that cannot be removed, compensation is the last resort and needs to be applied, and that NPS EN-1 supports this. Compensation will not remove or mitigate the residual effects, as this is, by definition, not possible, but provide something different, for example landscape and visual enhancement, improved access to the countryside, better doorstep green spaces, etc., to make up for compensate for the residual effects. The Councils consider that landscape restoration should be considered along the entire length of the route, where significant residual effects are recorded (the area of influence), but efforts should be particularly focused around key areas (Waveney Valley, Mellis Common/ north of Gislingham, Gipping Valley, Bramford/Burstall substation area). The Councils welcome the current engagement with the Applicant in these matters, as detailed in answer to GEN 2.2 above.	

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
LV 2.18	The Applicant	Landscape Assessment of the Colne Valley In your representation [REP4-380] you indicate that a landscape assessment report, commissioned by residents of the Colne Valley, may be submitted at deadline 5, or later. The ExA appreciate that this is a time-consuming exercise but remind you that deadline 6 (07 July) would be the last deadline for submission of such a document in order to give the applicant and others time to respond at deadline 7 and for the ExA to take on board their comments. Please confirm when such documentation is likely to be submitted.	**Villages Against Pylons** *Submission of a Landscape and Visual Technical Note by Planscape*	Please see Appendix B for the Applicant's detailed response to the Planscape Landscape and Visual Technical Note.

11. Minerals and waste

Table 11.1 Minerals and waste

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
MW 2.1	Essex County Council Thurrock Council Suffolk County Council Norfolk County Council	Contaminated Ground Please confirm if you accept the applicant's assessment of contaminated ground risk as detailed in ES Chapter 9 **[APP-181]** and provide any comments, if applicable, on commitment GH10 in the outline **CoCP [REP4-163]**.	**Essex County Council** ECC considers that it is not clear if the historical landfill at Buckingham Hill Road, Linford, SS17 0PP has been considered. The site is in the joint ownership of Essex County Council and Thurrock Council and the landfill was permitted to accept Household, Commercial and Non-hazardous Industrial Waste from 1967 to 1991. The site also has a history of landfill gas migration and is still monitored. ECC notes that commitment GH10 suggests an appropriate methodology for further investigation of the site and mitigation if necessary	Buckingham Hill historical landfill has been identified within **6.9.A1 Environmental Statement Appendix 9.1 - Baseline Information and Preliminary Contamination Risk Assessment [APP-182]** as PSC H5 and has been assessed. The site has been assessed as having high potential for generating contamination but low risk in relation to the Project because Project infrastructure within the landfill boundary comprises only temporary access roads and scaffolding.
			Thurrock Council The Council considers that whilst the commitment to GH10 appears reasonable, the supporting technical information referred to within ES Chapter 9, including the Preliminary Risk Assessment appendices and associated figures, have not been available for review. Consequently, the Council is not in a position to confirm whether the Applicant's assessment of contaminated land risk is acceptable. The Council reserves its position pending review of the relevant supporting information and will provide further comments should additional evidence become available during the examination.	The Applicant notes that the following documents were submitted as of the DCO submission and are available in the Norwich to Tilbury Project Examination Library, published on the National Infrastructure Planning website: • **6.9 Environmental Statement Chapter 9 - Contaminated Land Geology and Hydrogeology [APP-181]** • **6.9.A1 Environmental Statement Appendix 9.1 - Baseline Information and Preliminary Contamination Risk Assessment [APP-182]** • **6.9.A2 Environmental Statement Appendix 9.2 - Qualitative Minerals Resource and Infrastructure Assessment [APP-183]** • **6.9.A3 Environmental Statement Appendix 9.3 - Groundwater Baseline and Qualitative Groundwater Risk Assessment [APP-184]** • **6.9.A4 Environmental Statement Appendix 9.4 - Hydrogeological Risk Assessment [APP-185]** • **6.9.F1 Environmental Statement Figure 9.1 - Superficial Geology [APP-186]** • **6.9.F2 Environmental Statement Figure 9.2 - Bedrock Geology [APP-187]** • **6.9.F3 Environmental Statement Figure 9.3 - Mineral Safeguarding Areas Mineral Consultation Areas and Minerals Infrastructure [APP-188]**

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
				• **6.9.F4 Environmental Statement Figure 9.4 - Geologically Designated Sites [REP4-122]** • **6.9.F5 Environmental Statement Figure 9.5 - Hydrogeology and Hydrogeological Receptors [APP-190]** • **6.9.F6 Environmental Statement Figure 9.6 - Sites with a Moderate or Above Risk Classification [APP-191].**
MW 2.2	The applicant Essex County Council Thurrock Council Suffolk County Council Norfolk County Council	Quarries and Minerals Plan Candidate Sites Please provide an update from ExQ1 on consideration of design and land use considerations in the vicinity of existing quarries and candidate sites.	**Essex County Council** ECC would make the following comments in respect of MW 1.2 – MW 1.7 from ExQ1: MW 1.2 - The MWPA accepts the Applicants evidence and has no further comment. MW 1.3 - The MWPA continues to welcome the acknowledgement of silica sand as being a nationally important resource and the additional work that has been carried out to minimise the impact upon Candidate Sites which have the potential to supply it. The MWPA continues to acknowledge that a Candidate Site designation currently carries little to no weight as part of any planning judgement in isolation. However, as a clearly defined area of land being actively promoted for mineral extraction, not only is the land mineral bearing, there is, without prejudice to any future Preferred Allocations in the emerging MLP, the potential that land allocated as Candidate Sites have a greater prospect of contributing to future mineral supply as they have demonstrable interest in being worked. In that sense, Candidate Sites carry the full weight of national policy protection as afforded by the NPPF (Paragraph 223c and 223d). That said, the MWPA accepts that very little additional weight can be attributed at the sub-national policy level, and such sites are not covered by any additional local-level safeguarding policy. As such, the MWPA maintains its position that whilst there is the requirement to ensure that impacts from the delivery of non-mineral development on finite resources are minimised, it is not appropriate for the MWPA to attempt to establish the primacy of Candidate Sites over or within the proposed route of the DCO. The MWPA therefore maintains its position that it is for site promoters and the Applicant to negotiate an appropriate way forward ahead of independent Examination. In previous correspondence, the MWPA noted that the Minerals Resource Assessment accompanying the planning application did not explicitly state that the Candidate Sites associated with extensions to Martells Quarry	**MW 1.3** - The Applicant provided a further response in relation to the Martells Minerals site in its response to ExQ2. Since ExQ1, the Applicant has further developed its alternative scenario to minimise the interactions with the minerals site. The Applicant has sought to position the pylons as far north as practicable within the Limits of Deviation to minimise impacts within SRC's site. The alternative scenario is set out in **8.11 Approach to Scenarios [Revision D]**. A draft Statement of Common Ground has been agreed with the stakeholder (**8.3.28 Draft Statement of Common Ground - SRC Group (Martells Mineral Site A85 & A86) [REP5-172]**. It is expected a final signed Statement of Common Ground will be agreed with the stakeholder and submitted at Deadline 7. **MW 1.6** - The Applicant provided a further response in relation to the Lowleys Farm site in its response to ExQ2. Since ExQ1, the Applicant has agreed a draft Statement of Common Ground with Tritton Farming Partnership, submitted most recently at Deadline 5 (**8.3.32 Draft Statement of Common Ground - Tritton Farming Partnership and Brett Aggregates (Lowleys Farm Mineral Site) [REP5-178]**). The Applicant acknowledges the presence of a mineral deposit within the site at Lowleys Farm and that the design would potentially constrain or prevent the full extraction of this resource, and that as it currently stands the Project alignment would extend through the deepest point. It is considered not possible to fully avoid the mineral site within the Limits of Deviation, however, it is possible to allow flexibility in the alignment to reduce the impact on the mineral site, should it be progressed. Widened Order Limits have been proposed in this location to allow for an alternative scenario that would reduce the impacts on the minerals site. This includes the potential relocations of pylons TB128 to TB133 further to the south-east within the widened Order Limits.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			would effectively be sterilised by the proposed route. Prompted by the Inspector's questions of 22nd May, it is noted that the MWPA have only recently pro-actively sought to clarify the position with site promoters now that the authority will soon be able to progress its site assessment and selection work following Regulation 18 Consultation on the MLP Review. The MWPA wrote to the promoters of these Candidate Sites on 25th May seeking an up-to-date position with regards to the ongoing viability and deliverability of the sites in light of the current position with National Grid. This included a request for confirmation with regards to whether the site remains viable and whether there may be an impact on its delivery timescales, spatial extent and/ or its envisaged mineral yield. A response was received from the site promoter stating that the Candidate Sites associated with Martells Quarry will not be significantly impacted by the proposed DCO route and that they are to remain in scope of the Minerals Local Plan Review. Similarly, the MWPA have received no further information from either the Applicant or the SRC Group. Therefore, they are still currently considered to be within scope for potential allocation as part of the Minerals Local Plan (MLP) Review. The MWPA accepts that it is incumbent on the MWPA to establish the deliverability of sites potentially impacted by the DCO Route ahead of any promotion of any site as a Preferred Allocation to be taken forward in a future draft of the MLP. The MWPA notes the commitment from the Applicant to continue to engage with SRC Group. MW 1.4 - The MWPA accepts the Applicants evidence and has no further comment. MW 1.5 - The MWPA accepts the Applicants evidence and has no further comment. MW 1.6 - The MWPA continues to acknowledge that a Candidate Site designation currently carries little to no weight as part of any planning judgement in isolation. However, as a clearly defined area of land being actively promoted for mineral extraction, not only is the land mineral bearing, there is, without prejudice to any future Preferred Allocations in the emerging MLP, the potential that land allocated as Candidate Sites have a greater prospect of contributing to future mineral supply as they have demonstrable interest in being worked. In that sense, Candidate Sites carry the full weight of national policy protection as afforded by the NPPF (Paragraph 223c and 223d). That said, the MWPA accepts that very little additional weight can be attributed at the sub-	The stakeholder has provided the Applicant with site plans and information on extractable depths. Detailed routeing, pylon locations and pylon specifications for the Project have not yet been finalised, and the full extent of the impact cannot yet be determined. Further detail of the proposed Scenario B option is included in Table 2.6 of **8.11 Approach to Scenarios [Revision D]**. The Applicant has submitted updated **2.3 Works Plans – Section F [Revision C]** for Deadline 6.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			national policy level, and such sites are not covered by any additional local-level safeguarding policy. As such, the MWPA maintains its position that whilst there is the requirement to ensure that impacts from the delivery of non-mineral development on finite resources are minimised, it is not appropriate for the MWPA to attempt to establish the primacy of Candidate Sites over or within the proposed route of the DCO. The MWPA therefore maintains its position that it is for site promoters and the Applicant to negotiate an appropriate way forward ahead of independent Examination. However, in conformity with national policy, the MWPA would expect impacts on the most mineral-rich areas of the site to be avoided when doing so is within the operational limits of the delivery of the DCO or that sufficient evidence is submitted to demonstrate that this is not practical. In previous correspondence, the MWPA noted that the Minerals Resource Assessment accompanying the planning application did not explicitly state that the Candidate Sites associated with extensions to Martells Quarry would effectively be sterilised by the proposed route. Prompted by the Inspector's questions of 22nd May, it is noted that the MWPA have only recently pro-actively sought to clarify the position with site promoters now that the authority will soon be able to progress its site assessment and selection work following Regulation 18 Consultation on the MLP Review. The MWPA wrote to the promoters of these Candidate Sites on 25th May seeking an up-to-date position with regards to the ongoing viability and deliverability of the sites in light of the current position with National Grid. This request included updates with regards to whether the site remains viable but there may be an impact on its delivery timescales, spatial extent and/ or its envisaged mineral yield. At the time of writing (2nd June), no response has been received. Similarly, the MWPA have received no further information from either the Applicant or Brett Aggregates Ltd. Therefore, the site is currently considered to be within scope for potential allocation as part of the Minerals Local Plan (MLP) Review. The MWPA accepts that it is incumbent on the MWPA to establish the deliverability of sites potentially impacted by the DCO Route ahead of any promotion of any site as a Preferred Allocation to be taken forward in a future draft of the MLP. The MWPA notes the commitment from the Applicant to continue to engage with Brett Aggregates Ltd. MW 1.7 - The	

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			MWPA notes that it appears that insufficient information is currently in place to comment on whether the effects arising from crushing pylon foundations have been accounted for as this will rely on bespoke site specific assessment. The MWPA raises no concerns regarding the Applicant's commitments to implement localised screening and mitigation measures, and to ensure the adoption of best practicable means by the Main Works Contractor(s) to minimise impacts from construction noise.	

12. Noise and vibration

Table 12.1 Noise and vibration

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
NV 2.2	The Applicant	Noise & Vibration 2 Explain how you have reached your conclusions, as set out in ES Chapter 14 (Noise and Vibration) regarding construction noise and impacts on NSRs, bearing in mind the degrees of variation that would be permitted by the Limits of Deviation as currently sought in the draft DCO? For example NSRs on Old Mill Lane could in theory be 50 metres away from a pylon placed on the edge of the Order limits. How has the ES has considered the worst case scenario for construction noise impacts on these NSR and how can the ExA be certain the level of effect will not be higher than those set out in the ES.	**Braintree District Council** While the Council acknowledge that this is directed at the Applicant, it has representations to make on this question.For the example quoted in NV2.2, due to the proximity of the likely pylon location to the NSR, even without considering any deviation due to LoD or the size of the construction compound surrounding the location, the Council consider there are likely to be significant noise effects potentially during weekday daytime periods and for the more sensitive periods at the weekend. This example, would rely heavily on the assumed 10dB reduction for implementation of BPM, which we consider to not represent a worst-case prediction.	The Applicant disagrees with this comment, as set out in its response to Question NV 2.2 in **8.9.2 Applicant's Responses to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]**. The effectiveness of noise mitigation measures was also addressed at Issue Specific Hearing 2, as summarised in **8.5.7 Applicant's Written Summary of Oral Submissions to Issue Specific Hearing 2 [REP4-302]**, Agenda Item 4.1. Notwithstanding this, the Applicant acknowledges the potential for exceedance of the weekend 'ABC' threshold, as identified in our response. Should this be predicted to occur, works would be subject to temporal restrictions agreed with the relevant Local Planning Authority, secured through commitment NV05 within **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]**.

13. Safety and security

Table 13.1 Safety and security

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
SS 2.3	The applicant	Aviation safety – Consultation and engagement It is clear that there is a substantial difference in opinion between the applicant, the General Aviation Awareness Council and various airfields over the impact of the proposed development on aviation safety, with many representations noting the history of the project and ongoing consultation issues. As stated in ISH2, the ExA request that engagement on outstanding issues between the applicant and relevant stakeholders is prioritised. Provide detail of how you intend to achieve such engagement during the time remaining in the examination, including detail such as dates of meetings and deadlines for actions.	**Norfolk Gliding Club** NGC's response to ExQ2 GEN 2.1 identifies a number of examples of the issues preventing acceptance of the draft SoCG or AIA Our final paragraph in that response states For the avoidance of doubt, NGC are prepared to meet in person at Tibenham at short notice once the withheld information has been received and reviewed by them. The purpose of the meeting would then be to produce new versions of the SoCG and AIA that encompass the safety concerns of NGC whilst developing documents that comply with the advice and guidance of National Planning Policies, the CAA and other aviation bodies As an example, our GEN 2.1 response in reference to the AIA states In 2025 the CAA AAT wrote to the Applicant advising 'From our earliest engagement, we have provided signal that when considering proposed power line routing, it is not the aircraft performance envelope that is the limiting factor. Therefore, any intimation that a specific type can manoeuvre to avoid such vertical obstructions should be disregarded' Yet only a few months after receipt in 2025 the Applicant published their Aviation Impact Assessment that ignored that advice and concluded that 'An aerotow combination would have sufficient room to manoeuvre away from the OHL after take-off' In mid-2025 we believed nothing would be gained from a continuation of this approach where expert advice from such as the CAA AAT was being ignored without a detailed explanation from the Applicant as to why. This is the position we were in last July when the Applicant agreed to submit written detailed explanations in advance of the August 2025 consultation which would have enabled progression of both the SoCG and AIA. In the event the Applicant chose to withhold the information and continues to do so We have responded to the Applicant's email of May 26 indicating the need for them to supply that withheld information together with answers to the questions within our email of April 16 but as yet have not received a reply	The Applicant's position in terms of consultation and engagement with General Aviation aerodromes is stated within its response to SS 2.3 in **8.9.2 Applicant's Responses to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]**. More specifically, **8.5.8 Applicant's Response to Issue Specific Hearing Action Points [REP4-303]** (Action 05 (First Bullet)) details the Applicant's regard to advice from the Civil Aviation Authority Airfields Advisory Team (CAA AAT) in relation to aircraft performance as well as other matters. Our response also recognises the authoritative advice of the CAA has evolved since the CAA AAT March 2025 position statement as part of the implementation of new International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) standards for aviation obstacle evaluation, which introduce a performance-based approach.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
SS 2.4	The applicant General Aviation Awareness Council Norfolk Gliding Club/Tibenham Airfield Raydon Wings Aerodrome Priory Farm And any other relevant IP	Aviation safety resolution – Agent of change It was stated in ISH2 and is reiterated in the written summary of oral submissions [REP4-302] that the matter of public safety is one for the aerodrome operator and that insofar as operations are alleged by an operator to be unsafe then they will not happen and the operator will cease that element of the operation. However, there is clearly a difference in opinion between the applicant and many of the relevant airfield operators between whether the proposed development will cause issues of public safety. The ExA understands the position of the applicant in this matter (in short that no harm will be caused, save to Chase Farm) but would appreciate the views of all relevant parties on the relevance of the 'agent of change' principle within the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 200).	**Suffolk County Council** NPPF December 2024 (as amended) paragraph 200 states: "Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new development can be integrated effectively with existing businesses and community facilities (such as places of worship, pubs, music venues and sports clubs). Existing businesses and facilities should not have unreasonable restrictions placed on them as a result of development permitted after they were established. Where the operation of an existing business or community facility could have a significant adverse effect on new development (including changes of use) in its vicinity, the applicant (or 'agent of change') should be required to provide suitable mitigation before the development has been completed." SCC (Planning) considers that the Norfolk Airfields of Priory Farm and Tibenham would be significantly affected by having 50m high pylons introduced under the existing circuit pattern. Aircraft departing or arriving will face additional obstructions which would make technical or human factor error very much more hazardous and potentially fatal. The remedy would be to re-route the overhead lines or bury them under the surface. A similar situation exists in respect of Raydon Wings whereby the Cable Sealing End Compound and the crude opencut trench burial of the adjacent cables will again introduce serious hazards into the flight paths and ground rolls of aircraft operating in and out of the airfield, potentially with fatal consequences. The remedy in this instance would require moving the CSEC further north and routing the cable away from the grass runway or by using horizontal directional drilling to bury it.	The Applicant's position in terms of the relevance of the 'agent of change' principle is stated within its response to SS 2.4 in **8.9.2 Applicant's Responses to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]** (page 215 to 218) and recognises paragraph 200 of the National Planning Policy Framework is most relevant to projects which are not of national significance. NPS EN-1 (2024) is the primary policy relevant to this critical national priority Project. EN-1 is consistent with and has regard to the NPPF but cannot be countermanded by NPPF paragraph 200. EN-1 sets an expectation of reciprocal cooperation (see paragraph 5.5.5) and makes clear responsibility for mitigation does not lie solely with the Applicant (see paragraph 5.5.50). The Applicant does not recognise the respondent's characterisation of Project aviation impacts and required mitigations for Priory Farm, Raydon Wings and Tibenham aerodromes. The Applicant's aviation impact assessment conclusions and proposed mitigations are set out within **6.1.A2 Environmental Statement – Review of Aviation Impact [REP4-161]** as well as the relevant Statements of Common Ground (see **8.3.35 Draft Statement of Common Ground - Raydon Wings Aerodrome [REP4-245]**, **8.3.36 Draft Statement of Common Ground – Priory Farm Airfield [REP4-247]** and **8.3.37 Draft Statement of Common Ground – Tibenham Aerodrome [REP4-249]** which also detail the Applicant's continued engagement with the operators, seeking information to inform assessments and views on acceptable mitigation options, including the potential for reasonable changes to be made to operational procedures, in accordance with EN-1 paragraph 5.5.50.
			Norfolk Gliding Club A reference in the ExA ExQ2 question was made to 'The matter of public safety is one for the aerodrome operator and that insofar as operations are alleged by an operator to be unsafe then they will not happen and the operator will cease that element of the operation' The primary legislation governing aviation safety and aircraft operations in UK airspace is the Air Navigation Order 2016 (ANO 2016). It is enforced by the CAA and covers all non-EU regulated aviation matters to ensure high standards of airworthiness, crew licensing and safe flight operations It is a wide-ranging statutory instrument that dictates the legal requirements for flying safely in the UK within key	The Applicant's position in terms of the relevance of the 'agent of change' principle is stated within its response to SS 2.4 in **8.9.2 Applicant's Responses to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]** (page 215 to 218) and recognises paragraph 200 of the National Planning Policy Framework is most relevant to projects which are not of national significance. NPS EN-1 (2024) is the primary policy relevant to this critical national priority Project. EN-1 is consistent with and has regard to the NPPF but cannot be countermanded by NPPF paragraph 200. EN-1 sets an expectation of reciprocal cooperation (see paragraph 5.5.5) and makes clear responsibility for

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			areas such as Pilot and crew licensing, Airworthiness, Operational Directives and Rules of the Air It establishes strict rules to ensure passenger and public safety such as article 241 which states 'It is an offence to recklessly or negligently cause or permit an aircraft to endanger any person or property' However, whilst we were preparing the NGC safeguarding plan, the CAA advised that what might be considered a safety risk by one person, might not by another and qualified that by reference to UK Regulation 2018/1139 which in summary states that 'Only the aerodrome operator holds expert opinion as to safety when it comes to the question of proposed obstacles around their airfield'. NGC, as operators of Tibenham Airfield consider the proximity of the pylons to be a significant aviation safety risk As the ExA will be aware from the various submissions received from other aviation bodies, including Dr Mark Eddowes, that view is echoed many times Even the Applicant in a recent submission concerning the risks involved with EFATO type incidents and the possibility of a forced landing before the overhead line (OHL) or gliding over to land beyond states that 'The Applicant accepts that there is a period in the middle where hitting the line is a possibility' In view of this if the OHL were to be constructed as proposed, NGC, as the Airfield Operator, would have no choice other than to close the two runways concerned with the adverse impact on the airfield as referred to in EN-1 It is in this context that we believe the NPPF paragraph 200 is relevant 'Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new development can be integrated effectively with existing businesses and community facilities (such as places of worship, pubs, music venues and sports clubs). Existing businesses and facilities should not have unreasonable restrictions placed on them as a result of development permitted after they were established. Where the operation of an existing business or community facility could have a significant adverse effect on new development (including changes of use) in its vicinity, the applicant (or 'agent of change') should be required to provide suitable mitigation before the development has been completed'. And that forcing the closure of two runways on a well-established airfield represents "unreasonable restrictions" especially since the whole problem can be avoided and could have been avoided at the outset by collaboration. Perhaps the one issue that is open to debate is that of the likely frequency of these	mitigation does not lie solely with the Applicant (see paragraph 5.5.50). Paragraphs 15.2.14 to 15.2.18 and 15.3.14 to 15.3.15 of **6.15.A2 Environmental Statement Appendix 15.2 - Review of Aviation Impact [REP4-161]** describe how the Applicant had regard to relevant aviation regulations and the statutory duties of the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and the advice of associated body the CAA Airfields Advisory Team (AAT). Matters 7.4 and 7.5 of **8.43.37 Draft Statement of Common Ground – Tibenham Aerodrome [REP4-249]** describe the Applicant's position that substantial changes regarding mitigation measures are not justified given the impact of the Project on the aerodrome operations are assessed to be minimal. The Applicant suggests the operator may consider operational procedure changes (such as the design of competition finishes, and/or measures to enhance pilot awareness) as reasonable mitigation to residual risk, in accordance with paragraph 5.5.50 of NPS EN-1 (2024). Notwithstanding the availability of alternative mitigation, the Applicant notes the operator response states Project impacts would prompt the closure of two out of seven of the aerodrome's runways. Whilst the Applicant does not assess any of the operations at Tibenham Aerodrome would need to cease, the Applicant notes that the operator's response demonstrates that any potential unacceptable risk to public safety would not arise as any risk would be mitigated by the operator's decision to cease operations on those runways.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			potentially fatal accidents and this is covered in the CAA CAP1059 Risk Tolerability Matrix, see appendix C of REP3-128. The Applicant tries to water down the frequency by quoting numbers from various sources but, as we have previously advised them, whilst we use the term EFATO we are using it to encompass any and all forced landing emergencies resulting from whatever cause. Further detail on this can be found in Dr Mark Eddowes' (Eddowes Aviation Safety Ltd) report which has been appended to NGC's Written Representation REP1-256. Also, within REP1-256 appendix H is a table of aerotow issues where aborting the tow is the only safe option. These incidents do not require reporting and are therefore not found in any statistical information The conclusion from assessing the EFATO scenario within the matrix is The risk is unacceptable and major mitigation measures are required to reduce the level of risk to as low as reasonably practicable We do not consider procedural changes, marker balls or low-height pylons to be acceptable forms of mitigation since the obstacle is still present and forming a real aviation safety risk The only acceptable mitigation is to increase the distance between the airfield and the OHL and since we cannot move the airfield the Applicant as the "Agent of Change" must accept re-alignment to outside our 5km safeguarding zone or undergrounding whilst within it as the only viable option	
			Norfolk Gliding Club (Flight Safety Officer) During the meetings between NG and NGC, NG have have consistently failed to demonstrate an understanding of the complex aviation environment that operates out of Tibenham airfield. In doing so, NG have ignored the needs of coexistent Power and Gliding operations, Power Flight Training (Flight Training East Anglia - FTEA), Ballooning (Virgin Balloons & Buckletlist Balloons), MOD Helicopter Fuel replenishment, RC Models (Including Jets) and soon, Para-motors and Hang Gliders, all of which operate aircraft of differing types and performance. Aircraft / Launch types include: Single Engine Piston (SEP) including Twin Piston and Turbo Prop capability, Winch Launched Glider, Aerotow / Glider Combination, Self Launched Gliders, Motor gliders, Balloons, Helicopters, Para-motors and Winch Launched Hang-gliders. In it's assessment of risk, NG have continuously ignored the complexity that arises due to the close proximity of Tibenham and	The Applicant's position in terms of the relevance of the 'agent of change' principle is stated within its response to SS 2.4 in **8.9.2 Applicant's Responses to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]** (page 215 to 218) and recognises paragraph 200 of the National Planning Policy Framework is most relevant to projects which are not of national significance. NPS EN-1 (2024) is the primary policy relevant to this critical national priority Project. EN-1 is consistent with and has regard to the NPPF but cannot be countermanded by NPPF paragraph 200. EN-1 sets an expectation of reciprocal cooperation (see paragraph 5.5.5) and makes clear responsibility for mitigation does not lie solely with the Applicant (see paragraph 5.5.50). Matter 7.5 of **8.43.37 Draft Statement of Common Ground – Tibenham Aerodrome [REP4-249]** describes the Applicant's position that substantial changes regarding mitigation measures are not justified but suggests the operator may consider

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			Priory Farm. Both airfields currently interoperate safely by close cooperation and implementation of non-conflicting circuits. With the installation of the Pylons, Priory Farm pilots may choose to not overfly the Pylons to the West of Priory Farm and instead fly circuits to the East potentially bringing them into conflict with circuit traffic operating into / out of Tibenham. Although Tibenham recommended circuits displaced away from Priory Farm, due to the inherent inability of gliders to climb or maintain height, they can regularly find themselves without sufficient height to safely reach the recommended circuit and so have to fly circuits on the non-recommended side of Tibenham airfield, bringing them into direct conflict with Priory Farm traffic. It is extremely unsafe to over-fly an airfield when glider winch launching is active. In addition NG has failed to take into consideration the local topography, by ignoring the existence of areas of population (Tibenham Village) and how to the North West of the airfield, emergency landing options for Runway 33 are severely curtailed by the existence of the River Taz. In this area fields are extremely small with significant down and upslopes, with the only landable options, beyond this area. However these options will be become unavailable as Pylons are due to be installed in this area. Thus pilots experiencing an emergency situation will need to overfly the village, in an effort to try and reach the larger fields beyond the river, only to be presented with a row of 400kV Pylons all whilst attempting to nurse an ailing aircraft to a safe survivable landing. It should also be remembered that the Pylons will effectively mask the availability of any landable field that is on their far side, close to the Pylons, as the ailing aircraft will need to first pass over the Pylons before being able to initiate a descent to an available field, which will now be even further away. When NG was asked to provide the methodology as to how they came to the conclusion that the existence of the Pylons will cause 'no harm' to the Tibenham and Priory Farm operations, NG produced an A4 half page table of obstacle limitation surface (OLS) calculations, which is a process that was deemed by UK Aviation Authorities as inappropriate for such a complex environment. Even though NG have been repeaeted asked to explain as why the views of the UK Aviation Authorities on this matter were ignored, no valid response has been forthcoming. NG and their advisors continue to make light of the risks, the resulting implications and survivability of take-off	operational procedure changes (such as the design of competition finishes, and/or measures to enhance pilot awareness) as reasonable mitigation, in accordance with paragraph 5.5.50 of NPS EN-1 (2024). **6.15.A2 Environmental Statement Appendix 15.2 - Review of Aviation Impact [REP4-161]** details the Applicant's impact assessment methodology in general (paragraphs 15.3.22 to 15.3.38), as well as providing a summary of impact assessment considerations and conclusions for Tibenham aerodrome specifically (paragraphs 15.4.22 to 15.4.25 refer).

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			power failures / power reduction / reduced climb out performance, whether caused by mechanical of metrological factors and have not taken into consideration the reduced climb out performance for the various aircraft types operating out of Tibenham Airfield	
			General Aviation Awareness Council The relevance of the 'agent of change' is that the All-Party Parliamentary Group – Avia on,, which was reformed in 2017, sought to increase the protec on of General Avia on Aerodromes. That led to the specific reference to General Avia on in paragraph 111 of the NPPF and also to the specific iden fica on of aerodromes having protec on under the agent of change principle. The NPPF paragraph 200 states: 'Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new development can be integrated effectively with existing businesses and community facilities (such as places of worship, pubs, music venues and sports clubs). Existing businesses and facilities should not have unreasonable restrictions placed on them as a result of development permitted after they were established. Where the operation of an existing business or community facility could have a significant adverse effect on new development (including changes of use) in its vicinity, the applicant (or 'agent of change') should be required to provide suitable mitigation before the development has been completed.' On 23 July 2019, the MCHLG published new guidance on the Agent of Change. This specifically applies the Agent of Change Principle to airfields. This guidance is intended: a. To avoid adverse effects on noise-sensi ve development b. Encourage developers to work together with aerodrome operators The new guidance states: **How can the potential impact of aviation activities on new development be addressed through the planning system?** 'The agent of change principle may apply in areas near to airports, or which experience low altitude overflight, where there is the potential for aviation activities to have a significant adverse effect on new noise-sensitive development (such as residential, hospitals and schools). This could include development in the immediate vicinity of an airport, or the final approach and departure routes of an operational runway, and locations that experience regular low altitude overflight by general aviation aircraft, where this activity could subject residents or	The Applicant's position in terms of the relevance of the 'agent of change' principle is stated within its response to SS 2.4 in **8.9.2 Applicant's Responses to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]** (pages 215 to 218) and recognises paragraph 200 of the National Planning Policy Framework is most relevant to projects which are not of national significance. This same position applies to related planning practice guidance. NPS EN-1 (2024) is the primary policy relevant to this critical national priority Project. EN-1 is consistent with and has regard to the NPPF but cannot be countermanded by paragraph 200. EN-1 sets an expectation of reciprocal cooperation (see paragraph 5.5.5) and makes clear responsibility for mitigation does not lie solely with the Applicant (see paragraph 5.5.50).

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			occupiers to significant noise, air quality issues and/or vibration impacts. The need for and type of mitigation will depend on a variety of factors including the nature of the aviation activity, location and normal environmental conditions in that context. Local planning authorities could consider the use of planning conditions or obligations to require the provision of appropriate mitigation measures in the new development.' Paragraph: 012 Reference ID: 30-012-20190722 Revision date: 22 07 2019 **How can local authorities and airport operators mitigate the environmental impacts of airport expansion?** 'The management of environmental effects associated with the development of airports and airfields is considered in detail in the Aviation Policy Framework. Planning authorities and airport operators are encouraged to work together to develop mitigation measures that are proportionate to the scale of the impact. Development that would increase air movements may require an Environmental Impact Assessment (where it meets the relevant threshold in Schedule 2 to The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017). It may be appropriate to consider, as part of any proposed mitigation strategy, how operational measures, siting and design of new taxiways, apron and runways, and ground-level noise attenuation measures could reduce noise impacts of expansion or increased utilisation to a minimum.'	
SS 2.5	The applicant	Aviation and Critical National Priority (CNP) Point 5.1b of the written summary of oral submissions [REP4-302] appears to state that the applicant's view is that unlicensed aerodromes do not fall within the remit of the CNP policy within EN-1 and that therefore effectively potential matters of public safety arising from the effect of the proposed development upon unlicensed aerodromes are not relevant to the application of the CNP policy. Is this a fair summation of your view?	**Norfolk Gliding Club (Flight Safety Officer)** It is our and GAAC's views that NG has wrongly sought to differentiate between licensed and unlicensed airfields (3.6 of GAACs ISH 2 28 April 2026 Written Post-Hearing Submission). With NG taking this stance, it suggests that NG believe that pilots, crew and their passengers flying from unlicensed airfields do not deserve the protections from risk that NG would like to see only afforded to users of licensed airfields or to members of the general public. Even is this stance is correct, this completely ignores the fact that Pilots flying from unlicensed airfields, when not part of an professional operation, are members of the public and an as such should be included in assessment as to how they will be affected by the increased risk that the Pylons will present. NG's stance also ignores the fact that NGC regularly fly members of the public on Trial Flights	The Applicant's position in terms of the disapplication of the critical national priority presumption in relation to unacceptable human health or public safety risk to unlicensed aerodromes is within SS 2.5 in **8.9.2 Applicant's Responses to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]**. As per page 55 of **8.4.12 Applicant's Comments on Post-Hearing Submissions and Interested Party Action Points [REP5-194]**, the Applicant has not sought to argue that EN-1 applies only to licensed aerodromes. Indeed, in the absence of specific direction or guidance for unlicensed aerodrome obstacle assessment, paragraph 15.3.27 of **6.15.A2 Environmental Impact Appendix 15.2 - Review of Aviation Impact [REP4-161]** explains that the Applicant methodology has applied regulatory measures for licensed aerodromes to all aerodromes

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			where they are shown the joys of silent flight in a glider. These flights are a valuable source of revenue for NGC, contributing greatly to keeping the Club in existence as well as providing a means of attracting new members. Members of the local community are also regularly invited to take part in Trial Flight events at the regular NGC Community Days. The last Community Day was held on 2nd May 2026 with another arranged for 12th September 2026. NG also appear to be ignoring the safety needs of the customers of the two Ballooning operations that operate from Tibenham Airfield.	in scope (regardless of licensed status), recognising these to be best practice.
SS 2.6	The applicant	Aviation safety and risk Point 5 (second bullet) of the applicant's response to ISH2 action points [REP4-303] states that the likelihood of any aircraft-specific emergency is unaffected by the presence of the Project, but that the applicant recognises that obstacles in the environment can increase the complexity of decision-making and can limit options in the event that a forced landing is required, which can affect the severity of the outcome (and therefore potentially contributes to a rise in risk). While the ExA agrees that the presence of pylons and overhead lines will not affect whether an engine failure (or similar emergency) occurs, the presence of the project would seemingly present a significant obstacle and severely limit options available to pilots of aircraft in the vicinity of the overhead lines. Furthermore, the consequences arising from an accident from an interaction between an aircraft and the overhead lines and pylons would appear likely to be grave. Respond to this view.	**Norfolk Gliding Club** Within the ExQ2 question reference was made to 'Furthermore, the consequences arising from an accident from an interaction between an aircraft and the overhead lines and pylons would appear likely to be grave' NGC support this view and have provided witnessed examples in submission REP3-128 In the decision dated 31 October 2019 involving a planning appeal over Rufforth airfield and a planning application for farm buildings, the Inspectorate took the same view. Reference to this can be found in Dr Mark Eddowes report appended to REP1-256	As per the Applicant's position within its response to SS 2.6 in **8.9.2 Applicant's Responses to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]** and in agreement with the operator, the Applicant agrees with the Examining Authority's assertion that '*the consequences arising from an accident from an interaction between* [taken to mean a collision with] *an aircraft and the overhead lines and pylons would appear likely to be grave*'. Any structure coming into contact with an aircraft in flight would be grave. The question is whether the risks of that collision are real and whether an aerodrome operator and/or pilot and/or the CAA would allow unacceptable risk as a result of juxtaposition, to occur. For the reasons set out elsewhere, the Applicant takes the view that the risks associated with the overhead line are not unacceptable and if they were, then the aerodrome would have to employ mitigation to ensure safe flying could continue. If no such mitigation is possible then NPS EN-1 envisages the potential loss of operational capacity or closure of even licensed aerodromes.
SS 2.8(a)	Norfolk Gliding Club/Tibenham Airfield Priory Farm	Low height pylons and mitigation measures Point 5 (third bullet) of the applicant's response to ISH2 action points [REP4-303] considers Tibenham Airfield and Priory Farm. a) The applicant suggests that appropriate mitigation includes the use of marker balls for Priory Farm and changes to competition procedures for Tibenham. Please respond to such suggestions. b) Would low height pylons in the vicinity of the airfields serve to lower the risk of the proposed development?	**Norfolk Gliding Club** Marker balls The use of marker balls would have little or no effect on mitigating the safety risks posed by the proposed pylons. All club pilots flying from Tibenham are either briefed by the duty instructor or through the use of the Notice to Air Missions (NOTAM) system which is managed by the CAA Changes to competition procedures In terms of competitions, the adverse impact of the proposed overhead line on the operations of the airfield falls into two groups, aerotow take-off and landing (competition finishes)	The Applicant's position within its response to SS 2.7 in **8.9.2 Applicant's Responses to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]** addresses the matter of potential mitigation measures for Tibenham aerodrome, including changes to competition procedures and the use of low height pylons. The Applicant notes the operator has not directly answered the Examining Authority's question in relation to the potential for it to make changes to its own competition procedures. The operator's comments regarding marker balls and low height pylons are noted to differ slightly to those of the Norfolk Gliding Club safety officer (see below). The safety officer appears to see potential benefits of marker balls as a visibility or navigational aid. The

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			Where meteorological conditions dictate the use of runway 26 towards the proposed overhead line for aerotows would not be allowed due to safety risks and the 'competition day' would be abandoned. Whilst recognising the need for aviation safety, this loss of a good competition day would not be appreciated by the pilots which would be reflected in reduced number of competitors to the point that the competition would be no longer viable with corresponding financial losses to the club As has been previously mentioned, the British Gliding Association (BGA) had indicated that the presence of the proposed line would preclude Tibenham from hosting National competitions in any case. A modern competition glider returning from the west to land at Tibenham would overfly the pylon route at about 100ft above ground level (ie half the height of the proposed pylons). We understand that whilst the BGA are reviewing procedures for competition finishers the loss of 'competition days' due to meteorological conditions would still be an issue The use of low-height pylons The suggestion of low-height pylons was introduced in the 2024 consultation by the Applicant but no dimensions were given then and none have been received since. The response at that time by NGC was that, whatever the height, they would still form an unacceptable obstacle in any EFATO type situation In principle the reduction in height of an obstacle would in aviation terms reduce the level of risk but with the route alignment cutting through the forced landing splay the potential for a fatal accident in such circumstances would still exist	use of marker balls has been suggested as mitigation for Priory Farm aerodrome but would potentially benefit Tibenham pilots also due to the proximity of the aerodromes. Whilst the safety officer appears to recognise benefits to low height pylons in relation to forced landing scenarios, the operator maintains a more extreme position that an obstacle of any height is unacceptable. The Applicant continues to seek in-depth discussion with the operator to explore whether changes to operational procedures, including the design of competition finishes and/or measures to enhance pilot awareness, are reasonable, in accordance with NPS EN-1 (2024) paragraph 5.5.50. An update following a recent meeting with the British Gliding Association (with the operator also present) which clarified the potential for such changes exists, is provided in the Applicant's response to Action Point 24 within **8.5.12 Applicant's Written Summary of Oral Submissions and Response to Action Points for Issue Specific Hearing 4.**
SS 2.8(a)			**Norfolk Gliding Club (Flight Safety Officer)** a – Marker Balls) The use of marker balls would have only a small effect on mitigating the risk from the Pylons / Power Lines. Pilots will already be aware of the location of the Pylons and hence the power lines, either through pilot briefings or documented pilot information such as airfield plates which describe runway directions and length, as well as other obstructions, villages, areas not to over fly etc. The marker balls will however allow the pilot of an ailing aircraft to more easily judge whether they would be able to overfly the power lines or attempt to fly under them. I wouold suggest that attempting to fly through the rows of 400kV power lines is not a valid option. The pylons and cables would still constitute a significant barrier to reaching a safe emergency	The Applicant's position within its response to SS 2.7 in **8.9.2 Applicant's Responses to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]** addresses the matter of potential mitigation measures for Tibenham aerodrome, including changes to competition procedures and the use of low height pylons. The Applicant notes the respondent has not addressed the Examining Authority's question in relation to potential for changes to its competition procedures. The respondent's comments regarding marker balls and low height pylons are noted. The Applicant continues to seek in-depth discussion with the operator to explore whether changes to operational procedures, including the design of competition finishes and/or measures to enhance pilot awareness, are reasonable, in accordance with NPS

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			landing option. B – Lower Pylons) The installation of lower pylons would have only a small effect on mitigating the risk from the Pylons / Power Lines. Lower pylons would improve the chances of an ailing aircraft being able to overfly the cables, assuming that the compromised aircraft had sufficient height and performance to do so. However due to their lower height, the option to land underneath them would be almost completely removed. Thus this mitigation measure would only improve the result of any forced landing where there was already sufficient height to overfly the lower pylon height at the point of failure. The pylons and cables would still constitute a significant barrier to reaching a safe emergency landing option	EN-1 (2024) paragraph 5.5.50. An update following a recent meeting with the British Gliding Association (with the operator also present) which clarified the potential for such changes exists, is provided in the Applicant's response to Action Point 24 within **8.5.12 Applicant's Written Summary of Oral Submissions and Response to Action Points for Issue Specific Hearing 4.**
SS 2.8(b)	Norfolk Gliding Club/Tibenham Airfield Raydon Wings Aerodrome Priory Farm And any other relevant IP	Applicant's response to action points The applicant's response to ISH2 action points [REP4-303] considers a wide range of matters relating to aviation safety. Please respond to such points.	**Norfolk Gliding Club** *[Full response provided in* Appendix C *due to length]*	Please refer to Appendix C for the Applicant's response.

14. Socio-economics, tourism and recreation

Table 14.1 Socio-economics, tourism and recreation

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
SET 2.1	Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils	Socio-economics In your 'Comments on any further information or submissions received by deadline 1' [REP2-113] concern was raised in regard to the 'cumulative impacts of the proposed development' in relation to the applicant only considering other projects that physically interface with the order limits and the temporal interface of those projects which overlap. You considered other projects not considered by the applicant, as they fell outside of the above criteria, would also be likely to have socio-economic impacts when considered in conjunction with the applicants proposed development. These included i) pressure on the housing markets; ii) social integration; iii) loss of rental accommodation; and iv) pressure on local facilities and resources. The ExA would draw your attention to the applicant's response to your deadline 2 submission in its 'Comments on any Further Information or Submissions Received by Deadline 3' [REP4-298]. We would also draw your attention to the applicants document entitled 'ES Chapter 17 Cumulative Effects -Response Update' [REP4-163] and ask whether the applicant's responses in these documents adequately address the socio-economic concerns, as listed above, which you raised. Please note the applicant has indicated an Employment and Skills Plan is to be submitted at deadline 5.	**Suffolk County Council** BMSDC remains concerned that Applicant has not fully assessed the impact (cumulative or otherwise) of construction on socio-economics, recreation or tourism. They have declared that there are "no significant cumulative effects from the Project and the newly identified other existing and, or approved developments on socio-economic, recreation and tourism receptors within the areas surrounding the Project are anticipated during both construction and operation (and maintenance)". BMSDC are minded to agree that long term operation of the pylons will not have a significant impact but disagree with this assessment in relation to the construction phase. The specific issue of severance alongside lengthy diversions during construction could cause significant harm to small businesses and communities accessing essential services, including education, healthcare and employment as well as leisure facilities. The visual impact of the construction is also likely to be significant, particularly when we are celebrating "Constable 250" this year and "Gainsborough 300" next year when the landscape in this specific area is likely to have a national focus e.eg. the Haywain is being exhibited at Christchurch Mansion this summer and this will attract national media to the area to showcase the landscapes that he painted. There will also be a significant anniversary for Benton End in 2030 (Cedric Morris), BMSDC are aware that the pylons are projected to have a direct impact on Benton End which BMSDC have identified specifically in a previous response.	The Socio-economics, Recreation and Tourism assessment has been guided by various EIA guidance documents and further developed following different thematic group engagement throughout the EIA stages. The Applicant has identified that there would be significant effects on visual receptors during construction within Babergh and Mid Suffolk, as set out in **6.13.A3 Environmental Statement Appendix 13.3 - Visual Baseline and Assessment - Part 1 of 4 [APP-229]**. However, taking into account the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures during the construction phase, including those set out in **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]**, **7.3 Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan [Revision E]** and **7.6 Outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan [REP5-163]**, effects on tourism within the Wider Study Area are not anticipated to be significant. These mitigation measures include maintaining access to businesses and Public Rights of Way (PRoW), where practicable. Where temporary closures are required, appropriate alternative access arrangements, including temporary diversions, would be provided. Advance notice signage would be erected to inform users of any changes and to ensure effective wayfinding. In addition, the Applicant would seek to engage with event organisers to minimise potential disruption to scheduled events. Event organisers are encouraged to contact the Applicant in advance to facilitate appropriate coordination and support where necessary as outlined in **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]**. The proposed mitigation measures would be secured through Requirement 4 of **3.1 Draft DCO [Revision F]** through the final versions of the CoCP, CTMP and PRoW Management Plan.

15. Traffic and transport

Table 15.1 Traffic and transport

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
TT 2.2	National Highways Essex County Council Thurrock Council Suffolk County Council Norfolk County Council	PARs 2 Please highlight any residual concerns you may have regarding specific PARs which you believe have not been adequately addressed by the applicant and where you may have concerns about ability to address them either during or after the examination.	**Suffolk County Council** **B1113 to Finningham** Whilst SCC (Highways) acknowledges that the Applicant has proposed mitigation, the Council has residual concerns with how this will work in practice. However, SCC hopes that the positive working relationship with National Grid on this project continues and that if any issues arise then they will work with the LHA to resolve them.	The Applicant will follow the monitoring processes detailed within **7.3 Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan [Revision E]** and will continue to liaise with Suffolk County Council.
			Norfolk County Council NCC and the developer still have outstanding issues relating to HGV traffic in Diss, specifically concerning PARs 8 and 9. Following discussions with the applicant's transport consultants, an updated Diss Strategy is expected to be submitted ahead of Deadline 5.	The Applicant has issued a Diss Routeing Strategy technical note to NCC, which provides a more detailed justification for why the Project is seeking to retain proposed construction movements through Diss. The Applicant held a meeting with NCC Highway Officers on 30 June 2026 to discuss any further NCC comments on the Diss access strategy. Following the meeting, the Applicant will provide additional clarification on the proposed routeing to Norfolk County Council by Deadline 6.
			Essex County Council ECC as the relevant Highway Authority has the following concerns that remain outstanding in relation to specific PARs: • PAR 32, Wick Lane – the current proposal of traffic management between two haul roads on a narrow rural lane is not acceptable to ECC. The Applicant is re-considering the design and ECC require a concept design to be agreed during the examination so it is clear what the access strategy will be prior to detailed design discussions with the Contractor. • PAR 31, Ardleigh Road – the current proposal includes permanent widening of a rural lane to 6m over a length of approx.1Km. The Applicant is considering an alternative option which they intend to share prior to the end of the examination in the form of a concept design. ECC want to ensure there is sufficient time to review and agree the alternative option; and there are concerns that if an alternative is not feasible then there will be a	The Applicant notes this comment. **PAR 32 Wick Lane:** The Applicant and its contractors have been exploring an alternative construction routeing strategy to avoid using Wick Lane (PAR 32) at the Ardleigh Reservoir Causeway. The Applicant will continue to engage with ECC on this matter and confirm its position to ECC before the end of the examination. **PAR 31 Ardleigh Road:** The Applicant and its contractors have been exploring an alternative option for the proposed design of Ardleigh Road. The Applicant will continue to liaise with ECC on the proposed design for Ardleigh Road and confirm its position to ECC before the end of the examination. **PAR 30 Bentley Road:** Response TT 2.1 (pages 236-238) in **8.9.2 Applicant's Response to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]** sets out that the Norwich to Tilbury project (the Applicant), the North Falls project and the Five Estuaries project, have contractually

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			residual legacy issue relating to speeding vehicles and anti-social behaviour. • PAR 30, Bentley Road – ECC have concerns around how the maintenance of the footway/cycleway infrastructure is to be managed with the other NSIPs relying on Bentley Road and Ardleigh Road (as per item TT 2.1 above). ECC would like to have reassurance that some form of collaborative agreement is in place between the windfarms and Norwich to Tilbury. This is on the basis that ECC are not adopting the infrastructure and so there must be clear accountability as to which organisation is maintaining the infrastructure at all times. • PAR 43, Spa Road – ECC has requested that the Applicant undertakes tracking analysis to determine whether HGV movements can be facilitated along this route and to better understand whether the existing highway facilities are suitable for the uplift in HGV movements. Furthermore, if mitigation is required then a concept design can be produced by the Applicant prior to the close of the examination. This concept design would then be discussed in more detail with the Contractor through the detailed design process. The reason ECC has requested this is that there are concerns with the uplift in HGVs regularly using this route in relation to maintenance at this location which in turn could lead to road safety issues for pedestrians. For example, an increase in vehicles overrunning the kerb which could lead to kerb or footway damage impacting on safety for pedestrian users.	agreed maintenance arrangements for the temporary footway/cycleway on Bentley Road (PAR 30). **PAR 43 Spa Road:** The Applicant undertook vehicle tracking of Spa Road during the initial assessment of the suitability of Spa Road for use by construction traffic. The resulting indicative mitigation measures are detailed in **Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan: Indicative Highway Mitigation Plans Section C [REP4-172]**. The Applicant provided a response to the suitability of the proposed highway mitigation measures (concept design) in **8.4.9 Applicant's Comments on any Further Information on Submissions Received at Deadline 3 [REP4-298]**. Within **6.16 Environmental Statement Chapter 16 - Traffic and Transport [APP-271]** an assessment of road safety was undertaken in relation to the increase in future baseline traffic as a result of construction vehicle movements. This assessment was undertaken with the understanding that two-way movement of HGVs and AILs could be accommodated along Spa Road. Where not feasible, appropriate traffic management measures would be provided as presented on **7.3 Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan Appendix C - Indicative Highway Mitigation Plans - Section E [APP-317]**. No significant effects on road safety were therefore identified.
			Thurrock Council The Council notes that the increase in construction traffic associated with the Proposed Development are generally acceptable in principle. Whilst Health Road PAR (PAR 68) is forecast to experience increases in HGV traffic during peak periods, these impacts relate to a relatively short section of highway with comparatively low existing traffic volumes, The Council's principal concern relates to locations where Walking, Cycling and Riding Routes (WCRs) would be severed, removed or otherwise adversely affected during the construction period. The Council considers that additional mitigation measures are required beyond the provision of advisory information packs, including appropriate on-site signage for both WCR users and drivers. In the case of PAR65, vegetation clearance at the Buckingham Hill Road crossing should also be undertaken to improve	**Walking, Cycling and Horse-Riding Routes** The Applicant notes this comment. Table 7.125 in **7.11 Transport Assessment [APP-333]**, and Table 5.7 in **7.3 Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan [Revision E]** detail the additional mitigation of ensuring additional vegetation is maintained on PAR 65 to allow visibility, particularly for the users of footpaths 41 and 42. The Transport Coordinator will be responsible for ensuring the mitigation measures are fulfilled. All incidents associated with the Project, including environmental incidents (which would include complaints from the public should the vegetation clearance not be maintained or substantive) will be reported by Environmental Clerks of Works (EnvCoW(s)) and Transport Coordinators.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			visibility for both vehicles and vulnerable road users. The Council further considers that monitoring should be undertaken to assess the effectiveness of these measures. The Council also notes concerns regarding the proposed Satellite Access Points (SAPs) at Brentwood Road and Buckingham Hill Road, the predicted volume of construction traffic at these locations would result in vehicle arrivals and departures at frequent intervals during peak periods. The Council considers that the operation of these junctions should be appropriately tested and demonstrated to ensure they can safely accommodate the anticipated level of traffic.	**Brentwood Road and Buckingham Hill Road Site Access Points:** The Applicant undertook junction capacity assessments for the Brentwood Road and Buckingham Hill Road Satellite Access Points. The findings of these assessments were presented to Thurrock Council at the Thematic Working Group in June 2025 which identified that the existing layout would be sufficient to accommodate construction vehicle movements. The Applicant will provide the capacity assessments to Thurrock Council for review.
			National Highways NH is unable to determine whether any/all concerns regarding specific PARs have been addressed until the trip generation, distribution, and assignment (and therefore the development traffic impact at all impacted SRN junctions) have been agreed. Further information and clarifications are required for NH to be able to agree the expected flows at the SRN junction and therefore to understand fully the impact of the proposed development. Therefore, NH may have concerns about the impacts and mitigation proposals at some of the SRN junctions which form part of the PARs.	The Applicant presented additional information to National Highways in March 2026. The Applicant issued a technical note covering trip generation and junction flows to National Highways consultants to provide the additional information requested. The Applicant held a meeting with National Highways on 1 July 2026 where any additional concerns on the trip generation, distribution and assignment, were discussed, with actions in place to close out comments.
TT 2.3	The applicant	Outline CTMP 1 Further to Royal Mail's DL4 submission [REP4-371] can you explain why paragraph 5.8.5 of the outline CTMP [REP4-174] only requires reasonable endeavours to inform stakeholders of traffic matter, especially in the light of the discussion at ISH2 regarding liaison and provision of this type of information and the changes to the outline CTMP at DL4, including a commitment at 3.3.1 to provide information to residents and stakeholders.	**Chelmsford City Council** As part of the Applicants communication strategy, CCC wonders if there could be a commitment to directly inform Royal Mail of affected routes etc. It is critical that the postal service is not unnecessarily disrupted, particularly where some documents, such as hospital appointments, are not always sent remotely.	The Applicant has updated paragraph 5.8.6 of **7.3 Outline Construction Traffic Mangament Plan [Revision E]**, submitted at Deadline 5, to the following: '*Advanced notice of planned diversions and closures will be issued to relevant stakeholders (such as royal mail, Blue Light Services and bus operators) where these may affect their operations, at the earliest possible opportunity.*' **7.3 Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan [Revision E]** is secured through Article 3 of Schedule 4 of **3.1 Draft DCO [Revision F]**.
TT 2.4	National Highways Essex County Council Thurrock Council Suffolk County Council Norfolk County Council	Outline CTMP 2 Following ISH2, at DL4 the applicant updated the outline CTMP [REP4-174] with regard to community engagement with councils, parish councils, other developers and the public. Please provide comments on this updated proposal.	**Suffolk County Council** SCC (Highways) considers that more detail is required as to communication and the proposals, specifically with local organisations such as County, District and Parish Councillors.	The Applicant will appoint a community relations team to engage with local residents and stakeholders – including at a local level, parish councils – and to provide dedicated community relations and external communications support. The structure and resourcing of the community relations team, including the potential roles and geographical responsibilities of individual team members, are currently being developed and will be

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
				informed by a variety of factors including contractor arrangements, the distribution of construction activities across the Project area, and plans for local government reorganisation. Accordingly, the Applicant is not currently in a position to confirm a specific team structure. The Applicant anticipates being able to provide further details of the community relations arrangements to relevant stakeholders during detailed design and construction planning, in advance of construction commencing. The Applicant will provide at Deadline 7 further detail regarding engagement with other relevant county, district and parish councils.
			National Highways NH has no comments about these updates. It should be noted, however, that NH is unable to agree the oCTMP fully until the impacts of the development on the SRN have been fully understood, as per the response to TT2.2 above.	The Applicant notes this comment. Please see response above.
			Essex County Council ECC requested the following to be included in the CTMP (as set out in REP3-078): "A commitment in the Community Engagement and Public Information document (APP-305) for the website and any other media communication: • to include clear information to the public on what AILs are, why they are needed and how they impact the local//strategic road network • to include information on how people's journeys will be impacted without people needing to consult multiple sources of information" The first point has been dealt with through the update of the CTMP but the second is only partially considered. The Applicant has specified that links will be included to find 'further information' and it is assumed this relates to 'further information' on how people's journeys will be impacted. It would be useful to understand if these links would be to third party information (and if so what websites and what would they cover so we can review how useful they will be to residents in understanding impacts) or if the links would be to information produced by the Applicant. If the latter, this could involve an interactive map or fixed graphics showing the full routing of the AILs for people to be able to understand easily together with dates/times of the AILs).	The Applicant anticipates that the published information will link to third-party websites used by the escorting constabulary or joint forces to publish anticipated AIL routeing and affected roads. This information normally includes the timings, roads affected and associated project. From this, the public will be able to identify AIL movements associated with the Project. The Applicant does not anticipate publishing this information independently, to avoid confusion from multiple information sources.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			ECC's concern is that National Grid relies on external information which may be piecemeal making it difficult for people to navigate easily or not detailed enough making it difficult to understand impacts. In which case, a commitment from National Grid to produce suitable graphics showing the routing and dates/times would be required. ECC would also suggest that reliance on links alone is not necessarily inclusive for all members of the community. Therefore, further engagement via the local Parishes with alternative means of communication should be included as a commitment i.e. printed leaflets etc.	
			Thurrock Council The Council notes that Outline CTMP Revision C [REP4-174] introduces no substantive changes to the proposed construction traffic management arrangements. The Council welcomes the amendments made to Section 3.3 of the Outline CTMP relating to community engagement and public communications. These amendments reinforce the Applicant's commitment to providing information to stakeholders regarding construction activities, including project updates, contact details and other communication channels. The Council considers that these commitments are appropriate. The Council expects that the Main Works Contractors obligations in respect of stakeholder engagement and communication will be clearly secured and documented through subsequent versions of the CTMP.	This comment is noted by the Applicant. The final CoCP and CTMP will be developed with the Main Works Contractor(s) in partnership with the Local Highway Authorities, where it is expected that the detailed stakeholder engagement and communication will be secured and documented.
			Norfolk County Council One aspect that has not changed is the proposed working hours on Saturdays, Sundays, and Bank Holidays. If the developer is seeking to improve community engagement, construction activity should be limited to Saturday mornings only (07:00–12:00), with no working on Sundays or Bank Holidays. This has been the case for all NSIPs in Norfolk so far. It would be helpful to understand whether the project will appoint a Community Liaison Officer (CLO) for each County or a single CLO for the entire project. From our experience on other NSIPs, having a dedicated CLO has proven highly beneficial in maintaining strong relationships between all parties and ensuring communities feel properly engaged and represented, particularly at the parish level.	Working hours: The Applicant notes this comment. The Applicant has summarised, in its response to item DCO 2.S10 in **8.4.15 Applicant's Comments on Responses to ExQ2**, its position on the proposed working hours. Community Liaison: The Applicant notes this comment. The Applicant will appoint a community relations team to engage with local residents and stakeholders – including at a local level, parish councils – and to provide dedicated community relations and external communications support. The structure and resourcing of the community relations team, including the potential roles and geographical responsibilities of individual team members, are currently being developed and will be

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
				informed by a variety of factors including contractor arrangements, the distribution of construction activities across the Project area and plans for local government reorganisation. Accordingly, the Applicant is not currently in a position to confirm a specific team structure. The Applicant anticipates being able to provide further details of the community relations arrangements to relevant stakeholders during detailed design and construction planning, in advance of construction commencing.
TT 2.8	The applicant	Outline CTMP 5 Provide a full list of schools which will be on PARs and which are proposed to have restriction of construction traffic at certain times of the school day. For those which are not proposed to have restrictions, explain why it is considered not necessary to have such restrictions.	**Chelmsford City Council** CCC considers that construction traffic should be restricted at all schools affected by the proposal, during drop off and collection times. In relation to secondary, private and other schools, parents and children may be reliant on a wider means of transport and may not live geographically close to the school, meaning there may be reliance on the wider highway network. As a minimum, restrictions should apply during exam season, where it is crucial that employees and students can attend school so not to miss exams.	All schools within the Study Area, located within a 150 m radius of the Project Primary Access Routes (PARs), were assessed within **6.16 Environmental Statement Chapter 16 - Traffic and Transport [APP-271]**. The need for additional mitigation (over and above embedded and standard Mitigation) was only identified at two schools where construction vehicle movements would be restricted during the school drop-off/pick-up periods and these were not within Chelmsford. An assessment on driver and public transport delay undertaken within **6.16 Environmental Statement Chapter 16 - Traffic and Transport [APP-271]** on PAR 50 – A1016 and PAR 51 – A1060 identified that there would be a large significance of effects due to the increase in construction vehicle movements. However, this would be for a temporary short duration of one-week which is not anticipated to be scheduled during examination periods. Furthermore, within **7.11 Transport Assessment [APP-333]** mitigation has been proposed, where deemed required, to reduce the level of impact during peak hours on delay at junctions. Mitigation measures include signal optimisation, monitoring, and temporary signage to warn general traffic of peak hour congestion and availability of alternative routes.
TT 2.9	The applicant National Highways Essex County Council Thurrock Council Norfolk County Council	Outline CTMP 6 In their response action points at ISH2 [REP4-336] at paragraph 11.5.d, Suffolk CC propose a quarterly report on the key transport parameters, some of which they go on to list. Does the applicant consider this appropriate and how would this be secured in the DCO. Please can the other highway authorities comment on this proposal.	**Suffolk County Council** SCC (Highways) considers that the quarterly report should be secured within the CTMP with the contents agreed with the LHA. There is a strong preference that this document should be made available to the public. The LHA considers that this will help reassure local communities that the management of construction traffic is transparent and accountable	The Applicant provided a response to the quarterly report in item 11.5c of **8.4.12 Applicant's Comments on Post-Hearing Submissions and Interested Party Action Points [REP5-194]**. The Applicant has updated **7.3 Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan [Revision E]** submitted at Deadline 6 to capture the detail of the quarterly report. **7.3 Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan Appendix B: Outline Construction Worker Travel Plan [REP5-151]** is considered appropriate in terms of the level of detail contained within the quarterly report, in relation to construction worker movement.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			Essex County Council ECC believes a quarterly report on the key transport parameters would be a good way of summarising the items to be reviewed rather than having multiple submissions of information to the relevant Local Highway Authority. It is noted that the Applicant has included a commitment in the latest CTMP to undertake a three month look ahead to understand predicted HGV deliveries and that this will be reviewed against the assumptions in the TA (document ref. 7.11) and the ES Appendix 16.4 (document ref. 6.16.A4). ECC believes this along with the other key transport parameters could be secured through the CTMP with some updated wording to confirm the quarterly report approach.	The Applicant notes this comment. The Applicant has updated **7.3 Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan [Revision E]** submitted at Deadline 6 to capture the detail of the quarterly report.
			National Highways The proposed parameters listed at 11.5.d are as follows: • HGV numbers and distribution • Exceedance of assessed volumes (or caps) • Non-compliance with routing or timing • Compliance with key mitigation e.g. avoidance of school start / finish (Stowupland) or shift times • Worker numbers • Car share ratios NH supports the proposal and considers the parameters listed above are appropriate to report on a quarterly basis. Once the impacts of the development are fully understood (as per the response to TT2.2 above), NH may request further measures to be added to the list.	The Applicant notes this comment. The Applicant has updated Section 6.2.7 in **7.3 Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan [Revision E]** submitted at Deadline 6 to capture the detail of the quarterly report. Section 8.2.1 of **7.3 Construction Worker Travel Plan [REP5-151]** provides an overview of the approach to the quarterly review of worker travel. The Travel Plan Coordinator (TPC) will collect data from the workforce regarding actual shift start and finish times quarterly during the construction programme, to capture potential differences in seasonality, and will collate, review and summarise the data to inform the monitoring review report. Additionally, car share ratios will be collated; from this, worker numbers additionally will be inferred. This information will be sent to the relevant LHA, at quarterly intervals, in the form of a monitoring review report.
			Thurrock Council The Council notes that Outline CTMP Revision C [REP4-174] identifies responsibilities for the Main Works Contractor and Transport Coordinators and includes commitments relating to monitoring, reporting and compliance with the CTMP. The updated CTMP also refers to the monitoring of junction performance, route adherence, speed data and site safety matters. The Council notes that the CTMP does not specify the frequency of monitoring reports or define the information that should be included within those reports. The Council considers that a commitment to the regular preparation and publication of monitoring reports, including key transport performance	The Applicant notes this comment. The Applicant has updated Section 6.2.7 **7.3 Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan [Revision E]** submitted at Deadline 6 to capture the detail of the quarterly report.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			indicators, would be appropriate. The Council further considers that the scope and content of monitoring reports should be clearly defined within the CTMP and agreed with relevant highway authorities. This should include reporting on compliance with the CTMP requirements, any breaches identified, remedial actions undertaken and the effectiveness of mitigation measures. The Council also considers that monitoring reports should be made publicly available alongside CTMP updates in the interests of transparency and stakeholder engagement.	
			Norfolk County Council NCC are happy for quarterly reporting to be set as the minimum requirement. However, there should be provision for flexibility, allowing NCC to request more frequent updates where necessary, for example, in circumstances where the developer or contractor anticipates potential peaks in HGV movements that may approach or exceed the DCO traffic thresholds.	The Applicant notes this comment. The Applicant has updated Section 6.2.7 of **7.3 Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan [Revision E]** submitted at Deadline 6 to capture the detail of the quarterly report. Paragraph 5.4.19 of **7.3 Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan [Revision E]** notes the three-month lookahead process for potential exceedance of the construction traffic forecasts. The Main Works Contractor(s) will discuss with the Applicant and Local Highway Authorities where approporate. This process is not constrained to a quarterly report.
TT 2.10	National Highways Essex County Council Thurrock Council Suffolk County Council Norfolk County Council	Cap on Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) Please can all highway authorities who have not done so already, provide comments on whether you consider a cap on HGVs is required or if the applicant's proposals to provide a three month forward view is acceptable. If you have commented previously, please signpost the ExA to your latest position on this matter.	**Suffolk County Council** SCC (Highways) welcomes the three month forward view, however, this should be provided in addition to caps on HGV numbers, not as an alternative. Caps should be placed on HGV movements to secure what the LHA understands to be the Applicant's realistic worst case assessment. This would give reassurance to the LHA and local communities that movements will not exceed those assessed.	The Applicant provided a response regarding a cap on Heavy Goods Vehicles in TT2.11 of **8.9.2 Applicant's Responses to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]**. **7.3 Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (Revision E)** was updated at Deadline 4 to incorporate additional controls to monitor construction vehicle numbers against those assessed in **7.11 Transport Assessment [APP-333]** and **6.16.A4 Environmental Statement Appendix 16.4 – Traffic and Transport Construction Effects [APP-275]**. The Applicant considers that these measures represent a proportionate and robust approach, offering both the Local Highway Authority and local communities' confidence that construction traffic will remain within assessed levels. As outlined above, vehicle flows will be regularly compared against those assessed and reported through quarterly monitoring reports.

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			Essex County Council ECC has not previously stated that a cap on HGVs is required. However, wording is proposed for inclusion in the CTMP in response to ExQ1 (REP4-174) which: • removed the justification by the Applicant that a cap on vehicle numbers was not necessary; • required that the movements of construction vehicles and workforce vehicles should be compared with the TA/ES to ensure no additional impact occurs beyond what has been assessed; and • introduced a requirement to agree corrective actions due to non compliance with the Local Highway Authority and/or community members and set out a list of possible actions to be included in the Outline CTMP. ECC notes that the Applicant has updated the CTMP which : • deals with the first bullet point above in respect of the justification for the cap being removed; • includes for HGV deliveries to be compared with the TA/ES but does not commit to comparing total HGVs movements (i.e. it would appear that vehicles involved in the collection of excess materials, waste or recycling for example are not included) or the workforce vehicle numbers with the TA/ES. Furthermore, the Applicant has stated that National Grid's EnvCoW would be responsible for determining if any materially new or materially different residual effects were occurring and before discussing with the Local Highway Authority suitable steps to avoid or mitigate such effects from HGV vehicles. Instead, ECC believes the information on HGV numbers should be provided regularly and at least every three months during construction to the Local Highway Authority. This regular reporting should also be linked to a commitment from the Applicant to discuss with the relevant highway authority whether there is a material impact and if so what corrective action will be taken; and has not taken account of bullet point 3 above. The Applicant has stated that "Further detail on the sanctions which could be applied will be included within the final Construction Traffic Management Plan". ECC does not consider this is acceptable as it does not see why potential corrective actions cannot be included now to enable discussions to progress as	Section 6.3 of **7.3 Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan [Revision E]** has been updated to include additional information on the enforcement and potential sanctions. • The Applicant will take all reasonable steps to avoid any breach of the CTMP through the implementation of the management measures. However, should any breaches occur, then enforcement procedures will be followed: • Stage One: The Transport Co-ordinator will notify National Grid of any breaches of the CTMP arrangements as and when they occur, or the relevant highway authority will confirm a breach and request the Transport Co-ordinator to review the data and concerns. The relevant highway authority and the Transport Co-ordinator would then agree the extent of the breach of controls, and agree action, which is likely to be a contractor warning at this stage. • Stage Two: If a further material breach is identified, National Grid will issue a warning letter to the relevant contractor outlining what action would be taken in the event of any further non-compliance (in general terms). The contractor will then be required to produce an action plan to outline how the issue would be rectified and any additional mitigation measures proposed. • Stage Three: Should further breaches continue to occur, the contractor would be required to remove the offender from site and the contractor/ supplier would receive a formal warning. Any continued breaches by individuals of the supplier/ contractor may be dealt with by the formal dispute procedures of the contract.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			part of the Final CTMP produced by the Contractor. Providing potential actions would enable the Contractor to understand the types of interventions that are to be considered and shows the importance of remaining within or at the level of impact assessed. In response to the ExQ's question, ECC believe a cap would be clearer and a more definite approach compared to the that taken in the CTMP which sets out the three month forecast and consideration of material change. Both are trying to achieve the same aim in terms of providing accountability on the impacts that have been assessed as part of the application but the approach in the CTMP includes flexibility on the threshold (i.e. whether the Applicant believes there to be a material change or not). The three month forecast monitoring approach proposed could work with a cap in place but as discussed above, there would need to be more consideration in how all vehicles are captured. It should be noted that whatever approach is taken the Applicant should include ready made solutions to mitigate the additional impact in the Outline CTMP (refer to REP3-078) should the number of vehicles be higher than assessed.	
			National Highways The need for any caps on the number of HGVs is dependent on the impact of the development traffic. Therefore, from NH's perspective, any caps on HGVs would need to be agreed once the traffic impact on the SRN has been fully understood and agreed.	This is noted by the Applicant. The Applicant has committed to a monitoring and management approach in Section 5.4.18 and 5.4.18 in **7.3 Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan [Revision E]**. The Main Works Contractor(s) will discuss with National Highways where appropriate.
			Thurrock Council The Council notes that Muckingford Road is subject to a prohibition on HGV movements and remains available for Light Goods Vehicles only. The Council considers that this restriction should continue to be observed throughout the construction period. The Council considers it reasonable that construction vehicle and workforce traffic should be capped at the forecast levels assessed within the Transport Assessment and supporting Environmental Statement documentation. The Council notes the Applicant's position that the forecast traffic levels are supported by robust assessment and monitoring arrangements. The Council further notes the monitoring and reporting procedures set out within the Outline CTMP. Where forecast traffic levels are exceeded, the Council would expect the Applicant to notify the	Muckingford Road: The prohibition of HGV movements on Muckingford road will be captured through the route adherence monitoring, detailed in section 6.4.1 **7.3 Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan [Revision E].** Potential exceedance of forecast traffic levels Section 5.4.19 of **7.3 Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan [Revision E]** details that where any potential exceedances are predicted, where they have the potential to introduce materially new or materially different effects, the Main Works Contractors will discuss with the Local Highway Authorities, where appropriate. A monitoring framework, which will include potentially mitigations, will be detailed within the final CTMP. These mitigations will be implemented with the intention to

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			relevant highway authorities, undertake an assessment of the causes and impacts of the exceedance, and implement appropriate mitigation measures to prevent recurrence. The Council acknowledges that there may be circumstances outside the Applicant's control which affect traffic movements and route selection. In such circumstances, the use of agreed contingency routes may be appropriate, subject to agreement with the relevant highway authorities and appropriate monitoring to ensure that traffic levels do not exceed those assessed within the Transport Assessment.	reduce and remove the any identification of materially new or materially different effects. <u>Contingency Routes:</u> The Applicant has documented their approach to Contingency Routes in Section 5.4.21 to 5.4.23 of **7.3 Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan [Revision E]**. Section 5.4.23 details that, where required, the Main Works Contractor(s) will propose the estimated frequency of the use of the contingency routes and share information with the LHA.
			Norfolk County Council NCC have not made any comments but are happy with this approach. As per our comments on TT 2.9, the three-month window could be monthly or even weekly.	This is noted by the Applicant.
TT 2.12	The applicant National Highways Essex County Council Thurrock Council Norfolk County Council	Abnormal Indivisible Loads (AIL) 1 Thank you for the updates on structural assessments for AIL routes provided at deadline 4. For clarification, please explain the expectation for undertaking the remaining structural assessments on AIL routes and outline what measures will be taken, and how they are secured in the draft DCO, if structural assessments fail.	**National Highways** NH have advised the applicant to submit its proposals via the formal ESDAL process as this is the most efficient and effective way in which to identify the structures which will need to be assessed. The passage of AIL's can be arranged in line with NH's usual processes for the notification for AIL movements on the network, with any resulting highway works authorised by way of an agreement, having followed the procedures in its template protective provisions. Accordingly, it is not clear why any measures required would need to be secured in the DCO, since the applicant will need to address them in order to be able to utilise those routes or, alternatively, use a different route.	Noted and agreed.
			Essex County Council It is understood that there are 13 assets yet to have Structural Assessments undertaken, and possibly 10 more awaiting on next steps to be agreed. ECC also understands that the Applicant's Team have started some of the outstanding assessments, but it is not clear when they will be available. It is difficult to quantify how long a Technical Review of the Structural Assessment will take to complete as it depends on a number of factors including the workload of the Authority at the time, the quality of the submission, the subsequent responses made by the Applicant, the results of the analysis, whether more information is required and if there is disagreement on the assessment. In our experience	The Applicant notes the comments raised and welcome the continued colaborative enagement. The AIL Strategy document is not a secured, approved document within the DCO. AIL routeing will be secured through the formal ESDAL process, where the items raised will be considered by the Main Works Contractor as the AIL routes are assessed and confirmed. As such, it is not appropriate to revise the AIL Strategy as suggested.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			assessments following due process, usually take around a year to complete. On this basis, ECC believe it is highly unlikely that the assessments and any discussions on the outcomes of these assessments will be completed by the end of the examination in August 2026. However, ECC will continue to work with the Applicant to try to deal with the assessments in an efficient manner when they are submitted so as to try and achieve reasonable timescales. On the basis that the AIL Strategy document forms an approved document in the DCO, the following is suggested as an approach to follow when structural assessments identify a problem with an asset. • The AIL Strategy document should be updated to reflect the latest position prior to the end of the examination with a summary table/plan of all the structures identified as being required to support AIL movements and their current status, along with the current status of the specific AIL routes. • There should be a commitment in the AIL Strategy to complete the review of the routes beyond the Examination and a Technical Note produced setting out a summary of the final routes submitted to the Local Planning and Highway Authorities, National Highways and Network Rail. • Should issues be identified that affect the use of an Asset that cannot be dealt with through mitigation agreed with the Relevant Highway Authorities, National Highways and Network Rail (where appropriate) then the Applicant will need to consider an alternative routing strategy. This would need to be discussed with the Relevant Highway Authority and / or PINS to determine if the alternative routing strategy represents a material change or introduces materially different effects from those assessed as part of the DCO application and agree next steps to authorise the alternative. ECC considers an example of a material change which could result in materially different effects is if AILs could not use the A12 around Colchester due to structural issues and instead an alternative route had to be proposed through Colchester Town via the local highway network • In line with standard practice, the Applicant will be submitting the AIL routes they intend to use prior to construction to the Local Highway Authorities and Police. The submission will be reviewed at the time	

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			and the use of the route approved or denied. The assumption is that the routes submitted will be based on the routes included in the AIL Strategy document as part of the DCO as these have been assessed. A commitment to this assumption is required in the AIL Strategy document.	
			Thurrock Council The Council notes that the Applicant has identified two highway structures within Thurrock that may be affected by AIL movements, namely the A1014 Stanford-le-Hope Railway Bridge and the A1014 Manorway / Stanford-le-Hope Road Bridge. The Council considers that, in addition to the principal structures identified, other highway assets such as retaining walls, embankments and culverts should be appropriately reviewed to ensure that all potentially affected are assessed prior to commencement of AIL movements. Should any structure be found incapable of accommodating the proposed AIL movements, the Council considers that the Applicant should be responsible for identifying, funding and implementing any necessary mitigation measures to the satisfaction of the relevant highway authority. The Council notes that suitable alternative routes for AIL movements may be limited and therefore considers it important that any structural constraints are identified and resolved at the earliest opportunity.	Noted. The AIL routes and any required assessments will be secured via the ESDAL process.
TT 2.13	The applicant Essex Police Suffolk Constabulary	AILs 2 Since ISH2 and submissions at deadline 4, please update the ExA on engagement between the applicant and the joint forces regarding AILs and update the ExA on any further discussions that may have taken place since the deadline 4 submissions.	**Essex Police and Suffolk Constabulary** On 8 June 2026, the Joint Forces attended a meeting with the Applicant. This meeting was attended by legal representatives for both parties at which the Joint Forces and the Applicant discussed the mechanisms that will be required to legally secure the mitigation required by the Joint Forces. The Joint Forces and the Applicant are scheduled to attend a further meeting on 12 June 2026. At this meeting, the Applicant will provide the Joint Forces with an update on its AIL strategy and movements, and further discuss numerous outstanding issues identified by the Joint Forces in the statement of common ground ("SoCG"). The Joint Forces wish to refer the ExA to the revised SoCGs that were uploaded as part of the Applicant's Deadline 5 submissions. It is therefore anticipated the Joint Forces and the Applicant will be in a position to record further progress at Deadline 6.	The Applicant welcomes Essex Police's and Suffolk Constabulary's response to TT 2.13. The Applicant and the Joint Forces held further meetings on 12 June and 1 July 2026. The next meeting is scheduled for 29 July 2026. The revised SoCGs to be submitted at Deadline 7 will record further progress made on matters discussed since ISH2.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
TT 2.15	The applicant Network Rail	Network Rail The SoCG with Network Rail [REP4-099] states that crossing agreements are progressing, will these be complete by the close of the examination and if not, how can the ExA be assured that they will be completed and how is this secured in the draft DCO	**Network Rail Infrastructure Limited** We hope to reach agreement prior to the close of examination on the various agreements required, and negotiations are progressing between the Parties. Should it not be possible to secure these via agreement prior to the close of examination, Network Rail's preferred form of protective provisions (should the ExA be minded to grant the Order) include requirements for the Applicant to enter into an asset protection agreement. We understand the Applicant does not have any objections to the principal of being required to enter into an asset protection agreement, albeit at present the draft order does not contain any protective provisions for the benefit of railway interests. Further, in NR's preferred protective provisions the restrictions on CPO powers without NR's consent contained would ensure protection of the railway, and would require the necessary agreements to be in place prior to granting of consent as appropriate.	Negotiations are continuing between the Applicant and Network Rail, with the aim of reaching a formal agreement between the parties. In the meantime, **3.1 Draft Development Consent Order [Revision F]** includes the Applicant's preferred form of protective provisions for the protection of railway interests. These require the Applicant to enter into an asset protection agreement, basic asset protection agreement or both (as shall be reasonably determined by Network Rail to regulate the construction and maintenance of the 'specified work' in a form reasonably prescribed from time to time by Network Rail) prior to the carrying out of any 'specified work'. The Applicant considers that its preferred form of protective provisions secures the protection of Network Rail's operational assets for the reasons given in **8.29.9 Application under Section 127 Planning Act 2008 – Network Rail Infrastructure Limited [Revision A]**.

16. Water environment – flood risk, hydrology and drainage

Table 16.1 Water environment – flood risk, hydrology and drainage

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
WE 2.1	Water Management Alliance Essex County Council Thurrock Council Suffolk County Council Norfolk County Council	Drainage Strategy Please provide comments on the updated drainage strategy submitted at deadline 4 **[REP4-186]**.	**Water Management Alliance** WMA has reviewed the updated drainage strategy [REP4-186]. We provide the following comments: 1) Section 2.3.9: Maximum discharge rates for SuDS features: WMA welcomes the Applicant's recognition of the IDBs' required discharge rates within the Boards' districts. We would highlight that even where proposed discharge rates are within these limits, discharge into ordinary watercourses within the IDB districts still requires Board consent (see point 4). 2) Section 3.2.2: Ordinary watercourse definition. It is incorrect to state that "ordinary watercourses regulated by an IDB are usually named". We suggest the following text is substituted: "Those regulated by an IDB, which include all named and unnamed ordinary watercourses within the Board's district." 3) Section 3.2.4 states, "An assessment of the works has been undertaken to locate crossings of Main Rivers and Ordinary Watercourses, and to identify the relevant regulatory body for each Ordinary Watercourse. ExQ2 Question to: Question: Response from Water Management Alliance, dated 10th June 2026 These crossings are detailed in 6.4.A2 Environmental Statement Appendix 4.2 - Watercourse Crossing Details [APP-132]." However, Appendix 4.2 includes neither grid references nor the relevant regulatory body for each crossing. It would be helpful to have this information in one place to support our assessment of the number, location and risk of each crossing to the IDBs. WMA considers that both the Drainage Strategy and Appendix 4.2 should clearly state that IDB consent is needed for watercourse crossings within the Boards' Internal Drainage Districts, and the locations of these.	1. The requirement for the Applicant to gain approvals for discharging into ordinary watercourses within the Boards' districts is noted and is secured via the approval of plans mechanism detailed in the Protective Provisions. 2. The requested update has been made in the Outline Drainage Strategy Report, which has been resubmitted to the examination at Deadline 6 (**8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [Revision C]**). 3. The Applicant confirms that the information requested on watercourse crossing locations has been provided at Deadline 6, through an update to **6.4.A2 Environmental Statement Appendix 4.2 - Watercourse Crossing Details [Revision B]**, to which grid references have been added for each crossing location. 4, 5 and 6. The requested updates has been made in the Outline Drainage Strategy Report, which has been resubmitted to the examination at Deadline 6 (**8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [Revision C]**). 7. The Applicant confirms that the information requested on watercourse crossing locations has been provided at Deadline 6, through an update to **6.4.A2 Environmental Statement Appendix 4.2 - Watercourse Crossing Details [Revision B]**, to which grid references have been added for each crossing location. The Applicant confirms that further engagement with the Water Management Alliance (WMA) is required throughout detailed design. The further information the WMA requests will be provided following the DCO Examination as secured by the Surface Water Management Plan that is secured via commitment GG22 within **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]**. The Applicant has updated the drainage strategy (**8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [Revision C]**), to explicitly name the Water Management Alliance in paragraph 1.2.1.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			4) It is not explicit within the drainage strategy that Internal Drainage Board (IDB) consent is required for discharges into watercourses (other than Main Rivers) within the Internal Drainage Districts. At several points within the drainage strategy, for example sections 5.4 and 6.5, reference is made to consent being required from Environment Agency or Lead Local Flood Authority, but no reference is made to IDB consent requirement. We suggest section 5.4.6 should be reworded to read as follows: "5.4.6 Constructing an outfall to the river would require consent from the Environment Agency where an outfall is to a Main River, and the LLFA or IDB where an outfall is to an Ordinary Watercourse, depending on whether the outfall is within an IDB district." 5) Similarly, the drainage strategy does not explicitly acknowledge the requirement for IDB consent for works within 7m or 9m (depending upon the Board concerned) of an arterial watercourse within an Internal Drainage District. We suggest that section 6.5.5 should be amended to read as follows: ExQ2 Question to: Question: Response from Water Management Alliance, dated 10th June 2026 "Works within 8 (EA) or 7 or 9 (IDB) metres from the top of a watercourse bank may also require consent. Consultation should be undertaken with the Environment Agency and Internal Drainage Board (where within an Internal Drainage District) to determine whether consent is needed." 6) Section 9.3.1 In addition to agreements with the landowner, LLFA and/or the Environment Agency, this section of the drainage strategy should include reference to the requirement for consultation and agreement with the relevant IDB in relation to the removal of temporary structures (including bridges and culverts) within the Internal Drainage Districts. 7) Drainage Strategy Appendix A, Table A.1 Section A and B (Norwich Main Substation, RG Overhead Line Alignment, Bramford Substation), and Appendix B Indicative Drainage Figures (refers to 8.2.1 Drainage Strategy – Appendix B [Revision A] [REP4-188]): Appendix B of the	8. The Applicant is committed to continued engagement with all relevant drainage authorities in developing the detailed drainage designs. This is secured through commitment GG22 within **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]**. Watercourse crossing designs will also require IDB authorisation via submission of detailed plans, as set out in the Protective Provisions.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			Drainage Strategy [REP4-186] explains that "the details shown in [REP4-188] are indicative only", that "drainage collection systems will be designed at a later design stage", and that "indicative outfall locations for the overhead line attenuation features have not currently been depicted". Further, Appendix B of [REP4-186] states that "outfall locations where required, would discharge to locations within the Order limits." The current lack of grid references for each proposed attenuation / infiltration pond and their outfalls makes it difficult to say whether IDB consent will be required for discharge of water from these ponds. However, given that the overhead line route crosses parts of three IDB districts, it is likely that the Boards will be the Consenting body for some of the pond discharges. The Drainage Strategy should acknowledge the need for the Applicant to discuss discharge consenting requirements with the Boards when the drainage collection systems are designed. 8) ExQ2 Question to: Question: Response from Water Management Alliance, dated 10th June 2026 For ease of reference, we have referred to IDB consents in this submission, but note that the proposed disapplication of section 23 of the Land Drainage Act 1991 and use of Protective Provisions for Drainage Authorities (discussed further at WE 2.3) will mean that the usual IDB consenting process will be replaced by IDB authorisation of detailed plans, as set out in the Protective rovisions. This does not remove the need for the Applicant to engage fully with the affected IDBs during development of detailed drainage design (including outfall location, discharge rate, impermeable area drained, and headwall design) and watercourse crossing design (including existing watercourse dimensions, and proposed pipe, culvert or bridge dimensions) where these affect Internal Drainage Districts.	

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			Essex County Council ECC has reviewed the latest iteration of the Drainage Strategy as submitted by the Applicant at Deadline 4 and has the following comments: i) At 5.2.8 The table shows incorrect Climate change allowances. It should be noted that while the table on the EA's Climate change allowance webpages does refer to a 40% allowance for the 2070's epoch for some locations in Essex, this should be read in conjunction with the exemption not on the previous page, which highlights that if the allowance for the 2050s epoch is greater this should be used instead. While it is noted that 45% will be applied as standard to promote consistency. The following values should be updated in the table to ensure that minimum requirements are correctly represented. The EACN Substation - 45% Climate change allowance. The Fairstead CSE compound - 45% Climate change allowance. Tilbury North Substation - 45% Climate change allowance. CSE compound related to modifications to the existing YYJ infrastructure - 45% Climate change allowance. ii) At 5.4.27 It was noted that while most features are proposed for removal on completion of temporary works this is not the case for some culverts. On this basis ECC's approach to review of culverts will assume permeance unless it is specifically highlighted that culverts will not remain post completion of temporary works. iii) 5.6.8 Where possible sediment forebays should be retained in attenuation features to provide improved water quality benefits to the main body of water contained in the feature. iv) Appendix A While it is noted that appendix A contains information about discharge rates and storage volumes, there is not enough context for the LLFA to be able to comment on whether these figures are appropriate at this stage. v) Appendix B Drainage Strategy Details lack appropriate detail to allow comment on this section for the strategy. However, is it noted that detailed design for each location will be reviewed as part of the detailed design process. vi) Appendix C Where possible attenuation feature should include sediment forebays to support maintenance of the feature and to	i) Table 5.1 has been updated in the Deadline 6 submission **8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [Revision C]** to reflect a 45% allowance for the remaining errata. This change does not materially alter the original assessment of the drainage strategy as all locations have already been assessed with a 45% allowance as noted in paragraph 5.2.9. ii) This is noted. iii) and vi) The Applicant notes this comment and has amended paragraph 5.6.8 in **8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [Revision C]** to acknowledge that where required and possible, sediment forebays are to be retained in attenuation features to provide improved water quality benefits to the main body of water contained in the feature. This would be considered in accordance with the outline water quality controls as set out in Section 6 of **8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [Revision C]**. v) and v) As noted, the Applicant will be providing further information during detailed design, and the LLFA will be able to provide authorisations for applicable drainage works via the approval of detailed plans process, as set out in the Protective Provisions. Further information will be provided following the DCO Examination as secured by the Surface Water Management Plan that is secured via commitment GG22 within **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]**.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			ensure that water quality in the main body of water is improved. This matter continues to be discussed through the SoCG.	
			Norfolk County Council The LLFA has provided a separate written response that reviews each of our previous comments against the updated Drainage Strategy.	Noted. The Applicant has considered Norfolk County Council LLFA's new comments **[REP5-257]**. Norfolk County Council's original comments were responded to directly within **8.4.9 Applicant's Comments on any Further Information or Submissions Received by Deadline 3 [REP4-298]**. Not all comments resulted in an update to **8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [Revision C]**. Therefore, the Applicant considers some comments which have been indicated as 'partially resolved' or 'not resolved' as having been progressed already. The Applicant has responded in Appendix A. The Applicant has drafted responses and updated the Drainage Strategy where appropriate in support of continued engagement and consultation with Norfolk County Council and the other LLFAs.
			Thurrock Council The Council notes the comments provided by the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) in relation to the updated drainage strategy and has no additional observations to make at this stage. The LLFA's comments are provided in Appendix B – Comments on the Applicant's updated documents. The Council will continue to have regard to the advice of the LLFA as discussions progress through the examination.	The Applicant welcomes further engagement with Thurrock Council as an LLFA, which will continue as the examination progresses and, should the Project be granted consent, thereafter during detailed design.
			Suffolk County Council SCC (LLFA) has provided comments on [REP4-186] in its Comments on Submissions Received at Deadline 4.	The Applicant has provided responses to these comments and has shared these with SCC (LLFA) and will continue to engage to resolve any outstanding matters. The Applicant has provided responses in **8.4.14 Applicant's Comments on any Further Information or Submissions Received by Deadline 5 [Revision A]**.
WE 2.2	Water Management Alliance Essex County Council Thurrock Council Suffolk County Council	Progress with agreement of issues The applicant states that it is confident that drainage issues can be resolved by close of the examination, please explain if you consider this an accurate reflection of progress and if there	**Water Management Alliance** 1) WMA and the Applicant have been engaging to develop a Statement of Common Ground. The latest version of this, incorporating WMA comments, is document [REP4-087], submitted	1. 1 The Applicant welcomes this comment from the Water Management Alliance. 2. a) The Applicant and WMA have made signficant progress on the terms of the

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
	Norfolk County Council	are specific matters you consider are at risk of not being agreed by the close of the examination.	at deadline 4. This document reflects WMA's current view on matters agreed and yet to be agreed. 2) REP4-087 sets out matters that remain under discussion. These include matters relating to draft DCO wording (including Article 20: Discharge of Water and Schedule 16, Part 3, Protective rovisions for Drainage and Flood Authorities); Cost Recovery, Watercourse crossing methods, and the Drainage Strategy. A brief note on progress with each matter is given below: a) WMA continues to engage with the Applicant, via legal representation, regarding the DCO wording issues. Whilst some agreement has been reached with regards to some areas of wording within the Protective Provisions, neither the matters regarding Article 20 nor the Protective Provisions have yet been resolved. WMA is expecting a further response from the Applicant on these matters. The Applicant has stated that "further responses will be provided in the next revision of the Statement of Common Ground at Deadline 5"; until this is received WMA cannot predict whether these matters will be agreed by the close of the examination. b) The Applicant has agreed cost recovery for legal review of the Protective Provisions, but wider cost recovery for officer time spent on the Project has not yet been agreed. Again, the Applicant states that further responses will be provided at Deadline 5. c) Similarly, WMA awaits further responses from the Applicant in the next revision of the Statement of Common Ground at Deadline 5 regarding watercourse crossing methods. WMA does not consider that its position, set out in REP4-087, differs from the Applicant's position on this matter and therefore it is envisaged that this matter will be agreed by close of the examination. To be clear, this does not mean that WMA approves the proposed watercourse crossing methods set out in 6.4.A2 Environmental Statement Appendix 4.2 - Watercourse d) Crossing Details [APP-132] (either assumed closed culvert or bridge) at all of the crossings proposed within the IDBs' Internal Drainage	protective provisions which are now included in **3.1 Draft DCO [Revision F]**. The Applicant is liaising with the WMA in relation to any necessary updates to Article 20 of the draft DCO. b) The Applicant notes the Water Management Alliance agreement on cost recovery for legal review of Protective Provisions, and are looking to close out wider cost recovery at Deadline 7. c) The Applicant confirms that the information requested on watercourse crossing locations has been provided at Deadline 6, through an updated **6.4.A2 Environmental Statement Appendix 4.2 - Watercourse Crossing Details [Revision B]**, to which grid references have been added for each crossing location. d) The Applicant has updated **8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [Revision C]** to explicitly set out the requirement for IDB consents for discharge into watercourses. The Applicant has completed the requested updates in the subsequent comments and has updated the stakeholder information in Paragraph 2.3.1. 3. The Applicant will continue to engage with the WMA to resolve outstanding matters before the end of the examination.

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			Districts, but means that the process for Board approval of these watercourse crossings has been agreed, and will require the Boards' consideration of detailed crossing designs, which are not available at this stage. e) Finally, matters relating to the Drainage Strategy have been covered in detail in WMA's response to ExQ2 WE 2.1 (above) within this submission. WMA considers that the strategy fails to explicitly set out the requirement for IDB consents for discharge ExQ2 Question to: Question: Response from Water Management Alliance, dated 10th June 2026 into watercourses – to be delivered via the approvals process set out in the Protective rovisions – and the requirement for the Applicant to engage with the Boards as drainage authorities whilst developing detailed drainage plans, which will not be available before the end of the examination process. WMA awaits the Applicant's updates at Deadline 5. 1) WMA will continue to engage with the Applicant with a view to resolving these outstanding matters before the end of the examination if possible.	
			Essex County Council ECC as the LLFA does not believe that there are any issues that are unresolvable as part of the drainage design. Following an initial meeting with the detailed design team, ECC will confirm design principles, and then review detailed design by geographic section as supplied to the LLFA.	The Applicant welcomes this position and will continue to work with the LLFA in developing the detailed designs for the Project.
			Norfolk County Council It is not clear to the LLFA if this is possible to resolve, due to the limited amount of consultation with the LLFA by the applicant to date and the limited amendments made so far to the drainage strategy would indicate a reluctance to engage in resolving these issues.	The Applicant is continuing to engage with NCC (LLFA) to resolve any matters still under discussion, with progress being made, through further updates to **8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [Revision C]**, submitted at Deadline 6, and documented within the SoCG between the parties.
			Thurrock Council The Council notes the Lead Local Flood Authority's advice that a number of outstanding drainage matters remain under discussion.	The Applicant continues to engage with Thurrock Council LLFA and to share the additional information that has been requested regarding flood risk and drainage matters. At a meeting on 19 June 2026, Thurrock Council LLFA noted that

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			Accordingly, the Council does not consider it appropriate at this stage to conclude that all matters will be resolved by the close of examination and will continue to monitor progress the outstanding issues.	this information had addressed several queries and the parties made further progress in moving matters documented within the Statement of Common Ground to an 'Agreed' status, and identified a number of actions that could be completed by the Applicant to resolve further matters. This progress will be reflected in the Deadline 7 submission of the Statement of Common Ground.
			Suffolk County Council SCC (LLFA) confirms that this is an accurate reflection of progress and are working towards an agreed strategy with the Applicant. The Council's position is therefore that matters, as stated in the SoCG, are likely to be agreed before the close of the examination.	The Applicant welcomes this update from SCC (LLFA) and is continuing to engage to resolve any matters still under discussion, with progress being made and documented within the SoCG between the parties.
WE 2.3	Water Management Alliance Essex County Council Thurrock Council Suffolk County Council Norfolk County Council	Disapplication of section 23 of the Land Drainage Act 1991 Further to applicants reply to WE 1.9, please confirm acceptance, or otherwise, to the disapplication of section 23 of the Land Drainage Act 1991 and provide an update on your consideration of the applicants proposed protective provisions in this regard.	**Water Management Alliance** Water Management Alliance, on behalf of the three affected Internal Drainage Boards (Norfolk Rivers IDB; Waveney, Lower Yare & Lothingland IDB; and East Suffolk Water Management Board), accepts the disapplication of section 23 of the Land Drainage Act 1991, subject to agreement of satisfactory protective provisions for the drainage authorities (which include the IDBs). 2. Water Management Alliance is continuing to liaise with the Applicant in relation to the detail of the protective provisions for Drainage Authorities. Whilst the bulk of the protective provisions are acceptable to WMA, there remain several outstanding areas of disagreement; these are being negotiated via legal representation of both parties (WMA and the Applicant). WMA's latest response was provided to the Applicant on 15th May 2026, and a further response from the Applicant is awaited.	The Applicant and WMA have made signficant progress on the terms of the protective provisions which are now included in **3.1 Draft DCO [Revision F]**. The Applicant is liasing with the WMA in relation to any necessary updates to Article 20 of the draft DCO.
			Essex County Council ECC can confirm that it is in discussion with the Applicant regarding the use of protective provisions which once agreed, will mean the Council has no objection to the disapplication of Section 23 of the Land Drainage Act 1991	The Applicant is continuing to engage with ECC to reach agreement on a set of protective provisions to allow disapplication of Section 23 of the Land Drainage Act 1991.
			Norfolk County Council Norfolk LLFA does not accept the disapplication of Section 23 of the Land Drainage Act 1991 due	NCC provided the Applicant with a list of amendments considered necessary to allow for NCC's agreement to the set of protective provisions offered on 25 June 2026. The

Reference	Question to	Question	Response from Interested Parties or Affected Person	Applicant's Comment
			to the additional requirements the applicant seeks to place on the LLFA that are not present in the Land Drainage Act 1991. The LLFA have tried to discuss this with the applicant who have been reluctant to engage in a constructive manner.	Applicant returned the protective provisions taking into account all of these amendments, save for one, on 3 July 2026 and awaits a response from NCC.
			Thurrock Council The Council notes the advice of the Lead Local Flood Authority that discussion remains ongoing regarding the proposed protective provisions and the implications of the proposed disapplication of Section 23 of the Land Drainage Act 1991. The Council therefore considers that this matter remains unresolved at this stage and reserves its position pending the outcome of those discussions.	The Applicant is continuing to engage with Thurrock Council to reach agreement on a set of protective provisions to allow disapplication of Section 23 of the Land Drainage Act 1991.
			Suffolk County Council SCC (LLFA) does not agree to the disapplication of section 23 of the Land Drainage Act 1991, as indicated in [REP4 336]. If the Applicant's proposed Protective Provisions are in accordance with the determination period as set out in Section 23 of the Land Drainage Act 1991 then SCC could find these agreeable.	SCC provided the Applicant with a list of amendments considered necessary to allow for SCC's agreement to the set of protective provisions offered on 25 June 2026. The Applicant returned the protective provisions taking into account all of these amendments, save for one, on 3 July 2026 and awaits a response from SCC.

Appendix A. Norfolk County Council REP5-257, LLFA Review of Drainage Strategy

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Appendix A Norfolk County Council REP5-257, LLFA Review of Drainage Strategy

A.1.1 Table A.1 provides the Applicant's response to **[REP5-257]** submitted at Deadline 5 by Norfolk County Council. **[REP5-257]** provides NCC's response to WE 2.1 and provides an update on its position on matters relating to the Drainage Strategy prepared by the Applicant. In doing so, it provides an update on NCC's previous comments in **[REP3-083]**. The table below provides both of these comments as set out by NCC in **[REP5-257]**, and then provides the Applicant's response.

Table A.1 Applicant's Responses to Norfolk County Council REP5-257, LLFA Review of Drainage Strategy

Norfolk County Council's Previous Comment [REP3-083]	Norfolk County Council's Comment [REP5-257]	Applicant's Comment
In section 2.3.5 the applicant states that NCC as LLFA gave guidance that the FSR rainfall calculation method could be used. This is not correct. The LLFA did not indicate that. We referred to our LLFA Developer Guidance which is freely available online. The LLFA's Developer Guidance is clear the FEH is the preferred method of rainfall calculation. Therefore, the LLFA is aware that at present this paragraph is incorrect and requires amendment. Further work is required.	Resolved - Amendment made.	The Applicant notes that this item is now considered resolved.
The LLFA notes that in Table 2.3, the applicant incorrectly titles and references the Norfolk Highways Drainage Design standards rather than the LLFA Developer Guidance. It is not clear to the LLFA, how the applicant was not able to identify that the Drainage Design standards related to the Highways design when they information was found under the highways section of the website and has continued reference to the disposal of surface water from a public highway rather than looking of the LLFA's Flood and Water Management pages where the LLFA's Developer Guidance is freely available https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/article/38642/Information-for-developers [Applicant note: hyperlink has not been included here, please see original REP5-257 for hyperlink]. It is clear the applicant had accessed areas of the Flood and Water Management pages to obtain the Local Flood Risk management Strategy. Therefore, it is not clear why the LLFA Developer Guidance has not been used to support the development of this proposed Drainage Strategy. As the base assumptions for the proposed drainage strategy and surface water management design within the Norfolk area have not been founded on the appropriate guidance, Norfolk LLFA is concerned that as a consequence, there will be continued divergence from the Norfolk LLFA Guidance. Further work is like to be required.	Resolved - Amendments made.	The Applicant notes that this item is now considered resolved.
Norfolk LLFA also notes that Table 2.3 does not reference the updated version of the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (2018). It is clear the applicant has reviewed the correct page which is referenced (footnote 5 on page 12 of the Drainage Strategy). However, the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy Policy Review 2021 is in the section immediately below the link to the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2015. Therefore, the Drainage Strategy has not considered the latest available policy information in Norfolk. Further work and information is required.	Resolved – Amendments made.	The Applicant notes that this item is now considered resolved.

Norfolk County Council's Previous Comment [REP3-083]	Norfolk County Council's Comment [REP5-257]	Applicant's Comment
In section 2.5.3, the LLFA notes the applicant references the now superseded Defra Non-statutory Technical Standards for SuDs. It is not clear to the LLFA why the new National Standards for Sustainable Drainage that were published on 30th July 2025 have not been referred to. The LLFA notes there are other older documents that are referred to when there are more recent relevant publications that should be considered. For example, the applicant has referenced the Environment Agency's 2012 Rural Sustainable Drainage Systems rather than the more recently published Natural Flood Management Manual by CIRIA (2022) which provides updated and detailed technical design guidance on many of the methods identified in the Rural Sustainable Drainage Systems. The LLFA is concerned the applicant is not using the latest relevant guidance and practices in the proposed design, which is reducing the LLFA's confidence in the Drainage Strategy at this time. Further work and information is required.	Partly Resolved – The new National Standards for Sustainable Drainage have been referred to along with the Natural Flood Management Manual. However, the superceded Rural SuDS document continues to be referred to.	The Applicant has removed reference to the Defra Non-Statutory Technical Standards for SuDS. By referencing the National Standards for Sustainable Drainage and the Natural Flood Management Manual in paragraph 2.5.3 in **8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [Revision C]**, the Applicant acknowledges that these are more recent documents and should be considered in the first instance.
The LLFA notes that in section 2.5.2, the applicant's specification of the minimum criteria for the site drainage does not consider the inclusion of climate change allowances. Therefore, the proposed design criteria is not future proof. This is in contradiction to section 4.10 of the National Policy Statement for Energy 1, which clearly states "If new energy infrastructure is not sufficiently resilient against the possible impacts of climate change, it will not be able to satisfy the energy needs as outlined in Part 3 of this NPS." Further work and information is required.	Not Resolved - The applicant has not included the statements in the bullet pointed specification that demonstrate that climate change is included.	The Applicant has updated paragraph 2.5.2 in **8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [Revision C]** to clarify that Table 5.2 contains the applied design storm events with climate change.
The LLFA notes the Drainage Strategy is not based upon site specific topographic data as confirmed by the applicant in section 3.1.1 to 3.1.6. While the LLFA can appreciate the applicant may have a few gaps in the baseline data, topography is a key data set for so many design matters. In relation to flood risk and surface water drainage, it is important in defining catchment areas, design calculations and mitigation measure designs. Therefore, it is not clear to the LLFA why this data is not available to support the early design development. Further work and information is required.	Partly Resolved - The applicant has provided further information about additional Lidar data that was collected along the route of the scheme. However, while the additional explanation is informative the data gaps appear to continue, as it is not clear whether the Bluesky Survey infilled the data gaps within the OS Terrain 5 data. It is noted the vertical accuracy of the OS Terrian 5 data is up to 2 m and a 1.5 m root mean square error. This is a coarse set of data and it continues to be unclear where this data has been used. Further information and clarification is required.	The information the LLFA requests on topography will be provided following the DCO Examination as secured by the Surface Water Management Plan that is secured via commitment GG22 within **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]**. LiDAR data have been collected across the majority of the Project. In the limited instances where these data are not available, topographical information has been drawn from OS Terrain 5 data. Although a coarser dataset, given the limited areas to which it has been applied and the purpose of this outline drainage strategy, it is considered sufficient for identifying the general topographical conditions. Detailed topographic surveys will be completed by the Main Works Contractor(s) in the detailed design and set out in the Main Works Contractor's Surface Water Management Plan as secured in commitment GG22, in **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]**. The LiDAR data captured the existing ground elevation above ordnance datum (AOD) in mid-late 2023. Where the Project alignment has subsequently changed as set out and detailed in **7.21 2024 - Design Development Report for the Project [APP-359]** and **5.15 Design Development Report [APP-122]**, these changes represent locations where OS Terrain 5 data may have been used, as the extent of the original LiDAR coverage may not have been sufficient to capture the developed Project alignment.

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In sections 3.1.7 to 3.1.9, the applicant indicates the site area of the Norwich Main Substation to be on "relatively flat ground" even though there is a 5m variation in level across the site. While in section 3.1.9 for RG Overhead Line Alignment (in Sections A and B) the applicant indicates the "topography is generally flatter" in the northern section of the route with a 30 m variation in levels while in the southern section has a greater variation in levels of approximately 57m. These descriptions are too vague over such a wide area. For example, section 3.1.9 covers the area between Norwich to Bramford. Therefore, this could not be considered informative in relation to surface water management as a number of catchments and discreet catchment areas would be included along this route. Further, more suitably detailed information is required as this stage.	Partly Resolved - The applicant has removed the statement of "There are no steep slopes or rapid changes in elevation" and "however, slopes are still relatively shallow and rolling". There is now an inclusion of text that references 2.7 Elevation Drawings - Overhead Line Profiles - Part 1 of 2 [APP-044]. These drawings are not easy to interpret but they do give an indication of the topographic levels in relation to the proposed overhead lines. However, due to the scale and notes on the drawings, the levels appear to be indicative and focus only on the levels on the centerline below the overhead line route. The LLFA continues to request more suitable detailed information at this stage.	The information the LLFA requests on topography will be provided following the DCO Examination as secured by the Surface Water Management Plan that is secured via commitment GG22 within **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]**.
The definition of the "main rivers" and "ordinary watercourses" in section 3.2.2 is not consistent with the legal definitions in the Water Resources Act 1991 and the Land Drainage Act 1991. To confirm, in legal terms there are only two types of watercourse in England; Main River and Ordinary Watercourse. A ditch is a colloquial name for a watercourse and, depending on its definition, could be either a Main River or an Ordinary Watercourse. The LLFA suggests the applicant updates their report to ensure the correct legal definitions of these terms are applied. The regulation of these watercourses varies both of with legal definition of watercourse type and the presence of an Internal Drainage Board. Further work is required.	Partly Resolved - The LLFA notes the applicant has removed the definition of a ditch. However, the definition of the "main rivers" and "ordinary watercourses" in section 3.2.2 continues to not be consistent with the legal definitions in the Water Resources Act 1991 and the Land Drainage Act 1991.	In the updated drainage strategy (**8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [Revision C]**), the Applicant has updated Section 3.2.2 to clarify that the watercourse classifications are Project specific and do not directly align to the statutory definitions provided in the Water Resources Act 1991 and the Land Drainage Act 1991.
In relation to Table 3.2, the applicant may wish to note the River Waveney is part of the River Yare catchment as it discharges to the River Yare. Table 3.2 should be updated to reflect this. Further work is required.	Not Resolved - No amendments observed.	The Applicant notes that this item was resolved in **8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [REP4-186]**. Footnote 17 was added as requested to note that '*The River Waveney is part of the River Yare catchment as it discharges to the River Yare*'.
In section 3.2.6, the section is titled Lakes and Reservoirs. However, in this section there is no discussion or mention of reservoirs. While in the second paragraph of this section there appears to be an indication that culverts and open cuts will be used to cross lakes and ponds. The LLFA requires clarification as to which lake or pond the applicant is planning to cross with a culvert. There is also no indication of the number of ponds that are within each section of the proposed development that is consistent with the format of the previous sections on watercourses. A summary of where the watercourses and ponds are located would be appropriate for inclusion. Further work and information is required.	Not Resolved - The LLFA notes that some text has been removed and references to 8.2.1 Drainage Strategy - Appendix B [Revision A]. On review of the drainage plans stated to be in Appendix B of the drainage strategy, only a covering page of text was found that referred me to the appendix being viewed, that did not illustrate where the Project interfaces with lakes, ponds and reservoirs. The page of text then discusses the use of the Environment Agency Probable Overland Flow Pathway dataset on the plans as not available. This dataset is identified on the data.gov.uk webpage to provide an indication of the likely flow route of water along with potential accumulations of diffuse pollution and soil erosion features and is to broadly identify potential problem areas in the landscape (https://environment.data.gov.uk/dataset/36e7f4d3-61b2-4e64-aaa2-2b85bceb61a9Overland Flow Pathways) [Applicant note: hyperlink has not been included here, please see original REP5-257 for hyperlink]. Therefore, it is not clear how this dataset relates to the identification of permanent lakes, ponds and reservoirs features. Furthermore, the covering page of text indicates that no plans are provided although there is a cross reference back to the scheme design in "6.4.F1 Environmental Statement Figure 4.1 - Proposed	No works are anticipated within any lakes or reservoirs crossed by the Project, except for the construction and installation of outfalls (where required) and the stabilisation of embankments, if any works are in close proximity to the waterbodies. The text of **8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [Revision C]** has been updated accordingly. **8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [Revision C]**, Appendix A and **8.2.1 Drainage Strategy - Appendix B [Revision B]** are to be read in conjunction. The cover pages of both appendices set out the relevant information to enable appropriate cross-referencing. The Project interfaces with multiple waterbodies and these are illustrated in **8.2.1 Drainage Strategy - Appendix B [Revision B]** with the respective crossing locations marked with a unique ID which can be cross referenced with **6.4.A2 Environmental Statement Appendix 4.2 - Watercourse Crossing Details [Revision B]**. The additional plans referred to provide additional context with regards to the Project. In the updated drainage strategy (**8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [Revision C]**) the references have been updated to reflect the latest versions of the documents.

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	Project Design [APP-133]. Refer also to the Guide to the Plans [APP-007], and the other plans located in the Volume 2 of the DCO application". Returning to the original concern regarding the evidence supporting the information in section 3.2.6 that identifies the Lakes, ponds and Reservoirs relevant to the proposed scheme, no new information is available to review. Further work and information is required.	
The LLFA notes that in section 3.2.9 to 3.2.10 the applicant has referred to the Anglian Water records that have been reviewed. The LLFA notes that within Norfolk there are some private sewer structures within the road under section 50 agreements. It is not clear to the LLFA at this time whether the applicant has checked for the presence of these structures at this time. Further clarification is required.	Resolved - The applicant notes in section 3.2.7 that private sewers has not been confirmed at this time and there is a limited commitment to undertake further surveys to identify any interactions with private sewers.	The Applicant notes that this item is now considered resolved.
In section 3.2.21 to 3.2.22 it is not clear what drainage structures are present that relate to the proposed development at the Norwich Substation that "may need to be modified". The LLFA did review the information given in 6.4 ES Chapter 4 - Project Description [APP-130] where no information relating to the existing surface water drainage was provided. Therefore, it is not possible to understand what modifications may be necessary at this time. Further information is required.	Partly Resolved - The LLFA notes the applicant has made some textual amendments. However, this only identifies that "Any proposed drainage related to the extension of Norwich Main Substation is to be completed by others. This may require modifications to the existing surface water drainage, also to be completed by them." if these works are not within the scope of the proposed scheme or necessary to support the proposed scheme then it is not relevant information to support the scheme. The LLFA seek confirmation of what additional drainage works the applicant would require at the Norwich Main to facilitate the proposed scheme under consideration. Further clarification and information is required.	The Applicant does not anticipate any permanent drainage works outside the footprint of the Norwich Main Substation platform as part of this Project.
In section 3.2.24, the applicant confirms the "location and details of existing field drainage systems are unknown at this stage and a review of natural overland flow paths on steeply sloping ground has not been undertaken." The applicant then goes on to indicate their commitment to the maintaining of land drainage provided in Commitments AS05 and GG22. The LLFA acknowledges AS05 as being relevant to land drainage, but it is not clear to the LLFA how GG22 is specifically related to land drainage. Further information and clarification is needed.	Partly Resolved - The applicant has amended the Commitment reference to W14 in 7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [REP3-025], however the reference number associated with the code is now superseded. The LLFA has reviewed W14 in REP4-164 and is mostly satisfied with it. Although it is noted that in W14 there is no acknowledgement of soil decompaction activities prior to reinstating the stripped topsoil. The LLFA requests the W14 text is amended to include decompaction activities prior to soil reinstatement activities occurring. Further work is required.	The Applicant has updated the reference in the updated **8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [Revision C]**, to reflect the latest revision of the document. The Applicant has also revised the wording in Commitment W14 in **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]**.
The LLFA also notes that in section 3.2.24 there is reference to 7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [APP-300] which in section 6.1.16 states the Surface Water Management has not been prepared to support the Outline CoCP as the detailed design is not yet known. However, this is now not correct and the OCoCP will need to be appropriately updated once this surface water drainage strategy has been appropriately updated to show the surface water drainage design with the supporting evidence. Further work is required.	Not Resolved - No amendment to the 7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [REP4-164] observed. Further work remains.	The Applicant has amended the paragraph 6.1.16 in **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]**.
The LLFA notes that in section 3.2.27 the applicant states "To produce this drainage strategy, a review of the Environment Agency flood risk mapping has been undertaken to ensure that the Project does not increase flood risk to the site or elsewhere and where practicable reduces flood risk over the lifetime of the development."	Not Resolved - No changes or additional information appear to have been provided.	The text in paragraph 3.2.26 was updated in **8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [REP4-186]** to clarify that this statement refers to fluvial flood risk. The Applicant does not believe that any further action is required.

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The LLFA questions this statement as the approach appears to lack the assessment and consideration to develop an appropriate proposal to either avoid, reduce or mitigate flood risk. Further consideration and work is required.		
There is an inconsistency in the information that is provided in the baseline sections within the drainage strategy. For example, in some sections there is a break down on the summary information by section area such as section in geology (section 3.3) or existing sewers (3.2.8 to 3.2.20). While in other sections there is just a cross reference to another report with no relevant summary such as Flood Zones (3.2.27) and Contaminated Land (3.3.3 to 3.3.4). The Drainage Strategy should be able to be read as a standalone document as it is not incorporated into the ES. This inconsistency makes reading and reviewing the drainage strategy uneven and difficult. It also demonstrates an inconsistent consideration and presentation of relevant information. The LLFA suggests that while cross referencing can be used, a more informative summary should be provided. Further work is required.	Not Resolved - No changes or additional information appear to have been provided.	As noted in the Applicant's previous response within **8.4.9 Applicant's Comments on any Further Information or Submissions Received by Deadline 3 [REP4-298]**, *'The Applicant considers that it has provided an outline Drainage Strategy that is proportionate to the scale and nature of the Project, that focuses on key details with regards to describing baseline conditions. As the Project covers such a large geographical scale, without using cross referencing to other Development Consent Order application documents, an already lengthy document would become considerably longer'*. With regard to **8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [Revision C]**, Section 5.6, the drainage principles and mitigation measures described are intended to apply to either permanent drainage features, or to temporary features where relevant. The identification of uncertainty in groundwater levels (as noted in Paragraphs 5.6.4 and 5.6.5) reflects the outline nature of the assessment at this stage, with further site-specific investigation to be undertaken at detailed design as secured by the Surface Water Management Plan that is secured via commitment GG22 within **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]**. Appropriate mitigation measures will be refined accordingly to address both temporary construction phase risks and permanent operational requirements. Paragraph 5.6.5 has been reviewed and clarified in **8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [Revision C]**, although the Applicant could not locate a specific incomplete sentence.
In combination with our previous point, it is also noted that the drainage strategy is written and assessed in a similar way to the Environment Statement rather than as a site specific technical design strategy. For example, in section 3.3.13 on the "RG Overhead Line Alignment", the applicant states; "As set out in 6.4 Environmental Statement Chapter 4 - Project Description [APP-130], paragraphs 4.8.42 to 4.8.58, all overhead line works are temporary. Therefore, the permanent impact of the overhead line works is negligible to groundwater. Proposed temporary drainage features outlined in Section 5.6 will manage groundwater risks at the construction stage." The first sentence is a cross reference and there is no reference in the text to the context of the information. It is also clear in the statement that "all overhead line works are temporary". Although, it is not clear to the LLFA whether applicant means that the overhead line works are temporary or that there are temporary works associated with the construction of the overhead line. The second sentence is based upon the unclear first sentence and is written like a conclusion from the Environmental Statement, even though no evidence has been presented or clearly discussed in this section of the drainage strategy. The final sentence makes reference to a future section in the drainage strategy report. However, it is not clear how this final sentence is relevant as the second sentence clearly indicates there is no risk to mitigate, while the first sentence indicates that the overhead lines are temporary with no construction considerations mentioned. This is a fairly typical example of the information provided in this "Existing Conditions" chapter which should be provided as a baseline for the report but that is not the case. Rather, it is trying to assess the proposed development using an incomplete approach from the ES and without stating which phase of development it is reviewing.	Partly Resolved - The applicant has attempted to address some of the concerns raised by the LLFA. However, the cross referencing to section 5.6 identifies that the proposed temporary drainage features will manage groundwater risks at the construction stage. On review of section 5.6, it is noted that in section 5.6.4 and 5.6.5 the applicant identifies there is uncertainty around the ground water levels and the risks associated with it. However, it is not clear if the proposed mitigation approaches apply to the temporary or permanent drainage solutions. There is also an incomplete sentence in section 5.6.5 relating to the mitigation of the features in low lying or flat areas where gravity drainage is not possible. Further information is required.	

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Further work is required throughout this report to resolve and address this inconsistent structure and inappropriate approach to the drainage strategy.		
In relation to section 4.1.2, the LLFA acknowledges the "expected" approach to the temporary foul water drainage from the construction compounds for it to be "contained on-site and regularly pumped, emptied, and transported off-site." It is not clear where the waste is proposed to be transported to and the LLFA would seek clarification as to the destination of the foul water. Further information required.	Not Resolved - No additional information provided.	As noted in **8.4.9 Applicant's Comments on any Further Information or Submissions Received by Deadline 3 [REP4-298]**, *'The detail of the destination of foul water drainage during construction is not yet confirmed and the potential need for works to existing foul drainage systems serving existing substations has yet to be certified. The appointed Contractor would engage with the relevant utility providers and disposal of foul water during both construction and operation of the Project would be undertaken in accordance with all relevant regulations'*. The information the LLFA requests will be provided following the DCO Examination as secured by the Surface Water Management Plan that is secured via commitment GG22 within **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]**.
Furthermore, the LLFA notes that in section 4.1.2, the applicant indicates that the contractor may establish connections to the existing foul water sewers for some of the construction compounds. While the LLFA accepts this as an approach, the LLFA requests consideration is given to the capacity in the sewers to accept this additional flow without increasing flood risk from the sewers on site or elsewhere. This section is also inconsistent with the information provided in the operational section. The operational section of chapter 4 is subdivided in to features where there is a lack of information. Further information is required.	Not Resolved - No additional information provided. The LLFA notes the incomplete sentence in our previous response and notes that the completed sentence would read; The operation section of chapter 4 is subdivided in to features and while there is a lack of information at this time on the potential foul water design, the applicant has indicated previously that sewer record have been obtained and it would be possible to identify sites that have the potential to be connected to the foul water sewer network. Further information is required.	
In relation to 4.2.2, the applicant has provided one sentence for Norwich Main and Bamford Substations that states "Both Norwich Main and Bramford Substation currently have operational welfare facilities and further requirements would be defined at a later stage of the Project." This sentence lacks suitable detail to demonstrate what the existing arrangements are, whether they would be suitable for future use and whether there are any risks associated with the proposed future drainage approach. Further information is required.	Not Resolved - No further information is provided.	
In section 5.2.1, the LLFA notes the applicant references the National Grid design document TS2.10.13. however, this document has not been made available to the LLFA for review and has not been found available through an online search. The LLFA requires that a copy of the referenced design document is made available for review to enable the LLFA to understand the design approach advocated by National Grid and to consider how this design approach relates to the national policy requirements to ensure that there is no increase in flood risk. Further information is required.	Not Resolved - The National Grid Design Document that has been referred to has not been provided.	As noted in **8.4.9 Applicant's Comments on any Further Information or Submissions Received by Deadline 3 [REP4-298]**, *'The Applicant notes the request from the LLFA to view National Grid standard TS2.10.13. This is a confidential internal National Grid standard. We would welcome additional detail of the specific design approach that the LLFA is seeking clarity on, so that we can respond and progress discussions'.*
In section 5.2.2, the LLFA notes there is no evidence for the statement provided. Furthermore, the assessment statement is made in the context of the ES assessment methodology rather than consideration and assessment of whether there is an increase in the impermeable areas of each of the discreet drainage catchments. This lack of information and evidence will need to be addressed to support the statement made. Further information is required.	Not Resolved - No additional information or changes have occurred.	Above the surface of the ground each pylon would have four 'feet', that are each embedded into a foundational muff. The foundational muffs each measure 1 m^2. As illustrated in the photo below, any rainfall runoff from the muffs would shed to adjacent ground and on the basis of the very small scale of impermeable footprint no operational drainage measures are proposed to serve the pylon bases.

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The LLFA notes that in section 5.2.3, the applicant's reference to there is no requirement for the application of climate change to the temporary works. The LLFA questions this interpretation as it is clear the applicant has not read the Norfolk LLFA Statutory Consultee Guidance Document. The LLFA notes that in accordance with the current NPPF paragraph 182, which states that "as part of proposals for major development should: a) take account of advice from the Lead Local Flood Authority". The LLFA consider the Norfolk LLFA Statutory Consultee Guidance Document publicly available advice for developers. In section 13.1.10 of the Norfolk LLFA Statutory Consultee Guidance Document (also known as the LLFA Developer Guidance) it states "For development with a lifetime up to 2060 use the central allowance for the 2050s epoch (2022 to 2060). Unless the '2050s' climate change epoch allowance is greater than that of the '2070s' climate change epoch allowance, the LLFA are likely to query the use of the '2050s' climate change epoch if it is not obvious that the development is temporary in nature (i.e. temporary haul roads or construction sites)." This implies that a climate change allowance in accordance with the '2050s' epoch would be expected to be applied to temporary construction works. Therefore, it is appropriate for the applicant to consider whether the 20% allowance that is indicated in section 5.2.3 is consistent with the implied requirements of the LLFA Developer Guidance. Further consideration and information is required.	Resolved - Section updated	The Applicant notes that this item is now considered resolved.

Norfolk County Council's Previous Comment [REP3-083]	Norfolk County Council's Comment [REP5-257]	Applicant's Comment
Informative - In section 5.2.7 the LLFA notes the applicant does not appropriately attribute the key flood risk principles relating to development. NPPF is the nationally recognised exponent of the principle that there should be no increase in flood risk from any source, now or in the future on site or elsewhere. However, section 5.2.7 of the drainage strategy it appears to attribute this to the "Environment Agency" rather than the NPPF.	Resolved - Section updated	The Applicant notes that this item is now considered resolved.
In section 5.2.7, the LLFA notes the applicant appears to be considering climate change allowances for Flood Risk Assessments, however, there is no reference to the source of the information provided in the Climate Change sections (5.2.7 to 5.2.10). Assuming that it does relate to the Flood Risk Assessments: Climate Change Allowances Guidance, the LLFA notes that at present the applicant has indicated that climate change would be applied to the 1% AEP event. However, the Flood Risk Assessments: Climate Change Allowances Guidance is clear that climate change must be applied to the 3.3% AEP event calculations too. Further work and consideration is required.	Not Resolved - No additional information or changes have occurred.	The information the LLFA requests will be provided following the DCO Examination as secured by the Surface Water Management Plan that is secured via commitment GG22 within **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]**.
The LLFA notes that is section 5.2.8, the applicant has indicated the scheme has a 50 year design life yet in Table 5.1, the applicant has stated the figures are "for permanent infrastructure". Paragraph 6 of the NPPG for Flood Risk and Coastal Change that for the assessment of flood risk for non-residential development a "period of at least 75 years". Furthermore, paragraph 6 of NPPG also confirms that where the lifetime of a development is significantly beyond 100 years such as some infrastructure projects, it may be appropriate to consider a longer period for the lifetime of the development when assessing the potential impacts of climate change on flood risk. The LLFA returned to the Project Description chapter in the Environmental Statement to see if further information was available to provide clarity on the lifetime of the proposed scheme. In section 4.10.8 of chapter 4 of the Environmental Statement indicates that fittings on the pylons have a life expectancy of 20 to 40 years, overhead lines 40 years and pylons 80 years. In section 4.10.8, also states that full refurbishment works would "be needed at the end of the lifespan of the overhead line 40 years, although pylons have a typical life expectancy of 80 years) and works would be subject to separate permissions, to consider the latest site conditions and legislation in force at that time." In section 4.11 of the Environmental Statement the applicant states "It is expected that the transmission of electricity would continue for as long as there is a business case for doing so and that any decommissioning activity would occur decades into the future. To date, relatively few transmission projects have been decommissioned since the main expansion of such infrastructure in the 1950s and 1960s. The cables and pylons for overhead transmission lines are replaced periodically, ordinarily under National Grid's permitted development rights."	Partly Resolved - The applicant has updated the 45% climate change allowance for the Norwich Main Substation. However, the LLFA notes that there is no further update on the need to apply climate change to the 3.3% event. Further work remains.	The 3.33% AEP event is not a design event, as it is a smaller event than the design event, which is the 1% AEP event with climate change. The design events are provided in Table 5.2 of **8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [Revision C]**.

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Therefore, the information about the lifespan of the proposed project is conflicting within the project description and between the Drainage Strategy and the Environmental Statement. There is a lack of clarity at this time. However, based upon the information in the project description, it is reasonable to consider the statements made in 4.11 of the project description should be given priority, as these statements are based upon the previous experience of similar schemes and aligns with the aim and purpose of this proposed scheme. Therefore, the Drainage Strategy should consider the proposed development as a permanent development rather than only having a "50-year design life" for the consideration of climate change. The inconsistencies and need for amendments in section 5.2 continue in the Table 5.1 to 5.3. In Table 5.1, the applicant has not identified the correct climate change allowance for the Norwich Main Substation which has identified a 40% climate change allowance. However, as this site is located in a catchment where the allowance for the 2050s epoch is higher than that for the 2070s epoch and development has a lifetime beyond 2061, the exception rule requires the use the higher of the two allowances. This results in a 45% climate change allowance being required for the Norwich Main Substation. The applicant then goes on to state in section 5.2.9 that a 45% allowance will be applied in all areas which is confirmed in Table 5.2. Although there are inconsistencies in the information presented within the Table. While in Table 5.3, a summary of the Resolvedfield runoff rates, and presumably the climate change allowances are provided for a couple of permanent and temporary items. While some temporary features are mentioned, the most significant temporary works features in drainage terms are not mentioned. The information provided within section 5.2 is unclear and in places incorrect and incomplete. Further work is required to update this section with appropriate information.		
The information in section 5.3 confidently indicates that the discharge hierarchy has been applied, however, there are no references or examples to specific locations along where each of the approaches are used. Therefore, these statements at present are unevidenced. Further information is required to support the statements made in this section.	Partly Resolved - The applicant has updated section 5.3. However, section 5.3.4 wrongly references the where the discharge hierarchy is derived from. In addition, the applicant goes on to discussion the drainage strategy without evidence as the cross reference to Appendix B does not contain the information indicated in the text. As previously stated, Appendix B of the drainage strategy, only provided a covering page of text that referred to the appendix being reviewed, that did not illustrate the proposed drainage strategy. Further work and information is required.	The Applicant has updated paragraph 5.3.4 in **8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [Revision C]** to reference the most recent guidance 'The National Standards for Sustainable Drainage'. **8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [Revision C]** Appendix A and **8.2.1 Drainage Strategy - Appendix B [Revision B]** are to be read in conjunction. The cover pages of both appendices set out the relevant information to enable appropriate cross-referencing. For clarity, Appendix B is provided as a separate document (**8.2.1 Drainage Strategy – Appendix B [Revision B]**) due to file size constraints.
In section 5.4.2 titled "Post-Development Discharge", it is not clear whether this relates to the operational phase or another phase, such as decommissioning, of the development. Clarification is required.	Resolved - Addressed.	The Applicant notes that this item is now considered resolved.

Norfolk County Council's Previous Comment [REP3-083]	Norfolk County Council's Comment [REP5-257]	Applicant's Comment
Section 5.4.2 also states "The above hierarchy is a summary of the potential discharge routes which could be utilised at each site." However, the hierarchy given in section 5.3.4 lists the options but does not indicate the prioritisation of the options until the last bullet point. Furthermore, the list does not reflect the local discharge hierarchy in Norfolk and no consideration or discussion has been undertaken as to where location variations in the discharge hierarchy are applied. Further information and clarification is required.	Partly Resolved - The applicant has updated the discharge hierarchy in the section above. However, as previously indicated Appendix B does not contain the information indicated in the text. Further work is required.	The Applicant notes the discharge heirachy is set out in paragraph 5.3.4 in **8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [Revision C]**, this is explained further in paragraph 5.3.5. **8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [Revision C]** Appendix A and **8.2.1 Drainage Strategy - Appendix B [Revision B]** are to be read in conjunction. The cover pages of both appendices set out the relevant information to enable appropriate cross-referencing. For clarity, Appendix B is provided as a separate document (**8.2.1 Drainage Strategy – Appendix B [Revision B]**) due to file size constraints.
N/A – new June 2026 comment	In relation to section 5.4.4, the applicant states that "3.1 Draft Development Consent Order [APP-056], Article 20 must be adhered to with regards to the discharge of water for the Project. Discharge rates to Water Management Alliance (WMA) watercourses have been agreed through engagement with the WMA." The LLFA notes the superseded document reference that has been updated to a fourth version at the time of this review. In relation to article 20 of the current draft DCO, section 1 appears to indicate that drainage can connect to any watercourse for the "carrying out or maintenance of the authorised development". This is assumed to be construction activities and operation maintenance activities. Part 3 of article 20 indicates that to connect drainage to a watercourse or sewer the applicant will require consent from the landowner, but it does not indicate that consent is needed from the regulating organisation in accordance with the legislation at this time. Part 4 of Article 20 appears to only relate to the damage to Main Rivers and there is no consideration of Ordinary Watercourses. It is reasonable that the same approach is applied to ordinary watercourse that is enjoyed by as Main Rivers. There appears to be no mention in Article 20 that confirms that ordinary watercourse consents will also be required where appropriate. As Norfolk County Council has not consented to the disapplication of Section 23 of the Land Drainage Act, the need for ordinary watercourse consents is possibly required to facilitate the connection works for drainage discharges. Following on, in relation to the comments regarding the discharge rates have been agreed with the Water Management Alliance, this agreement would only relate to watercourses within the Internal Drainage Board's area. Outside of these areas, the ordinary watercourses in relation to section 23 of the land drainage Act are managed by the relevant LLFAs. The LLFA have not previously commented upon this issue as there were limited ongoing discussions relating to the drafting of protective provisions. However, this has currently resulted in Norfolk County Council as LLFA not consenting to the disapplication of section 23 of the Land Drainage Act. Therefore, the Article 20 will need to be updated to reflect the suitable consideration of ordinary watercourses and the need for the Land Drainage Act to be appropriately applied within Norfolk. Further work and information is required.	The Applicant has updated the reference in the updated Drainage Strategy (**8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [Revision C]**), to reflect the latest revision of the document. [Article 20(3) of **3.1 Draft Development Consent Order [Revision F]** requires the Applicant to seek the consent of the '*person to whom* [the watercourse, public sewer or drain] *belongs*', which aligns with article 14 of the general model provisions and which follows considerable precedent in other DCOs. Of relevance, here, is also article 20(7) which clarifies that nothing in this article overrides the requirement for an environmental permit under regulation 12(1)(b) of the 2016 Regulations, and article 20(8) which clarifies that activities listed in paragraph 3(1) of Schedule 21 to the 2016 Regulations are not permitted by Article 20. The Applicant notes the comments made in relation to article 20(4). The Applicant disagrees with the statement that article 20(4) does not consider 'Ordinary Watercourses'. The definition of 'watercourse' in article 2 (interpretation) does not distinguish between 'Main Rivers' and 'Ordinary Watercourses' and instead relates to '***all*** *rivers, streams, ditches, drains, canals, cuts, culverts, dykes, sluices, rhynes, sewers and passages through which water flows except a public sewer or drain*' (emphasis added). Therefore, the Applicant's position is that ordinary watercourses are treated the same as main rivers. The Applicant acknowledges that without Norfolk County Council's consent to the disapplication of section 23 of the Land Drainage Act 1991, the Applicant would be required to obtain the necessary consents under the ordinary statutory regime. NCC provided the Applicant with a list of amendments considered necessary to allow for NCC's agreement to the set of protective provisions offered on 25 June 2026. The Applicant returned the protective provisions taking into account all of these amendments, save for one, on 3 July 2026 and awaits a response from NCC.

Norfolk County Council's Previous Comment [REP3-083]	Norfolk County Council's Comment [REP5-257]	Applicant's Comment
N/A – new June 2026 comment	Informative - The applicant cross reference to 6.4.F1 Environmental Statement Figure 4.1 - Proposed Project Design [APP-133] but this has been superseded by REP4-109 and 6.4.F2 Environmental Statement Figure 4.2 - Proposed Project Design - Permanent Features (Final Issue A) [APP134] although this has been superseded by REP4-110. The additional text goes on to state "Indicative drainage figures are included in 8.2.1 Drainage Strategy - Appendix B [Revision A]; these figures depict the indicative Project overland flows." However, as previously indicated, Appendix B does not contain the information indicated in the text. Therefore, it is becoming apparent that the drainage strategy is not maintaining cross references to the latest information.	The Applicant has updated the reference in the updated Drainage Strategy (**8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [Revision C]**), to reflect the latest revision of the documents. **8.2.1 Drainage Strategy - Appendix B [Revision B]** illustrates the indicative Project overland flow routes, with arrows provided to highlight key routes associated with the Projecty development. For clarity, Appendix B is provided as a separate document (**8.2.1 Drainage Strategy – Appendix B [Revision B]**) due to file size constraints.
Again, in relation to section 5.4.2, the applicant states "The above hierarchy is a summary of the potential discharge routes which could be utilised at each site. The respective site layouts are shown in 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] and the proposed discharge methodology per drainage pond is shown in Appendix A." On review of Figure 4.1, Figure 4.2 and Appendix A, it is not possible to make a connection between the information and references provided in the drawings and the information provided in Appendix A. In Figure 4.1, the proposed overhead line construction SuDS basins are the only SuDS features with a symbol on the plans. These SuDS features are not labelled in Figure 4.1. In Appendix A, a pond reference number is provided along with a contributing catchment area. This information is not provided in either Figures 4.1 or 4.2. Furthermore, the order of the ponds appears to not be provided in a north to south approach and is therefore inconsistent with the approach taken in the previous section of the drainage strategy. In Appendix A, there are a number of statements in the "notes/assumptions/risks" section that state "Infiltration of surface water considered unsuitable. Shallow groundwater not identified." followed by a statement of "Infiltration may be deemed possible after infiltration test." This indicates to the LLFA that at present no ground investigation has taken place. Therefore, it is not possible for the applicant to determine whether infiltration is viable. The LLFA Developer Guidance is clear that where in the early stages of design that infiltration testing has not been undertaken, the developer should assume that infiltration is possible as a Plan A approach while demonstrating that a viable Plan B is available. At present, the applicant has not been able to demonstrate that either a Plan A or a Plan B could be viable due to a lack of information. It is also not possible to check or confirm the whether the proposed discreet drainage catchment area is appropriate and therefore, that the appropriate sizing of the attenuation basin has occurred. Further work and information is required.	Not Resolved - No changes have been made to Appendix A. It continues to not be possible to make a connection between the information and references provided in the drawings and the information provided in Appendix A. Further work and information is required.	As noted in **8.4.9 Applicant's Comments on any Further Information or Submissions Received by Deadline 3 [REP4-298]**, '*The plans will assist in understanding the information provided in Appendix A. These changes incorporated as part of this update are to provide additional data to reflect the outline drainage design that has been assessed for the Project'.* **8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [Revision C]** Appendix A and **8.2.1 Drainage Strategy - Appendix B [Revision B]** are to be read in conjunction. The cover pages of both appendices set out the relevant information to enable appropriate cross-referencing.

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In addition, the information provided in Appendix A is not complete as it does not compare the proposed discharge rate to the greenfield runoff rate for the comparable area. Further work and information is required.	Not Resolved - As previously indicated no new information has been provided. No changes have been made to Appendix A. Further work is required.	As noted in **8.4.9 Applicant's Comments on any Further Information or Submissions Received by Deadline 3 [REP4-298]**, *'The Applicant has set out a maximum runoff limit per hectare (l/s/ha), in Table 5.3. The contributing impermeable areas have been provided for each catchment, in Appendix A, to demonstrate the relationship between the maximum runoff limit and the indicative discharge rate. The contributing impermeable areas consider the percentage impervious rates given in Table 5.5, for each of the Project elements within the allocated drainage catchment areas'*. The further information the LLFA requests will be provided following the DCO Examination as secured by the Surface Water Management Plan that is secured via commitment GG22 within **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]**.
The LLFA also notes the Pond Reference also contains a discrete code identifying whether the "pond" (meaning attenuation feature) is temporary or permanent. This information is not clear and should be made clearer in Appendix A. Further work is required.	Not Resolved - As previously indicated no new information has been provided in Table A.1. Additional text has been provided is section A.1.4 that appears to be duplicated in Appendix B. The original LLFA concern / query has not been addressed. Further work is required.	The Applicant refers Norfolk County Council LLFA to the naming convention outlined in A1.3 of **8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [Revision C]**. Each pond reference comprises a code that identifies whether the feature is temporary or permanent, and whether it is proposed as attenuation or infiltration. For clarity, the information presented in Sections A1.4 and B1.1 has been duplicated to aid ease of reference, noting that Appendix B is provided as a separate document (**8.2.1 Drainage Strategy – Appendix B [Revision B]**) due to file size constraints.
In the sections subsequent to 5.4.2, the LLFA notes the ordering of the discharge locations is not consistent with the SuDS Manual discharge hierarchy. For example, section 5.4.4 to 5.4.6 is Discharge to a Watercourse, 5.4.7 to 5.4.8 is Discharge to an Existing Reservoir / Water Body, 5.4.9 to 5.4.10 is Discharge via Infiltration and then there is Discharge to Existing Drain or Public Sewer in section 5.4.11. This is not consistent with the discharge hierarchy as defined in paragraph 56 of NPPG of: 1. "into the ground (infiltration); numbering needs addressing 2. to a surface water body; 3. to a surface water sewer, highway drain, or another drainage system; 4. to a combined sewer." While the Water UK Design and Construction Guidance – Sewerage Section Guidance Appendix C (Section C3: Paragraph 12) states the discharge Hierarchy to as: a) "a. Surface water runoff is collected for use. b) Discharge into the ground via infiltration. c) Discharge to a watercourse or other surface waterbody. d) Discharge to a surface water sewer, highway drain or another drainage system discharging to a watercourse or other surface waterbody. e) Discharge to a combined sewer."	Resolved - The applicant has re-ordered the structure of the text to reflect the order of the discharge hierarchy. In addition, the applicant has altered the text to indicate an approach that would consider the discharge locations as part of the design process compared to the previous approach.	The Applicant notes that this item is now considered resolved.

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In addition, it is clear that the drainage strategy has not considered infiltration appropriately in context of the discharge hierarchy as in section 5.4.9 that applicant states "Following the hierarchy as set out above where no suitable watercourse / water body is identified, discharge via infiltration is considered." This demonstrates the applicant has prioritised the connection to the watercourse over the discharge to infiltration. Therefore, clearly showing the applicant is not adhering to any of the national or local discharge hierarchies. Furthermore, it is clear the applicant has misunderstood the hierarchy as they have separated watercourses and "existing reservoir / water body" whereas the discharge hierarchy is clear in the two examples given above that watercourses are considered to be a waterbody and that they are of equal standing to other waterbodies such as reservoirs in this context. Further work and information is required.		
In relation to section 5.4.4, it is not clear to the LLFA why there is a difference between the maximum discharge rate for the WMA's and the LLFA's ordinary watercourses. Further explanation and information is required.	Not Resolved - No new information is provided.	Discharge rates to Water Management Alliance (WMA) watercourses have been agreed by the Applicant through engagement with the WMA which required differing maximum discharge rates to the LLFA. This is the reason for the difference.
In relation to the discharge via infiltration, the applicant indicates in section 5.4.10 that as yet infiltration testing or ground investigation in relation to permeability is yet to be conducted. Further work is required.	Not Resolved - As yet, no preliminary or other infiltration testing has been undertaken to inform the drainage strategy.	The information the LLFA requests on infiltration testing will be provided following the DCO Examination as secured by the Surface Water Management Plan that is secured via commitment GG22 within **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]**. The Applicant will follow the discharge hierarchy set out in Section 5.3 of **8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [Revision C]**. As stated in this section, appropriate justification will be provided for any progression between the hierarchy levels.
In section 5.4.13, the LLFA notes the applicant has included a 300mm freeboard value for ponds that are 1m deep but not for ponds that are 0.5m deep. There is no explanation for this approach. In addition, this approach is not consistent with the LLFA's Developer Guidance, that in section 12.1.31 clearly states a minimum freeboard of 300mm to the top of bank, along with other open SuDs design parameters such as a maximum water depth of 1.2m. Further work is required.	Partly Resolved - The applicant has improved the design commitment to provide a freeboard although this commitment to freeboard for the construction phase features is not in line with either the LLFA Developer's Guidance (section 12.1.31) or the new National SuDs Standards (Section 3.37).	The Applicant considers the wording in **8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [Revision C]**, paragraph 5.4.15 to be in accordance with the National SuDs Standards (paragraph 3.37). A freeboard for all storage features has been used as a starting presumption. A reduced freeboard may be considered where the risk and consequences of flooding to buildings, water-sensitive utility plant, or routes required for safe access and egress are demonstrably low, and where the required level of protection can be achieved with reduced uncertainty, in accordance with the National SuDS Standards (Paragraph 3.37).
In relation to section 5.4.16, the LLFA confirms that Norfolk requires that the latest FEH catchment data and rainfall method is used. Should an alternative rainfall method be proposed, a fully hydrology assessment will be required to provide robust technical justification. Further work is required.	Resolved - Amendment made.	The Applicant notes that this item is now considered resolved.
In relation to Table 5.4, the LLFA notes the applicant proposes to use Type 1 material for the Haul Road and suggests the use of an 80% impermeability rate. The LLFA is not supportive of this approach and would require a 100% impermeability rate if Type 1 material is to be used. While the Plat / Cable Drum Storage is indicated to be Type 3 Gravel with a 30% impermeability. Again, the	Not Resolved - No additional information provided by the applicant. An additional cross reference to existing documents was included but no new information has been included. The cross references do not address the LLFA's concern. On further review of the 2.6.1 Design Errata and Layout Plans - Subs and Cables [REP1-003], the LLFA notes the Illustrative Primary Construction Compound	As noted in **8.4.9 Applicant's Comments on any Further Information or Submissions Received by Deadline 3 [REP4-298]**, '*The Applicant does not agree with this assumption. Treating haul roads and construction compounds as fully impermeable is disproportionate, since traffic does not uniformly compact the surface across the entire width or area. The Applicant confirms that*

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LLFA is not supportive of the very low impermeability value associated with these areas. The LLFA would consider any platforms, access tracks and haul road to be impermeable due to the proposed materials and need for the materials to be compacted to such an extent that prevents them from being considered as permeable. From a drainage perspective, the more open the grading is considered better for drainage, while from vehicle running and structural platform perspective, a more dense grading is desired. The denser the build-up, the slower the rate of that water can permeate the surface resulting in an increased likelihood of surface water flow over the top of the haul road or platform area, particularly if the fines happen to be compacted into the surface. Type 1 material depending on the age and compaction, can result in a smooth and impermeable surface. While a Type 3 material is more open graded and more porous than a Type 1 material but is not completely permeable when compacted. Therefore, it is not possible to consider the platform, access tracks and haul roads as permeable or semi permeable. The impermeability rates for all these features will need to increase. In relation to the spoil / laydown areas and the cable trenches there is not enough information proved at this time to consider whether the 20% impermeability assumption is appropriate. These principles and LLFA comments follow through to Table 5.5 which considers the impermeability rates for the substations, various compounds and construction works compounds. It is interesting that section 5.4.18 indicates that "construction compounds will consist of a combination of cabins (on asphalt areas), roads, parking, storage and spoil / laydown areas" and there is no information available on the areas of each type of use in a compound yet the impermeability percentage has lowered significantly when this information and supporting evidence is not available to inform this assessment. Later in section 5.4.27 the applicant indicates that "construction compounds have been assumed to have 60–75% of their gross site area as impervious", however, evidence has not been provided to demonstrate what this assumption has been based upon. Further work and information is required.	Arrangement indicates the utility space could be used in a variety of ways that could alter the pollution potential of the surface water runoff along with the infiltration potential. However, there is also some concern about the undefined use of this area of the compound could result in the need to increase the area. For example, should the amount of cabin accommodation increase it would increase the parking area needed that would likely result in the need to extend the site compound area.	*the next iteration of the drainage design will further develop the proposed drainage arrangements, which will provide further clarity on this matter*.' This will be reported in the Surface Water Management Plan that is secured via commitment GG22 within **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]**. The Applicant's position on this has not changed.
The LLFA notes that in section 5.4.22 the applicant indicates that "dirty water" from the temporary features during construction shall be treated through pollution controls and treatment. It is not clear to the LLFA how this will be possible if so much of the surface water runoff is intended to infiltrate due to the previously indicated permeability of the structures (as seen in Table 5.4 and 5.5). This inconsistency indicates the design has not yet been considered in full. Further work is required.	Not Resolved - The LLFA acknowledges that the applicant has amended the wording slightly. However, this wording has resulted in reducing the applicant's commitment to the protection of the environment from the construction activities. The LLFA's initial concern has not been addressed.	The Applicant, does not consider the amendment as a reduction in the commitment to provide pollution controls and treatment. The Applicant refers Norfolk County Council LLFA to Commitment GG22, secured in **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]**, where it confirms that '*construction drainage measures will be developed liaising with the Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFAs) and statutory undertakers including Anglian Water (where relevant), with ongoing dialogue during implementation of the measures*'. In response to the LLFA's initial comment and as noted in **8.4.9 Applicant's Comments on any Further Information or Submissions Received by Deadline 3 [REP4-298]**, '*In practice, the contaminants would be trapped in sediment at the bottom of the*

Norfolk County Council's Previous Comment [REP3-083]	Norfolk County Council's Comment [REP5-257]	Applicant's Comment
		infiltration basin, and therefore could be dug out at the end of the construction period, if required.'
In section 5.4.23, it is not clear which substation this action relates to or whether it is all the substations. In addition, the discharge hierarchy has either not been applied appropriately or that suitable justification has not been provided. Furthermore, it is not clear from the design whether the discharge to the watercourse is viable by gravity. Overall, despite the text provided, there is no viable design that the applicant is able to evidence at this time and it is not clear to the reader where this issue occurs along the scheme's route that crosses 3 counties and one unitary authority area. Further information is required.	Not Resolved - No changes or new information found.	As noted in **8.4.9 Applicant's Comments on any Further Information or Submissions Received by Deadline 3 [REP4-298]**, '*Paragraph 5.4.23 applies to all elements listed'*. The plural of these elements is included in the updated paragraph, now referenced as paragraph 5.4.25, in **8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [Revision C]**. Further more the Applicant refers Norfolk County Council LLFA to the last sentence in the relevant response in 8**.4.9 Applicant's Comments on any Further Information or Submissions Received by Deadline 3 [REP4-298]**, which clarifies that, *'The Applicant has applied the discharge hierarchy as set out in Section 5.3, in principle by replicating the natural drainage processes. This change does not materially alter the original assessment of the drainage strategy'*.
Section 5.4.23 is one sentence that is so generic, it is not clear what value it adds to the drainage strategy. Further work is required.	Not Resolved - No changes or new information found.	The information the LLFA requests will be provided following the DCO Examination as secured by the Surface Water Management Plan that is secured via commitment GG22 within **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]**.
In relation to section 5.4.25, the applicant states that "all temporary features described in this section will be removed and reinstated to the previous land use, unless otherwise agreed with landowner". This sentence has contradictory actions by stating the removal all temporary works unless they leave them in place. The LLFA requires that all temporary works that are proposed will need to be removed to ensure there is no increase in flood risk over the long term. Should any works remain in place, the applicant will need to identify these at this stage and they will need to be designed and built as permanent features to ensure there is no increase in flood risk in the long term either onsite or elsewhere. Further work is required.	Partly Resolved - The LLFA notes the applicant has made some amendments to the section. However, these changes do not quite reflect the commitment in W14 (7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [REP3-025]). The LLFA requires consistency between the text in section 5.4.27 and Commitment W14. Further work required.	The Applicant has updated paragraph 5.4.27, in **8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [Revision C]** to align with the wording of Commitment W14, within **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]**.
The LLFA notes in section 5.4.27 that the applicant has not included surface water drainage features such as SuDs attenuation basins into the areas that are within the construction compounds. In addition, the applicant has stated "The contractor is to manage areas within the Project with access from construction vehicles and where materials/spoil and waste are stored, and hence potentially dirty water may drain into the ground below." The applicant has indicated that they are likely to pollute the soil and water within the area of the contractor compound. Yet in the Environmental Statement, the applicant has indicated that this risk is managed through a combination of site management and a surface water drainage system that is designed to adequately treat the surface water. Therefore, the Drainage Strategy is not consistent with the Environmental Statement and there is a lack of clarity around what is proposed at the temporary construction compounds that will be in place for approximately 5 years. Further work and information is required.	Resolved - Cross reference to the OCoCP W13.	The Applicant notes that this item is now considered resolved.

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In sections 5.4.29 to 5.4.32, the applicant indicates there are 3 different haul road design widths that are likely to be used that range from 6m to 21m wide. However, while it is clear the 6-8m haul roads would be used for overhead line and underground cable construction, it is not clear what a 21m wide haul road would be used for or where it would be used. It is noted that only the 21m wide haul road has an indication of including surface water drainage in sections 5.4.32 to 5.4.33. The 6-8m wide haul roads do not have any mention of surface water being associated with them. The LLFA notes that both types of haul road would produce a significant increase in impermeable area that would potentially lead to an increase in flood risk. Later in section 5.4.35 for overhead lines, the applicant indicates that "the impermeable area has been determined from the full width of the haul road swathe (21 m wide)", which contradicts section 5.4.30 where its states the haul road for overhead line construction would be 6-8m wide. Further work and information is required.	Not Resolved - No changes or alterations have been made.	The Applicant clarifies that the 21 m referred to in paragraph 5.4.32 of **8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [Revision C]** represents the width of the construction swathe. The swathe is wide enough to accommodate the haul road, in addition to topsoil and subsoil storage space, drainage, and demarcation fencing. This paragraph will be updated to provide this clarification.
In LLFA notes that in section 5.4.34, the applicant again assesses the flood risk for the overhead line works as temporary and in an approach associated with an environmental statement rather than a drainage strategy. The LLFA's earlier points on these two issues continue to remain a concern. Further work and information is required.	Resolved - Additional information included although it cross referenced to existing information.	The Applicant notes that this item is now considered resolved.
In section 5.4.36, the applicant indicates "SuDS will be used to provide storage for the 100 year plus 25% climate change event for the overhead line route alignment." However, the preceding section (5.4.35) appears to indicate it is only haul roads associated with the overhead line construction. Yet in section 5.4.38, the applicant identifies that "Surface water runoff originating from the haul road, pylon work sites, and temporary construction compounds along the overhead line routes". It is not clear to the LLFA what areas are associated with the overhead line construction and how the overhead line section is different to the Construction Compound Site (sections 5.4.27 to 5.4.28) and Haul Road (sections 5.4.29 to 5.4.33). Further work is required.	Partly Resolved - Some improvement although still not clear as there continues to be some inconsistencies.	The Applicant clarifies that runoff from the construction swathe associated with the overhead line construction works will be captured and managed using suitable Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and will only be required during the temporary construction phase as stated in paragraph 5.3.38, in **8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [Revision C]**. Paragraph 5.3.39 then defines the design event adopted for the temporary SuDS.
In section 5.4.38, the applicant has indicated that land drainages would be directed into surface water storage basins". The design need and justification for attenuating the water from the land drainage network in the temporary construction surface water storage basin, is not clear to the LLFA. Further information is required.	Resolved - Amendment made.	The Applicant notes that this item is now considered resolved.
In section 5.4.37, the LLFA notes the applicant has not reviewed or considered the Norfolk LLFA's Developer Guidance. Therefore, this statement is incorrect as not all guidance has been reviewed or considered. Further work and information is required.	Resolved - There is now an indication that the LLFA Developer guidance has been reviewed in relation the preceding sections.	The Applicant notes that this item is now considered resolved.
The LLFA notes there is a lack of explanation or description relating to the temporary pylon working areas. As these areas denoted in Figure 4.1 form a significant area, it is reasonable for the LLFA to	Not Resolved - No additional information provided.	**8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [Revision C]**, paragraph 5.4.37 provided further information regarding the temporary pylon working

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require further information about these areas to better inform our understanding of the potential drainage and surface water runoff implications. Further information is required.		areas and other examples of key components of the overhead line temporary construction phase. The Applicant asks Norfolk County Council LLFA to provide further clarity as to the elements they are seeking further information on. The Applicant refers Norfolk County Council to Commitment GG22, secured in **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]**, where it confirms that the information the LLFA requests will be provided following the DCO Examination in the Surface Water Management Plan.
In section 5.4.41, the applicant describes a series of cascading settlement basins proposed to be used to manage the sediment discharged from the surface water runoff from the haul road, pylon working area or construction compounds. It is not clear from this information if this is a description that relates to all the SuDS basins shown in Figure 4.1 or whether this is for a few select locations. It is also not clear how the water would reach the basins as there been no discussion on the drainage network other than in selection 5.4.38 where some component features were mentioned in a list. Further information is required.	Not Resolved - No additional information provided.	As noted in **8.4.9 Applicant's Comments on any Further Information or Submissions Received by Deadline 3 [REP4-298]**, *'The Applicant confirms that this level of design detail is not currently available. Detailed information will be provided in the forthcoming Surface Water Management Plan, which would be prepared to discharge a Requirement of the Development Consent Order'*. The information the LLFA requests will be provided following the DCO Examination as secured by the Surface Water Management Plan that is secured via commitment GG22 within **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]**.
The LLFA requires clarification as to whether sections 5.4.47 to 5.4.50 relates to new Substations or the extension of existing substations. Clarification is required.	Resolved - Clarification provided.	The Applicant notes that this item is now considered resolved.
In section 5.4.47, it is clear that the discharge hierarchy, again, has not been appropriately followed as the applicant has demonstrated a preference to discharge to a watercourse without considering whether infiltration to ground is viable. As stated in a previous comment on the discharge hierarchy, further work and evidence is required to demonstrate that infiltration is not viable before discharging to a watercourse / waterbody. Further work and information is required.	Not Resolved - No additional information provided.	As noted in **8.4.9 Applicant's Comments on any Further Information or Submissions Received by Deadline 3 [REP4-298]**, '*The Applicant notes this comment; based upon the available information, discharge to a watercourse is most likely. The Applicant has applied the discharge hierarchy as set out in Section 5.3 of 8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [Revision B], in principle by replicating the natural drainage processes of each catchment as closely as possible. Specific locations proposed for ponds/basins have not all been tested for infiltration potential and where a desktop study has indicated that infiltration is not likely suitable, the design has sought to include a viable drainage option*'.
The LLFA notes the applicant's high level description of the finished platform in section 5.4.50 and 5.4.54 as a permeable structure that would facilitate infiltration. At this early stage, the LLFA would consider these platforms to be an impermeable surface based upon the previously discussed matters relating to the need to compact the subbase and surface lay to ensure suitable and stable base for vehicles and equipment to be based upon. Furthermore, it is normal practice within the surface water drainage industry to keep infiltration drainage structures approximately 5m away from existing or proposed buildings and structures. This approach is reflected both in part by Part H of the building regulations, the SuDS Manual and the new National Standards for SuDS. Therefore, the suggestion that the proposed platform for a substation as permeable and enabling infiltration to occur is incorrect and inconsistent with	Not Resolved - No changes or additional information provided.	As noted in **8.4.9 Applicant's Comments on any Further Information or Submissions Received by Deadline 3 [REP4-298]**, '*The Applicant does not agree with this assumption. Treating the finished substation and Cable Sealing End compound platforms as fully impermeable is disproportionate, since they are not uniformly compacted across the entire area and relatively only a small proportion of the compounds is comprised of hardstanding material. The Applicant confirms that the next iteration of the drainage design will further develop the proposed drainage arrangements, which will provide further clarity on this matter. The next iteration of the drainage design will also further develop the permanent surface water drainage network, in line with the relevant National Grid Technical Specifications.'*

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the national standards and regulations and local requirements that are in place to reduce the risk of detrimental impacts posed to this infrastructure. The applicant has shown an awareness of the need for infiltration systems to be at least 5m away from "any existing or proposed buildings, roads, embankments or other infrastructure" as identified in section 9.5.3 if this drainage strategy. Therefore, this information is not new to the applicant and the applicant will need to review this design approach and update accordingly. Further work is required.		This will be reported in the Surface Water Management Plan that is secured via commitment GG22 within **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]**.
The LLFA notes that in sections 5.4.48 and 5.4.52, the applicant indicates that the proposed drainage strategy is "heavily informed by the 7.9 Flood Risk Assessment [APP-331] and information fed in from the LLFA." At present, it is not clear what information from the FRA has been used to "heavily inform" the drainage strategy. Furthermore, the LLFA has already highlighted various concerns regarding the incorrect information used in relation to the Norfolk LLFA's requirement in part as the applicant appears to have not reviewed or considered the Norfolk LLFA's Developer Guidance or information. Therefore, there is a lack of evidence to support the applicant's statement that the proposed drainage strategy is "heavily informed by the 7.9 Flood Risk Assessment [APP-331] and information fed in from the LLFA." Further work is required to address this matter.	Not Resolved - There has been little change to the information provided to evidence of the "heavily" informing of this drainage strategy from the FRA.	As noted in **8.4.9 Applicant's Comments on any Further Information or Submissions Received by Deadline 3 [REP4-298]**, *'The Applicant considers the Drainage Strategy (8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [Revision B]) to be proportionate for the nature and scale of the Project and has considered the requirements of all relevant statutory undertakers in developing the strategy. The Drainage Strategy follows the same principles set out in 7.9 of the Flood Risk Assessment [APP-331], which underpin the overall approach to the assessment'*.
In relation to section 5.4.55, the applicant has again indicated that they believe there is the potential for the access roads to be designed in a permeable manner. Again, the LLFA considers these access roads to be an impermeable surface based upon the previously comments relating to the compaction of materials for vehicles to use and the application of normal practice in the surface water drainage industry to keep infiltration drainage structures approximately 5m away from existing or proposed buildings and structures including roads. This is reflected in national regulations, design standards and local design requirements to reduce the risk of detrimental impacts posed to this infrastructure. The applicant will need to review this design approach and update accordingly. Further work is required.	Partly Resolved - No changes in the text but it is acknowledged that accessed roads are different to haul roads. However, the indication that the design would use "asphalt or concrete pavement as a worst-case" continues to indicate the applicant is considering other unidentified solutions.	As noted in **8.4.9 Applicant's Comments on any Further Information or Submissions Received by Deadline 3 [REP4-298]**, *'The Applicant seeks to provide infiltration based drainage where possible in accordance with design principles and policy. The Applicant recognises that this will not be suitable in a number of locations due to the underlying ground permeability. Specific locations proposed for ponds/basins have not all been tested for infiltration potential and where a desktop study has indicated that infiltration is not likely suitable, the design has sought to include a viable drainage option. The discharge hierarchy will be followed if infiltration based drainage is not feasible'.* The Applicant refers Norfolk County Council to Commitment GG22, secured in **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]**, where it confirms that *'drainage measures will be developed liaising with the Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFAs) and statutory undertakers including Anglian Water (where relevant), with ongoing dialogue during implementation of the measures'*.
In section 5.4.55, the applicant identifies bellmouths for temporary haul roads in the permanent works section. The LLFA requires clarification as to whether the bellmouths to the temporary haul roads would be a permanent feature or removed at and the original land use reinstated as per the project environmental commitments. Further information and clarification is required.	Resolved - additional information provided.	The Applicant notes that this item is now considered resolved.

Norfolk County Council's Previous Comment [REP3-083]	Norfolk County Council's Comment [REP5-257]	Applicant's Comment
In section 5.4.57, the applicant has stated that "Runoff from the access roads and bellmouths is proposed to be collected via infiltration drains/ditches along the edge and will be attenuated via the attenuation/infiltration ponds with a controlled discharge to the nearest existing watercourse or drainage ditch." This statement lacks clarity about the proposed drainage arrangements, discharge location and evidence to demonstrate these approaches are viable. Further work and information is required.	Not Resolved - No further information provided or clarification given.	The information the LLFA requests will be provided following the DCO Examination as secured by the Surface Water Management Plan that is secured via commitment GG22 within **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]**.
In relation to section 5.4.58, the LLFA notes the Drainage Strategy is not based upon site specific topographic data and has incomplete topographic data and information as confirmed by the applicant in section 3.1.1 to 3.1.6. The applicant does indicate that "all outfall locations are indicative". Further work and information is required.	Partly Resolved - The applicant has updated to indicate that some of the outfall locations are shown in Appendix B. However, the information is not shown in Appendix B at present as previously discussed.	**8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [Revision C]** Appendix A and **8.2.1 Drainage Strategy - Appendix B [Revision B]** are to be read in conjunction. The cover pages of both appendices set out the relevant information to enable appropriate cross-referencing. For clarity, Appendix B is provided as a separate document (**8.2.1 Drainage Strategy – Appendix B [Revision B]**) due to file size constraints. As clarified in **8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [Revision C]**, paragraph 5.4.60, indicative outfall locations for the overhead line attenuation features have not currently been depicted, however, discharge from these features would follow the hierarchy set out in Section 5.3 of **8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [Revision C]**. Outfall locations where required, would discharge to locations within the Order Limits.
The LLFA notes the reference to TS2.10.09 which is a internal technical specification to Nation Grid and has not been shared or suitable extracts provided from in this drainage strategy. Therefore, there is no evidence provided at this time to support the proposed approach. Further information is required.	Not Resolved - TS2.10.09 has not been provided for LLFA review.	As noted in **8.4.9 Applicant's Comments on any Further Information or Submissions Received by Deadline 3 [REP4-298]**, *'The Applicant notes the request from the LLFA to view National Grid standard TS2.10.09. This is a confidential internal National Grid standard. We would welcome additional detail of the specific design approach that the LLFA is seeking clarity on, so that we can respond and progress discussions'*.
Again, the LLFA notes there is a section in the drainage strategy for the proposed outfalls, however, there is no information or consideration to the infiltration testing that would be necessary to demonstrate that the discharge hierarchy has been adequately applied. Further work and information is required.	Partly Resolved - Some further information about outfalls is indicated as in Appendix B although as previously discussed it is not available. Furthermore, the information in the text does not address the LLFA's concerns regarding infiltration testing.	**8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [Revision C]** Appendix A and **8.2.1 Drainage Strategy - Appendix B [Revision B]** are to be read in conjunction. The cover pages of both appendices set out the relevant information to enable appropriate cross-referencing. For clarity, Appendix B is provided as a separate document (**8.2.1 Drainage Strategy – Appendix B [Revision B]**) due to file size constraints. As clarified in **8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [Revision C]**, paragraph 5.4.60, indicative outfall locations for the overhead line attenuation features have not currently been depicted, however, discharge from these features would follow the hierarchy set out in Section 5.3 of **8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [Revision C]**. Outfall locations where required, would discharge to locations within the Order Limits. The Applicant confirms that the Surface Water Management Plan, secured through Commitment GG22 in **7.2 of the Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]**, will assess each catchment area in accordance with the hierarchy set out in Section 5.3. Movement between hierarchy levels will be supported by appropriate justification. The assessment will be informed by detailed ground investigations and topographic survey data.
The application states that "Outfall locations are indicated in 6.4.F1 Environmental Statement Figure 4.1 - Proposed Project Design [APP-133]." The LLFA has reviewed figure 4.1 and notes that only ordinary watercourse crossing points and the proposed overhead line SuDs basins are shown on these figures. Therefore, the drainage strategy statement is not correct. Further work and information is required.	Not Resolved - No change	

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In section 5.4.60, the statement that all attenuation and infiltration features would have a 300mm freeboard is inconsistent with the earlier statement in the drainage strategy in section 5.4.13. Section 5.4.13 indicated that only features with a 1 m depth of water would have a 300mm freeboard. Further work and information is required.	Resolved - Further information has been provided.	The Applicant notes that this item is now considered resolved.
Section 5.4.60 indicates the applicant's expectation of residual flood risks likely to be associated with the proposed development. However, the Environmental Statement indicated that this was not to be the case. Therefore, the Drainage Strategy and the Environmental Statement appear to contradict. Further work and information is required to resolve this contradiction.	Partly Resolved - The applicant has included additional information the Drainage Strategy although this does not alter the position of the Drainage Strategy. There appears to be no change to the Environmental Statement. Therefore, there continues to be an inconsistency between the two reports.	**8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [Revision C]**, paragraph 5.4.62 confirms that residual risks are negligible for the design events, with controls for exceedance events to be addressed at the detailed design stage. **6.12 Environmental Statement Chapter 12 - Hydrology Land Drainage and Flood Risk [APP-221]**, paragraph 12.8.1 explains that residual effects are assessed on the basis that all mitigation measures (embedded, standard and additional) are in place. Paragraphs 12.8.22 to 12.8.24 further assess potential impacts on surface water flood risk and drainage, concluding that residual effects during construction are of negligible magnitude and therefore of negligible significance. The same conclusion is reached for the operational phase of the Project. Accordingly, no inconsistency between the Drainage Strategy and the Enviromental Statment has been identified.
Section 5.4.59 contains very detailed information about the outfall design when there is a lack of information about the location of the outfalls and the proposed drainage design associated with the outfalls. Therefore, it is not possible to determine whether these outfalls are suitable for these locations or the drainage infrastructure. Further information is required.	Partly Resolved - Some further information about outfalls is indicated as in Appendix B although as previously discussed it is not available.	**8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [Revision C]** Appendix A and **8.2.1 Drainage Strategy - Appendix B [Revision B]** are to be read in conjunction. The cover pages of both appendices set out the relevant information to enable appropriate cross-referencing. For clarity, Appendix B is provided as a separate document (**8.2.1 Drainage Strategy – Appendix B [Revision B]**) due to file size constraints. As clarified in **8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [Revision C]**, paragraph 5.4.60, indicative outfall locations for the overhead line attenuation features have not currently been depicted, however, discharge from these features would follow the hierarchy set out in Section 5.3 of **8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [Revision C]**. Outfall locations where required, would discharge to locations within the Order Limits.
In section 5.5, the applicant has stated that "The proposed SuDS features would allow interception of the first 5 mm of rainfall where possible, reducing runoff from the site into surface water or piped drainage systems." At present there is not enough detail to evidence that approach has been applied as no surface water drainage layouts have been provided for any of the construction or operational phases proposed developments. Further information is required as it is not possible to assess this section at this time. Further work and information is required.	Partly Resolved - The applicant has provided some additional information although it is not demonstrated as a viable drainage solution either in terms of discharge location or attenuation capacity. This approach is also not reflected in the associated Works descriptions.	The Applicant acknowledges these comments and considers the information submitted at Deadline 4 to be sufficient, including **8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [REP4-186]** and **8.2.1 Drainage Strategy - Appendix B [REP4-188]**. The further information the LLFA requests will be provided following the DCO Examination as secured by the Surface Water Management Plan that is secured via commitment GG22 within **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]**.
In relation to section 5.5.3, the LLFA's previous comments regarding the substation platforms and construction compounds would not be considered as "constructed with permeable material". Therefore, these structures would not be considered as offering interception of everyday rainfall. Furthermore, the LLFA notes that in section 5.5.4, the applicant lists items from Standard 2 in the National Standards for SuDS. Again, without a proposed drainage design it is not	Partly Resolved - The applicant has provided some additional information although it is not demonstrated as a viable drainage solution either in terms of discharge location or attenuation capacity. This approach is also not reflected in the associated Works descriptions.	The Applicant refers Norfolk County Council to its relavent responses in **8.4.9 Applicant's Comments on any Further Information or Submissions Received by Deadline 3 [REP4-298]**.

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possible to determine whether the proposed design approach is appropriate. Further work and information is required.		
In relation to section 5.5.3, the applicant has stated "The permeable platform construction shall naturally retain runoff, where runoffs will be lost to the soils or the atmosphere." The LLFA notes the applicant has previously indicated that the platforms material would be unbound and appear to have no sides to retain any water within these structures. The LLFA notes that these structures are yet to be suitably designed as attenuation structures as no drainage design information has been provided. Further information is required.	Partly Resolved - The applicant has provided some additional information although it is not demonstrated as a viable drainage solution either in terms of discharge location or attenuation capacity. This approach is also not reflected in the associated Works descriptions.	
In section 5.6.1, the applicant has indicated the identification of the discreet drainage catchments along the route of the proposed development. However, this information has not been included in either the Drainage Strategy, Flood Risk Assessment or the Environmental Statement. Therefore, the proposed design and the drainage strategy is not supported by an evidence base on this point. Further information is required.	Not Resolved - No further information of the discreet drainage catchments has been provided.	The information the LLFA requests will be provided following the DCO Examination as secured by the Surface Water Management Plan that is secured via commitment GG22 within **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]**.
In section 5.6, the use of the term pond implies these features are expected to contain a waterbody throughout the year. However, in previous sections the applicant has indicated these were basins or attenuation areas rather than ponds. The LLFA seeks clarification as to whether these features will be designed as ponds with standing water in them or attenuation basins that do not have standing water within them. Further information is required.	Resolved - Amendments made to reflect this it is a basin rather than a pond.	The Applicant notes that this item is now considered resolved.
In section 5.6.2, the applicant identifies there are two types of ponds; a.) permanent pond for treated surface water and b.) a temporary pond that allows for the settlement of sediments in the pond design. However, in the subsequent information provided in sections 5.6.3 to 5.6.9, it does not clearly show which basin design the information relates to. It appears that most of the information provided relates to the temporary sediment management basins. The LLFA seeks clarification of which design information relates to each type of basin. Further clarification and information is required.	Partly Resolved - Reference is made to Appendix B, although as previously discussed it is not available. No further information is provided to address the concern.	**8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [Revision C]** Appendix A and **8.2.1 Drainage Strategy - Appendix B [Revision B]** are to be read in conjunction. The cover pages of both appendices set out the relevant information to enable appropriate cross-referencing. For clarity, Appendix B is provided as a separate document (**8.2.1 Drainage Strategy – Appendix B [Revision B]**) due to file size constraints.
In section 5.6.10 to 5.6.13, the applicant appears to indicate that Header, Filter drains and swales are being included in the permanent drainage arrangements. However, in the discussion within sections 5.6.10 to 5.6.13, the applicant considers the use of these features in relation to the temporary construction phase features, which is not what this section is about. Therefore, it is not clear to the LLFA how these features will relate to the permanent drainage arrangement or where they will be located and how they will be used in the surface water drainage systems for the operational phase. Further work and information is required.	Resolved - Amendments made.	The Applicant notes that this item is now considered resolved.
In section 5.6.14, it is not clear where or what development these possible features could be related to. Further information is required.	Not Resolved - No additional information is provided.	The information the LLFA requests will be provided following the DCO Examination as secured by the Surface Water Management Plan that is secured via commitment GG22 within **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]**.

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The LLFA notes the discussion in section 5.7.5 that indicates that existing land drainage is 0.9m and that external access roads are expected to reach a depth of between 0.5 and 0.7m. The applicant has assumed that there would be no interaction. However, the LLFA, notes that these depths given are the invert depths. This means that a typical 150mm or 225mm diameter would have a soffit of between 0.75 and 0.675m plus an allowance for cover. Therefore, there is a moderate potential risk of interaction between the field drains and the proposed access roads. Again, this risk could apply to haul roads with depths around 0.7m that are referred to in section 5.7.8. Further work will be needed by the applicant to manage this risk.	Partly Resolved - Amendments made although the risk level has been altered from very low to low, the LLFA is not clear what evidence this is based on and whether it accurately reflects the level of risk.	The Applicant considers the risk to existing field drainage to be low for external access roads as they are only expected to reach a depth between 0.5 m and 0.7 m depending on ground conditions and vertical road profiles. The increase in risk captured in **8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [Revision C]** from very low to low reflects stakeholder feedback and concerns raised due to the likely inconsistent records for land drainage installation depth. The Applicant still considers the risk to remain low as the anticipated depth of the haul roads as stated is considered a worst-case scenario and land drainage is likely to be at depth to avoid farming practices. Furthermore where the risk is increased due to challenging ground conditions and unfavourable topography, alternative construction methods may be used to mitigate the impact.
In relation to section 5.8, it is not possible for the LLFA to provide any specific comment as there is no indication as to where the areas of high groundwater levels are located. Furthermore, it is noted that this section is written in the manner of an Environmental Assessment rather than a drainage strategy. Further work and information is required.	Not Resolved - No amendments made	The information the LLFA requests will be provided following the DCO Examination as secured by the Surface Water Management Plan that is secured via commitment GG22 within **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]**.
The LLFA notes that in section 5.8.7 there is another attenuation ponds section included, consisting of two sentences relating to ponds and groundwater. However, again this information is not specific and does not indicate where the areas of high groundwater levels are located. It is also the first time that the basins have considered being lined. Although the base of the basins would need to have 1.2m of clearance between the basin base of the peak high groundwater level. This is identified in the LLFA Developer Guidance. Further work and information is required.	Not Resolved - No amendments made	
In section 6.1, it is not clear to the LLFA whether the applicant will be using the simple index approach or another approach identified in The SuDs Manual (C753). Further information is required.	Resolved - Amendments made.	The Applicant notes that this item is now considered resolved.
The LLFA notes that the majority of the information provided in section 6.2 relates to site management and pollution mitigation practises on construction sites. There is no information relating to the proposed method of the water quality assessment for the surface water drainage system. The LLFA notes in section 6.2 the applicant refers to the Ciria C648 Control of water pollution from linear construction projects was published in 2006. The Ciria SuDS Manual C753 (Published in 2015) includes information for the assessment of water quality for surface water drainage systems. As these temporary drainage systems will be in place for approximately 5 years, it is reasonable to use the more recently published water quality assessment approaches for sustainable drainage systems in this drainage strategy. It is also noted that the applicant focuses on the water quality for discharge to watercourses, with no obvious consideration of discharge to the ground. However, throughout the drainage strategy there was limited consideration and mention of discharge to the ground, resulting in the incomplete consideration of	Partly Resolved - The applicant has confirmed the use of the Simple index approach but no additional information is provided. There is no information about the general discharge of surface water to ground consideration, only the discharge to watercourses.	The information the LLFA requests will be provided following the DCO Examination as secured by the Surface Water Management Plan that is secured via commitment GG22 within **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]**.

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the discharge location and the water quality. As there is no information relating to the proposed method of the water quality assessment for the surface water drainage system it is not possible to determine at this time whether the proposed drainage strategy and design is appropriate. Further work is required.		
The LLFA notes that in section 6.5.4 the applicant has only referenced the Water Resources Act 1991, which is where the Environment Agency derives their consenting powers. However, the LLFA and IDB derive their powers from the Land Drainage Act 1991. As this has not been identified in this section, correction will be appropriate as it is incorrect as it stands. Further work is required.	Resolved - Amendments made.	The Applicant notes that this item is now considered resolved.
In relation to section 6.5.8 to 6.5.10 and the dewatering of construction works, the LLFA notes there is no consideration of whether the discharge of dewatering activities could increase flood risk on site or elsewhere. Further work and information is required.	Not Resolved - No additional information or amendments	The Applicant acknowledges these comments and considers the information submitted at Deadline 4 to be sufficient, including **8.2 Drainage Strategy DCO [REP4-186]** and **8.2.1 Drainage Strategy - Appendix B [REP4-188]**. The further information the LLFA requests will be provided following the DCO Examination as secured by the Surface Water Management Plan that is secured via commitment GG22 within **7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice [Revision F]**. The Applicant refers Norfolk County Council to its relevant responses in **8.4.9 Applicant's Comments on any Further Information or Submissions Received by Deadline 3 [REP4-298]**.
The LLFA notes that in section 8.1.4, the applicant indicates that the proposed project is committed to delivering at least 10% BNG and reinstating habitats across the route. While the LLFA supports these commitments, it is noted these commitments are separate to the provision of biodiversity within the sustainable drainage design, especially as many of these SuDs features are proposed to be temporary for the duration of the construction phase. Furthermore, it is not clear in section 8 where these additional enhancements would be located as no information is provided as this time in the drainage strategy. Further work and information is required.	Not Resolved - No additional information or amendments	
In section 8.1.7, the LLFA notes the applicant states the project "is retaining the temporary attenuation pond at the EACN Substation to create a wetland habitat to introduce habitat diversity." If the temporary attenuation basin is being retained to then develop a wetland then this is either a change of use or a permanent structure. It should be noted that an attenuation basin is a different type of feature to a wetland. Further clarification and information on any retention of temporary features, such as this situation, would need to be identified at the start of the project. Further information is required.	Not Resolved - No additional information or amendments	
The LLFA notes that at present the list of SuDS features given in Table 9.1 does not include infiltration features. It is also not discussed how the potential permeable structures such the platform and access road should a suitable permeable design be developed would be maintained to their proposed design capacity. At present the information provided in the maintenance section is not consistent with the drainage features identified in the preceding section of the drainage strategy. These inconsistencies will need to be resolved. Further information and work is required.	Partly Resolved - Infiltration Basins added to Table 9.1 but no other infiltration structures considered such as infiltration trenches.	

Norfolk County Council's Previous Comment [REP3-083]	Norfolk County Council's Comment [REP5-257]	Applicant's Comment
In relation to 9.3, the LLFA has been clear in our previous consultations that temporary works will need to be removed as they have been identified as temporary. Should the applicant seek for these temporary structures to remain after the construction phase then these structures would be considered as permanent structures. Any permanent structures would need to be identified during this phase of the design development and the structure designed for long term use and to ensure there is no increase in flood risk of the full design life of the structure. Further work and information is required.	Not Resolved - No amendments made.	

Appendix B. Applicant's Comments on LV 2.18 Villages Against Pylons

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Appendix B Applicant's Comments on LV 2.18 Villages Against Pylons [REP5-277]

Table B.1 Applicant's Responses to an Additional Submission from Villages Against Pylons [REP5-277] Matter

Applicant's Responses to an Additional Submission from Villages Against Pylons [REP5-277] Matter	NG Response
Policy Context In relation to EN-5, two related, but distinct, landscape considerations are relevant to this section of the route; The first relates to the effects of the proposed infrastructure on the Dedham Vale National Landscape and its setting. The second relates to the effects on the Colne Valley itself, which, whilst undesignated, exhibits many of the characteristics associated with a valued and highly sensitive landscape. National Policy Statement EN-5 affords substantial weight to the protection of nationally designated landscapes. Paragraph 2.9.21 states that National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. The policy reflects the long-established principle contained within the Holford Rules that major areas of highest amenity value should be avoided altogether where reasonably possible, even where this results in increased route length. EN-5 recognises that the scale and nature of overhead transmission infrastructure means that residual effects within nationally designated landscapes are unlikely to be acceptable in planning terms except in exceptional circumstances. The policy therefore establishes a strong presumption in favour of avoiding designated landscapes and reducing adverse effects through routeing and undergrounding wherever reasonably practicable. Importantly, the policy also recognises that effects are not limited to the designated landscape itself. The setting of a National Landscape can contribute to its natural beauty, appreciation and experience, and adverse effects on that setting remain relevant considerations when assessing compliance with national policy. This is particularly relevant in the present case given the visual and functional relationship between the Colne Valley and the Dedham Vale National Landscape, and the extent to which views from the National Landscape and its setting extend across the wider valley landscape. The second issue is in reference to the value and sensitivity of the Colne Valley itself. Whilst the Colne Valley does not benefit from national landscape designation, EN-5 does not restrict consideration of undergrounding solely to designated landscapes. Paragraph 2.9.14 specifically recognises that where the nature or routeing of an overhead line is likely to result in particularly significant landscape and visual impacts, applicants should demonstrate that due consideration has been given to feasible alternatives, including rerouting or undergrounding, taking account of landscape, visual, environmental, engineering and cost considerations. The policy therefore recognises that undesignated landscapes may nevertheless possess qualities and characteristics which render them highly sensitive to overhead transmission infrastructure. This is consistent with GLVIA3 and Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 02/21, which make clear that valued landscapes are not limited to designated areas and may derive value from scenic quality, tranquillity, recreational use, cultural associations, perceptual qualities, distinctiveness and sense of place. This Technical Note will demonstrate that the Colne Valley exhibits many of the characteristics which informed the designation of the adjoining Dedham Vale landscape and the Stour Valley Project Area, including strong valley landform, wooded skylines, rural character, historic settlement pattern, recreational value and high scenic quality. In these circumstances, there is a question as to whether sufficient weight has been afforded to landscape considerations when determining the extent of undergrounding through this section of the route and whether the proposed overhead alignment represents the least harmful reasonable option in accordance with the objectives of EN-5.	The Applicant has responded to matters related to Dedham Vale National Landscape and its setting and effects on the Colne Valley in responses below. The Applicant's assessment concludes that the connection as an overhead line technology on the proposed alignment is consistent with Policy. Others of course may take a different view and consider that on this basis there should be consideration of the use of underground cables for the Colne Valley. Whilst the Applicant disagrees with the need for this, we have reviewed what such an option could be if it were considered further pursuant to EN-5. Underground Cable options: • A minimum crossing requirement would be to use the cable for the valley crossing only. To the north of the River Colne, a Cable Sealing End (CSE) compound location around TB47 may be appropriate, being backclothed in one direction with cable routeing to the south of the Order Limits to seek to reduce the interaction with areas of heritage interest identified. For a CSE compound on the south side of the river, an initial consideration of The Horlock Rules leads to a location south of TB50 to the east side of Fiddlers Wood which benefits from being backclothed to a degree. This is a route of around 1.2 km in length with limited net benefit as effects arising from two CSE compounds may offset the benefits of the removal of a section of overhead line. • To avoid locations where the benefit of removing some pylons may be offset by the effects of CSE compounds, there may need to be around 2.7 km of cable. A CSE compound north of the river would, as an example, need to be moved to the vicinity of TB45 and to the south a relocation to around TB53 may provide a basis for design. It is noted that feedback also refers to extending cables to a total of around 7 km of cable from the Great Horkesley Tilbury side CSE compound through to the south of Aldham. • EN-5 sets out from paragraph 2.9.24 the Secretary of State's decision making in circumstances that the test at 2.9.23 is engaged. The Applicant's view is that not only is the test at 2.9.23 not engaged, but that even if it was, for the purposes of paragraphs 2.9.24 and 2.9.25 EN-5, the benefits accruing from the potential undergrounding alternative clearly do not outweigh any extra economic, social, or environmental impacts that it presents. • EN-5 policy then goes on to state at paragraph 2.9.24: '*The Secretary of State must weigh the feasibility, cost, and any harm of the undergrounding or subsea option against: the adverse implications of the overhead line proposal; the cost and feasibility of re-routing overhead lines or mitigation proposals for the relevant line section; and the cost and feasibility of the reconfiguration, rationalisation, and/or use of underground or subsea cabling of proximate existing or proposed electricity networks infrastructure*'. • EN-5 paragraph 2.9.25 states: '*In such cases the Secretary of State should only grant development consent for underground or subsea sections of a proposed line over an overhead alternative if they are satisfied that the benefits accruing from the former proposal clearly outweigh any extra economic, social, or environmental impacts that it presents* […]'.

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Landscape Value Landscape value is an important component of landscape assessment and forms a key consideration in the assessment of effects arising from major infrastructure projects. This matter has been specifically raised during examination of the Norwich to Tilbury project. In particular, Document 8.5.8 Applicant's Response to Issue Specific Hearing 2 Action Points responded to the Inspector's request made during Day 2 of ISH2 (29 April 2026, Agenda Item 8: Landscape and Visual Effects), which sought clarification regarding the application of Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 02/21 and requested an example of where the guidance had materially influenced routeing decisions or the proposed alignment. The Inspector's request reflects the increasing importance afforded to landscape value within both national policy and professional guidance. Whilst nationally designated landscapes such as National Parks and National Landscapes are afforded the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty, GLVIA3 and subsequent Landscape Institute guidance make clear that landscapes outside of national designation can also be valued for a wide range of reasons and may therefore be susceptible to significant adverse effects arising from development. Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 02/21 (Assessing Landscape Value Outside National Designations) confirms that landscape value may derive from a combination of factors including scenic quality, perceptual qualities, cultural and natural heritage interest, recreational value, rarity, distinctiveness, conservation interest, associations and functional importance. Importantly, the guidance also emphasises that valued landscapes may exist outside nationally designated areas and that value may vary spatially within wider landscape character areas depending on the specific qualities and attributes present. This is particularly relevant within the context of the Norwich to Tilbury project given the extensive geographic scale of the proposals and the number of sensitive river valleys, historic landscapes and recreational corridors affected by the route alignment. National Policy Statement EN-5 similarly recognises that significant landscape and visual impacts may arise not only within designated landscapes, but also within other highly sensitive landscapes where the nature or routeing of overhead lines could give rise to substantial harm. Paragraph 2.9.14 specifically recognises that where overhead line proposals are likely to result in particularly significant landscape and visual impacts, applicants should demonstrate that due consideration has been given to feasible alternatives, including rerouting or undergrounding, taking account of landscape, visual, environmental, engineering and cost considerations. Applicant's Landscape Value Evaluation The Applicant's response within Document 8.5.8 and the earlier response to ExQ1 LV1.21 in REP3-074 confirms that Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 02/21 was considered as part of the assessment process and routeing decisions. It is accepted that the Applicant has recognised the role of landscape value within the assessment of landscape sensitivity and has identified examples where route amendments sought to reduce effects on particular landscape features, including veteran trees, historic field patterns and heritage assets. However, notwithstanding this, we are of the judgement that the practical application of TGN 02/21 within the assessment of the Colne Valley has been relatively broad and does not fully reflect the experiential, perceptual and locally specific qualities of the landscape corridor directly affected by the proposed alignment. In particular, whilst the Applicant's assessment judgements have appropriately been structured around the defined study area bands of "Within 0.5km", "Between 0.5–1.5km" and "Beyond 1.5km", the baseline analysis informing these judgements appears to rely heavily on broad Landscape Character Area-scale evaluations. As a consequence, there is concern that the value of the more rural and tranquil sections of the Colne Valley directly affected by the proposals may be moderated or diluted through averaging	The Applicant has undertaken a landscape value assessment as set out in response to ID 12.133 in **8.8.2 Applicant's Comments on Local Impact Reports [REP2-030]**. The Applicant recognises the local value and high sensitivity of the Colne Valley. Despite being valued locally and of high sensitivity, the Applicant does not consider the impacts on this landscape to warrant consideration of an underground cable solution pursuant to the NPS policy tests. Consideration has been given to the route alignment in this location (as has been done across the Project) based on consultation feedback and as part of the iterative design and assessment process. Design considerations related to the Project and Colne Valley are included in the following sections of Design Development Reports: • **7.20 2023 - Design Development Report for the Project [APP-358]** paragraph 5.5.109, page 55 • **7.21 2024 - Design Development Report for the Project [APP-359]** paragraphs 5.4.136 to 5.4.151, pages 70 to 74 • **5.15 Design Development Report [APP-122]** Section 7.3 paragraphs 7.3.1 to 7.3.3, pages 94 to 95. The Planscape Landscape and Visual Technical Note (Planscape report) **[REP5-277]** recognises the Applicant's consideration of landscape value and confirms that the assessment of effects judgements have been appropriately structured. The Planscape report **[REP5-277]** raises concerns that sensitivity and significance judgements may understate the likely effects of the Project. The Applicant has assessed the sensitivity of the Colne Valley landscape to be high, taking into consideration medium-high value and high susceptibility. An increase in value judgement would not change the overall judgement of high sensitivity. The Applicant has undertaken the LVIA in a proportionate and consistent manner across the Study Area, reflective of the scale of the Project. The LVIA is based on recognised, published landscape character assessments. Landscape sensitivity will inevitably vary to some degree within Landscape Character Assessments (LCAs), but the overall judgements remain fair and valid. The Applicant considers that the overall sensitivity judgements and resulting assessment conclusions remain robust and appropriate, and stands by the assessment of landscape sensitivity and landscape effects as reported in **6.13 Environmental Statement Chapter 13 – Landscape and Visual [APP-226]**. It is considered that the level of detail provided in the LVIA is sufficient and proportionate, enabling the decision maker to understand the nature and level of effects. Whilst it would always be possible to add further detail, the purpose of LVIA (and EIA) is to provide a proportionate assessment. The potential for significant effects is to be expected from the introduction of 400 kV overhead lines and is recognised in policy and has been transparently reported within **6.13 Environmental Statement Chapter 13 – Landscape and Visual [APP-226]**.

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across wider LCAs containing varying levels of urban influence, tranquillity, scenic quality and perceptual character. Document 6.13.A2 Environmental Statement Appendix 13.2 – Landscape Baseline and Assessment identifies both the Colne River Valley Floor and Colne River Valley Slopes as being of medium-high landscape value. The assessment tables identify a number of positive attributes contributing to this judgement, including scenic quality, recreational use, historic character, woodland cover, river corridor qualities and perceptual attributes. However, it is notable that no landscape receptors within this part of the study area are identified as being of high value despite many of the characteristics described within the baseline closely aligning with the Applicant's own criteria for higher value landscapes set out within Document 6.13.A1 Environmental Statement Appendix 13.1 – Landscape and Visual Methodology. The methodology document explains that higher value landscapes are likely to display a strong sense of place, scenic quality, intact character, perceptual qualities including tranquillity, recreational importance, cultural associations and a high degree of rarity or distinctiveness. Many of these characteristics are evident within the Colne Valley corridor, particularly within the central rural sections through which the proposed pylon alignment passes. This appears particularly relevant within the Colne Valley corridor where the proposed alignment passes through the more rural and tranquil central sections of the valley landscape, rather than the more urban influenced edges associated with Colchester. The immediate route corridor and surrounding landscape within the principal area of influence display notably stronger perceptual and experiential qualities than the wider LCA as a whole, including greater tranquillity and rural character, stronger enclosure associated with wooded valley sides and riparian vegetation, more pronounced scenic quality and cross-valley intervisibility, extensive recreational use through the Essex Way and wider PRoW network, and a comparatively limited presence of existing large-scale transmission infrastructure. For example, the Applicant's assessment of perceptual qualities acknowledges that "there is a perception of tranquillity in rural areas, away from the edge of Colchester", yet the resulting value judgement remains moderated by the wider Landscape Character Area context. In practice, however, the proposed alignment passes directly through those quieter and more rural sections of the valley where tranquillity, enclosure and rural character are most strongly expressed. Similarly, the route corridor itself contains many of the characteristics associated with valued landscapes under TGN 02/21, including strong scenic quality associated with the enclosed valley landform and wooded skylines, extensive recreational use through the Essex Way and wider PRoW network, historic settlement relationships and cultural associations, a strong sense of place and landscape cohesion, relative tranquillity and separation from urban influences, and a comparatively limited presence of existing large-scale transmission infrastructure. As such, the Applicant's use of broad LCA-scale and study area-scale judgements appears to not sufficiently recognise the higher value and susceptibility of the specific landscape corridor experiencing direct effects from the proposed overhead line infrastructure. TGN 02/21 supports a more nuanced understanding of how value may vary spatially within wider landscapes, particularly where development affects the more valued or sensitive portions of a landscape. This distinction is important because landscape value directly informs overall landscape sensitivity. If the value of the Colne Valley corridor has been moderated through reliance on broad LCA-scale judgements, then the resulting sensitivity and significance judgements may similarly understate the likely effects arising from the introduction of large-scale overhead line infrastructure.	
<u>Our Landscape Value Evaluation</u> In the case of the Colne Valley, the principal concern relates not simply to the presence of individual valued elements, but to the combined experience of the valley landscape, including its enclosed river corridor, wooded valley sides, historic settlement relationship, relative tranquillity, recreational use and cohesive visual composition. The introduction of substantial overhead line infrastructure and pylons has	As explained above, the Applicant has assessed the sensitivity of the Colne Valley landscape to be high taking into consideration medium-high value and high susceptibility. An increase in value judgement would not change the overall judgement of high sensitivity.

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the potential to alter these qualities across a broad geographic area, including through skyline intrusion, increased visual prominence, erosion of perceived remoteness and changes to the experiential qualities of the valley corridor. Consequently, whilst it is accepted that the Applicant has referenced and considered TGN 02/21 within the assessment process, the conclusions reached in relation to landscape value within the Colne Valley do not fully reflect either the intent of the guidance or the characteristics of the landscape most directly affected by the proposed route alignment. The following review therefore considers the value of the Colne Valley corridor against the factors identified within Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 02/21 and the landscape value criteria set out within the Applicant's own Landscape and Visual Methodology (**Document 6.13.A1 Environmental Statement Appendix 13.1 – Landscape and Visual Methodology**).	
Review of Applicant's LVIA Findings Landscape Effects The Applicant's own assessment identifies substantial adverse effects on the character and perception of the Colne Valley landscape arising from both construction and operation of the proposed overhead alignment through LCA A5: Colne River Valley Slopes and LCA A4: Colne River Valley Floors. In both cases, the Applicant identifies the landscape as being of high sensitivity due to the pronounced valley landform, open and attractive views across the valley corridor, historic settlement pattern, recreational use, woodland structure and perceived tranquillity of the landscape. Within LCA A5: Colne River Valley Slopes, the assessment acknowledges that the overhead alignment would introduce infrastructure into a landscape otherwise relatively absent of notable modern infrastructure and would affect the sense of openness identified as a key characteristic of the valley landscape. The Environmental Statement specifically recognises that pylons would appear prominently on valley slopes and ridgelines, including where the route ascends the slopes east of Fordham and crosses the intricately wooded valley sides associated with the River Colne corridor. The Applicant concludes that the Project would result in major and significant (adverse) effects within 0.5km of the alignment and moderate and significant (adverse) effects within 1.5km during both construction and operation, including at Year 15 following mitigation. Importantly, the assessment identifies that the magnitude and significance of effects would remain unchanged at Year 15. Similarly, within LCA A4: Colne River Valley Floors, the Applicant identifies high susceptibility arising from the strong character associated with the River Colne floodplain, the smaller-scale field patterns, historic mills and weirs, views along the river corridor and the perception of tranquillity within the rural valley landscape. The assessment acknowledges that the proposed overhead line would become a prominent feature crossing the river valley and would affect the narrow meandering river corridor identified as a key characteristic of the landscape. It also confirms that pylons would appear above the treeline, interrupt field boundaries and become noticeable skyline features where the alignment ascends the valley slopes. Again, the Applicant concludes that effects would remain major and significant (adverse) within 0.5km and moderate and significant (adverse) within 1.5km throughout construction and operation, including at Year 15. These findings are important because they demonstrate that the Applicant itself acknowledges the high sensitivity of the receiving landscape, the substantial nature of the likely long-term effects and the inability to materially reduce effects over time within this section of the route corridor. Given the acknowledged value and sensitivity of the receiving landscape, together with the scale, and significance of the identified effects, it is reasonable to question why this particular alignment was selected and whether sufficient weight was afforded to landscape and visual considerations during route selection. In particular, the extent of undergrounding and other avoidance measures has not been fully justified when considered against the effects identified by the Applicant's own assessment.	The Applicant notes there is no disagreement in the Planscape report **[REP5-277]** in terms of landscape effects reported in **6.13 Environmental Statement Chapter 13 – Landscape and Visual [APP-226]**. Significant landscape effects are not unusual for a project of this nature as is recognised in NPS Policy. The Applicant notes that **6.13 Environmental Statement Chapter 13 – Landscape and Visual [APP-226]** identifies significant landscape effects elsewhere within the Study Area for the Project. Consideration has been given to the route in this location (as has been done along the whole Project) based on consultation feedback and as part of the iterative design and assessment process. Design considerations related to the Project and Colne Valley are included in the following sections of Design Development Reports: • 7.20 2023 - Design Development Report for the Project **[APP-358]** paragraph 5.5.109, page 55 • 7.21 2024 - Design Development Report for the Project **[APP-359]** paragraphs 5.4.136 to 5.4.151, pages 70 to 74 • **5.15 Design Development Report [APP-122]** Section 7.3 paragraphs 7.3.1 to 7.3.3, pages 94 to 95. Whilst the Applicant does not consider the findings of the assessment engage paragraph 2.9.23 of NPS EN-5, it has nonetheless, in case others have taken a different view, considered what an underground solution may comprise and whether that could be justified in the context of the Secretary of State's decision making. The Applicant concludes as follows: The Applicant's view is that not only is the test at 2.9.23 not engaged, but that even if it was, the benefits accruing from the former proposal clearly outweigh any extra economic, social, or environmental impacts that it presents (Further detail is provided in the response above against Policy context).

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Visual Effects As well as significant adverse effects on landscape receptors, the Applicant's assessment identifies significant visual effects affecting a number of visual receptor groups too, including receptors associated with the Essex Way and wider PRoW network, together with residential and recreational receptors experiencing elevated and open views across the valley corridor. The assessment also acknowledges a number of recurring effect characteristics including: • skyline visibility • extensive views of pylons • introduction of infrastructure into views presently absent of comparable electrical infrastructure • and the perception of stacked or layered infrastructure within wider landscape views. These acknowledgements are important because they indicate that the likely effects are not simply localised or short-term in nature but relate fundamentally to the introduction of vertical infrastructure into a sensitive river valley landscape. The submitted visualisations and assessment narrative demonstrate that in many locations pylons would remain clearly perceptible above vegetation and woodland canopies and would frequently occupy elevated positions within the wider valley landscape. This is particularly evident within views experienced from VP 4.05, 4.14, 4.24, 4.25 and 4.30 where the relationship between valley landform, wooded skylines and open agricultural slopes currently forms an important component of the visual experience. This conclusion is reinforced by the Applicant's own visual assessment findings. The assessment identifies major adverse effects from Viewpoints 4.14, 4.24, 4.25 and 4.30 (**Document: 6.13.A3 Environmental Statement Appendix 13.3 – Visual Baseline and Assessment - Part 3**), demonstrating that in a number of locations the proposed pylons would become prominent and defining features within views across the wider valley landscape. Particular consideration should also be given to Viewpoint 4.05, located on a PRoW near Hillhouse Wood. Whilst the Applicant assesses the receptor as being of medium sensitivity, with a medium magnitude of change resulting in a moderate adverse effect, we are of the opinion that this judgement may understate the importance of the view and the susceptibility of the receptor to change. The route forms part of a well-used recreational corridor where appreciation of the surrounding landscape is a key component of the user experience. Although the proposed pylons would be experienced in mid-distance views, they would extend extensively across the view and introduce a prominent linear corridor of infrastructure into a landscape currently characterised by its rural qualities and relative absence of comparable infrastructure. In this respect, the visual influence of the overhead line is not derived solely from the proximity of individual pylons, but from the horizontal extent of the infrastructure and its interaction with the wider valley panorama. Given the recreational nature of the receptor and the importance of landscape appreciation to the user experience, there is a justifiable basis to conclude that the effects at this location may be greater than those presented within the assessment. The effects on residential receptors should also be considered collectively within the wider landscape context. Whilst Residential Visual Amenity Assessment is generally reserved for exceptionally overbearing effects, the cumulative experience of infrastructure across the valley corridor remains relevant when considering overall visual amenity, recreational experience and the perception of landscape change experienced by communities living within and moving through the valley landscape. This is particularly important where many residential properties currently experience a predominantly rural outlook characterised by open views across valley slopes, wooded skylines, agricultural land and	The LVIA has been undertaken in a proportionate and consistent manner across the Study Area, reflective to the scale of the Project. The Applicant considers that the assessment conclusions remain robust and appropriate and stands by the assessment of visual effects as reported. The Applicant notes a matter of differing professional opinion regarding the assessment of effects at Viewpoint 4.05. No comparative assessment is provided in the Planscape report **[REP5-277]**; however, the suggestion of an increase in judgement higher than moderate adverse reported in the LVIA, would not introduce a new significant effect as this is already considered to be significant within **6.13 Environmental Statement Chapter 13 – Landscape and Visual [APP-226]**. Whilst there are locations where views of the Project extend into more elevated surrounding rural areas, in the vicinity of the Colne Valley near Fordham Place, and into neighbouring lower-lying farmland near Aldham, intervening landform and vegetation filters views of parts of this section of the overhead line and typically limits more distant views. Effects within the lower-lying River Colne valley areas are generally contained by intervening topography on the valley sides along the meandering course of the river, combined with layers of mature and maturing vegetation, both of which filter or screen views from parts of the surrounding landscape. Landscape and visual effects beyond approximately 1.5 km are therefore judged to be not significant (note some significant visual effects up to approximately 2 km). The Applicant assumes the reference to the term 'cumulative' is related to the Project itself and not cumulative in EIA terms, between the Project and other developments. Visual Receptor Area (VRA) assessments consider the effects of the Project itself on visual amenity in wider areas rather than just isolated viewpoints. The Applicant notes that there are other circumstances related to sensitive landscapes combined with a range of sensitive visual receptors including walkers, recreational users, road users and local communities in other parts of the Study Area, including other valley landscapes. This is not isolated to the Colne Valley. The potential for significant visual effects is to be expected from the introduction of 400 kV overhead lines. It is recognised in policy and has been transparently reported within **6.13 Environmental Statement Chapter 13 – Landscape and Visual [APP-226]**. In relation to effects on residential receptors, the Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA) set out in **6.13.A4 Environmental Statement Appendix 13.4 - Residential Visual Amenity Assessment [REP5-126]** to **[REP5-135]**, provides an assessment of all properties within 200 m of the Project, and not just those that may experience exceptional overbearing effects. This distance draws upon the Landscape Institute's 'Technical Guidance Note 2/19: Residential Visual Amenity Assessment'[7] as well as experience, observations made on site during field surveys and an understanding of the Project. The RVAA also assessed impacts not just on a single view from a property, but instead considered the overall effect, 'in the round', from all available views. Visual effects on residential receptors beyond this distance and other nearby locations such as residential communities use (including Public Rights of Way, accessible open spaces and local roads) are assessed in **6.13 Environmental Statement Chapter 13 - Landscape and Visual [APP-226]**.

[7] tgn-02-2019-rvaa.pdf

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the wider river valley landscape. For these residents, the proposed development would not simply result in a change to a single view, but would introduce a new and permanent industrial feature into the wider landscape setting experienced on a daily basis. Overall, whilst the Applicant's assessment acknowledges significant adverse visual effects within the Colne Valley, there remains significant professional concern that the cumulative and sequential effects experienced by receptors moving through the landscape may be understated in places. The proposed pylons would not be experienced solely as isolated features within individual views, but as a recurring and prominent element across a number of viewpoints, PRoW and recreational routes throughout the valley corridor. As a result, the effects on visual amenity extend beyond individual receptor locations and influence the wider experience and enjoyment of the landscape.	
Impacts on the Setting of the Dedham Vale National Landscape The proposed route corridor between the sealing end compound and Fordstreet forms part of the wider transitional landscape extending south from the Dedham Vale toward Colchester. The landscape shares a number of characteristics commonly associated with the wider Stour and Dedham valley landscape, including valley landform, wooded skylines, mature hedgerow structure, rural lanes, historic settlement pattern and elevated panoramic views across interrelated valley landscapes. Importantly, the National Landscape (NL) qualities do not necessarily terminate at the designation boundary. Rather, the surrounding countryside contributes to the appreciation, setting and approach to the designated landscape, including views toward and away from the Dedham Vale and the continuity of rural valley character extending beyond the NL itself. National Policy Statement EN-5 affords National Landscapes the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. The policy expectation is clear that such landscapes should be avoided altogether where possible and that adverse effects should be minimised through routeing and design. In this context, the issue is not simply whether effects within the National Landscape are assessed as significant in EIA terms, but whether the proposals adequately conserve and enhance the natural beauty, setting and appreciation of the National Landscape. The Applicant itself acknowledges that effects on National Landscapes can arise from infrastructure located outside the designated boundary. This is especially relevant in the present case due to the elevated and intervisible nature of the surrounding valley landscapes, the strong relationship between skylines, valley slopes and settlement edges, and the sequential experience of views when travelling through the wider countryside surrounding the Dedham Vale. There is concern that the assessment of effects on the setting of the National Landscape relies heavily on a limited number of viewpoints and does not fully capture the wider visual relationship between the proposed infrastructure and the National Landscape. For example, whilst Viewpoint 4.13 at Wormingford has been used to inform the assessment, views toward the sealing end compound and the overhead alignment are not confined to this location. Similar views are available from a wider range of locations within and around the National Landscape, including potential views along Little Horkesley Road (51.94895° N, 0.81910° E). The Applicant assesses effects from Viewpoint 4.13 as Minor Adverse during construction and operation. Whilst it is acknowledged that the proposed pylons would be experienced within mid/long-distance views, they would nevertheless introduce new vertical and horizontal infrastructure into an otherwise predominantly rural valley panorama. The pylons, conductors and associated wirescape would extend across the view and introduce a clearly perceptible industrial element into the landscape. Given the acknowledged sensitivity of the visual receptor and the importance of scenic quality and natural beauty to the purpose of the National Landscape, there is concern that a minor adverse	The Applicant has undertaken a setting study for the National Landscape as set out in Annex A of **6.13.A5 Environmental Statement Appendix 13.5 - National Landscape Assessment Study [APP-235]**. The setting study considers areas of the landscape where pylons may give rise to '*substantial impacts, positive or negative, on the natural beauty and special qualities*' of the National Landscape, as defined in the Development in the Setting of the Dedham Vale AONB Position Statement (National Landscape Partnership, 2024)[8]. The Colne Valley, including the area around Fordham, is not considered to form a part of Dedham Vale National Landscape setting. The 'setting' information has informed the development of the design of the Project to reduce landscape and visual effects. This specifically relates to the location of CSE compounds north and south of Dedham Vale National Landscape and additional areas of underground cable in proximity to the National Landscape. The Applicant notes the Planscape report **[REP5-277]** does not provide its own setting study to evidence the assertion that the Colne Valley forms part of the setting of Dedham Vale National Landscape. In addition to this, Natural England and the Dedham Vale National Landscape Partnership have raised no concerns or suggestions that the setting extends beyond that which has been identified by the Applicant. As a point of clarification, the assessment of effects on Dedham Vale National Landscape and its setting does not rely heavily on viewpoints. The assessment set out in **6.13.A5 Environmental Statement Appendix 13.5 - National Landscape Assessment Study [APP-235]** is based on site observations and judgements, backed up by professional experience. Viewpoints have been referenced to provide illustrative examples in response to concerns raised during the Examination. Regarding viewpoint 4.13, the Project is over 2 km from this viewpoint, and not visible across the full width of the view. The fact that the Project will be distantly visible from parts of the Dedham Vale National Landscape is not disputed, but the Applicant's position is that the long-term adverse effects on the Special Qualities of the National Landscape will not be significant. In terms of effects, the potential for effects on the Special Qualities of the Dedham Vale National Landscape was considered when siting the CSE compounds and routeing of the overhead line. The Applicant notes paragraph 3.3.6 of The Landscape Partnership report in Appendix D of **Comments on any further information or submissions received by deadline 4 - appendices C to I [REP5-265]** supports the location of the Great Horkesley Tilbury Side CSE compound. This is in terms of the description of visual containment within B5a Grove Tributary Valley Local Landscape Character Area (LLCA) in relation to the wider plateau landscape. The Applicant notes the sense of containment is not as strong as further south, down the tributary valley and the Colne River Valley itself.

[8] National Landscape Partnership (2024) Development in the Setting of the Dedham Vale AONB Position Statement

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judgement understates the extent of visual change and the influence of the proposed infrastructure on the appreciation of the wider landscape setting. Furthermore, the significance of effects on the National Landscape should not be considered solely through EIA significance thresholds. The Dedham Vale National Landscape and Stour Valley Partnership has specifically noted that even where effects are assessed as not significant in EIA terms, adverse effects nevertheless remain harmful and do not contribute to the statutory purpose of conserving and enhancing natural beauty. This distinction is important. The question is not simply whether effects reach the threshold of significance within the EIA, but whether the proposals conserve and enhance the natural beauty, setting and experience of the National Landscape in accordance with national policy. Accordingly, there remains concern that the effects on the setting, appreciation and experience of the Dedham Vale National Landscape have not been fully reflected within the routeing proposals. Given the acknowledged sensitivity and national importance of the landscape, together with the visual and functional relationship between the Dedham Vale and the adjoining Colne Valley corridor, it is considered that the evidence currently before the Examination does not adequately demonstrate that effects on the National Landscape and its setting have been avoided or minimised to the fullest extent reasonably possible in accordance with the objectives of National Policy Statement EN-5.	As explained in ISH4, members of the Applicant's landscape and visual team have previous experience working on behalf of Natural England to identify candidates for extensions to National Landscape areas, establishing whether landscapes have potential to meet the natural beauty criteria. The Applicant's professional judgement is that despite being valued locally, the Colne Valley area does not strongly meet the natural beauty criteria for National Designation and is therefore not comparable to a National Landscape, as set out below: • The core parts of the Colne River valley floor and slopes have a distinct sense of place with scenic qualities, shaped by the River Colne and its enclosed floodplain and rising valley slopes with tributary valleys. The Planscape report **[REP5-277]** notes '*Whilst the landscape does not necessarily contain rare or nationally unusual features, the combination and expression of landscape characteristics within the corridor creates a distinctive and* ***locally important*** *river valley landscape with a strong sense of place*'. • There are pockets of tranquillity and natural heritage features including wetlands, woodland and priority habitats, typically along the narrow valley floor. There are some areas of ancient woodland. As tree cover within the Woodland Trust's Fordham Hall Estate matures, natural heritage value will increase over time. • Although the Planscape report **[REP5-277]** notes '*the landscape* ***does not contain an extensive concentration of nationally exceptional heritage features or designed landscapes***', there is evidence of time depth with listed buildings and surviving field patterns in places. The Planscape report **[REP5-277]** also notes that '*Whilst the* ***landscape does not appear to possess nationally recognised literary, artistic or cultural associations comparable to those found within parts of the Dedham Vale and wider Stour Valley****, it nevertheless exhibits a degree of local and regional cultural, recreational and historical association which contributes positively to its identity and appreciation.*' • The Applicant considers that these above qualities are moderated by the influence of transport corridors (including A1124 and B1508), intensive agriculture, agricultural infrastructure and equestrian land use, modern settlement expansion (such as at Fordham, Aldham, Eight Ash Green and West Bergholt) and small pockets of modern commercial development (including to the south east of Fordham, west of Fordstreet and along the busy A1124). • Comparison of historic Ordnance Survey mapping against current mapping indicates that there has been notable field amalgamation in the Colne River valley and slopes. Intensive agriculture practices have reduced the proportion of tree cover and caused deterioration of hedgerow field boundaries in places. Overall, while the area demonstrates pockets of natural beauty, these are typically focused within the core of the valley and are diluted elsewhere. The Applicant considers that although locally valued, the Colne Valley is not comparable to Dedham Vale National Landscape as it fails to meet the natural beauty criteria required of nationally designated landscape.
Undergrounding and Route Selection Considerations The submitted alternatives appraisal demonstrates that the Applicant has undertaken routeing and design development work in response to engineering, environmental and technical constraints. The Applicant also places reliance upon established routeing principles, including the Holford Rules, in support of the chosen alignment. However, notwithstanding the assessment work undertaken, there remains concern that the route selection and undergrounding appraisal gives disproportionate weight to engineering efficiency, deliverability and cost considerations relative to the sensitivity of the landscape and the extent of likely long-term landscape and visual significant adverse impact.	The Planscape report **[REP5-277]** acknowledges routeing and design development work undertaken by the Applicant in response to engineering, environmental and technical constraints. As explained above, the Applicant has considered alternatives within this part of the Study Area, as has been done for other parts of the Project. The Applicant has previously responded on this matter in Action Point 34 within **8.5.8 Applicant's Response to Issue Specific Hearing 2 Action Points [REP4-303]**. As noted in Design Development Reports **[APP-358**, **APP-359** and **APP-122]**, A route west of Fordham was considered and preferred in landscape and visual terms due to less topographical variation, tree cover and lower numbers of recreational receptors. There would, however, be a transfer of effects to receptors in the west, and the Project would still cross over the Colne Valley. The Applicant notes that Wakes Colne Parish Council and Chappel Parish Council raised concerns about

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National Policy Statement EN-5 recognises that overhead electricity transmission infrastructure can give rise to substantial landscape and visual effects and requires careful consideration of routeing, mitigation and alternative solutions. Paragraph 2.9.14 specifically states that where the nature or route of an overhead line is likely to result in particularly significant landscape and visual impacts, applicants should demonstrate that they have given due consideration to the costs and benefits of feasible alternatives, including rerouting and undergrounding. In relation to nationally designated landscapes, EN-5 adopts an even stronger position. Paragraph 2.9.21 confirms that National Landscapes have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty and that major development should be refused other than in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated to be in the public interest. The policy also recognises that, because of the serious potential effects of overhead line infrastructure on these landscapes, undergrounding may represent the most appropriate solution. Importantly, when considering effects on nationally designated landscapes, the policy requires consideration of landscape harm and the extent to which that harm can be moderated, rather than simply balancing such effects against project cost. Whilst the Applicant has sought to respond to this policy position through the undergrounding of the route across the Dedham Vale National Landscape, the proposed transition back to overhead infrastructure immediately beyond the designated landscape raises substantial concerns regarding the extent to which effects on both the setting of the National Landscape and the highly sensitive Colne Valley landscape have been taken into account. As set out previously within this Technical Note, the Colne Valley corridor between the proposed sealing end compound (Figure 6) and Fordstreet exhibits many of the characteristics associated with valued landscapes under Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 02/21, including strong scenic, perceptual and recreational qualities, a coherent valley landform, wooded skylines and a strong sense of place. The Applicant's own assessment identifies the Colne River Valley Slopes and Colne River Valley Floor landscape character areas as receptors of high sensitivity, whilst also identifying a range of highly sensitive visual receptors including residents and PRoW users. Importantly, the Applicant concludes that the proposed overhead alignment would result in major and significant adverse effects within the immediate corridor during construction, operation Year 1 and operation Year 15, acknowledging that these effects would remain for the lifetime of the proposed development. [Figure 6: View across arable fields at proposed Sealing End Compound Location ((Site visit date: 21/05/2026) Co-ordinates: 51.93632° N, 0.83876° E)) Comparable to ES Visual Assessment - Viewpoint 4.34: Crabtree Lane, north of West Bergholt (View Direction 280)] In this context, the transition from underground to overhead infrastructure occurs not within a landscape of lower sensitivity or limited visual influence, but within a corridor that the Applicant itself acknowledges to be highly sensitive and subject to significant landscape and visual effects. Additional undergrounding through the Colne Valley corridor therefore has the potential to materially reduce landscape and visual effects, avoid skyline intrusion, reduce the sequential visibility of pylons across the valley landscape and lessen effects on the setting and appreciation of the Dedham Vale National Landscape. It would also avoid substantial and permanent change to a landscape which the Applicant itself acknowledges to be highly sensitive. Whilst the submitted material explains why overhead infrastructure may be preferable from an engineering and delivery perspective, it is considerably less convincing in demonstrating why the significant adverse effects identified through the Colne Valley should be accepted, or why additional undergrounding was not pursued further. Accordingly, there remains a professional concern that insufficient weight may have been afforded to landscape sensitivity, and the acknowledged magnitude of landscape and visual effects when determining the extent of undergrounding through this section of the route.	consideration of a route west of Fordham in Appendix E and F of **Comments on any further information or submissions received by deadline 4 - appendices C to I [REP5-265]**. The proposal to underground the Project within Dedham Vale National Landscape and its setting, where the Project would be likely to result in significant effects on its special qualities (natural beauty), accords with NPS EN-5. This is because the presumption of overhead line is reversed within National Landscapes, as acknowledged in the Planscape report **[REP5-277]**. The Applicant disagrees with the characterisation that the undergrounding transitions back to overhead line infrastructure immediately beyond the designated landscape. The reality is that the transition from underground cables back to overhead line is not immediately beyond Dedham Vale National Landscape. The Great Horkesley Tilbury Side CSE compound is approximately 1.3 km from Dedham Vale National Landscape. As explained above: • The Colne Valley is not considered to form part of the setting of Dedham Vale National Landscape. The Applicant recognises the high sensitivity of the Colne Valley. Despite this landscape being valued locally and of high sensitivity, the Applicant does not consider it to warrant consideration of an underground cable solution in Policy terms. • Whilst the Applicant does not consider the findings of the assessment engage paragraph 2.9.23 of NPS EN-5, it has nonetheless, in case others have taken a different view, considered what an underground solution may comprise and whether that would be justified in the context of the Secretary of State's decision making. The Applicant's view is that not only is the test at 2.9.23 not engaged, but that even if it was, the benefits accruing from the former proposal clearly outweigh any extra economic, social, or environmental impacts that it presents (Further detail is provided in the response above against Policy context). • The Planscape report **[REP5-277]** notes '*Whilst the landscape does not necessarily contain rare or nationally unusual features, the combination and expression of landscape characteristics within the corridor creates a distinctive and **locally important** river valley landscape with a strong sense of place*'. The Applicant notes that indicators of natural beauty in the Colne Valley are largely derived from the topography and natural heritage features, typically associated with the core part of the Colne River valley. Overall, while the area demonstrates pockets of natural beauty, these are typically focused within the core of the valley and are diluted elsewhere due to a number of factors and elements that influence the perception of landscape condition and detract from a sense of tranquillity and wildness in places (including transport corridors, field amalgamation and deterioration of field boundaries resulting from intensive agriculture, equestrian land use and agricultural infrastructure, modern settlement expansion and pockets of modern commercial development). • The potential for significant effects is to be expected from the introduction of 400 kV overhead lines; it is recognised in NPS policy and has been transparently reported within **6.13 Environmental Statement Chapter 13 – Landscape and Visual [APP-226]**.

Applicant's Responses to an Additional Submission from Villages Against Pylons [REP5-277] Matter	NG Response
Conclusion In conclusion, the Applicant's own Environmental Statement demonstrates that the Colne Valley represents a highly sensitive river valley landscape and that the proposed overhead alignment would result in significant adverse landscape and visual effects affecting landscape character, residents and PRoW user receptors throughout the operational life of the development. The assessment identifies the Colne River Valley Slopes and Colne River Valley Floor as receptors of high sensitivity and acknowledges major and significant adverse effects within the immediate route corridor which would remain unchanged at Year 15. The review undertaken within this Technical Note indicates that the corridor between the proposed sealing end compound and Fordstreet exhibits many of the characteristics associated with valued landscapes under Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 02/21, including strong scenic, recreational and perceptual qualities, a legible valley landform, extensive public access and recreational use, historic landscape interest, relative tranquillity and a strong sense of place. These qualities contribute directly to the value and susceptibility of the landscape to large-scale overhead transmission infrastructure and increase the significance of the identified effects. The proposed overhead alignment would introduce substantial and permanent vertical infrastructure into a landscape presently characterised by its rural qualities, wooded skylines and relative absence of comparable transmission infrastructure. Whilst vegetation and landform may locally filter some views, the Applicant's own assessment and visual material demonstrate that pylons would remain prominent features across valley slopes and skylines and would be experienced sequentially across the wider landscape. The resulting effects extend beyond individual viewpoints and influence the appreciation, character and experience of the Colne Valley as a landscape system. The proposed route would also result in adverse effects on the setting and appreciation of the Dedham Vale NL. Given the strong visual, physical and perceptual relationship between the Dedham Vale and the adjoining Colne Valley, together with the acknowledged importance of conserving and enhancing natural beauty, there is the view that the extent of these effects and the contribution of the Colne Valley to the wider setting of the NL have not been fully reflected within the routeing proposals. In light of the acknowledged sensitivity of the receiving landscape, the significant adverse effects identified by the Applicant and the inability of mitigation measures to materially reduce those effects over time, there remains a significant professional concern that insufficient weight has been afforded to landscape value, landscape sensitivity and visual amenity when determining the extent of undergrounding and the acceptability of the proposed overhead alignment. Accordingly, it is considered that the Examining Authority should give careful consideration to whether the balance between engineering requirements, routeing, landscape and visual effects and undergrounding has been sufficiently justified through this section of the route. Based on the evidence reviewed, it is my professional opinion that the proposed overhead alignment through the Colne Valley does not represent the least harmful reasonable option in landscape and visual terms and that further undergrounding should have been pursued in accordance with the objectives and principles set out within National Policy Statement EN-5.	The Applicant has responded to the matters raised in this conclusion within the above responses. Responses within **8.4.1 Applicant's Comments on Relevant Representations [REP2-023]** confirm that embedded mitigation has sought to minimise landscape effects as far as practicable, as reported in **5.6 Planning Statement [APP-085]**. The impact of the Project upon landscape character and visual amenity is an inevitable consequence of the change resulting from the Project. Paragraph 5.10.5 of NPS EN-1 (2024) acknowledges that '*virtually all nationally significant energy infrastructure projects will have adverse effects on the landscape*' and paragraph 5.10.13, that '*all proposed energy infrastructure is likely to have visual effects for many receptors around proposed sites*'. For critical national priority infrastructure, '***the need case will outweigh the residual effects in all but the most exceptional cases***' (paragraph 4.1.7 of NPS EN-1 (2024)). In addition to the above, the Applicant notes that the Planscape report **[REP5-277]** recognises the inability of mitigation measures to materially reduce effects over time.

Appendix C. Comments on Norfolk Gliding Club responses to GEN2.1 and SS2.8(b)

nationalgrid

Appendix C Comments on Norfolk Gliding Club responses to GEN2.1 and SS2.8(b) [REP5-259]

C.1.1 Given the length of Norfolk Gliding Club's responses to GEN 2.1 and SS2.8, the responses are replicated and the Applicant's comments are provided in this appendix. The Applicant notes that there were two questions titled SS2.8 at ExQ2 and that this refers to the second of those (referred to as SS2.8(b) above in this document and as SS2.9 by Norfolk Gliding Club).

Table C.1 Comments on Norfolk Gliding Club responses to GEN2.1

Norfolk Gliding Club response to GEN 2.1	Applicant's Comment
GEN2.1 *Final deadlines and statements of common ground (SoCG)* *The scale of the proposed development and volume of documentation submitted into the examination by all parties is considerable. The applicant and all interested parties (IPs) are reminded of the four remaining deadlines in the examination timetable and are referred to the Rule 8 letter dated 17 February 2026 [PD-011] which sets out what the ExA expects to receive at each deadline.* *deadline 5: 10 June (the additional deadline 5A on 17 June is limited to certain responses only) deadline 6: 7 July deadline 7: 21 July deadline 8: 4 August. All parties are reminded that there is no need to resubmit comments which have already been made in earlier deadlines. If an IP continues to be dissatisfied with the unchanged response from the applicant, they should set out clearly those points in summary form in their final comments at deadline 7; there is no requirement to respond at every deadline unless new information has arisen which they wish to comment on. Cross-reference should be made to the examination library references where possible in all submissions. The ExA also reminds all parties of the importance of setting out matters which the parties agree on, and which they continue to disagree on. This can be set out in SoCGs or written summaries at the final deadline 8 (by 4 August 2026). The ExA expects SoCGs to be signed by both parties involved in each SoCG and urges the relevant IPs to engage in these so that their comments are accurately reflected within the documents.*	
Introduction Since receipt of the first draft of the SoCG in June 2025 we were concerned with some of the unsubstantiated claims and generalisations contained within it As requested by the Applicant we identified areas of disagreement, deleted errors and added some omissions Although most of our changes were added in the areas requested, some were altered and some moved by the Applicant to elsewhere within the document claiming them to be discussion and not factual points When the Applicant requested a 4th consultation in August 2025, we reviewed the agenda with them and they agreed to provide written statements on route development rationale, alternative costings and their proposed mitigation recommendations, all of which would assist in developing the SoCG and AIA We have, in a previous response, advised that the Applicant chose to withhold that agreed information from the August 2025 consultation Without that pertinent information we were unable to review and resolve the areas of disagreement in the draft SoCG and AIA in a meaningful way. That information continues to be withheld We have repeatedly attempted to work with the Applicant and have advised that once the withheld information has been provided and reviewed by NGC we would be able to meet at relatively short notice to review/complete both documents. Our last email was in mid-April, there has been no reply, the information is still being withheld and our questions remain unanswered However, the latest version of the draft SoCG dated May 2026, REP4-249 claims in section 3 paragraph 7.2 that no information has been withheld then where is it? This version has been produced by the Applicant without reference to or input from NGC and we do not agree with the content. The agreed information was withheld from the August 2025 consultation but the inference of paragraph 7.2 is that it is now available in which case why does the Applicant not resubmit this to NGC and allow the consultation to progress?	The Applicant has previously provided extensive responses regarding the matters raised by Norfolk Gliding Club (NGC). Of particular relevance to the Examining Authority's question GEN 2.1 and NGC's response on the matter of statements of common ground, the Applicant's response to NGC's **[REP3-126]** within **8.4.9 Applicant's Comments on any Further Information or Submissions Received by Deadline 3 [REP4-298]** (page 275) describes our approach to drafting and attempted collaboration with NGC therein. The Applicant has addressed the matter of NGC's perception of our withholding of information several times, including within **8.5.8 Applicant's Response to Issue Specific Hearing 2 Action Points [REP4-303]** (Action 5 (first bullet)) and **8.9.2 Applicant's Response to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]** (SS 2.3, page 214) as well as within the SoCG itself (**8.3.37 Draft Statement of Common Ground – Tibenham Aerodrome [REP4-249]**). The summary of matters under discussion within Section 3 of the SoCG **[REP4-249]** sets out which matters are proposed for further discussion, whilst also recognising those considered by the Applicant as unlikely to be resolved. We are hopeful that NGC's recent acceptance of an invitation to attend a meeting with the Applicant and the British Gliding Association (BGA) will enable progression of matters currently stalled, with the potential for a signed SoCG to be submitted at Deadline 7 (clarifying matters agreed and not agreed), subject to NGC's participation in the process.

Norfolk Gliding Club response to GEN 2.1	Applicant's Comment
Examples of SoCG and AIA issues 5. Compliance with EN-1 The Applicant states in the latest draft SoCG REP4-249 section 3 paragraph 7.1 that they comply with NPS EN-1 which as the ExA knows states that *'It is essential that new energy infrastructure is developed collaboratively alongside aerodromes, aircraft, air systems and airspace so that safety, operations and capabilities are not adversely affected by new energy infrastructure'* The two salient points within that are 'developed collaboratively' and 'not adversely affected' Developed collaboratively Collaboration – Can be defined as working together as equals to co-create a solution In this scenario our interpretation would have involved the Applicant meeting with NGC, discussing the broad requirements, reviewing the aviation safety issues, identifying the design issues and their limitations and reaching a consensus view. There was no collaboration with NGC prior to publication of the proposed route The Applicant made no attempt to engage with NGC prior to 2023 which gave the impression that the route was imposed upon us without reference to any aviation safety issues being considered The first meeting with NGC was in the summer of 2023 as part of the round of non-statutory consultations in which we were told that the route had been determined and our only option was to raise objections. Despite requesting an electronic version of the route at that consultation, it took until the summer of 2025 before it was provided in order that we could more accurately determine the aviation safety risks involved Therefore, in terms of compliance with EN-1, the Applicant fails Adversely affected During that first consultation many objections were raised and have continued to be referred to by various professional aviation bodies in the intervening years but the approach taken by the Applicant has until now always been that there are no aviation safety risks associated with the proposed route alignment However, in their response REP4-302 table 2.2 Item 5 (Aviation Safety), 5.1 Aviation Discussion, the Applicant states when responding to Engine Failure After Take Off (EFATO) incidents that *'The Applicant accepts that there is a period in the middle where hitting the line is a possibility'* Which is something of an understatement since not only is it a possibility, it is an inevitability as the pilot would have no other option. As mentioned in a previous response, in 50 years of flying I have witnessed two incidents where aircraft collided with cables. The outcome was two aircraft written off, two fatalities, one in a wheelchair for life and one with some degree of recovery Therefore, in terms of compliance with EN-1, the Applicant fails again Elsewhere in EN-1, para 4.2.15 refers to the impacts of CNP infrastructure where the unacceptable risks to human health provide for an exception to the presumption of consent. We believe the proximity to the airfield and the level of aviation safety risk qualifies as an exception to the presumption of consent So how does the failure to collaborate with aviation stakeholders at the Project's inception, the failure to consult in a meaningful way with regard to adverse effects and the admission that hitting the line in the event of an EFATO incident could happen show compliance with EN-1? In the 'Deadline for Resolution' column of the draft SoCG referred to above when considering their claim to be EN-1 compliant the Applicant has written *'Considered unlikely to resolve bilaterally. For the Examining Authority to assess'.* We do not accept that statement since it emphasises the denial by the Applicant of their responsibility with respect to aviation safety as exhibited by them throughout the project. The Project does not comply with EN-1 as claimed and the Applicant must remove that claim from the SoCG until they propose design-led mitigation measures to ensure that it does.	The Applicant encourages Norfolk Gliding Club to update their position in relation to Matters 7.1 (policy context), 7.2 (consultation) and 7.4 (impact assessment conclusion) within **8.3.37 Draft Statement of Common Ground – Tibenham Aerodrome [REP4-249]** where the Applicant's positions are summarised. **8.9.2 Applicant's Response to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]** (SS 2.3 and SS.6) describes the Applicant's engagement and consultation with NGC, and consideration of aviation safety and risk respectively.

Norfolk Gliding Club response to GEN 2.1	Applicant's Comment
6. Chronology Within the draft SoCG the Applicant details the chronology of the project with regard to their involvement with NGC *The chronology of National Grid's consultation approach, including engagement with Tibenham aerodrome to date, and the evolution of the Project's design is summarised as follows:* *2022* *- National Grid presented information on how the project was evolving from the evaluation of strategic options to a preliminary preferred graduated swathe within which new infrastructure (pylons and underground cables) could be located as well as a proposed new substation site on the Tendring Peninsula, as described within the 7.18 2022 - Corridor and Preliminary Routeing and Siting Study [APP-356]* *- 21 April – 16 June non-statutory consultation on the Preferred Route Corridor graduated swathe* The wording is such that the implication is that Tibenham, along with other airfields, were involved in the 2022 round of consultations. That is completely untrue, NGC were not consulted in 2022 yet the Applicant refused to clarify that in the draft SoCG	As per the previous response, **8.4.9 Applicant's Comments on any Further Information or Submissions Received by Deadline 3 [REP4-298]** (page 275) describe the Applicant's position regarding SoCG chronology drafting, including in relation to the 2022 non-statutory consultation, and the representation received in response on behalf of NGC.
7. Aviation Impact Assessment In 2025 the CAA AAT wrote to the Applicant advising *'From our earliest engagement, we have provided signal that when considering proposed power line routing, it is not the aircraft performance envelope that is the limiting factor. Therefore, any intimation that a specific type can manoeuvre to avoid such vertical obstructions should be disregarded'* Yet only a few weeks after receipt in 2025 the Applicant published their Aviation Impact Assessment that ignored that advice and concluded that *'An aerotow combination would have sufficient room to manoeuvre away from the OHL after take-off'* In an earlier submission, REP2-290, the Applicant drew the ExA's attention to CAP 1059 to which we responded in our submission REP3-128 referencing their paragraphs 7 and 8 (Aviation safety risks). We applied the EFATO scenario to the Risk Tolerability Matrix described in CAP 1059, which is summarised in appendix C of REP3-128, with the following results *Risk severity classification – Catastrophic* *Risk likelihood classification – Remote to Occasional* *Risk conclusion – Unacceptable* Which within the guidelines of CAP 1059 means that *The risk is unacceptable and major mitigation measures are required to reduce the level of risk to as low as reasonably practicable* So how does the decision to ignore CAA AAT guidelines on the one hand and failure to reach a satisfactory conclusion within the Risk Tolerability Matrix on the other justify not proposing design-led mitigation measures to resolve the issue?	**8.5.8 Applicant's Response to Issue Specific Hearing 2 Action Points [REP4-303]** (Action 5 (first bullet)) addresses the Applicant's consideration of advice from the Civil Aviation Authority Airfields Advisory Team (CAA AAT) within its impact assessment for Tibenham aerodrome.
The next steps In accordance with the directive from the ExA the Applicant has now requested a further meeting in their email dated May 26 *'we seek to progress outstanding issues'* But fails to address the main outstanding issue identified in my email of mid-April or answer any of the questions and whilst that information remains outstanding, we believe any meeting will just be a repeat of previous discussions and not affect the status quo In that email, reference is also made to *'we do not consider that the identified minor infringements of the Tibenham OLS (IHS) nor forced landing risks would justify substantial Project design changes'*	**8.9.2 Applicant's Response to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]** (SS 2.7) provides the Applicant's position regarding the use of low height pylons in the vicinity of Tibenham aerodrome. Matter 7.5 within **8.3.37 Draft Statement of Common Ground – Tibenham Aerodrome [REP4-249]** summarises the Applicant's position regarding appropriate mitigation measures, which it has proposed for discussion. **8.9.2 Applicant's Response to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]** (SS2.3) explains the Applicant's position in relation to consultation and engagement with the operator of Tibenham aerodrome. Matter 7.2 within **8.3.37 Draft Statement of Common Ground – Tibenham Aerodrome [REP4-249]** states the Applicant's position that this has been fully

Norfolk Gliding Club response to GEN 2.1	Applicant's Comment
Which is the first time I have heard the potential for fatal accidents being described as 'minor infringements' Together with *'We also note use of low height pylons has not, to date, been sought by yourselves'* Which serves to show the apparent contempt the Applicant took with regard to the consultation in 2024 where the issue of low-height pylons was discussed and rejected on the grounds that it was still an unacceptable obstacle in an EFATO situation Whilst the email does make reference to the need to discuss mitigation measures the nature of those proposed measures are not identified. The Applicant has repeatedly been advised that mitigation in the form of operational procedure changes or visibility aids is not acceptable and design-led changes in the form of re-alignment or undergrounding is the only way forward Had the Applicant collaborated with NGC, as required by EN-1, minor changes (underground or re-alignment) to the design could have been made to remove all our aviation safety concerns. Had the Applicant taken note in the limited consultation discussions where in 2024 the issue of low height pylons was discussed and rejected, they would not be raising the question now at this late stage The decision not to collaborate, not to consult in a meaningful way and to drag the timescale out to such an extent is a choice made by the Applicant	compliant with **5.1 Consultation Report Appendix E: Statement of Community Consultation [APP-071]** and legislative requirements under the Planning Act 2008.
Conclusions The aviation safety issues that would result from the proximity of the proposed route alignment existed prior to any design being developed. This is acknowledged within EN-1 by identifying the need for collaboration during that design stage – This did not take place The aviation safety issues resulting from the proximity of the proposed route alignment following publication of the draft alignment still existed but due to a lack of meaningful engagement were not addressed by the Applicant. This is contrary to the guidance within EN-1 on adversely affecting aviation safety and operations The CAA's Risk Tolerability Matrix (CAP 1059) identifies the fatal accident safety risk as unacceptable, requiring major mitigation measures which the Applicant appears to dismiss on the grounds that the project is too far advanced The aviation safety issues resulting from the proximity of the proposed route alignment still exist and the latest emails indicate that the Applicant is attempting to coerce the various Aviation Stakeholders into compromising safety margins to cover their failures in managing the project The project timescale may be well advanced but the failure of the Applicant to address the aviation safety concerns expressed by the various aviation stakeholders in a timely manner is of their own making and is their responsibility to correct For the avoidance of doubt, NGC are prepared to meet in person at Tibenham at short notice once the withheld information has been received and reviewed by them. The purpose of the meeting would then be to produce new versions of the SoCG and AIA that encompass the safety concerns of NGC whilst developing documents that comply with the advice and guidance of National Planning Policies, the CAA and other aviation bodies	A summary of the Applicant's consultation and engagement with the operator is provided within **8.3.37 Draft Statement of Common Ground – Tibenham Aerodrome [REP4-249]**. In response to the allegation of coercion, which the Applicant strongly refutes, we would instead describe our recent engagement as seeking to constructively and proactively progress outstanding matters during the remainder of the examination period, in accordance with the Examining Authority's direction. As per the response to SS 2.3 within **8.9.2 Applicant's Response to Second Written Questions [REP5-211],** the Applicant has been hosting meetings to focus on detailed technical matters of glider-specific operational parameters and key assumptions, having recognised in the summary of outstanding matters within **8.3.37 Draft Statement of Common Ground – Tibenham Aerodrome [REP4-249]** that broader matters of policy context and consultation approach, for example. are unlikely to be progressed and resolved between the Applicant and Norfolk Gliding Club (NGC). We have invited the British Gliding Association (BGA) and NGC to the discussions, recognising the former's authority on gliding-relating operational matters (including competitions), and the latter's safeguarding responsibility for Tibenham aerodrome. Our intention has been for the proposed in-depth technical focus to enable objective challenge and/or verification of impact assessment conclusions, and to inform collaborative consideration of reasonable mitigation options. Until 29 June, NGC has declined to attend these meetings. The intention of our correspondence with the operator in this period has, therefore, been to ensure they are updated regarding the nature and progression of discussions, and that they continue to have opportunity to participate. We have also provided signposts to relevant materials submitted to examination deadlines, and sought to clarify respective positions on specific matters raised by the ExA (such as the benefits of low height pylons, as raised by **8.5.8 Applicant's Response to Issue Specific Hearing 2 Action Points [REP4-303]** (see Action 5 (third bullet, pages 7 to 8)). In addition to engagement summarised in the chronology of **8.3.37 Draft Statement of Common Ground – Tibenham Aerodrome [REP4-249]** the following emails recently sent by the Applicant to NCG are listed as follows:

Norfolk Gliding Club response to GEN 2.1	Applicant's Comment
	26 May 2026 – providing an update to NGC regarding recent meeting with British Gliding Association (BGA); reiterating invitation to meet bilaterally or trilaterally to discuss impact assessment methodology and key assumptions, impact assessment conclusions and mitigation measures; noting the Examining Authority's focus on forced landing risk and low height pylons as potential mitigation and proposing further discussions as part of a future meeting to provide clarity on our respective positions to the ExA. 5 June 2026 – responding to NGC email of 1 June in which the operator states only two choices of mitigation (re-alignment outside of safeguarding zone or undergrounding – which the Applicant has previously explained as not being justified by assessed impacts); reiterating meeting invitation to discuss mitigation measures further with BGA or just the Applicant; referring to productive discussions with the BGA in relation to operational parameters; recognising dependencies on NGC engagement to apply the parameters to inform site-specific mitigation proposals. 17 June 2026 – responding to NGC email of 8 June reiterating the operator perception of the Applicant's withholding of information, providing links to recently published responses to the ExA's second written questions, as well Government's recently published research and analysis regarding the cost of undergrounding transmission cables in comparison to overhead lines[9]; Inviting to meeting with the BGA on 18 June or bilateral meeting as an alternative. 22 June 2026 – responding to NGC email of 17 June rejecting meeting proposal, providing an update on the meeting with the BGA; inviting to next planned meeting on 29 June to discuss modelling developed as a result of joint consideration of gliding operational parameters to ensure site-specific operations at Tibenham are appropriately considered. 25 June 2026 – responding to NGC email accepting meeting proposal, providing electronic invitation to meeting. 26 June 2026 – providing draft operational parameter modelling in advance of meeting, to enable constructive discussion. Further details of the 29 June meeting are provided in response to Action 24 within **8.5.12 Applicant's Written Summary of Oral Submissions and Response to Action Points for Issue Specific Hearing 4.** The Applicant is happy to provide additional information regarding the above emails, as well as earlier correspondence, if required by the ExA including the e-mails themselves.

[9] Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (June 2026) Undergrounding transmission cables: study of costs of innovative methods – literature review and cost assessment

Table C.2 Comments on Norfolk Gliding Club responses to SS2.8(b)

Norfolk Gliding Club response to SS2.9	Applicant Comment
Applicant's response to action points *SS2.8(b)* *The applicant's response to ISH2 action points [REP4-303] considers a wide range of matters relating to aviation safety. Please respond to such points.*	
Bullet Point 1 – Respond in detail to the CAA AAT letter of March 2025 The request from the ExA was for the Applicant to respond in detail ("line by line") to the CAA AAT letter of March 2025. NGC can find virtually no correlation between that letter and the Applicant's response as shown in REP4-303 Example 1 - Paragraph 4 of the CAA AAT letter The CAA AAT letter states *'From our earliest engagement, we have provided signal that when considering proposed power line routing, it is not the aircraft performance envelope that is the limiting factor. Therefore, any intimation that a specific type can manoeuvre to avoid such vertical obstructions should be disregarded'* Yet only a few months after receipt in 2025 the Applicant published their Aviation Impact Assessment that ignored that advice and concluded that *'An aerotow combination would have sufficient room to manoeuvre away from the OHL after take-off'* The initial draft versions of the SoCG and AIA were received by NGC at about the same time. In an effort to resolve this issue and progress development of those documents, in July 2025 the Applicant agreed with NGC to provide a written explanation of their route development rationale and in particular why so much expert advice and guidance was being ignored in favour of the less experienced opinion of their aviation consultants. In the event that information was withheld and continues to be withheld, both documents remain in draft form and "not agreed" In recent communications with NGC, the Applicant has claimed that no information has been withheld therefore it comes as a surprise that there is no line-by-line response to this paragraph within REP4-303 in answer to the ExA's request	**8.5.8 Applicant's Response to Issue Specific Hearing 2 Action Points [REP4-303]** provides the Applicant's comprehensive response to Action 5, First Bullet, which required a response in detail ('line by line') to the relevant paragraphs of Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) airfield advisory team letter of March 2025 concerning effects on Tibenham airfield (emphasis added). Notwithstanding this, the same response addresses the more generally applicable Civil Aviation Authority Airfields Advisory Team (CAA AAT) advice regarding aircraft performance, suggesting the advice of the CAA has evolved since the CAA AAT March 2025 position statement as part of the implementation of new International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) standards for aviation obstacle evaluation, which introduce a performance-based approach.
Example 2 – Paragraph 1 of the Applicants response The Applicants response states *In reference to the Civil Aviation Authority Airfield Advisory Team's (CAA AAT's) March 2025 Position Statement and its consideration of Tibenham aerodrome specifically, this is addressed within 8.8.2 Applicant's Comments on Local Impact Reports [REP2-030] (see paragraphs 3.17.13 to 3.17.15)* Paragraph 3.17.13 does not address the CAA AAT letter line-by-line as requested but reiterates elements of that letter without giving an answer or recognising that the concerns expressed represent 'adverse impacts' contrary to EN-1 Paragraph 3.17.14 references table A15.2.11 of 6.15.A2 Environmental Statement Appendix 15.2 Review of Aviation Impact [APP-267], which is the very document to which paragraph 4 of the CAA AAT is referring to, with the conclusion that clearance margins are adequate enabling runway use to continue. The paragraph fails to provide any explanation as to why the advice is being ignored and as such NGC believe this is another example of the expert advice and guidance expressing serious safety concerns continuing to be ignored without any explanation as to why Paragraph 3.17.15 references 8.3.7 Draft Statement of Common Ground – Tibenham Aerodrome [REP1-105] which we understand has been superseded by REP4-249. In this paragraph the Applicant claims that this document demonstrates that they have sought to collaborate with the operator (NGC) and the CAA AAT. Given that the CAA AAT letter was dated 20.3.25 advising of their disbandment as at 31.3.25 and NGC did not receive the draft SoCG until after that date it is difficult to see how that is possible	**8.5.8 Applicant's Response to Issue Specific Hearing 2 Action Points [REP4-303]** provides the Applicant's comprehensive response to Action 5, First Bullet, which required a response in detail ('line by line') to the relevant paragraphs of Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) airfield advisory team (AAT) letter of March 2025. References to the CAA AAT within **8.3.37 Draft Statement of Common Ground – Tibenham Aerodrome [REP4-249]** clearly refer to engagement in 2023 and 2024, as well as in relation to their March 2025 position statement.

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Example 3 – Some contradictory views Within the CAA AAT letter in the paragraph on page 3 commencing “To some extent....” there are three sentences to which the Applicant would seem to have responded *S1 – ‘I was concerned by suggestions that glider tow aircraft had the performance to climb clear of the proposed powerline infrastructure’* *S2 – ‘The reality is that the performance of both glider tow aircraft and gliders, are variable and based on many factors including meteorological conditions’* *S3 – ‘Energy management, height, speed and range from Tibenham are of course variable and will be impacted by other factors as described above’* S1 had to some extent already been referred to by the CAA AAT in their letter in paragraph 4 *‘any intimation that a specific type can manoeuvre to avoid such vertical obstructions should be disregarded’* However, the Applicant’s response concludes in REP4-303 that *‘considering a range of glider and powered aircraft types (including aerotows) as appropriate for the aerodrome, with related conclusions that clearance margins are adequate in terms of safety’* *‘The Applicant has also assessed and concluded there is sufficient distance from the Project to enable an aerotow to turn in front of it as well as clearance to climb over it’* In their response the Applicant fails to provide any evidence to support those views which is perhaps understandable given their limited aviation expertise however it does raise other issues Planning guidelines when addressing issues with respect to aerodromes indicate that not only should current use be considered but also potential future use. The Applicants reference to ‘appropriate for the aerodrome’ implies that they are not taking potential future use into account NGC have previously advised of the results of 14 aerotows from runway 26 in September 2025 in which conditions were such that not all aerotows would have cleared the proposed overhead line. The Applicant has requested details of the test flights ‘to understand the test conditions and parameters’ but this would serve no meaningful purpose since it is quite probable that on another day the same 14 aerotows would have resulted in a different outcome which could range from a clearance by all down to more failing to reach the required height. Whilst this phenomenon might seem difficult to appreciate it is, as the CAA AAT letter explains, a function of many factors, some physical and some meteorological. The Applicant acknowledges in REP4-303 *‘The assessment methodology uses International Standard Atmosphere conditions in still wind ….. recognising there may be some variation in clearances achieved due to specific conditions of the day’* The Applicant does not expand on the degree of variation in clearances but as a tug pilot and glider instructor with the experience of many thousands of launches I have witnessed short term climb rates that varied from a positive of 1,500 feet per minute to a negative 300 feet per minute. For comparison, a Robin DR400 (the type of tug aircraft used at NGC) has a declared climb rate in the order of 800 feet per minute This variation in climb rates allied to the risk of EFATO makes the use of runways 26 and 33 a significant safety risk in the event that the overhead line is built as proposed In reference to S3, the Applicant states in REP4-303 that *‘including variables regarding ‘energy management height’, a term that is not recognised by the Applicant or apparent within BGA guidance, speed and range from the aerodrome’* Which, due to a possible typo, is a misunderstanding since the phrase should have read energy management, height, speed and range from the aerodrome. This represents the four elements that competition pilots use to maximise their chances of success	Table A15.2.11 within **6.15.A2 Environmental Statement Appendix 15.2 - Review of Aviation Impacts [REP4-161]** provides details of clearances calculated for a range of powered and glider aircraft types. Table A15.2.3 provides performance data for these aircraft types.

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Bullet Point 2 – Risks in turns below 300ft and partial power loss The NGC response to the previous ExA question concerning the minimum height for a turn can be found in REP4-366 In order to avoid overflying the proposed overhead line aircraft taking off from runway 26 would have to execute a turn of about 120° northbound or about 60° southbound. Whilst as the Applicant states 'many aerodromes have noise abatement procedures which require similar turns after take-off', NGC is not aware of any that involve those turns being made at low level over the top of another active airfield with the resultant risk of a mid-air collision In terms of partial power loss limiting the turn to 30° left or right of the extended runway centerline would not avoid the overhead line. Whilst we agree that the likelihood of any EFATO type emergency is unaffected by the presence of the Project, the ability to make a safe forced landing is seriously affected and could result in fatalities	**8.5.8 Applicant's Response to Issue Specific Hearing 2 Action Points [REP4-303]** provides the Applicant's response to Action 5, Second Bullet. Furthermore, Matter 7.1.F) within Appendix A of **8.3.39 Draft Statement of Common Ground – British Gliding Association [REP5-187]** provides detail of the Applicant's modelling of safe heights for turns after take-off, including those for aerotow.
Bullet Point 4 – Justification to suggestion of lower height pylons The NGC response to the suggestion of lower height pylons has been addressed in our response to SS 2.8 which concludes with *In principle the reduction in height of an obstacle would in aviation terms reduce the level of risk but with the route alignment cutting through the forced landing splay the potential for a fatal accident in such circumstances would still exist* We note the Applicant does not consider the use of lower height pylons within the context of applying the mitigation hierarchy since they do consider the full height pylons to be a safety risk The NGC position is that both represent an unacceptable safety risk.	**8.5.8 Applicant's Response to Issue Specific Hearing 2 Action Points [REP4-303]** provides the Applicant's response to Action 5, Third Bullet. The Applicant again highlights slight differences in the response of the operator and the aerodrome safety officer.
Bullet Point 5 – Source of statistics for engine failure Introduction We would agree with the Applicant in that the availability of reliable data is difficult to obtain However within the NPPF paragraph 200 it states *'Existing businesses and facilities should not have unreasonable restrictions placed on them as a result of development permitted after they were established'* Which could prompt the question *Is it reasonable to place an obstacle in front of a pilot who would know that in the event of an emergency on any take-off the outcome could be fatal?* Example from Rufforth This statement in the appeal decision of a planning application for buildings close to Rufforth Airfield summarises the situation *From the evidence before me, both the Council's (Dr Eddowes) and appellant's (Mr Hinchcliffe/Osprey) aviation experts accept that in normal take-off and landing situations, the proposed buildings would have very little effect upon aviation safety. However, the point of dispute arises over the effect of unforeseen pre-cursor events (UPCE), for example, engine failure after take-off (EFATO), undershoot or bird strike. Whilst these UPCE are not influenced by the presence of the proposal, the location of the poultry sheds would remove an area of land that could be used for forced landings.* *This effectively would lead to a change in the obstacle environment in an area where UPCE may occur, and this could then lead to an increased risk of the forced landing colliding with the proposal, causing serious injury or fatality.* *The primary concern for the Council is EFATO.* Which brings us back to the question of risk	The Applicant's response to SS 2.6 within **8.9.2 Applicant's Response to Second Written Questions [REP5-211]** provides a comprehensive account of the Applicant position regarding aviation safety and risk. The Applicant notes the example of Rufforth aerodrome provided and recognises the value added to decision making by quantified evidence of risk. For the Project, modelling and reasonable mitigation suggestions have been provided by the Applicant. The Applicant further comments the circumstances of the Project differ to the Rufforth case in terms of the nature and location of the proposed obstacle, resulting in different risks in relation to forced landing events. We continue to encourage the provision of quantified evidence of risk from the operator regarding the specific circumstances of the Project proposals and Tibenham aerodrome.

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Risk Tolerability Matrix In an earlier submission, REP2-290, the Applicant drew the ExA's attention to CAP 1059 to which we responded in our submission REP3-128 referencing their paragraphs 7 and 8 (Aviation safety risks). When looking at the likelihood of occurrence, rather than attempt to determine a value based on statistics, the CAA guidelines placed the likelihood into one of five categories *Frequent – Likely to occur many times (has occurred frequently)* *Occasional – Likely to occur sometimes (has occurred infrequently)* *Remote – Unlikely to occur but possible (has occurred rarely)* *Improbable – Very unlikely to occur (not known to have occurred)* *Extremely improbable – Almost inconceivable that the event will occur* We applied the EFATO scenario to the Risk Tolerability Matrix described in CAP 1059, which is summarised in appendix C of REP3-128, with the following results *Risk severity classification – Catastrophic* *Risk likelihood classification – Remote to Occasional* *Risk conclusion – Unacceptable* Which within the guidelines of CAP 1059 means that *The risk is unacceptable and major mitigation measures are required to reduce the level of risk to as low as reasonably practicable* However, the question posed by the ExA concerns the source of the statistics used by the Applicant	
AAIB analysis Prior to the DCO application, on behalf of NGC, I reviewed the Air Accidents Investigation Branch (AAIB) database which allowed for the analysis of some 11,000 accidents over the last 25 years. A search of those reports looking for the term 'engine failure' produced 174 hits. Of these 174 hits: *75 occurred during take-off and 34 during approach and landing, the remainder being en-route flights* *Of the 75 take-off incidents, 56 of the reports indicated the height at which the problem occurred* *And 35 (62%) of these 56 were at 300ft or lower.* A similar search for accidents (excluding drones) involving cables produced 46 hits of which about 1/3 resulted in serious or fatal injuries.	
Personal experience On a personal level I am aware of 3 accidents (two of which I witnessed) involving cables that occurred prior to the AAIB's computerised database and resulted in 3 fatalities and 2 serious injuries In 1969, a Tiger Moth towing a glider from Tibenham crashed into an electricity pylon during a forced landing attempt following an aborted aerotow – the pilot was fatally injured In the mid 70's a PA 28 attempting to land at North Weald came in contact with cables and crashed – two occupants were fatally injured and a third suffered serious injuries In the 90's a glider from Tibenham whilst attempting to recover from a failed winch launch came in contact with electricity cables and the pilot was seriously injured	
Eddowes Aviation Safety Ltd Within the NGC Written Submission, REP1-256 we appended the report by Dr Mark Eddowes (Eddowes Aviation Safety Ltd) and have re-produced the section on EFATO type incidents 3.7 ENGINE FAILURE AFTER TAKE-OFF	

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3.7.1 Aircraft engine failure is a recognized hazard to safe flight. For commercial civil air transport operations, the risk associated with engine failure is generally mitigated by the use of multi-engine aircraft with the ability to maintain safe flight after a single engine failure, further recognizing that failure of more than one engine is a rare event. For single-engine aircraft, mitigation is through successful implementation of a forced landing, a scenario for which pilots undertaking such operations prepare through training. In most cases, forced landings following engine failure are achieved successfully, avoiding serious injury or fatality. Engine failure shortly after take-off is potentially of more specific concern than engine failure en-route. Where limited height has been gained during take-off there will be less time to respond and select a safe landing area and fewer landing options available. Also, engine failure is relatively common per unit flight time during take-off since it is when the engine is at high power and under most strain. According to the circumstances, the risks to aircraft occupants from developments in more critical areas along flight paths near runway ends can therefore be significant. Since risks are concentrated in these areas, development control at them can provide substantial safety benefits. 3.7.2 National Grid's aviation assessment considers forced landing risks at paras. 15.3.39 to 15.3.42. It begins by stating that *"it should first be recognised that the incidence of a forced landing is comparatively low"* but does not identify any comparator to support that suggestion. It goes on to identify engine failure rate statistics and then draw some conclusions, implying that any risk arising from the overhead line would be low, stating the following: *"The likelihood of an engine failure on a single-piston aircraft fitted with the most common engine types is between 1.21 per 10,000 hours i.e. 1.21 x 10-4 (with a Continental engine) and 1.27 per 10,000 hours i.e. 1.27 x 10-4 (with a Lycoming engine)1. The likelihood of a forced landing for any reason is very slightly higher, to take account of all other causes of emergency landing, although this increase is not materially significant. The risk of colliding with an overhead line after such a failure is smaller still, as the aircraft would have to be in a height band where it was too low to glide over the overhead line and too high to land before it, as well as being unable to manoeuvre sufficiently to avoid it."* Whilst appearing to be based on a statistic, this superficial, qualitative account is fundamentally flawed and presents a totally mis-leading picture. 3.7.3 In the first instance, the failure rate per flight hour is not put into any kind of context in terms of the number of hours flown per annum. A study around twenty years ago [10] estimated that there to be around a million hours flown by these sorts of general aviation aircraft per annum in the UK. On that basis, those failure rate statistics imply over a hundred UK incidents per annum. Next, the *"smaller still"* wording employed to describe the collision risk seems to imply that the precursor event has already been shown to be *"small"* without any objective basis for making such a judgement. Finally, there is no recognition that the height band conditions required to lower the collision risk with respect to the precursor engine failure event will not be satisfied for a substantial portion of the take-off operation. 3.7.4 Overall, the conclusion reached in respect of forced landings is that *"we regard these risks as acceptable within the standards of light aircraft operations."* No indication is given concerning what risk acceptability criteria have been employed and what standards are considered applicable. The UK CAA provide guidance on risk assessment and risk acceptability [11] which could assist in this respect. The superficial analysis presented in the National Grid aviation assessment does not comply with good practice as set out in that guidance. The process required to determine risk acceptability is first to identify an appropriate rate for the initiating event of engine failure or other cause leading to a forced landing during take-off towards the pylons, second to determine the likelihood that, due to the pylons, the forced landing would not be completed safely when otherwise it would, combine the likelihoods of the two events to determine the increased risk of fatality or serious injury and, finally, compare the estimated increased risk with an appropriate risk significance and acceptability criterion. The National Grid aviation assessment does not follow a rigorous process and does not adequately demonstrate that the pylons would not constitute an unacceptable risk to aerotow launch operations at Tibenham. 3.7.5 Brief reference has already been made in para. 2.4 to the precedent set at Rufforth Aerodrome from where the York Gliding Club operates. The risks to glider and aerotow operations were identified by the local planning authority as the sole reason for refusal [4] of a proposed chicken farm development along flight paths at Rufforth, based on a quantitative risk assessment [5], a decision that was upheld on appeal [6]. Referring to UK accident statistics derived from Air Accident Investigation Branch (AAIB) reports, the assessment identified an estimate [5]	

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for the likelihood of forced landing shortly after of 4.4 per million movements. Whilst that number might at first appear small, it has to be remembered that tug aircraft pilots will typically undertake several aerotow launches a day on several days of the year. Accordingly, a tug aircraft pilot might undertake several hundred aerotow launches per annum and the annual forced landing rate for an individual pilot will therefore be non-trivial. The fraction of forced landings that would be adversely affected was then estimated and an overall estimate for the increased risk of fatality for tug aircraft pilots was made. That estimate was then compared with an accepted risk significance criterion, identified by the Health and Safety Executive [12], confirming that the increased risk was significant in the planning context and sufficient to justify refusal of the application. 3.7.6 By analogy with those arguments made previously in relation to the Rufforth development, it may be concluded that the proposed overhead line represents a potentially significant threat to the safety of take-off operations at Tibenham. In the Rufforth case, the development area was relatively small but close to the runway end which were factors affecting the estimated risk and the feasibility of providing applicable risk estimates. For the Tibenham case, the obstacle is further from the runway end but it is very considerably larger. The pylons may not represent a major threat following engine failure earlier in the take-off since aircraft may not be able to reach the line of the pylons under those circumstances. However, simple mechanistic considerations of tug aircraft take-off profiles based on climb rate and glide rate after engine failure indicate that aircraft will be at potential risk for a substantial portion of the take-off path, perhaps around a third, before passing over the pylons. For the glider under tow, the degradation in safety will be greater due to the glider's shallower glide angle which allows for the possibility of travelling a more substantial distance after the initiating problem has occurred. Accordingly, a larger area of currently available land potentially suitable for glider safe forced landings would be lost to the pylon route. The review of light aircraft accidents that supported the forced landing rate estimate presented earlier identified 31 single engine light aircraft engine failures on take-off and 65 en-route failures. In five of those events, the available accident reports indicate that the forced landings were compromised by power lines. It has to be expected that in the majority of cases when power lines were not identified as a factor, they will not have been present at all. It is therefore clear that the suggestion in the National Grid aviation assessment that this risk can be reliably mitigated by pilot avoidance is not valid. 3.7.7 In conclusion, the proposal represents a potentially significant threat to the successful achievement of a safe forced landing in the event of engine failure during Runway 26 and Runway 33 light aircraft take-off operations and aerotow launches. The treatment of this risk in the National Grid aviation assessment is superficial and inadequate. It does not provide the necessary assurance that the proposal would not lead to an unacceptable fatality risk.	
BDA viewpoint The BGA have advised its member clubs that launch failures due to partial power loss in a single engine aircraft is soon to be added to the training syllabus in the UK. Evidently this is the result of an Australian study (https://www.atsb.gov.au/publications/2010/avoidable-3-ar-2010-055) which concluded that: *"The data, however, shows that during and after take-off, a partial power loss is three times more likely in today's light single-engine aircraft than a complete engine failure. Furthermore, there have been nine fatal accidents from 2000 to 2010 as a result of a response to a partial power loss compared with no fatal accidents where the engine failed completely."* The currently proposed pylon route is just 1.77 km from Runway 26. The pylons would seriously increase the risk for any pilot experiencing partial power failure whilst departing from this runway.	
Conclusion A recent media report (31 May 2026) states that a glider struck power cables whilst making a controlled landing leaving the pilot with significant life-changing injuries. The incident is being investigated by the AAIB but as yet there are no further details As I suspect the ExA recognises, the main problem with trying to produce an analysis is the lack of meaningful raw data. Virtually all glider pilots fly cross country as part of the sport and at some time will have been faced with	

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running out of thermals and the need to land. By far and away the majority of those landings will be safe and successful and the only record will be in the pilot's log book At this stage we do not know if the incident mentioned above falls into that category but experience over 50 yeas of flying has shown that "emergencies" do happen on take-off and landing to both light aircraft and gliders. Not all incidents are recorded by the AAIB even if a report was sent to them as evidenced by an EFATO incident early last year in which a light aircraft taking off from Tibenham suffered total engine failure (subsequently found to be a broken crankshaft). The pilot was able to make a safe forced landing, the aircraft was recovered, the engine was repaired and the aircraft is flying again. Although the AAIB was informed, we understand they chose not to include the incident within their database	

National Grid plc
National Grid House,
Warwick Technology Park,
Gallows Hill, Warwick.
CV34 6DA United Kingdom

Registered in England and Wales
No. 4031152
nationalgrid.com