MORGAN AND MORECAMBE OFFSHORE WIND FARMS: TRANSMISSION ASSETS

Applicants' Response to Deadline 6 Submissions from IPs

Deadline: Deadline 7
Application Reference: EN020028

Document Numbers:
MOR001-FLO-CON-ENV-NOT-0106
MRCNS-J3303-JVW-19258

Document Reference: S_D7_2

29 October 2025
F01

Document status					
Version	**Purpose of document**	**Approved by**	**Date**	**Approved by**	**Date**
F01	Submission at Deadline 7	GL	October 2025	IM	October 2025

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Glossary

Term	Meaning
400 kV grid connection cables	Cables that will connect the proposed onshore substations to the existing National Grid Penwortham substation.
400 kV grid connection cable corridor	The corridor within which the 400 kV grid connection cables will be located.
Applicants	Morgan Offshore Wind Limited (Morgan OWL) and Morecambe Offshore Windfarm Ltd (Morecambe OWL).
Biodiversity benefit	An approach to development that leaves biodiversity in a better state than before. Where a development has an impact on biodiversity, developers are encouraged to provide an increase in appropriate natural habitat and ecological features over and above that being affected. For the Transmission Assets, biodiversity benefit will be delivered within identified biodiversity benefit areas within the Onshore Order Limits. Further qualitative benefits to biodiversity are proposed via potential collaboration with stakeholders and local groups, contributing to existing plans and programmes, both within and outside the Order Limits.
Code of Construction Practice	A document detailing the overarching principles of construction, contractor protocols, construction-related environmental management measures, pollution prevention measures, the selection of appropriate construction techniques and monitoring processes.
Commitment	This term is used interchangeably with mitigation and enhancement measures. The purpose of commitments is to avoid, prevent, reduce or, if possible, offset significant adverse environmental effects. Primary and tertiary commitments are taken into account and embedded within the assessment set out in the ES.
Construction Traffic Management Plan	A document detailing the construction traffic routes for heavy goods vehicles and personnel travel, protocols for delivery of Abnormal Indivisible Loads to site, measures for road cleaning and sustainable site travel measures.
Design envelope	A description of the range of possible elements and parameters that make up the Transmission Assets options under consideration, as set out in detail in Volume 1, Chapter 3: Project Description. This envelope is used to define the Transmission Assets for EIA purposes when the exact engineering parameters are not yet known. This is also referred to as the Maximum Design Scenario or Rochdale Envelope approach.
Development Consent Order	An order made under the Planning Act 2008, as amended, granting development consent.
Direct pipe	A cable installation technique which involves the use of a mini (or micro) tunnel boring machine and a hydraulic (or other) thruster rig to directly install a steel pipe between two points.
Environmental Impact Assessment	The process of identifying and assessing the significant effects likely to arise from a project. This requires consideration of the likely changes to the environment, where these arise as a consequence of a project, through comparison with the existing and projected future baseline conditions.

Term	Meaning
Environmental Statement	The document presenting the results of the Environmental Impact Assessment process.
Evidence Plan Process	A voluntary consultation process with specialist stakeholders to agree the approach to, and information to support, the EIA and Habitats Regulations Assessment processes for certain topics.
Generation Assets	The generation assets associated with the Morgan Offshore Wind Project and the Morecambe Offshore Windfarm include the offshore wind turbines, inter-array cables, offshore substation platforms and platform link (interconnector) cables to connect offshore substations.
Intertidal area	The area between Mean High Water Springs and Mean Low Water Springs.
Intertidal Infrastructure Area	The temporary and permanent areas between MLWS and MHWS.
Landfall	The area in which the offshore export cables make landfall (come on shore) and the transitional area between the offshore cabling and the onshore cabling. This term applies to the entire landfall area at Lytham St. Annes between Mean Low Water Springs and the transition joint bay inclusive of all construction works, including the offshore and onshore cable routes, intertidal working area and landfall compound(s).
Local Authority	A body empowered by law to exercise various statutory functions for a particular area of the United Kingdom. This includes County Councils, District Councils and County Borough Councils.
Local Highway Authority	A body responsible for the public highways in a particular area of England and Wales, as defined in the Highways Act 1980.
Main rivers	The term used to describe a watercourse designated as a Main River under the Water Resources Act 1991 and shown on the Main River Map. These are usually larger rivers or streams and are managed by the Environment Agency.
Marine licence	The Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 requires a marine licence to be obtained for licensable marine activities. Section 149A of the Planning Act 2008 allows an applicant for to apply for 'deemed marine licences' in English waters as part of the development consent process
Maximum design scenario	The realistic worst case scenario, selected on a topic-specific and impact specific basis, from a range of potential parameters for the Transmission Assets.
Mean High Water Springs	The height of mean high water during spring tides in a year.
Mean Low Water Springs	The height of mean low water during spring tides in a year.
Micro-tunnel / micro-tunnelling	A tunnelling technique involving the use of a hydraulic (or other) jacking rig and a mini (or micro) tunnel boring machine to install a concrete tunnel between two points.
Mitigation measures	This term is used interchangeably with Commitments. The purpose of such measures is to avoid, prevent, reduce or, if possible, offset significant adverse environmental effects.
Morecambe Offshore Windfarm: Generation Assets	The offshore generation assets and associated activities for the Morecambe Offshore Windfarm.

Term	Meaning
Morecambe Offshore Windfarm: Transmission Assets	The offshore export cables, landfall, and onshore infrastructure required to connect the Morecambe Offshore Windfarm to the National Grid.
Morecambe OWL	Morecambe Offshore Windfarm Limited is owned by Copenhagen Infrastructure Partners' (CIP) fifth flagship fund, Copenhagen Infrastructure V (CI V).
Morgan and Morecambe Offshore Wind Farms: Transmission Assets	The offshore export cables, landfall, and onshore infrastructure for the Morgan Offshore Wind Project and the Morecambe Offshore Windfarm. This includes the offshore export cables, landfall site, onshore export cables, onshore substations, 400 kV grid connection cables and associated grid connection infrastructure such as circuit breaker compounds. Also referred to in this report as the Transmission Assets, for ease of reading.
Morgan Offshore Wind Project: Generation Assets	The offshore generation assets and associated activities for the Morgan Offshore Wind Project.
Morgan Offshore Wind Project: Transmission Assets	The offshore export cables, landfall and onshore infrastructure required to connect the Morgan Offshore Wind Project to the National Grid.
Morgan OWL	Morgan Offshore Wind Limited is a joint venture between JERA Nex bp (JNbp) and Energie Baden-Württemberg AG (EnBW).
National Grid Penwortham substation	The existing National Grid substation at Penwortham, Lancashire.
National Policy Statement(s)	The current national policy statements published by the Department for Energy and Net Zero in 2023 and adopted in 2024.
Offshore booster station	A fixed structure located along the offshore export cable route, containing electrical equipment to ensure bulk wind farm capacity can be fully transmitted to the onshore substations.
Offshore substation platform(s)	A fixed structure located within the wind farm sites, containing electrical equipment to aggregate the power from the wind turbine generators and convert it into a more suitable form for export to shore.
Offshore export cables	The cables which would bring electricity from the Generation Assets to the landfall.
Offshore export cable corridor	The corridor within which the offshore export cables will be located.
Offshore Permanent Infrastructure Area	The area within the Transmission Assets Offshore Order Limits (up to MLWS) where the permanent offshore electrical infrastructure (i.e. offshore export cables) will be located.
Offshore Order Limits	See Transmission Assets Order Limits: Offshore (below).
Offshore substation platform(s)	A fixed structure located within the wind farm sites, containing electrical equipment to aggregate the power from the wind turbine generators and convert it into a more suitable form for export to shore.
Onshore export cables	The cables which would bring electricity from the landfall to the onshore substations.
Onshore export cable corridor	The corridor within which the onshore export cables will be located.
Onshore Infrastructure Area	The area within the Transmission Assets Order Limits landward of MHWS. Comprising the offshore export cable corridor from MHWS to

Term	Meaning
	the transition joint bay, onshore export cable corridor, onshore substations and 400 kV grid connection cable corridor, and associated temporary and permanent infrastructure including temporary and permanent compound areas and accesses. Those parts of the Transmission Assets Order Limits proposed only for ecological mitigation and/or biodiversity benefit are excluded from this area.
Onshore Order Limits	See Transmission Assets Order Limits: Onshore (below).
Onshore substations	The onshore substations will include a substation for the Morgan Offshore Wind Project: Transmission Assets and a substation for the Morecambe Offshore Windfarm: Transmission Assets. These will each comprise a compound containing the electrical components for transforming the power supplied from the generation assets to 400 kV and to adjust the power quality and power factor, as required to meet the UK Grid Code for supply to the National Grid.
Preliminary Environmental Information Report	A report that provides preliminary environmental information in accordance with the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. This is information that enables consultees to understand the likely significant environmental effects of a project, and which helps to inform consultation responses.
Renewable energy	Energy from a source that is not depleted when used, such as wind or solar power.
Scour protection	Protective materials to avoid sediment being eroded away from the base of the foundations due to the flow of water.
Substation	Part of an electrical transmission and distribution system. Substations transform voltage from high to low, or the reverse by means of electrical transformers.
The Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero	The decision maker with regards to the application for development consent for the Transmission Assets.
Transmission Assets	See Morgan and Morecambe Offshore Wind Farms: Transmission Assets (above).
Transmission Assets Order Limits	The area within which all components of the Transmission Assets will be located, including areas required on a temporary basis during construction and/or decommissioning (such as construction compounds).
Transmission Assets Order Limits: Offshore	The area within which all components of the Transmission Assets seaward of Mean Low Water Springs will be located, including areas required on a temporary basis during construction and/or decommissioning. Also referred to in this report as the Offshore Order Limits, for ease of reading.
Transmission Assets Order Limits: Onshore	The area within which all components of the Transmission Assets landward of Mean High Water Springs will be located, including areas required on a temporary basis during construction and/or decommissioning (such as construction compounds). Also referred to in this report as the Onshore Order Limits, for ease of reading.

Acronyms

Acronym	Meaning
AIS	Air Insulated Switchgear
AOD	Above Ordnance Datum
BCA	Bilateral Grid Connection Agreement
CoCP	Code of Construction Practice
CoT	Project Commitment
CBRA	Cable Burial Risk Assessment
CfD	Contracts for Difference
CMS	Construction Method Statement
CSIP	Cable Specification and Installation Plan
CTMP	Construction Traffic Management Plan
DCO	Development Consent Order
DECC	Department of Energy and Climate Change
Defra	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DESNZ	Department for Energy Security & Net Zero
dML	Deemed Marine Licence
EnBW	Energie Baden-Württemberg AG
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EMP	Environmental Management Plan
EPP	Evidence Plan Process
ES	Environmental Statement
EWG	Expert Working Group
GIS	Gas Insulated Switchgear
HDD	Horizontal Directional Drilling
HGV	Heavy goods vehicle
HNDR	Holistic Network Design Review
HVAC	High Voltage Alternating Current
IALA	International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities
IAQM	Institute of Air Quality Management
LAT	Lowest Astronomical Tide
MCA	Maritime and Coastguard Agency
MCZ	Marine Conservation Zone
MDS	Maximum Design Scenario

Acronym	Meaning
MHWS	Mean High Water Springs
MLWS	Mean Low Water Springs
MMO	Marine Management Organisation
MPS	Marine Policy Statement
MTBM	Mini (or micro) tunnel boring machine
NGESO	National Grid Electricity System Operator
NPS	National Policy Statement
NSIP	Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project
O&M	Operation and Maintenance
OSP	Offshore Substation Platform
OTNR	Offshore Transmission Network Review
PDE	Project Design Envelope
PEIR	Preliminary Environmental Information Report
PPP	Pollution Prevention Plan
PRoW	Public rights of way
SAC	Special Areas of Conservation
SAR	Search and Rescue
SPA	Special Protection Area
SNCBs	Statutory Nature Conservation Bodies
SSSI	Sit of Special Scientific Interest
SWMP	Site Waste Management Plan
TEP	Technical Engagement Plan
TJB	Transition Joint Bay
UK	United Kingdom
UXO	Unexploded Ordnance
WSI	Written scheme of investigation

Units

Unit	Description
%	Percentage
dB	Decibels
Kg	Kilogram
kHz	Kilohertz

Unit	Description
KJ	Kilojoules
km	Kilometres
km^2	Kilometres squared
kV	Kilovolt
m	Metres
m^2	Metres squared
m^3	Metres cubed
nm	Nautical mile
µPa	micropascal

1 Applicants' Response to IPs' Submissions at Deadline 6

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1.1 Following Deadline 6, Morgan Offshore Wind Limited ('Morgan OWL') and Morecambe Offshore Windfarm Limited ('Morecambe OWL'), (together, 'the Applicants') have taken the opportunity to review each of the submissions from Interested Parties.

1.1.1.2 Details of the Applicants' response to each of the submissions from Interested Parties are set out in this document.

1.1.1.3 The Applicants have numbered the submissions in line with the Planning Inspectorate's document library, with subsequent paragraph number, e.g. REP6-001.1, REP6-001.2, etc.

2 Applicants' Response to IPs' submissions at Deadline 6 – Statutory Consultees

2.1 Defence Infrastructure Organisation (on behalf of the Ministry of Defence) (REP6-185)

Table 2.1: REP6-185 - Defence Infrastructure Organisation Comments on Responses to the Examining Authority's Further Written Questions

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
REP6-185.1	**Application by Morgan Offshore Wind Limited and Morecambe Offshore Windfarm Limited for an Order Granting Development Consent for the Morgan and Morecambe Offshore Wind Farms Transmission Assets** Thank you for the Action Points arising from issue specific hearing 4 (ISH4) within which you have requested information in relation to the above project. Responses are invited from the Ministry of Defence (Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) on two Action Points (27 and 39) in conjunction with BAE and the applicants. The wording of those Action Points has been used to structure this response. The Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) Safeguarding Team represents the MOD as a consultee in UK planning and energy consenting systems to ensure that development does not compromise or degrade the operation of defence sites such as aerodromes, explosives storage sites, air weapon ranges, technical sites or maritime defence assets and interests.	The Applicants note this response.
REP6-185.2	**Action Point 27 – drafting relating to aviation lighting** **a) BAE, DIO and the Applicants to discuss drafting relating to aviation lighting and whether this is secured through Requirement 4 or a separate requirement, and** **b) in the event, drafting is not agreed, any alternative drafting must be submitted into the Examination.** BAE, DIO and the applicants have engaged in discussions and have agreed up on a form of wording for Requirement 4 that addresses the need for aviation lighting. DIO is content that this wording negates the need for a separate Requirement.	The Applicants welcome DIO's engagement in discussions on Requirement 4. As DIO has confirmed, the wording of Requirement 4 (which was included in the version of the DCO submitted at Deadline 6) has been agreed and it is considered by all parties that it robustly secures the provision of aviation lighting, where required.
REP6-185.3	**Action Point 39 – amendments to Requirement 27** **a) Applicants, BAE and DIO/MoD to discuss BAE and DIO/MoD proposed amendments to Requirement 27 (regarding the wildlife hazard management plan).** The Applicants, BAE and DIO have discussed the wording for Requirement 27 and have agreed upon a form of wording, but the Wildlife Hazard Management Plan (WHMP) referenced in Requirement 27 is not acceptable in its current form. Proposals have been submitted to the Applicants to implement amendments to the WHMP, specific to Table 1-4 for review and consideration by the Applicants. However, until these proposals are agreed and implemented the MOD objection remains extant. I trust this is clear however should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.	The Applicants welcome DIO's engagement on the oWHMP and thank DIO for confirming that the wording of Requirement 27 has been agreed. The Applicants note DIO's position on the WHMP; however, the Applicants respectfully submit, given the agreed text of Requirement 27, that this is now a matter for the post-consent discharge of requirement stage. It is the Applicants' view that, when read alongside the updated oWHMP submitted at Deadline 6, Requirement 27 addresses all remaining points raised by the DIO. The oWHMP has been revised to incorporate DIO's concerns regarding monitoring frequency, trigger levels, and communication protocols. Requirement 27 secures the approval of a detailed Wildlife Hazard Management Plan in accordance with the oWHMP. This ensures that all details relating to the final design of mitigation areas will be discussed and agreed prior to commencement. Similarly, all monitoring and active management measures will be agreed with the Ministry of Defence (MOD) before any works begin. It is therefore the Applicants' position that all of the DIO's concerns have now been resolved. An updated SoCG with BAE and DIO has been submitted at Deadline 7, please note that this has not yet been fully signed off. Once signed off by all parties it will be submitted into Examination as soon as possible. Whilst some areas of disagreement remain, the Examining Authority can be reassured that under no circumstance can the Applicants'

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
		mitigation measures or biodiversity areas commence without agreement from BAE Systems and the DIO. Therefore, the Secretary of State can safely conclude that the Transmission Assets would not impede or compromise the safe and effective use of Warton Aerodrome.

2.2 Fylde Borough Council (REP6-187)

Table 2.2: REP6-187 – Fylde Borough Council (Deadline 6 Written Statement)

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
REP6-187 187.1	**Statement of Common Ground** FBC and the Applicants have made good progress in terms of updating their Statement of Common Ground [SoCG]. This progress has required multiple meetings, consultations and a significant amount of drafting, with the Examining Authority's [ExA] Action Points published on 14th October 2025, with Deadline 6 shortly following on 22nd October 2025. The SoCG is not yet fully finalised and signed. Therefore, FBC and the Applicants have agreed to submit an updated SoCG as soon as possible with the expectation a copy will be submitted ahead of Deadline 7.	The Applicants thank Fylde Borough Council (FBC) for their continued pro-active engagement throughout the examination period and can confirm that the final signed Statement of Common Ground has been submitted at Deadline 7 (document reference: S_D1_6.3/F03).
REP6-187 187.2	**Blackpool Road Recreation Ground – Alternative Provision** The information attached at Appendix 1 has been prepared to evidence submitted by the Applicants at DL5 regarding potential alternative sites within Fylde for accommodating football provision suitable for St Annes Football Club. The table included in the information provides a full response to the potential suitability for senior or junior football activity for the suggested sites as put forward by the Applicants. Following review, no substantive changes to the content of the site assessment have been identified. However, information is added to clarify the intended meaning of references to Multi-Use Games Areas, to ensure future consultation and local context are fully considered.	The Applicants thank FBC for their comments on Blackpool Road Recreation Ground - Summary of Provision of Alternative Facilities (REP5-143). This demonstrates that there are suitable alternative locations where football pitches could be laid out. The Applicants can confirm that those which were deemed unsuitable by FBC will not be progressed as suitable locations, notwithstanding that this was an indicative list of alternative facilities to evidence that there are options available.
REP6-187 187.3	**New Information and Consultation** This statement is provided by Fylde Borough Council [FBC] for submission at Deadline 6 and should be read alongside the "Response to Examining Authority's Action Points Received 14th October 2025" [RtAP] also prepared by FBC and submitted at Deadline 6. Comments on documents received at Deadline 5 is provided in the RtAP, either in relation to the relevant matter-specific Action Points [AP], or in response to AP44 which is a catchall for all other Deadline 5 documents. Whilst FBC continues to work positively and proactively with all relevant parties throughout the Examination, the volume and type of new and updated information submitted to the Examination both at and post-Deadline 5 is significant. Furthermore, the Applicants have confirmed that further information is to be submitted at Deadline 6. It is not clear to FBC how information submitted after Deadline 5 can be properly considered by all interested parties and used to properly influence the proposals. FBC acknowledges the Applicants most recent formal response to these concerns (Section 134.2 [REP5-121]) but disagrees with the Applicants' view that there has not been a significant amount of high level new and updated information. Furthermore, the Applicants' assertion that any new information provided often reflects progress made with interested parties and therefore justifies its submission, has no bearing on whether the volume and type of information has been received in a timely manner. Importantly, the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project [NSIP] consenting process is intended to be front-loaded and the applicants are required to be well-prepared, to enable efficient examination within the maximum six months provided by Section 98(1) of the Planning Act. Relatedly, FBC draws attention to the Government guidance note *'Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects: The stages of the NSIP process and how you can have your say'* demonstrates the issue at hand clearly. The guidance states that interested parties (in this case members of the public) *"can look at the application documents (and) comments from all the other interested parties"* and that *"The Examining Authority must tell everyone about the examination timetable which will include: a deadline for sending any further comments about the application. (…)"* The Rule 8 Letter [PD-007] and Rule 8(3) document [PD-014], which include the timetable for the Examination, allow one week between Deadlines 6 and 7, with no subsequent Deadlines. It is assumed that consistent with all previous Deadlines, the information received at Deadline 6 will be published a least a few days after the Deadline. This will limit the ability of Interested Parties to review, consult and	The Applicants refer FBC to their response to FBC's response to ISH4_1 below.

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
	comment upon this information but it also does not allow for Interested Parties to subsequently review the comments from all other interested parties. FBC expects that this issue will be significant, given the amount of new and significantly amended information which is likely to be submitted at Deadline 6. It is also very likely that some of the new information will relate specifically to concerns, queries and requests made by Interested Parties, including local authorities, parish council, specific community/sector interests and members of the public. The likely impact of this is that Interested Parties have not been provided with the opportunity to engage with the Examination in the way outlined in the Government guidance. Additionally, and as noted in multiple written submissions (most recently Section 1.2.5 of [REP4-134]), FBC considers that it has not been possible for some information to appropriately impact the proposals. FBC will comment on this further at Deadline 7, with the benefit of being able to see what has been submitted at Deadline 6.	
REP6-187 187.4	APPENDIX 1 **1 Table 1-1 Opportunities for Alternative Provision of Recreation Facilities** This document has been prepared in response to potential alternative sites within Fylde for accommodating football provision suitable for St Annes Football Club. The table below provides responses to the potential suitability for senior or junior football activity for the suggested sites as put forward by the Applicants. Following review, no substantive changes to the content of the site assessment have been identified. However, information is added to clarify the intended meaning of references to Multi-Use Games Areas, to ensure future consultation and local context are fully considered. It is noted that references to the inclusion of Multi-Use Games Areas (MUGAs) within this assessment should not be interpreted as fixed proposals, and MUGAs are generally unsuitable for competitive structured team sport to meet County Football Association standards. Any future consideration of MUGA provision would require consultation with local interest groups, including 'Friends of Parks' groups and other community user organizations. It also must be noted that MUGAs are not acceptable alternatives for football provision and provide neither league approved sizing nor adequate playing surfaces/area. Proposals for upgrading facilities at Blackpool Road North Playing Fields would be welcomed and supported by the local community, FBC and the football club.	The Applicants thank FBC for their comments on Blackpool Road Recreation Ground - Summary of Provision of Alternative Facilities (REP5-143). This demonstrates that there are suitable alternative locations where football pitches could be laid out. The Applicants can confirm that those which were deemed unsuitable by FBC will not be progressed, notwithstanding that this was an indicative list of alternative facilities to evidence that there are options available.
REP6-187 187.5	**Conclusion** This document provides information and transparency within the examination process. It aims to give a balanced overview of current options and considerations regarding potential football provision for St Annes Football Club. No formal recommendation is made at this stage, and any future proposal would be subject to further consultation, planning and financial appraisals.	

Table 2.3: REP6-187 – Fylde Borough Council (Response to ExA's Action Points Received 14th October 2025)

HAP No.	Hearing Action Point (HAP)	IP submission	Applicants' response
-	-	**1. Introduction and Approach** 1.1.1 Fylde Council [FBC] is a statutory consultee and Interested Party for the proposed Morgan and Morecambe Offshore Wind Farms Transmission Cables proposal. 1.1.2 This Response to Action Points Report is prepared in response to the Examining Authority's [ExA] Action Points issued on 14th October 2025. 1.1.3 In preparing this report in accordance with Section 60(3) of the Planning Act 2008 (as amended), FBC has shown due regard to relevant guidance, including the 'Nationally Significant	The Applicants note the response and have responded to each point raised by Fylde Borough Council below. In terms of volume and types of new and updated information, the Applicants would disagree that there has been a high or unusual level of requests for further information in respect of this application or ES. Furthermore, the new information or clarifications submitted to the examination is not atypical for DCO applications of this type, size or complexity.

HAP No.	Hearing Action Point (HAP)	IP submission	Applicants' response
		Infrastructure Projects: Advice for Local Authorities' published by the Planning Inspectorate on 08 August 2024 (updated 16 December 2024). 1.1.4 FBC continues to raise concerns with regards to the volume and significance of new information being submitted and still to be submitted to the Examination. FBC is particularly concerned that it will not be possible to properly respond to new and updated information submitted at Deadline 6 in time for Deadline 7, where a proper response would include necessary consultation, analysis, negotiation and response. 1.1.5 This report has in part been informed by consultation responses from council officers and other advisory bodies and individuals. The consultation requests, reviews of responses and creation of this report is the work of the officers of Fylde Borough Council, and no part of this process has been generated by AI.	
ISH4_1	Provide the full statement, as read out during the hearing, as to where FBC suggest the Environmental Statement is not complete and where the mitigation hierarchy has not been followed. Including where FBC has already made these points in written representations, including detail on specific areas where the ES is claimed to be insufficient.	**2 Our Responses** **2.1 AP1** 2.1.1 This AP has two parts: firstly, to provide a transcript of the opening statement provided by FBC at the hearings; and secondly to provide references to previous FBC representations on the adequacy of the Environmental Statement [ES]. These are responded to in turn below.	Noted.
		2.1.2 AP1 (Part One) *"We note with some concern that a significant volume of new and substantially amended information has been submitted in the Examination. We have made written representations to this effect.* *We wish to make brief comments now, to provide important context for our recent engagement with the Examination, as a main Interested Party.* *The National Policy Statements set out clear requirements for Applicants. Section 4.3 of EN-1 notably requires that any Environmental Statement includes an assessment of the likely significant effects at all stages of the project and the measures for avoiding of mitigating significant adverse effects.* *Section 4.2.11 is clear that Applicants must apply the mitigation hierarchy and provide evidence of its application. The Applicants are required to set out information on how the likely significant negative effects would be avoided, reduced, mitigated or compensated.* *This can only be achieved the necessary assessment have been carried out, at the appropriate time.* *We consider that there are two main issues of relevance to this hearing and the Examination more generally.* *Firstly, the amount and significance of new and updated information, as well as the timing of its submission relative to the Examination deadlines and hearings, means that insufficient time has been available for its consultation, assessment and negotiation, or for subsequent changes to other parts of the submission.* *Secondly, it cannot be possible that proper assessment of likely impacts by the applicant has influenced the proposals. For example, the assessment of likely tourism impacts is still in its infancy, with no explanation as to how the outputs have influenced the proposals with the required reference to the mitigation hierarchy. The same issue pervades a number of other issues.* *FBC therefore considers that it has not been possible to assess the likely impacts and subsequently demonstrate that those impacts have been avoided, reduced, mitigated or compensated and the veracity of the information in front of us and others.* *FBC therefore emphasises that discussions around a number of topics today and subsequently through written submissions, are without the benefit of sufficient information, time or influence over the proposals."*	The Applicants acknowledge Fylde's concerns regarding the amount of new and updated information submitted to the Examination. The Applicants reiterate their response that the new information or clarifications submitted to the Examination is not atypical for DCO applications of this type, size or complexity as set out in Annex 2.3 to Applicants' Response to Deadline 5 submissions from Statutory Consultees and other organisation: Fylde Borough Council, Section 170.2 (REP6-169). The Applicants also understand FBC's concerns about insufficient time to review these documents - unfortunately this a feature of the DCO Examination process that, as the ExA has reiterated, is largely a written process. The Applicants clarify that the new documents have been prepared to meet the ExA's timetable or requests and to reflect progress made with interested parties or to provide clarificatory notes in response to the ExA's written questions or hearing action points. Of the 755 documents submitted by the Applicants' up to Deadline 6: - 212 were track changed versions (to assist parties to quickly identify changes made) - 163 were updated management plans (to demonstrate the Applicants' securing of commitments provided to the Councils and others) or updates to ES Chapters (primarily provided at the request of Natural England) - 35 were HAP responses or responses to ExA questions - 68 were responses to other parties' submissions - Only 14 were either technical notes or clarification notes **Mitigation hierarchy** Table 5.2 of Volume 1, Chapter 5: Environmental assessment methodology (APP-034) sets out that the ES has been prepared in accordance with Regulation 14(2) of the EIA Regulations 2017 to provide '*a description of any features of the proposed development, or measures envisaged in order to avoid, prevent or reduce and, if possible, offset likely significant adverse effects on the environment*' which is reiterated in section 4.3 of NPS EN-1, specifically paragraph 4.3.4 where the Applicants have '*set out information on the likely significant environmental, social and economic effects of the development',* and have shown *'how any likely significant negative effects would be avoided, reduced, mitigated or compensated for, following the mitigation hierarchy*'. Evidence of the mitigation hierarchy has been applied within the commitments table presented in each ES chapter. In addition, the Applicants have also provided The Applicants' Response to ExQ2:1.1.6 - Mitigation Hierarchy (REP5-132) which refers the reader to the substantial level work undertaken within the site selection process undertaken at the pre-application stage to avoid impacts on the environment and harm

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			to the Green Belt as far as practicable, i.e., Volume 1, Chapter 4 (AS-026), Annex 4.1 (APP-031) and Annex 4.3 (AS-028) in addition to Site Selection of the Environmental Mitigation and Biodiversity Benefit Areas (REP2-046) and the Green Belt Technical Note (REP4-092). Each topic chapter provides evidence of embedded mitigation (both primary (inherent) and tertiary (such as standard practices to manage impacts) and secondary mitigation to reduce the significance of any environmental effects (refer to 'Measures adopted as part of the Transmission Assets (Commitments) in each topic chapter). In accordance with NPS EN-1 (paragraph 4.2.12) the Applicants have also set out that compensation for the residual impacts is not appropriate (refer to Table 1.1 of The Applicants' Response to ExQ2:1.1.6 - Mitigation Hierarchy (REP5-132). With reference to the tourism assessment, the Applicants draw FBC's attention to the response to ISH4_13, below. With respect to the mitigation hierarchy, the Local Tourism Assessment has directly contributed to scheme changes in respect of amended scope of Article 29 at Starr Gate/Squires Gate and the inclusion of tourism related businesses as part of the local liaison committee process within the outline Communications Plan (REP6-069).
		2.1.3 AP1 (Part Two) 2.1.4 The Applicants queried whether this statement was consistent with submissions made by FBC to the Examination, specifically in terms of detailing areas of the ES which are alleged to be insufficient. FBC has consistently made representations of this nature and will not rehearse those arguments, nor provide an exhaustive list of references but instead will provide key references (below). 2.1.5 FBC prefaces this list with the observation that it should not be taken to be a definitive list of all issues. To do so would be to undermine the content and meaning of all submissions made, particularly as many issues are interrelated. Instead, the intention is to provide clear evidence that FBC has set out key references to where representations have been made which are consistent with the above statement, to counter the claim by the Applicants that this has not been done. 2.1.6 The list below provides an overview in chronological order, demonstrating consistent representations on this basis throughout the full duration of the Examination. Each is supported by a single excerpt to demonstrate the approach taken but it should be noted that the content of each document largely consists of other similar narratives for the broadest range of ES topics. The excerpts also demonstrate that FBC has cross-referenced its own submissions and those made by others in order to improve the accessibility and credibility of the information. 2.1.7 This approach is sufficient to respond to this Action Point.	The Applicants note this response. Responses are set out below.
		• **Relevant Representations [RR-0705]:** this makes comments on specific potential effects and potential gaps in the ES. With regards to tourism, the 'Socioeconomics' section on page 6 states that *"Leisure, culture and tourism, and specifically costal tourism and recreation, make up an important industry in Fylde, accounting for 1 in 10 jobs. Each year, there are a total of more than 4.25 million tourist days. Impacts rising from the development, whether temporary impacts during construction or ongoing during operation, have the potential to impact upon tourist activities. The Council considers that the information provided so far, is not detailed or specific enough to allow the potential impacts of the proposal on leisure, culture and tourism to be properly understood. The Council expects to see further information provided with sufficient time allowed for its assessment."* The document includes further discussion around this point.	The Applicants set out in their response to this relevant representation (PDA-030) that potential indirect impacts on the visitor economy were assessed at the regional level in Volume 4, Chapter 2: Socio-economics (APP-141). This assessment was undertaken on the basis of the statutory consultation exercise where no responses were received from FBC, other Councils or other stakeholders on the matter of the spatial scale at which potential tourism effects had been assessed, or any other comments to suggest that there was concern regarding the Transmission Assets' potential to have a likely significant effect on tourism at a local level. However, following concerns from FBC and BBC, the Applicants have prepared a Local Tourism Assessment as submitted into the Examination at Deadlines 5 and 6 to clarify that the effect on local tourism is not likely to have significant effects on local tourism (see also response to ISH4_11 in REP6-176 and within this response below in ISH4_13).
		• A further key example is given in the 'Phases of Development' section on page 7, *"It is not sufficient to only assess the alleged maximum impact scenario, given the potential broad range of impacts that may arise. A maximum impact scenario may not consider specific impacts that would arise from another scenario, for example: lower noise impacts but over a much greater period of time, including night-time works, may give rise to a much greater level of harm on human health*	The ES has been prepared proportionately in accordance with section 4.3 of NPS EN-1 where the Maximum Design Scenarios have been selected as those having the potential to result in the greatest effect on an identified receptor or receptor group. The ES identifies and assesses likely significant environmental effects and not all possible effects that may arise. The MDS for each topic was discussed at Expert Working

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		and ecology. Additionally, some topics would clearly be more greatly impacted by non-concurrent development, such as impacts on agricultural and recreational land. The Council considers that all potential development scenarios must be properly considered." The document includes further discussion around this point.	Groups (EWGs) with stakeholders during the pre-application stage (refer to the Technical Engagement Plan (APP-189) and its appendices (APP-190 – APP192)). The Applicants have responded in further detail regarding the MDS in REP2-057 057.2 of REP3-053. This sets out how the Applicants have used the Rochdale Envelope approach, including how this is compliant with the guidance within PINS Advice Note Nine: Rochdale Envelope (Planning Inspectorate, 2018). The Applicants' interpretation of Part 6 of the Planning Act 2008, the Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 and the Planning Act 2008: Guidance on the Examination Stage for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (30 April 2024) is that the Examining Authority has an obligation to examine the application as submitted by the Applicants and to ensure that issues are proportionately, and reasonably, considered. All impacts assessed in the ES have been set out against each construction scenario within the Rule 9 response - ES Assessment of Construction Scenarios (AS-070) and the further clarification note (REP1-060). Noise and vibration and human health is covered in Table 1.20 of which confirms that concurrent construction is the MDS. Following engagement with Fylde Borough Council's noise specialist between Deadline 4 and Deadline 5, in which the Applicants provided further clarifications regarding the maximum design scenarios, the MDS is now agreed as reported in the Fylde Borough Council SoCG (FBC.NV.14 of Fylde SoCG (S_D1_6.3 F03)). With reference to the impact of permanent loss of agricultural land at the substations, the assessment was based on the MDS (sequential scenario), however, there would be no difference between either scenario because of the irreversible nature of impact (refer to Applicants' Answer to Examination Question 2:1.1.3: Construction Scenarios (REP5-131)). The Applicants maintain that the ES has been assessed in accordance with the appropriate MDS for each impact identified, be that concurrent or sequential construction (refer to AS-070, REP1-060 and REP5-131).
		• **Local Impact Report [REP1-078]:** this contains narrative throughout about insufficiencies of the ES. Each topic section includes an explanation of information which FBC considers is missing, inaccurate and/or incomplete, along with the likely consequences and suggestions for how these issues could be addressed. This information is plainly presented and includes repeat, specific references to insufficiencies in the ES, for example with regards to agricultural land impacts in Section 8.1.14 which states, *"In FBC's view the ES does not include proper consideration of operation and decommissioning which would likely give rise to temporary impacts on agricultural land."* The document includes further discussion around this point.	With respect to temporary impacts on agricultural land during the operation stage, the Scoping Opinion (APP-230) confirmed that the Planning Inspectorate agrees that *'disruption and reduced access to agricultural land during operation and maintenance […] can be scoped out'*. The effects of Transmission Assets during decommissioning on agricultural land are assessed in Volume 3, Chapter 6: Land use and recreation (APP-104) at Section 6.11. The Applicants previously responded to this point in their Response to Fylde Council's Local Impact Report, Section 8.1.14 (REP2-038).
		• **Written Representations [REP1-079]:** Section 5 of this submission is entirely about the ES, with Section 5.2 stating that, *"At a high level, FBC is of the opinion that parts of the ES are inappropriate, incomplete or inconsistent. Details were notably provided through Relevant Representations [RR-0705] with further explanation provided in the LIR submitted alongside this WR."* The document includes further discussion around this point.	The Applicants maintain that the application contains a detailed and complete suite of documents which includes a robust ES and associated outline management plans. The final Statement of Common Ground submitted at Deadline 7 (S_D1_6.3/F03) indicates that FBC agree on the assessment outcomes for air quality and partly agree on assessment outcomes for historic environment, onshore ecology, land use and recreation and noise and vibration. The Applicants previously responded to this point in their response to Written Representations from Statutory Consultees and other Organisations, Section 079.5 in REP2-031.
		• **Comments on Written Representations [REP2-057]:** as well highlighting topic-specific issues, the Summary section on page 9 of this submission includes the general point that *"FBC is increasingly concerned that requests for additional information are not being responded to appropriately, with reliance by the Applicants upon deferring provision of information including details of investigations, design, control, monitoring and mitigation, to times after any such DCO is granted. FBC is of the opinion that the Environmental Statement does not include the information reasonably required for reaching a reasoned conclusion on the significant effects of the development on the environment."*	The Applicants confirm that it is usual practice for DCOs to include requirements and other types of controls that require provision of this information. The Applicants have continued to work with the stakeholders throughout the Examination to ensure that the requirements, commitments and management plans are appropriate. The final Statement of Common Ground submitted at Deadline 7 (S_D1_6.3/F03) indicates that FBC agree to all requirements, except one (Requirement 16). The Applicants previously responded to this in their Response to WRs from Statutory Consultees: Fylde Council, Section 057.74, REP3-053.

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		• **Answers to Examining Authority's Written Questions [REP3-082]:** whilst the content of this document was naturally guided by the questions posed by the ExA, this still includes comments relating to insufficiencies in the ES. For example, Section 2.44 responds to Q15.1.4, setting out that *"FBC considers that the Applicants have not justified their approach to tourism."* A detailed analysis of the Applicants' approach, including reference to other made DCOs, supports this point.	The Local Tourism Assessment was prepared in response to comments made in REP3-082 section 2.44 alongside other submissions as per the Applicants' response to REP3-082 (REP6-160). The Local Tourism Assessment addresses the issues raised by FBC using reference to Rampion 2 as an example. These include: • A more localised local study area and consideration of impacts at local authority level. • Adoption of a buffer zone, with a larger 1km buffer zone (cf. 500m at Rampion 2) to identify potentially affected tourism and recreation assets (illustrated at Figure 5.1 of the Local Tourism Assessment). • Updated baseline statistics recognising the importance of the tourism sector in Fylde. • Assessment of impacts within an extended range of topics to include natural capital, culture and entertainment, heritage, recreation, accommodation, and hospitality. • The Local Tourism Assessment acknowledges that there may be localised adverse effects, including in Fylde. Whilst these are not significant in EIA terms due to the low levels of magnitude at a local tourism study area and local authority level a range of mitigation measures have been included to address these issues. • A range of mitigation measures very similar to those referenced at Rampion 2 summarised at Table 4.6 of the Local Tourism Assessment, including CoT03 avoiding areas of sensitivity, CoT18 addressing construction working hours, CoT32 and CoT91 addressing the management of PRoWs, and CoT34, CoT35 and CoT79 addressing noise and vibration management.
		• **Post-hearing Submission [REP4-134]:** this document includes a high-level discussion around the issues arising from absent and late information. Section 1.2.4 sets out that *"Furthermore, FBC notes that some of this information has been outstanding for a long period of time, including submissions requested by the ExA at the Preliminary Hearing and information requested by key consultees as early as 2023. For example, requests made by Natural England in relation to sand lizard surveys in November 2023 and as acknowledged in writing by the applicants at Page 48 of Volume 3, Chapter 3 of their Environmental Statement [APP075], are still being sustained in response to Q6.1.5 of the ExA Written Question [REP3- 095]."*	As per the response to REP4-134 134.2 (REP5-121), the Applicants note this comment but disagree that information provided during the Examination has either been late or absent. In terms of sand lizards, the Applicants maintain that there is no requirement to undertake specific surveys because sufficient (and extensive) survey data are available from the annual monitoring undertaken of the sand lizard population by the Fylde Sand Dunes Project, gathered over multiple survey seasons (REP6-156). The Applicants set this out in Volume 3, Chapter 3: Onshore ecology and nature conservation (APP-075), in response to Natural England's request for sand lizard surveys and pointed to the fact that further surveys would cause unnecessary disturbance to dune habitats. In addition, the data from a survey would not improve the basis for assessment. FBC did not raise that surveys should be undertaken during the pre-application EWGs (refer to the Technical Engagement Plan – (APP-189)).
		• **Written Statement [REP5-170]:** this document includes detailed narrative relating to the Applicants' Green Belt Technical Note [REP4-092]. With regards to insufficiencies of the ES, Section 2.4.8 states *"FBC maintains its position that the Applicants have not appropriately considered Green Belt designation as a constraint during the site selection process. FBC has raised this at each deadline and hearing (Section 12.6 [REP1-078]; pages 2-3 [REP2-057]; Answer Q17.1.1 [REP3- 082]; and, Section 4 [REP4-134]) FBC also notes that the same issue has been raised by other interested parties, notably South Ribble Borough Council [REP1-227] and Lancashire County Council [REP1-085]."*	The Applicants note FBC's Written Statement in REP5-170. The Applicants stand by their approach in the site selection process, which has been explained and justified throughout the Examination. The remaining points of difference between the Applicants and FBC on this matter are set out within the SoCG (document reference: S_D1_6.3/F03) submitted at Deadline 7.
		• **Answers to Examining Authority's Written Questions [REP5-171]:** Section 1.1.6 makes a clear statement, upfront, which responds directly to the Applicants' assertion that no comments have been made on the insufficiencies of the ES. *"FBC has consistently raised concerns about the inadequacy of the Environmental Statement [ES] both in terms of its incompleteness and its inconsistencies, as well as the volume of new and updated information still to be provided by the Applicants. FBC notes that a range of documents are due to be submitted at Deadline 5, Deadline 6 and in some case post-examination."*	The Applicants note FBC's comment and reiterate all their responses to ISH4_1 above. The Applicants would question which documents FBC believe will be provided post-examination.

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		2.1.8 In addition to the above formal submissions, FBC officers continue to engage in topic-specific meetings with the Applicants, as well as general oversight meetings. To date, FBC officers have engaged with well more than 30 meetings with the Applicants during the Examination. These meetings have included specific requests for additional information and discussions around alleged insufficiencies in the ES. 2.1.9 FBC rejects the assertion that the Applicants have not been made aware of the FBC's assessment and opinions regarding the ES. Indeed, the above excerpts, which reflect only a small portion of the consistent representations, demonstrate that FBC has made its position very clear and has made efforts to properly cross-reference submissions to assist the Applicants with their review.	The Applicants thank FBC for their continued engagement throughout the Examination which is reflected in the final Statement of Common Ground submitted at Deadline 7 (document reference: S_D1_6.3/F03). The Applicants acknowledge FBC's concerns but maintain that the ES provides robust and proportionate assessments consistent with the requirements of the EIA Regulations 2017.
ISH4_2	Confirm that the statement of common ground submitted on 6 October includes confirmation that the updates to the NVMP at D5 address the Council's concerns around noise sensitive receptors. Further to this, FBC is to confirm wording of CoT79 is satisfactory.	**2.2 AP2** 2.2.1 The FBC draft Statement of Common Ground [SoCG] (submitted to the Examination by the Applicants immediately prior to the October hearings but not recorded on the Examination Library) reflects the Council's latest position with regards to noise impacts. This was based upon a review of the documents available up to and including Deadline 5. 2.2.2 FBC has no objection to the wording of CoT79.	The Applicants thank FBC for their continued engagement throughout the Examination which is reflected in the final Statement of Common Ground submitted at Deadline 7 (S_D1_6.3/F03). In addition, the Applicants thank FBC for confirm that they are content with the wording of CoT79.
ISH4_5	Confirm the determination status of the Bluefield Solar project close to the Morecambe substation site.	2.3.1 FBC provided the following response to the Applicants ahead of Deadline 6 and have received and reviewed a subsequent response from the Applicants. FBC understands that the Applicants will submit their comments to the Examination. FBC considers that the response provided by the Applicants have no bearing on the below comments or any previous submissions relating to this matter. 2.3.2 FBC most recently provided an update on new and recently consented developments in Section 3 in its Written Statement submitted at Deadline 5 [REP5-170]. 2.3.3 Whilst FBC has been requested to provide an update for the 'Bluefield Solar' project, for the sake of consistency, the information below also provides an update for the Clifton Marsh Solar Farm. • Application 24/0541 at land to the west of Parrox Lane (Bluefield Solar project): a 30-day consultation on the updated Environmental Statement expires on 22/10/2025. 4 neighbour objections have been received so far for this latest round of consultation. Statutory consultee consultation expires on 15/10/2025 although responses for some consultees are received after any deadline. Prior to this deadline, comments were outstanding from Newton Parish Council, LCC Highways, BAe, MoD, Fire Service, United Utilities, National Grid and Electricity North West. The case officer cannot confirm the committee referral date at this time due to outstanding consultee responses. • Application 24/0414 at Clifton Marsh Farm: the consultation on updated Environmental Statement has now expired. No neighbour objections were received. All statutory responses received, with the only outstanding matter being an objection from United Utilities, with reference to a request for the precise location of their rising main in relation to the proposed development, to be provided prior to determination. The applicant is progressing dialogue with United Utilities. This application is likely to be sent to December planning committee but this cannot be confirmed until the outstanding request is resolved.	The Applicants can confirm that these updates do not alter the conclusions of the CEA submitted by the Applicants, including the potential cumulative impacts on landscape and visual resources in accordance with the Applicants' cumulative assessment methodology and approach, as set out in Volume 1: Chapter 5: Environmental Assessment Methodology (APP-034). This position is based on the understanding that no material changes have been made to the developments as part of this published update.
ISH4_9	Engage and provide an updated position and/or updated documentation regarding the sand lizard mitigation.	**2.4 AP9** 2.4.1 FBC provided the response below under the heading 'Engagement with Applicants' to the Applicants ahead of Deadline 6 and have received and reviewed a subsequent response from the Applicants. FBC understands that the Applicants will submit their comments to the Examination. FBC has provided a response to the Applicants' comments further below under the heading 'Response to Applicants'.	Noted. The Applicants thank FBC for their constructive engagement on matters concerning sand lizards over the course of the Examination, notably at meetings on 9 September and 18 September 2025.
		2.4.2 Engagement with Applicants	The Applicants have amended the Outline Sand Lizard Mitigation Plan (REP6-148) submitted at Deadline 6 to clarify this matter. The, following wording has been added to row 2, column 3 of Table 1:

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		FBC notes that the updated Sand Lizard Mitigation Plan [REP5-112] confirms vehicle movements at eight per day – however, the list of vehicles does not appear to reflect this proposed level of movement. 2.4.2 FBC requests that the Applicants confirm if this movement prediction is for the full length of track only (Clifton Drive to Beach) or if it also includes movement from the compound to beach. This is relevant because whilst both areas require management, the area from compound to beach is highest in terms of sand lizard activity hotspots.	*"The predicted vehicle movements would be the full length of the track i.e. from Clifton Drive North onto the beach and temporary compound 2, and then the return journey."* This was clarified to FBC during the meeting held on 18 October 2025.
		2.4.3 FBC makes the above comments with reference to the following excerpt from the plan: *"13.6.1 The onshore plant used specifically for the landfall construction is likely to include: mobile crane; flat-bed articulated trucks; 360 excavators; compressors; piling equipment; lighting towers and CCTV equipment; concrete mixer lorries and pumps; trenchless boring equipment; mud mixing and recycling plant; steel and plastic welding plant (butt fusion welders); cable winches; cable drums; compaction rollers; jointing containers; HV test lorries; water pumping equipment; and, stone delivery trucks."* 2.4.4 FBC requests that in addition to a speed limit, a limit of single carriageway, only allowing on one vehicle on the track at a time, is enforced. This would help to ensure that the vehicles would not be at the edges of the dune slopes with greater risk of disturbance.	The Applicants have amended the Outline Sand Lizard Mitigation plan submitted at Deadline 6 (REP6-148) to address this concern, and to clarify that the track would only be used by one vehicle moving in one direction at any one time. The following wording has been added to row 2, column 4 of Table 1: "*Single directional movement of vehicles would be enforced to ensure that there is only one vehicle moving in one direction on the track at any one time.*" This was clarified to FBC during the meeting held on 18 October 2025.
		2.4.5 FBC notes that the use of track matting would be 'considered' but is of the opinion that this should be embedded as essential mitigation. FBC maintains the request for matting to reduce vibration, especially from compound to beach access.	The Applicants maintain that the need for track matting or other geotextile membranes will be determined during detailed design following plate load testing to confirm the ground's track loading ability. At this stage, it is not considered appropriate to commit to track matting, as its installation in proximity to sand lizard habitat could encourage them to move underneath the boards, increasing the risk of entrapment or harm. The Applicants require the flexibility to ensure the appropriate mitigation measure is selected once detailed design and ground testing results are available. However, the Applicants can confirm that gravel aggregate will not be used on either the beach access track or haul roads that may be required on the beach itself. Section 1.12 of the Outline Landfall Method Statement (REP6-151) has been updated at Deadline 6 to reflect this change.
		2.4.6 FBC requests specific details as to how contaminated and cleared sand will be disposed of.	The Applicants confirm that the cleared sand will be tested for contaminants, and it would be managed under the Site Waste Management Plan(s), which forms part of the Code of Construction Practice. An Outline Site Waste Management Plan (REP6-089) has been prepared as part of the DCO application. The testing of waste materials will form part of the waste classification process. This process and details of waste types, quantities and the method of managing construction wastes will be set out in the detailed Site Waste Management Plan.
		2.4.7 FBC has concerns over the reference to path widened through clearance. The clearance should not widen the track, only maintain what is already there. The dunes have developed over the path, so if they are trying to get back to the original track boundary this will result in significant damage to the dune system edges.	The Applicants have amended the Outline Sand Lizard Mitigation plan submitted at Deadline 6 (REP6-148) to address this concern, and to clarify that the track would not be widened. The following wording has been added to row 2, column 4 of Table 1: • "*The access track will not be widened beyond its current extent (to avoid direct impacts to the toe of the dunes that are immediately adjacent to the current track); occasional clearance of windblown sand will be undertaken only where it is necessary to maintain the existing track width.*"
		2.4.3 Response to Applicants 2.4.4 FBC welcomes the commitment to single directional movement of vehicles at any one time.	Noted.
		2.4.5 FBC welcomes the principle of testing of any cleared sand. However, FBC considers that the Outline Site Waste Management Plan [REP4-038] should be updated to include specific reference to contaminated and cleared sand given the significance and sensitivity of the dunes system.	The Applicants confirm that the cleared sand would be tested for contaminants, and it would be managed under the Site Waste Management Plan, which forms part of the Code of Construction Practice. An Outline Site Waste Management Plan (REP6-089) has been prepared as part of the DCO application.

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		2.4.6 FBC welcomes the commitment to not widening the access track. However, the proposed caveat of occasional clearance of windblown sand is not considered to be precise enough, given the fact that the accretion of the dunes is via wind.	The Applicants can confirm that wind-blown sand would only be cleared from the surface of the road as necessary to ensure the road surface is safely accessible for vehicles. It is assumed this is commensurate with current periodic maintenance undertaken by FBC to maintain this access point onto the beach for vehicles. The Applicants can confirm that there would therefore be no disturbance to the dune habitats as a result of the occasional sweeping of wind-blown sand, only to the road surface.
		2.4.7 FBC suggests that the solution to this issue would be to require the submission and approval of a suitably scaled and detailed plan showing the extent of the dunes and area within which any clearing could take place (i.e. the maximum operational track).	The Applicants welcome this suggestion and would incorporate this within the detailed SLMP that would be submitted as part of the detailed EMP(s) and that would form the method statement for the EPS licence application to Natural England post-consent.
		2.4.8 FBC remains concerned that the absence of any commitment to track matting leads to an increased harm to sand lizards we note the Applicants assertion that matting could also create the potential for harm to sand lizards.	The Applicants confirm that consideration will be given to the use of temporary track matting (or similar) for vehicle movements along the access track and onto and off the beach to minimise the risk of vibrations transmitting to the sand dunes from HGVs using the track (Table 1, Sand Lizard Mitigation Plan (REP6-148)).
		2.4.9 However, the issue remains that disruptive and harmful works are proposed within the sand lizard habitat, including areas of high activity. FBC is therefore of the opinion that the proposals would on balance likely lead harm to sand lizards.	The Applicants consider that any potential risks to sand lizard can be adequately managed through the adoption of the Sand Lizard Mitigation Plan(s), on the basis that there are no direct impacts from the Transmission Assets to the dunes themselves. Therefore, the risk of killing/ injury and/ or temporary disturbance to sand lizards, and damage to the dunes is negligible with appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures. However, an EPS mitigation licence would be obtained from Natural England to enable any sand lizards captured by the ECoW to be safely relocated away from the working area.
		2.4.10 Other Comments 2.4.11 FBC maintains its previous request that the use of reptile fencing around compounds be secured through the plan.	Temporary reptile exclusion fencing would be installed around temporary compound 3 as agreed with Natural England as part of the EPS licence as set out in Table 1 of the Sand Lizard Mitigation Plan (REP6-148).
		2.4.12 FBC considers that the Sand Lizard Survey Technical Note [REP5-148] supports the previously raised concerns regarding the hotspots of the sand lizard population around the access track. 2.4.13 The report states *"1.3.7.5 The population is comprised of approximately 14 adult females and a fluctuating number of adult males, with total records of males ranging from 14 to 43 recorded between years (possibly due to certain individuals being more prominent and being recorded frequently on each survey visit)."* 2.4.14 FBC survey data shows that 14 were surveyed at a time, not that this is the whole population. 2.4.15 This is a minimum population as it is not possible to be sure that every individual has been seen in any one survey and indeed is unlikely. There have been 14 recorded from three of the last four years but it cannot be assumed that they are the same 14 each year. Whilst some double-counting may happen across different surveys, this is still of use as it provides good territory data and it does not happen as often as the Applicants' note implies. 2.4.16 Any survey shows territory spread and population fluctuation trends rather than full population numbers. FBC considers that the Applicants assessment underplays the numbers and therefore the populations significance for the species at this important location.	The Applicants note this response. In terms of underplaying the numbers in the assessment, the assessment is based on the numbers provided by FBC, as set out in the Sand Lizard Survey Data Technical Note (REP6-156). To reiterate, for the purposes of the impact assessment, we have assumed that there is a population of sand lizards spread throughout the dunes (with the likely hotspots identified within the 'heat maps' provided by FBC) so the Applicants have been able to develop appropriate mitigation. However, the Sand Lizard Survey Technical Note was revised at Deadline 6 to remove reference to a population size estimate due to the concerns raised by FBC at the ISH in October 2025 (REP6-156). The Applicants reiterate that they have never sought to downplay the rarity of the species and its high conservation value.
ISH4_13	FBC and BBC to provide additional comments on the local tourism assessment (REP5-142) so applicants can make any necessary amends for Deadline 6.	**2.5 AP13** 2.5.1 FBC provided the response below under the heading 'Engagement with Applicants' to the Applicants ahead of Deadline 6 and have received and reviewed a subsequent response from the Applicants. FBC understands that the Applicants will submit their comments to the Examination. FBC has provided a response to the Applicants' comments further below under the heading 'Response to Applicants'.	Noted

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		2.5.2 Engagement with Applicants 2.5.3 FBC attended a meeting with the Applicants, with the specific purpose of responding to this AP. During the meeting, the previous FBC written submissions, including comments on the Applicants' DL5 updated Local Tourism Assessment [REP5-142] [LTA] provided direct to the Applicant, were discussed. Key FBC officers attended this meeting, including the Head of Tourism and the Service Director for Place and Culture and Service Director for Planning and Building Control. 2.5.4 During the meeting, the Applicants advised that they would be making further updates to the LTA for submission at Deadline 6. FBC will review this updated document and provide comments as part of its final submission at Deadline 7.	The Applicants thank FBC for their engagement on this topic. As previously agreed the updated Local Tourism Assessment was issued to FBC on Friday 17th October. This took into account comments received from FBC and BBC on REP5-142.
		2.5.3 Response to Applicants 2.5.4 FBC has reviewed an updated version of the LTA which FBC understands will be submitted at Deadline 6. 2.5.5 FBC welcomes the Applicants' efforts to update and expand the LTA at Deadline 6. 2.5.6 The inclusion of Appendix C, which now references a broader range of local tourism and recreation assets, and the strengthened cross-referencing to other documents are positive steps. 2.5.7 However, the revisions remain largely explanatory rather than evidential. The Applicants continue to rely on assertions rather than new data, and the conclusions continue to understate the potential for locally significant tourism, recreation, and hospitality impacts within Fylde. 2.5.8 Whilst FBC supports the intention to integrate tourism considerations across the wider environmental and socio-economic assessments, FBC considers that the methodological approach and underlying assumptions still lack sufficient rigour to demonstrate that effects will be non-significant.	2.5.4. Noted 2.5.5. The Applicants acknowledge and welcome Fylde Borough Council's comment on the updated Local Tourism Assessment at Deadline 6 (REP6-160). 2.5.6. The Applicants acknowledge Fylde Borough Council's comment on the addition of Appendix C. This provides detailed responses and cross-referencing as to how and where the Applicants have taken account of submitted comments from Fylde Borough Council during the examination. The Applicants also acknowledge Fylde Borough Council's comment on the cross-referencing to other documents having been a helpful addition. 2.5.7. The Applicants do not agree with the comment from Fylde Borough Council that the Local Tourism Assessment is not underpinned by evidence. The Applicants would emphasise that evidence as to the interactions between offshore wind infrastructure and tourism was submitted by the Applicants within their Deadline 1 submission (REP1-046). This evidence has also been included within the Local Tourism Assessment first submitted at Deadline 5, and updated at Deadline 6. Furthermore, the Local Tourism Assessment is underpinned by an array of Environmental Impact Assessments across a broad range of topics, all of which have been prepared according to EIA Regulations and relevant topic-specific guidance. Text within the Local Tourism Assessment of relevance to other EIA topics was either drafted, edited, or reviewed by the relevant expert topic author to ensure accuracy and consistency with guidance and standards. The findings of the Local Tourism Assessment align with the evidence submitted by the Applicant, which asserts there is no evidence available to suggest the construction and/or operation of onshore infrastructure associated with offshore wind development is likely to have significant effects on local tourism. It is evident that Fylde Borough Council do not agree with the conclusions of the evidence provided, but the contention that no evidence has been relied upon is incorrect. Furthermore, Fylde Borough Council were requested by the Examining Authority to "Provide evidence of where projects of this kind have had an impact on the tourism economy" via Hearing Action Point 53 under Agenda Item 6(i) of the Issue Specific Hearing 1. This request was made in April 2025 – Fylde Borough Council has not submitted any such evidence to the examination in the subsequent six months to support their repeated, assertion that the Transmission Assets is likely to have significant adverse effects on tourism. 2.5.8. The Applicants note Fylde Borough Council's support for integrating the assessment of potential tourism effects within the wider Environmental Impact Assessment documentation. The Applicants set out the methodology for doing so at ISH3 in July 2025.

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			Fylde Borough Council has not provided supporting evidence to substantiate their position that the assumptions applied within the Local Tourism Assessment 'lack sufficient rigour'. No alternative approaches, evidence or assumptions have been set out. The Applicants maintain confidence in the underlying evidence and assumptions which underpin the Local Tourism Assessment.
		2.5.9 Visual Amenity and Recreation 2.5.10 FBC acknowledges the Applicants' efforts to clarify the relationship between visual amenity and recreational experience and notes the updated wording recognising that walkers and cyclists value the landscape setting. References to temporary diversions and signage are appropriate. 2.5.11 However, the continued assertion that visual amenity has only a "weak" relationship with user experience remains unsubstantiated and inconsistent with established practice (for example, with reference to Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition, 2013). 2.5.12 The LTA still provides insufficient supporting evidence. For example, visitor surveys, intercept data, or precedent analysis, are required to justify the conclusion that visual impacts will not influence recreation. 2.5.13 Furthermore, the LTA does not address the issue raised in earlier submissions that visual and perceptual impacts are materially significant in recreation-related assessments and decision-making.	2.5.10. The Applicants acknowledge Fylde Borough Council's comment on text referring to walkers and cyclists valuing the landscape setting, and temporary diversions and signage. The importance of impacted walking and cycling routes was included at paragraph 5.6.2.19 of the Local Tourism Assessment submitted at Deadline 5, and was not an update at Deadline 6 as suggested by Fylde Borough Council. References to temporary diversions and signage were also included at paragraph 5.6.2.10 of the Local Tourism Assessment submitted at Deadline 5, and have not been updated at Deadline 6. 2.5.11. The assertion that the construction of renewable energy infrastructure has a limited relationship with tourism is substantiated by research authored by Glasson et al (2021). To provide assurance on the underpinning evidence, Professor John Glasson is Professor Emeritus in Planning and Impact Assessment at the Oxford Brookes University School of the Built Environment. He is a chartered town planner (MRTPI), and member of the International Association for Impact Assessment (IAIA). He was the Head of the Oxford Brookes University School of Planning from 1980-2003, and was the first Pro-Vice Chancellor for Research and Consultancy at Oxford Brookes. In 2009, he was awarded the title of Academician of the UK Academy of Social Sciences (AcSS, now FAcSS), particularly for his contributions in linking research and practice in his areas of expertise Prof. Glasson has successfully managed over 75 major research and consultancy projects, primarily in the fields of impact assessment and regional planning, including: • The 8-year project monitoring the socio-economic impacts of the Sizewell B construction phase. • Socio-economic impact studies for the JET nuclear fusion project. • Socio-economics consultant to EDF Energy for the new nuclear projects at Hinkley Point and Sizewell in the UK • Adviser on the local socio-economic impacts of a new power station development at Wylfa. Glasson et al (2021) presents a literature review setting out key findings from recent academic articles and professional and industry reports on the impacts of offshore wind projects on local tourism and recreation. The research also provides a number of UK case studies of specific projects in coastal locations that provide primary data, by direct survey, of impacts. The research concludes that: Whilst impacts vary from stakeholder to stakeholder, findings from the literature indicate the overall impact of offshore wind projects on the visitor economy are 'benign', and in some cases positive. This is supported by findings from research on onshore wind farms, which indicates little or no evidence to demonstrate that any windfarm development has resulted in any adverse impact on tourism. Results from agency and local business and residents' survey responses indicate there is little evidence of negative impacts of offshore wind projects on local visitor economy and recreation activities. Results demonstrate there are considerably more comments

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			on positive impacts, all set in the wider context of the importance of offshore wind developments in the transition towards renewable energy. The assessment is also underpinned by a second piece of evidence authored by Biggar Economics (2020). Biggar Economics is a leading independent economic consultancy providing economic analysis and advice for central and local government, economic development and other government agencies, universities, colleges, social economy organisations and private sector firms across Europe. They have prepared socio-economics inputs to many major offshore wind applications in the UK during the past number of years. The Biggar Economics (2020) study analysed indicators of the visitor economy in 11 cases (including 3 in North West England) to identify any relationship between offshore wind farms and changes in visitor behaviour or spending during construction periods. This included consideration of whether the construction of associated infrastructure, such as onshore cabling and substations, had an impact on the performance of the visitor economy where this activity took place. The purpose of the research was to identify evidence of the construction of offshore wind farms having an impact on the local visitor economy. No evidence was found to support this. Instead, it was found that areas, including those with landscape sensitivities, were not impacted by the construction activities of offshore wind farms, including installation of cabling and onshore substations. The industry precedent with which the findings of the Local Tourism Assessment aligns is therefore well established. As part of the SoCG discussions the Applicants received an email from FBC on 25/10/25 which disputed the validity and interpretation of the Glasson (2021) and Biggar (2020) sources. The Applicants' detailed response to the comments received is provided at A.1 1. The Local tourism Assessment is based on a methodology and evidence base such that reference to GLVIA3 is not directly applicable, as that guidance is intended specifically for the preparation of LVIA and its terminology/criteria. The Applicant wishes to reiterate that Fylde Borough Council were requested by the Examining Authority to "Provide evidence of where projects of this kind have had an impact on the tourism economy" via Hearing Action Point 53 under Agenda Item 6(i) of the Issue Specific Hearing 1, which they have not provided. 2.5.12. In light of the well-established industry precedent of the limited evidence of negative impacts of offshore wind projects on local visitor economies (per Glasson et al, 2021), it would be disproportionate to gather primary data via visitor/intercept surveys. 2.5.13. The Local Tourism Assessment considers potential impacts on each of the following tourism asset categories: Natural capital, Culture and entertainment, Heritage, Recreation, Accommodation, and Hospitality. As per section 5.2, the assessment of potential effects on all asset categories is informed by a consideration of impact pathways linked to six other topic chapters within the Environmental Statement, including Volume 3, Chapter 10: Landscape and visual resources of the ES (document reference F3.10). As such, the Applicant considers that visual impacts have been sufficiently addressed within the Local Tourism Assessment.
		2.5.14 Accommodation, Hospitality, and Visitor Economy 2.5.15 FBC welcomes the inclusion of commitments to liaise with local businesses through a proposed community or stakeholder liaison group, as well as the acknowledgement of the importance of local festivals and events.	2.5.15. The Applicants acknowledge Fylde Borough Council's comment on the commitment via the outline Communications Plan (REP6-069) to include tourism businesses within the liaison committee process.

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		2.5.16 However, the Applicants continue to oversimplify "displacement," assuming lost demand will be absorbed locally without net loss. There is no supporting data on Fylde's visitor flow, booking patterns, or spending profile to support this conclusion. 2.5.17 The reference to "available capacity" in the LTA misinterprets seasonal dynamics in Fylde's hospitality sector. High summer occupancy means displaced demand cannot easily be accommodated, and even small declines can materially affect business viability. 2.5.18 Furthermore, the LTA omits distributional analysis as to when and where which businesses are most at risk.	2.5.16. This is the first occasion where Fylde Borough Council has stated their consideration that information on visitor flow, booking patterns, or spending profiles should be incorporated within the Local Tourism Assessment. Data on Fylde's visitor flow, booking patterns, or spending profile is not publicly available. Fylde Borough Council has not made clear whether this information exists, and if so where it can be accessed. Discussions between the Applicants and Fylde Borough Council between Deadline 5 and Deadline 6 provided the opportunity for such matters to be raised. If Fylde Borough Council had been in a position to access or provide such information, this should have been raised at an earlier juncture to allow the Applicants to consider this in detail. If this information does not exist, it would be disproportionate for the Applicants to be expected to gather such information to inform the assessment of potential tourism effects, given the absence of evidence indicating a potentially significant relationship between offshore energy infrastructure and tourism activities (as per Glasson et al, 2021). With regards to displacement effects, economic displacement is a widely accepted economic effect, and forms part of the HM Treasury Green Book guidance on appraisal and evaluation. The Applicants wish to avoid adverse impacts on individual businesses. Within the Outline Communications Plan (document reference REP6-069), there is a commitment to include tourism-related businesses as part of the liaison committee process, to engage with individuals and organisations in close proximity to the order limits. It is intended that such measures will avoid displacement effects altogether. In the unlikely event displacement effects do occur in the specific case of hospitality bookings related to consumption of food and drink, it is highly likely that customers will secure this service at an alternative business where required. It is highly unlikely that customers would forego this service due to preference based on differences in the quality of environment and experience. At a sector level, this would not lead to material economic changes in either hospitality sector or the tourism industry at large. This applies at both the local study area and Fylde-only spatial scales. 2.5.17. Please see response to 2.5.16. The Applicants note that Fylde Borough Council has not provided evidence to substantiate their position. 2.5.18. It is not possible at pre-consent stage to determine the precise timing and location of construction works. However, there is a commitment within the Outline Communications Plan (document reference REP6-069) to include tourism-related businesses as part of the liaison committee process. The Outline Communications Plan has also been updated at Deadline 7 with a commitment to support Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) on the promotion of tourist destinations (within the immediate vicinity of the Transmission Assets) that may be affected by the construction activities associated with the Transmission Assets where this is a clear and proportionate need. Post consent, it will be possible for the Applicants to communicate detailed construction plans with tourism businesses in close proximity to the Order Limits, and pursue engagement via the liaison committee.
		2.5.19 Cultural and Event-Based Tourism 2.5.20 FBC welcomes the recognition of major events such as Lytham Festival, St Annes Kite Festival, and the Lowther Pavilion programme. These are integral to Fylde's tourism and cultural identity and draw significant regional audiences. The statement that event scheduling will be discussed with the relevant Local Authorities is also welcomed.	2.5.20. The Applicants acknowledge Fylde Borough Council's comment on the inclusion of relevant and important major events, including the proposed mitigation via the Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (document reference REP6-113).

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		2.5.21 However, FBC considers that the assessment still does not evaluate the scale of potential overlap between construction and event periods, or provide assurance that mitigation (e.g., timing restrictions, signage, alternative access) will be secured. Similarly, the effect of construction traffic and perception of disruption on visitor willingness to attend or return to events is not explored. 2.5.22 Whilst FBC supports the commitment to liaison, it should be formally embedded within the Communications Plan with specific triggers and monitoring in order to ensure that it is effective.	2.5.21. Post consent, phased construction traffic management plans (which must accord with the oCTMP) are to be discharged by Lancashire County Council at each stage of project development, as required by Requirement 9 in Schedules 2A and 2B of the draft DCO (REP6-013). This process will allow for appropriate measures to be included in a construction traffic management plan (as relevant) to ensure visitor access and experience associated with specific events and locations can be protected throughout the relevant construction phase. 2.5.22. The Outline Communications Plan (document reference REP6-069) already secures a commitment to include tourism-related businesses as part of the liaison committee process, to engage with individuals and organisations in close proximity to the order limits. The Outline Communications Plan has also been updated at Deadline 7 (document reference J1.1/F06) with a commitment to support Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) on the promotion of tourist destinations (within the immediate vicinity of the Transmission Assets) that may be affected by the construction activities associated with the Transmission Assets where this is a clear and proportionate need.
		2.5.23 Methodology and Language 2.5.24 FBC acknowledges the Applicants' effort to improve consistency across sections and to clarify terminology. The updated matrix in the D6 assessment is clearer and easier to follow compared to earlier versions. 2.5.25 However, FBC considers that despite these updates, much of the language remains subjective and non-committal. Terms such as "unlikely to materially undermine" and "highly unlikely to affect" are used repeatedly without evidential justification. Similarly, no data is presented to substantiate key assumptions, and the conclusions remain assertive rather than analytical.	2.5.24. The Applicants acknowledge Fylde Borough Council's comment on consistency across sections and terminology. 2.5.25. The phrases "unlikely to materially undermine" and "highly unlikely to affect" do not appear in the Local Tourism Assessment. The phrase "materially undermine" is used on seven occasions. Read alongside Table 4.4 (which sets out impact magnitude criteria), this is an important distinction between the parameters for assessing a medium or low magnitude within the context of impact scale: • Medium: "impact on tourism category would be widespread in terms of the number of visitors and businesses affected and would lead to material economic changes in tourism." (emphasis added) • Low: "impact on tourism category would be limited in terms of the number of visitors and businesses affected and would not lead to material economic changes in tourism." (emphasis added) As such, where the number of visitors and businesses affected is expected to be 'widespread', potential economic changes to tourism industry can be considered material, and the scale of impact assessed as medium. On the other hand, where the number of visitors and businesses affected is expected to be 'limited', potential economic changes to the tourism industry can be considered not material, and the scale of impact assessed as low. In light of the well-established industry precedent of the limited evidence of negative impacts of offshore wind projects on local visitor economies (per Glasson et al, 2021), it would be disproportionate to gather primary data to further inform the assessment.
		2.5.26 Outstanding Requirements 2.5.27 FBC reiterates the following key requests, made in more detail in earlier submissions: • (1) Locally focused tourism sensitivity analysis, quantifying visitor volumes, seasonal trends, and events overlap; • (2) Mapping of tourism and recreation assets relative to construction corridors and compounds, including but not limited to a more detailed assessment of impacts of Public Rights of Way; • (3) to tourism-sector engagement within the Communications Plan, with clear responsibilities and feedback mechanisms;	2.5.27 (1) The Local Tourism Assessment is a proportionate consideration of potential local tourism impacts associated with the Transmission Assets. In addition to the more localised consideration of potential effects which the assessment provides when compared to ES Volume 4, Chapter 2: Socio-economics (document reference F4.2), the assessment was updated for Deadline 6 to take account of a multitude of detailed comments submitted by Fylde Borough Council, which adds further local specificity.

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		• (4) Assessment of timing and cumulative effects, including seasonal and festival-based sensitivities; and, • (5) Revised terminology to align with evidence-based planning practice and removal of unsupported assertions of insignificance.	Fylde-specific considerations have been included within the assessment. Specific examples include: • Table 2.1 summarises key provisions in the Adopted Fylde Local Plan to 2032 (incorporating Partial Review) (Fylde Council, 2021) and the Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan 2012 to 2030 (Fylde Council, 2013). • Section 3 includes baseline environment information specific to the local study area's constituent local authorities, including Fylde. Table 3.2 sets out visitor numbers and associated economic impact in Fylde. A Fylde-specific summary of baseline conditions is provided at 3.9.3. • Table 5.1 sets out a Fylde-specific position on potential effects on tourism resulting from changes to natural capital during the construction phase. • Table 5.2 sets out a Fylde-specific position on potential effects on tourism resulting from changes to culture and entertainment during the construction phase. • Table 5.3 sets out a Fylde-specific position on potential effects on tourism resulting from changes to recreation during the construction phase. • Section 5.7 assesses potential effects on tourism related to specific accommodation businesses located within Fylde. • Section 5.8 assesses potential effects on tourism related to specific hospitality businesses located within Fylde. • Table 7.2 sets out the potential residual effects for Fylde under each asset category. This identifies potentially minor adverse effects on natural capital and recreation in Fylde, with effects on culture and entertainment, heritage, accommodation, and hospitality assessed as negligible. (2) Figure 5.1 of the Local Tourism Assessment maps key tourism assets relative to the 1km buffer zone that has been established. Figures 1.4 to 1.11 of the Outline Public Rights of Way (PRoW) Management Plan (REP6-087) show the PRoWs within and surrounding the onshore Order Limits. Additionally, Section 6.11 of Volume 3, Chapter 6: Land Use and Recreation (APP-104) provides a detailed assessment of the effects on recreational resources and PRoWs arising from the Transmission Assets. (3) Section 1.5 of the Outline Communications Plan (document reference J1./F06) commits the Applicants to preparing detailed communications plan(s) to provide effective and transparent methods of communication and engagement with residents, businesses, the local community and any other relevant stakeholders who may be impacted by site preparation and construction works. Regular meetings with a local liaison committee(s), comprising relevant local representatives. This will include, but not be limited to, Parish and Town Councils, nearby schools, businesses and tourism-related businesses, to effectively communicate upcoming construction activities and to establish the most appropriate timescale and the best way to disseminate this information to the community. The frequency and location of the local liaison committee meeting(s) will be determined in consultation with the relevant planning authority, taking account of feedback received from the local liaison committee. The Outline Communications Plan has also been updated at Deadline 7 with a commitment to support Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) on the promotion of tourist destinations (within the immediate vicinity of the Transmission Assets) that may be affected by the construction activities associated with the Transmission Assets where this is a clear and proportionate need. This is a minimum expectation, and the projects will draw upon best practice and engagement with relevant stakeholders to provide a robust detailed communications

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			plan, that satisfies local community and business needs in addition to wider relevant stakeholder requirements. The detailed Communications Plan(s) will also include a Complaints and Enquiries Management Procedure. The Complaints and Enquiries Management Process will provide formal lines of communication for external stakeholders, to communicate concerns and complaints to the Project(s). (4) Seasonality has been considered throughout the assessment, in particular with regards to potential effects on culture and entertainment (see section 5.4), accommodation (see section 5.7), and hospitality (see section 5.8). • Key management plans relevant to mitigating seasonal effects are: • Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (oCTMP) (document reference J5/F06): mitigates potential traffic and transport-related effects on major events. • Outline Communications Plan (document reference J1.1/F06): mitigates potential effects on individual tourism businesses, including accommodation and hospitality providers. (5) The overall finding that the Transmission Assets will have no significant effect on tourism is supported by evidence (see Glasson et al, 2021). Fylde Borough Council was requested by the Examining Authority to "Provide evidence of where projects of this kind have had an impact on the tourism economy" via Hearing Action Point 53 under Agenda Item 6(i) of the Issue Specific Hearing 1, which they have not provided.
		2.5.28 Summary 2.5.29 FBC appreciates the Applicants' effort to respond to previous comments and welcome the improved acknowledgement of local tourism assets, events, and the principle of ongoing liaison. 2.5.30 However, the shared version of the updated LTA remains qualitatively very similar to the Deadline 5 submission [REP5-142] which continues to rely on assertion rather than evidence. FBC maintains its position that, without more robust local analysis, the assessment underestimates the potential for temporary but locally significant effects on tourism, recreation, and hospitality within Fylde. 2.5.31 FBC therefore maintains that additional clarification, evidence, and secured commitments are required before the likely impacts can be properly assessed and the effect of proposed mitigation and commitments can be understood. 2.5.32 The likely impact of not addressing these issues is that significant harm would be caused to local tourism, with associated broader social, economic and environmental impacts.	2.5.29. The Applicants acknowledge Fylde Borough Council's comment on the updated Local Tourism Assessment at Deadline 6. 2.5.30. The overall finding that the Transmission Assets will have no significant effect on tourism is supported by evidence (see Glasson et al, 2021). Fylde Borough Council was requested by the Examining Authority to "Provide evidence of where projects of this kind have had an impact on the tourism economy" via Hearing Action Point 53 under Agenda Item 6(i) of the Issue Specific Hearing 1, which they have not provided. Their position of asserting the potential for 'for temporary but locally significant effects on tourism, recreation, and hospitality within Fylde' is therefore unsubstantiated. 2.5.31. The overall finding that the Transmission Assets will have no significant effect on tourism is supported by evidence (see Glasson et al, 2021). Key management plans relevant to mitigating seasonal effects are: • Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (oCTMP) (document reference J5/F06): mitigates potential traffic and transport-related effects on major events. • Outline Communications Plan (document reference J1.1/F06): mitigates potential effects on individual tourism businesses, including accommodation and hospitality providers. 2.5.32. Contrary to the Applicants' efforts to provide evidence and substantiate their findings on the projects' interaction with local tourism activities, Fylde Borough Council has provided no evidence to substantiate their claim of 'significant harm' to local tourism.

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ISH4_23	Provide comments on the outline Arboricultural Method Statement and any proposed alternative drafting for articles 35 and 36 to the applicants.	**2.6 AP23** 2.6.1 FBC provided the response below under the heading 'Engagement with Applicants' to the Applicants ahead of Deadline 6 and have received and reviewed a subsequent response from the Applicants. FBC understands that the Applicants will submit their comments to the Examination. FBC has provided a response to the Applicants' comments further below under the heading 'Response to Applicants'.	Noted.
		2.6.2 Engagement with Applicants 2.6.3 With regards to Schedule 35, FBC remains concerned that Articles 35 and 36 grant blanket powers to remove trees and hedgerows without sufficient safeguards. While the applicant has indicated updates will be made at Deadline 6, FBC considers that these powers must be constrained by certified plans, the approved Arboricultural Impact Assessments (AIA), Tree Protection Plans (TPPs), and hedgerow assessments under the Hedgerows Regulations 1997.	The Applicants have updated Articles 35 and 36 in the draft DCO (REP6-013) in response to HAP ISH4_24 and 25. The updates made include cross referencing the Outline Arboriculture Method Statement and the Outline Ecological Management Plan to ensure that the safeguards referenced within these plans are adhered to. The Applicants consider these updates to be reasonable and proportionate and that these updates resolve the concerns of FBC. **Part 5, Article 35, Felling or lopping of trees and removal of hedgerows** Paragraphs (2), (4) and (5) have been updated as follows: *(2) In carrying out any activity authorised by paragraph (1), the undertaker must—* *(a) comply with the processes for tree and hedgerow works (including tree removal) set out in the outline arboriculture method statement and the outline ecological management plan;* *(b) do no unnecessary damage to any tree or shrub; and* *(c) pay compensation to any person for any loss or damage arising from such activity.* *(4) Subject to paragraph (2), Morgan may, for the purposes of carrying out Project A and in accordance with the process set out in the outline ecological management plan—* *a. remove any hedgerow within the Order limits including those specified in Part 1 of Schedule 11A; and* *b. only remove the important hedgerows within the Order limits and specified in Part 2 of Schedule 11A, unless otherwise agreed.* *(5) Subject to paragraph (2), Morecambe may, for the purposes of carrying out Project B and in accordance with the process set out in the outline ecological management plan —* *(a) remove any hedgerow within the Order limits including those specified in Part 1 of Schedule 11B; and* *(b) only remove the important hedgerows within the Order limits and specified in Part 2 of Schedule 11B, unless otherwise agreed.* **Part 5, Article 36, Trees subject to tree preservation orders** Paragraph (2) has been updated as follows: (2) In carrying out any activity authorised by paragraph (1)— *(a) the undertaker must comply with the processes for tree works (including tree removal) set out in the outline arboriculture method statement;* *(b) the undertaker must do no unnecessary damage to any tree or shrub and must pay compensation to any person for any loss or damage arising from such activity; and* *(c) the duty contained in section 206(1) (replacement of trees) of the 1990 Act does not apply.*

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		2.6.4 Any removal must be: justified through ecological or arboricultural evidence; subject to precommencement approval by the relevant planning authority; and, accompanied by restoration proposals, including species-specific replanting and monitoring.	Section 1.8.1 of the Outline Arboriculture Method Statement (REP6-154) has been updated at Deadline 6 to reflect these comments from FBC.
		2.6.5 FBC therefore requests that Schedule 35 be amended to reflect these safeguards and to remove any perception of unrestricted removal powers. 2.6.6 With regards to the Arboricultural Methods Statement [AMS] [REP5-144], FBC maintains its position that further updates are required to the AMS. Firstly, prior to any works within any root protection areas, a detailed AMS must be secured which includes details of: supervision schedule by a qualified arboriculturist; Tree Protection Plans aligned with BS5837:2012; stopwork protocols for unauthorised encroachment; and, site-specific method statements for trenching, access, and compound areas.	The Applicants can confirm that Article 35 has been updated as outlined above in ISH4_23.1. In addition, Paragraph 1.5.1.1 of the Outline Arboriculture Method Statement (REP6-154) has been updated at Deadline 6 to reflect these comments from FBC.
		2.6.7 Secondly, the DCO should refer to the AMS and should secure a rolling 10-year planting and monitoring programme, including: annual surveying of all new planting areas; restocking of failed planting each season; monitoring reports submitted annually, including survival rates, species composition, and remedial actions; and, resetting of the 10-year maintenance period for any replacement planting. 2.6.8 FBC considers that in addition to the Schedule and AMS as submitted, the above additions and amendments would ensure long-term establishment and adaptive management, particularly in areas affected by trenching and easement constraints.	The Applicants confirm that the Arboriculture Method Statement (AMS) is now referenced in Part 5, Article 35 and 36 (see above in response to ISH4_23.1), as well as Requirement 8 of Schedules 2A and 2B of the draft DCO (REP6-013). Regarding the onshore export cable and 400kV grid connection corridors, the AMS sets out the measures that will be implemented for the protection and removal of trees during the construction of these components of the Transmission Assets. The Applicants reflect the update to the AMS in its Deadline 6 revision of the Outline Landscape Management Plan (J2/F05), in which updates to the landscape management and monitoring prescriptions (regimes) for proposed vegetation along the onshore cable corridor (and onshore substations). Furthermore, the Applicants note FBC's comments regarding the length of management and have committed to a 5-year rolling replanting obligation with a maximum 10-year management period along the onshore cable corridors, after planting to ensure proper establishment and ecological functions. This is reflected in updates to the oEMP and the oLMP at Deadline 6. To facilitate this, the Applicants have reviewed article 30(12) and have amended the drafting to provide for the ability to use temporary possession powers for maintenance purposes to a 10 year maintenance period for trees, hedges and shrubs and a 5 year period for any other part of the authorised project. The Applicants are of the opinion that this is proportionate when balancing the rights required from the Landowners.
		2.6.9 Response to Applicants 2.6.10 A number of elements of the Applicants' response indicates that updates will be made at Deadline 6 but without provision of sufficient detail for FBC to be able to come to a view. For example, a number of the above paragraphs are responded to in the following manner: *"Section 1.8.1 of the Outline Arboriculture Method Statement (S_D5_10/F02) has been updated at Deadline 6 to reflect these comments from FBC."* 2.6.11 FBC considers that the above issues must be addressed holistically and therefore is unable to come to an overall view as to the suitability of the Arboricultural Method Statement [REP5- 144], or Articles 35 and 36 of the dDCO.	The Applicants can confirm that these points have been reviewed holistically and that the response provided was to a specific comment raised by FBC.
		2.6.12 FBC welcomes the following updates, should they be appropriately secured: • Amendments to Articles 35 and 36 to reference the Outline Arboriculture Method Statement and the Outline Ecological Management Plan; • Updates to the Outline Arboriculture Method Statement to ensure appropriate justification for any removal of trees or hedges; and, • Updates to the Outline Arboriculture Method Statement and Articles 30(12) to ensure maintenance over a 10-year period.	As set out in response to hearing action point ISH4_23 of the Applicants response to hearing action points of ISH4 and CAH3 (REP6-176), the Applicants have updated Articles 35 and 36 in the draft DCO (REP6-013) to include cross referencing of the Outline Arboriculture Method Statement and Outline Ecological Management Plan and the processes set out within those management plans for tree and hedgerow removal to ensure that the safeguards and controls referenced within these plans are adhered to.
ISH4_26	Provide details to the applicants of their justification for a request of 5 years for implementation, not 7	**2.7 APP26** 2.7.1 FBC provided the response below to the Applicants ahead of Deadline 6. The Applicants notes this response.	The Applicants note FBC's response.

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	years, in respect of specific impacts, such as health.	*"FBC refers the Applicants to their answer to Q1:3.1 in its Answers to Examining Authority's Written Questions [REP5-171]."*	
ISH4_30	Provide alternative drafting concerning Requirement 6.	**2.8 APP30** 2.8.1 FBC provided the response below under the heading 'Engagement with Applicants' to the Applicants ahead of Deadline 6 and have received and reviewed a subsequent response from the Applicants. FBC understands that the Applicants will submit their comments to the Examination. FBC has provided a response to the Applicants' comments further below under the heading 'Response to Applicants'. 2.8.2 Engagement with Applicants 2.8.2 For its most recent supporting explanation, FBC refers the Applicants to Q1:3.7 in its Answers to Examining Authority's Written Questions [REP5-171]. This includes specific requests with regards to what Requirement 6 should achieve. 2.8.3 Response to Applicants 2.8.4 A number of elements of the Applicants' response indicates that updates will be made at Deadline 6 but without provision of sufficient detail for FBC to be able to come to a view. 2.8.5 FBC notes the commitment to hedgerow connectivity measures included in paragraph 1.4.4.3 of the Landscape Management Plan [REP5-063]. 2.8.6 FBC welcomes the following updates, should they be appropriately secured: • *"Annual monitoring and reporting: the Applicants have added clarifications in the oEMP and oLMP to reflect the request that monitoring should begin in Year 1 and continue annually. Reports will be submitted by 31 March each year and include survival rates, species counts, photographic evidence, and any remedial actions taken.* • *Updates to replanting commitments as per Action Point 23.* • *Integration with the DEMP: the Applicants have updated the oLMP at Deadline 6 to include that the detailed LMP will include details on species-specific maintenance regimes."*	**Minimum 10-year management period works completion**: the Applicants have committed to a minimum 10-year management period at the onshore substation and maximum 10-year management period along the onshore cable corridor, after planting to ensure proper establishment and ecological functions. This is reflected in updates to the oEMP (REP6-115) and the oLMP (REP6-102) at Deadline 6. **Annual monitoring and reporting:** the Applicants have added clarifications in the oEMP (REP6-115) and oLMP REP6-102) to reflect the request that monitoring should begin in Year 1 and continue annually. Reports will be submitted by 31 March each year and include survival rates, species counts, photographic evidence, and any remedial actions taken. **Rolling replanting obligation:** the Applicants have committed to a 5-year rolling replanting obligation in Requirement 7 of the dDCO with commitment to replacement planting occurring in the next available planting season via updates to the oLMP (REP6-102) and oEMP (REP6-115). The replanting period resets for another 5 years upon replanting. The Applicants have updated Requirement 7 at Deadline 6 (REP6-013) to include the clarification that this is a 'rolling' commitment, noting that the Applicants have a limited extent to maintain (as per the powers within the dDCO) in relation to the onshore cable corridor. The Applicants will hold the powers to maintain on the onshore substation site for the lifetime of the project(s) and therefore could conceivably have the replanting commitment roll until the lifetime of the project at this location. To facilitate this, the Applicants have reviewed article 30(12) of the draft DCO and have amended the drafting to provide for the ability to use temporary possession powers for maintenance purposes to a 10 year maintenance period for trees, hedges and shrubs and a 5 year period for any other part of the authorised project. These amendments align to clarifications and updates that were made to the outline landscape management plan (REP6-102) at Deadline 6. The outline landscape management plan provides for a 10 year maintenance period for trees, hedgerows and shrubs (planted outside the site of each onshore substation). **Responsibility and enforcement:** the Applicants refer to Section 1.4 of the oEMP (REP6-115) and Section 1.2 of the oLMP (REP6-102) that details the roles and responsibilities, including the responsibility for monitoring and reporting. **Integration with the DEMP:** the Applicants have updated the oLMP (REP6-102) at Deadline 6 to include that the detailed LMP will include details on species-specific maintenance regimes. The commitment to hedgerow connectivity measures is already included in paragraph 1.4.4.3. The Applicants consider therefore that sufficient controls are contained within the draft DCO (REP6-013) in respect of tree and hedgerow retention, removal and maintenance, so no further amendments are required to requirements 6 or 7.
ISH4_33	Provide to the Examining Authority any alternative drafting in relation to construction working hours (Requirement 14).	**2.9 AP33** 2.9.1 FBC considers that Requirement 14 should be amended to delete the following sections: 2e; 6; and 7a. 2.9.2 The intended effect is to remove the option of any works being carried out prior to 7am, with the exception of emergency works and 24 hour works, as otherwise specified and controlled in the requirement.	The Applicants have moved their position substantially in relation to construction hours during the course of examination, including removal of Saturday afternoon working from the draft DCO (REP6-013) at deadline 4 and including drafting at Deadline 5 into the draft DCO to make clear that mobilisation activities must be undertaken in accordance with the outline construction noise and vibration management plan.

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		2.9.3 The justification for this request is as set out in previous written and oral submissions but briefly relates to protecting the amenity of residents, with reference to the generally older local demographic and relatively tranquil nature of the local area.	The Applicants consider that the drafting included for this requirement at deadline 6 in the draft DCO (REP6-013) is reasonable and proportionate and aligns to precedent including with regards to providing for mobilisation activities one hour prior to and one hour after the construction hours specified within the requirement. This is set out in the Explanatory Memorandum (REP6-016) and in REP5-130.
ISH4_35	Engage with Fylde Borough Council on Requirement 16 and provide an update on these discussions to the ExA.	**2.10 AP35** 2.10.1 FBC has engaged with the Applicants with a view to agreeing wording for Requirement 16. However, agreement has not been reached. 2.10.2 FBC consider that a commitment to the provision of a pre-commencement Restoration Management Plan should be included in the requirement. FBC understands that the Applicants are of the view that the relevant controls around restoration are already included in the code of construction practice, soil management plan, landscape management plan and ecological management plan, and that a separate management plan is therefore not required. 2.10.3 However, matters relating to restoration require a greater degree of control and assurance. This is in part due to the amount of relevant information considered to still be outstanding (notably relating to peat surveys and the timing, duration and frequency of works), as well as the greater potential for harm to land arising from consecutive periods of disturbance. 2.10.4 This addition should be complemented by the inclusion of post-restoration reporting requirements in this requirement.	The Applicants consider that the wording for this requirement included in the deadline 6 draft DCO (REP6-013) is reasonable and appropriate, and accords with recent precedent. The Applicants refer to their response to hearing action point ISH4_35 in the Applicants response to Hearing Action Poins of ISH4 and CAH3 (REP6-176). A detailed response to the points FBC has raised is set out within Annex 2.3 to the Applicants' Response to Deadline 5 submissions from Statutory Consultees and other organisation: Fylde Borough Council (REP6-169).
		2.10.5 With regards to restoration timeframes, FBC maintains that the reduction of the period allowed in this requirement from 12 to 6 months is considered to be appropriate. This is on the basis that where repeat disturbance and subsequent restoration is required, there is an increase in likely harm. 2.10.6 FBC would consider wording that requires a reduced restoration period where the same land in directly or indirectly impacted by works after previous restoration, but this would need to be supported by additional information or requirements relating to phasing.	The Applicants refer to their detailed response to hearing action point ISH4_34 in the Applicants response to Hearing Action Poins of ISH4 and CAH3 (REP6-176) and the relevant updates to the outline construction traffic management plan (REP6-113) made at deadline 6. The Applicants consider this resolves this point.
ISH4_36	Provide any comments to the applicants on Requirement 25 and the updates to the CoCP and other management plans regarding the Construction Coordination Working Group.	**2.11 APP36** 2.11.1 FBC provided the response below under the heading 'Engagement with Applicants' to the Applicants ahead of Deadline 6 and have received and reviewed a subsequent response from the Applicants. FBC understands that the Applicants will submit their comments to the Examination. FBC has provided a response to the Applicants' comments further below under the heading 'Response to Applicants'.	Noted.
		<u>2.11.2 Engagement with Applicants</u> 2.11.2 Requirement 25 should include a requirement that the receiving party provides a response, even if this is to confirm that no comments are being provided.	The Applicants updated the wording of requirement 25 in the draft DCO (REP6-013) at deadline 6 to incorporate the feedback received from FBC and LCC. The Applicants can confirm that this is now resolved and has been reflected in the final Statement of Common Ground submitted at Deadline 7 (S_D1_6.3/F03). *Requirement 25 (Onshore Collaboration) now reads as follows:* *(1) Before submitting any plan, scheme, details or document required to be submitted for approval under the requirements, Morgan must provide a copy of the plan, scheme, details or document to Morecambe to enable Morecambe to provide comments on the relevant plans, schemes, details or documentation.* *(2) When submitting any plan, scheme, details or document referred to in sub-paragraph (1) for approval, Morgan must submit any comments duly received from Morecambe or a statement confirming that no such comments were received and a statement setting out how these have been taken into account, and where they have not, why this has been the case*.

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		2.11.3 FBC welcomes the addition of details around a Construction Coordination Working Group at Section 1.2.2 of the Outline Code of Construction Practice [REP5-044]. However, FBC requests that clarification is provided as to: • 1.2.2.2: "The membership of the CCWG will be kept under review throughout construction, with members added or removed as required." It should be explained how such decision will be made, even if this is to specify that the mechanism for adding and removing members will be agreed upon initial creation; and, • Wording should be added with the purpose of setting out how and when the Applicants will respond to matters raised by the working group.	The Applicants appreciate the clarification requests. The relevant sections in the CCWG wording (contained within the oCoCP) have been amended as follows: 1.2.2.2: The membership of the CCWG will be kept under review throughout construction, with members added or removed as required, via the ongoing engagement within the CCWG meetings. The mechanism to add or remove members will be agreed with the relevant planning authorities. (new) 1.2.2.5: The process of how the Applicants will respond to matters raised by the CCWG, and the timescales for provision of responses, will be agreed with the relevant planning authorities at the setup of the CCWG. The Applicants can confirm that this is now resolved and has been reflected in the final Statement of Common Ground submitted at Deadline 7 (S_D1_6.3/F03).
		2.11.4 Response to Applicants 2.11.5 The Applicants have set out that updates to the wording of the Outline Code of Construction Practice [REP5-044] which fully respond to and comply with the above requests. 2.11.6 FBC supports amendments in accordance with the below, as provided by the Applicants: *"The Applicants appreciate the clarification requests. The relevant sections in the CCWG wording (contained within the oCoCP) have been amended as follows: 1.2.2.2: The membership of the CCWG will be kept under review throughout construction, with members added or removed as required, via the ongoing engagement within the CCWG meetings. The mechanism to add or remove members will be agreed with the relevant planning authorities.* *(new) 1.2.2.5: The process of how the Applicants will respond to matters raised by the CCWG, and the timescales for provision of responses, will be agreed with the relevant planning authorities at the setup of the CCWG."*	
ISH4_37 and ISH4_38	ISH4_37: Provide the proposed updated drafting of Requirement 26 (Biodiversity Benefit) and corresponding updates to articles 20 and 22 to the ExA. ISH4_38: Provide comments to the applicants on the proposed updated Requirement 26 drafting to the applicants.	**2.12 AP37 and APP38** 2.12.1 FBC provided the response below under the heading 'Engagement with Applicants' to the Applicants ahead of Deadline 6 and have received and reviewed a subsequent response from the Applicants. FBC understands that the Applicants will submit their comments to the Examination. FBC has provided a response to the Applicants' comments further below under the heading 'Response to Applicants'.	Noted.
		2.12.2 Engagement with Applicants 2.12.2 FBC maintains that there are significant issues relating to biodiversity benefits. At a high level, the habitat compensation and biodiversity benefits offered only relate to the losses which the Applicants consider to be permanent, associated with above-ground infrastructure, rather than the semi-permanent habitat losses (which the Applicants maintain will be temporary) associated with the cable trenches. 2.12.3 FBC maintains the opinion that the duration of the cabling works could be so long that species could be permanently displaced. Any proposed monitoring of the works should be cognisant of this and mitigation plans should be adaptive, able to respond to long-term habitat losses (more than two years) wherever these occur. 2.12.4 FBC welcomes the recent hierarchical approach suggested for achieving biodiversity benefit, subject to details of delivery of this approach being agreed. 2.12.5 FBC considers that the question remains as to whether the 10% uplift is based on a baseline of habitat losses which only considers the permanent losses which the Applicant claims relate only to the permanent substations, or whether the baseline includes part or all of the cabling works, which in ecological terms may not be able to be considered as temporary if they result in habitat losses which could persist for several years. 2.12.6 Therefore, agreement still needs to be reached about what is taken as the baseline for habitat losses on which a 10% uplift can be based and that 10% sets a low bar noting another recent decision. It should not be assumed to refer only to specific work elements as defined by the applicants and should be expanded. 2.12.7 FBC welcomes the prioritisation hierarchy for how benefits will be delivered but the proposal needs to address the practicalities of implementation. Notably, delivering habitat enhancement works on other people's land can be a difficult process involving setting up	The Applicants welcome FBC's response to the hierarchical approach of delivering BNG which prioritises locally biodiversity delivery. It is the Applicants' view that their voluntary commitment to achieve an overall biodiversity benefit for areas of permanent habitat loss associated with the permanent above ground infrastructure of the Transmission Assets fulfils the requirements set out in the Fylde Local Plan. The Applicants can confirm that the baseline of habitat losses is calculated on the permanent habitat loss associated with Work Nos 23A/B and 21A/B. The Applicants would like to remind FBC that biodiversity net gain is not currently a mandatory requirement for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects and the commitment to delivering a minimum of 10% net gain of permanent loss is proportionate to the level of impact associated with the development. The Applicants can confirm that the requirement wording is now resolved and has been reflected in the final Statement of Common Ground submitted at Deadline 7 (S_D1_6.3/F03), notwithstanding, the Applicants have proposed some clarificatory wording to Requirement 26 in their response to the Examining Authority's Rule 17 Letter.

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		conservation covenants to secure long-term habitat management, a negotiation process for agreeing works which usually involves a dedicated project officer and a process to agree the costs of work – it can be difficult to implement in practice. 2.12.8 FBC cannot provide any further comments on the wording of Requirement 26 until these matters have been positively addressed.	
		2.12.9 Response to Applicants 2.12.10 The Applicants set out the following key points: • Biodiversity benefit is not a mandatory requirement and the earliest date that BNG requirements are to apply to Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects is May 2026; • The voluntary commitment to achieve an overall biodiversity benefit for areas of permanent habitat loss associated with the permanent above ground infrastructure of the Transmission Assets fulfils the requirements set out in the Fylde Local Plan; and, • The baseline of habitat losses is calculated on the permanent habitat loss associated with Work Nos 23A/B and 21A/B. 2.12.11 FBC considers that this does not address the concerns raised in the above comments and previous written and oral submissions. Key issue relating to the permanence of impacts and deliverability of mitigation or compensation remain.	The Applicants have provided a detailed response to the Rule 17 letter and have provided some further updates to both the outline biodiversity benefit management plan and proposed updates to the wording of requirement 26 within that response to provide greater clarity to the drafting. The Applicants consider their drafting is appropriate and meets the relevant tests and together with drafting updates to Articles 20, 22 and 29 of the draft DCO (REP6-013) at deadline 6 provides an appropriate balance, ensuring compliance with both policy and the compulsory acquisition tests. The Applicants maintain that their proposed approach to BNG is appropriate and proportionate. The Applicants have provided written responses throughout the Examination and oral presentations on this matter at the ISHs and have nothing further to add.
ISH4_40	a) Applicants and FBC to discuss and agree the proposed drafting for Requirement 28 - the s106 Grampian condition and submit into Examination as soon as possible. b) Applicants to submit a note setting out how the drafting meets the relevant tests and planning practice guidance on Grampian conditions into Examination at Deadline 6.	**2.13 AP40** 2.13.1 A jointly agreed statement between the Applicants and FBC was submitted at Specific Hearing 4 and currently remains FBCs position with any Grampian condition acting as a fall back. However, the remaining other related matters relating the Blackpool Road Playing Fields need agreement before FBC can agree to specific wording. 2.13.2 Separately there are also other matters as highlighted in previous submissions (notably including: Section 9 [REP4-134] and Section 2.11 [REP5-171]) which FBC, Local Authority Partners and the Fylde Economic Prosperity Board regard as relevant Section 106 matters. FBC notes that the Applicants have refused engage with these requests. 2.13.3 FBC therefore considers this to be significant point of disagreement between the FBC/LA partners and the Applicants and will take that these matters up directly with the Secretary of State as the decision maker at the appropriate time.	The Applicants and FBC have not agreed the drafting of requirement 28 which has been put forward by the Applicants as a fall-back without prejudice requirement. The Applicants note FBC's position set out in its Deadline 6 response that other related matters need agreement first. However, the Applicants do not consider that the matters raised previously in REP4-134 and REP5-171 relate directly to the form of wording put forward by the Applicants but rather the scope of the s106 Agreement which the Applicants are negotiating with FBC. The Applicants disagree that the s106 Agreement should cover anything other than the mitigation measures which are required to mitigate the construction impacts at Blackpool Road Recreation Ground. The Applicants have provided a response to what FBC has termed as related matters in Annex 2.3 to Applicants' Response to Deadline 5 submissions from Statutory Consultees and other organisation: Fylde Borough Council of REP6-169 at row AS-084.2. In summary, the Applicants' position is that those matters are either already secured through the requirements of the draft DCO and the accompanying management plans or are matters which are not required in order to mitigate the impacts of the Transmission Assets identified through the EIA but are community benefit matters. The Applicants consider that the without prejudice requirement is appropriate to include in the DCO pending completion of the s106 Agreement and refer to their detailed position on this set out in response to hearing action point ISH4_40 in the Applicants response to Hearing Action Points of ISH4 and CAH3 (REP6-176).
ISH4_41 and ISH4_42	ISH4_41: Provide to the applicants specific drafting it requires for the fees paragraphs in Schedule 12. ISH4_42: Engage regarding the fees paragraphs in Schedule 12 and seek to agree the drafting.	**2.14 AP41 and AP42** 2.14.1 The Applicants have informed FBC that Schedule 12 will be updated as requested by FBC in Issue Specific Hearing 4 and as addressed in its Answers to Examining Authority's Written Questions [REP5-171], as per the proposed wording below. 2.14.2 FBC is supportive of this update but queries whether part (2a) would be made more precise and less susceptible to other dDCO updates, by referring to any Requirement with details to discharge. 2Sub-paragraph (1) has been amended as follows: - (1) Where an application is made to the relevant planning authority for agreement or approval in respect of a requirement, a fee is to apply and must be paid to the relevant planning authority for each application. - (2) The fee payable for each application under subparagraph (1) is as follows: o a) a fee of £2,535 for the first application for the discharge of each of the requirements 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 26 and 27;	The Applicants note that the drafting included at paragraph 6 of Schedule 12 reflects the Heckington Fen Solar Park Order 2025 as requested by FBC and specifies the level of fees payable for each requirement. The Applicants note FBC's comments in relation to sub-paragraph 6(2)(a). The Applicants consider that the requirements specified are those that are more complex to discharge and would therefore warrant the higher fee which is applied through this sub-paragraph. The Applicants do not consider the potential drafting amendments proposed by FBC are clear and precise. The Applicants note however that they made a further update to this sub-paragraph at deadline 6 after the drafting was initially shared with FBC. Paragraph 6(2) of Schedule 12 of the draft DCO (REP6-013) states that the fees are payable as set out within the listed bullet points *'unless otherwise agreed with the relevant planning authority'*. The Applicants consider that the inclusion of this wording allows for a further assessment as necessary with the relevant planning authorities of the applicable fees at the relevant time and therefore specifically provides a mechanism by which the relevant planning authorities could require an uplift to any of the fees stated in paragraph 6. The drafting is therefore considered to be reasonable and proportionate in

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		○ b) a fee of £578 for each subsequent application for the discharge of each of the requirements listed in paragraph (a) and any application under requirement 5 in respect of the requirements listed in paragraph (a); and ○ c) a fee of £145 for any application for the discharge of— (i) any other requirements not listed in paragraph (a); (ii) any application under requirement 24 in respect of requirements not listed in paragraph (a); and (iii) any approval required by a document referred to by any requirement or a document approved pursuant to any requirement."	striking a balance between precision in the drafting and the ability to review application fees for the discharge of requirements at the appropriate time. The Applicants consider this approach accords with precedent.
ISH4_44	Provide any further comments on outstanding documents to the applicants.	**2.15 AP44** 2.15.1 The responses to the above Action Points demonstrate that FBC have provided comments to the Applicants on a range of documents, including Deadline 5 documents and draft documents produced after Deadline 5.	Noted
		2.15.2 In addition to those discussed above, FBC also fully engaged with the Applicants on the submitted Outline Design Principles [REP5-064] [ODP] and subsequent draft updates to that document. 2.15.3 FBC provided detailed written comments to the Applicants and has attended a number of meetings to discuss the design documents. At a high level, these comments included sustained concerns relating to: management of post-consent design variables; harmful impacts on the tranquillity, character and local identity of the landscape; securing good design; impacts on ecological networks as they relate to landscape character; and, the post-consent consultation and collaboration. 2.15.4 The Applicants provided a response to these comments with proposed updates to the ODP. FBC understands that the Applicants will submit an updated document in exact accordance with these changes and the response below is made based upon that assumption. 2.15.5 FBC will review the submitted Deadline 6 version and provide comments as appropriate.	The oDP (REP6-109) has been finalised in coordination with FBC and was submitted at D6. The Applicant sought to address all matters raised by FBC with a view to securing a document fit to support design governance for post consent design development and to support the discharge of relevant requirements.
		2.15.6 In response to the Applicants' proposed updated, FBC provides the following comments: • Project Level Design Principle CL4: FBC requested that adequate provision be made during the detailed design and construction periods for multi-disciplinary working, to ensure that the needs/requirements of all interests are met as far as possible. The Applicants indicated that CL4 would be updated to reflect this.	Reference to multi-disciplinary working has been included in the oDP (REP6-109) section 6, submitted at Deadline 6. Comments received on the Design Principles and Design Code by FBC on 13 October have been addressed where relevant and feedback was provided on these on 20 October and edits to the Design Principles/Design Codes and text within the oDP undertaken. Many of the comments were observations on wider matters of impacts as opposed to refinement of description of codes and principles but were noted.
		• With regards to the working group, FBC requests that the ODP be updated to provide assurance that optimum solutions are achieved within the limitations of the workability and cost of the project, which would provide the best outcomes for residents and the Fylde landscape.	The role of the Working Group is set out in the ODP (REP6-109) submitted at D6. The Applicant confirms and assures FBC in seeking to reach optimum solutions within the limitation of workability and cost.
		• FBC is content with the proposal that that the fulfilment of Design Principles and Design Code should be monitored through the Compliance Report.	Noted
		• FBC is content with the overall principle of the Applicants' suggestions for design development. However, FBC notes that these matters relates to unknown resourcing opportunities and constraints, in terms of ensuring that the appropriate professional support resource is available. This is therefore a resourcing issue which will be addressed through PPA arrangements and not to be confused with monitoring arrangements as requested and currently rejected by the Applicants through Section 106 matters.	Noted.
		• The ODP should include details of how and when the Applicants' independent Design Champion will be appointed and what role they will play, particularly with regards to the working group.	The Applicants confirm that the two Design Champions (DC) are: - Dirk Dollmann for the Morgan project and was identified at ExQ1 13.1.12. - Holly Cartwright for Morecambe. The Applicant intends to draft a clear description of the Design Champion role and to accord with the agreed approach to the Working Group and their governance and role.

<table>
<tr><th>HAP No.</th><th>Hearing Action Point (HAP)</th><th>IP submission</th><th>Applicants' response</th></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>Profiles of the Design Champions will be issued to FBC in support of the post consent process.</td></tr>
<tr><td>CAH3_1(a)</td><td>a) Engage regarding FBC ownership of the Fairhaven Salt Marsh (plots 19-001 and 19-002) and plots 02-001, 02-002, 02- 013, 02-014 and 02-015.</td><td>3.1 Action Point 1(a) – FBC has engaged with the Applicants' agent, Dalcour Mclaren, regarding ownership of the Fairhaven Salt Marsh (plots 19-001 and 19-002) and Land lying to the west side of Clifton Drive North (plots 02-001, 02-002, 02-013, 02-014 and 02-015). A full update on these and other Plots was provided to Dalcour Mclaren by e-mail on 20th October 2025.</td><td>The Applicants updated the Book of Reference (document reference REP6-020) at Deadline 6 to reflect the discussions and current status of ownership for the plots mentioned.</td></tr>
<tr><td>CAH3_1(b)</td><td>b) FBC to submit evidence of this ownership to the examination.</td><td>3.2 Action Point 1(b) - Details of ownership of these plots is set out in the table below:
<table><tr><th>Plot Number</th><th>Registered Owner</th><th>Title Number</th></tr><tr><td>02-001</td><td>The King's most excellent Majesty in right of his Duchy of Lancaster</td><td>LAN67950</td></tr><tr><td>02-002</td><td>The King's most excellent Majesty in right of his Duchy of Lancaster</td><td>LAN67950</td></tr><tr><td>02-013</td><td>The King's most excellent Majesty in right of his Duchy of Lancaster</td><td>LAN67950</td></tr><tr><td>02-014</td><td>The King's most excellent Majesty in right of his Duchy of Lancaster</td><td>LAN67950</td></tr><tr><td>02-015</td><td>The King's most excellent Majesty in right of his Duchy of Lancaster</td><td>LAN67950</td></tr><tr><td>19-001</td><td>Fylde Borough Council</td><td>LAN256720</td></tr><tr><td>19-002</td><td>Fylde Borough Council</td><td>LAN256701</td></tr></table></td><td>The Applicants confirm that registered title LAN67950 is in respect of a mines and minerals interest held by His Majesty The King in right of His Duchy of Lancaster, affecting plots 02-001, 02-002, 02-013, 02-014, and 02-015. The Applicants note that Fylde Borough Council is reputed to be the owner of these plots. The Applicants are aware title pending first registration which covers plots 02-001 and 02-013. The Applicants will continue to engage with the Council on the rights sought over these plots.</td></tr>
</table>

2.3 Lancashire County Council (REP6-188)

Table 2.4: REP6-188 – Lancashire County Council (Deadline 6 Submission)

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
REP6-188 188.1	**1. Introduction** 1.1. This submission sets out Lancashire County Council's (LCCs) Deadline 6 submission for the Development Consent Order application for the Morgan and Morecambe Offshore Windfarm Transmission Assets Generation Assets ('the Scheme'). It includes written submissions following Issue Specific Hearing 4 (ISH4) on Tuesday 7th October 2025 and Wednesday 8th October 2025 and responses to the Examining Authority's Action points arising from Issue Specific Hearing 4 (ISH4). 1.2. In relation to the Examining Authority's Action Points arising from Issue Specific Hearing 4 (ISH4) (EV10-018), the responses only deal with the questions addressed to LCC. Other questions addressed to the applicant and other parties are not included.	Noted
REP6-188 188.2	**2. Written submissions by Lancashire County Council following Issue Specific Hearing 4 (ISH4) on Tuesday 7th October 2025 and Wednesday 8th October 2025** 2.1. The comments set out below are made by the LCC, following Issue Specific Hearing 4 (ISH4) on Tuesday 7th October 2025 and Wednesday 8th October 2025. They follow the structure of the items set out in the Agenda, although only those items are listed in relation to which additional comments are included.	Noted, the Applicants have set out their response to each matter below.
REP6-188 188.3	**3. Item 4 Landscape and Visual Matters** 3.1. Since ISH 4 LCC has returned comments to the Applicants on the Outline Design Principles Document Ref. J3_F02 (REP5-064). A copy of those comments are attached as Appendix A to this submission. LCC also returned comments on the Landscape and Visual Resources section of the Morgan And Morecambe Offshore Wind Farms: Transmission Assets Lancashire County Council SOCG Document Ref. S_D1_6.1/F03 (REP4-079). A copy of LCC's comments are attached as Appendix B. In addition LCC has returned comments on the Green Belt and Separation section of the of the Morgan and Morecambe Offshore Wind Farms: Transmission Assets Lancashire County Council SOCG Document Ref. S_D1_6.1/F03 (REP4-079). A copy of these comments are attached as Appendix C. 3.2. LCC Landscape has concerns both in terms of the location and selection of Substation sites in the Green Belt, the significant effects on spatial and visual elements particularly to openness, their permanence and the intrinsic, irreversible and fundamental changes to both Green Belt and Landscape Character.	The Applicants note LCC's further comments on the named documents that have been submitted during the Examination. The Applicants acknowledge the concerns raised and refer LCC back to their previous responses and submissions on these matters, which set out the Applicants' position and supporting evidence in full.
REP6-188 188.4	3.3. It is considered that currently the Landscape Proposals/Strategy and the Outline Design Principles in particular, do not sufficiently address the potential residual impacts and that the Applicant has not yet 'minimised' the effects, which can be reasonably avoided, reduced and mitigated. Proposals are not considered proportionate to the proposed scale of development of the two substations. These would likely include off site planting, an agreed manipulation of levels and gradients, potential relocation of Public Rights of Way and the Bridleway. These measures are not considered overly onerous on the Applicant. Further commitments are required which guarantee measures to achieve better aesthetic and design solutions than currently proposed. The use of an independent Design Review Panel would be welcomed.	The Applicants note LCC's repeated comments regarding the outline Design Principles (oDP) (REP6-109) document and the indicative Landscape Strategy presented into the outline Landscape Management Plan (oLMP) (REP6-101). The Applicants consider that the submitted documents appropriately address the potential residual landscape and visual effects through the application of embedded mitigation, proportionate design measures, and a clear framework for ongoing design development secured through the oDP document. The Applicants therefore refer LCC back to their previous submissions, which set out the approach to mitigation, design evolution and governance, including the mechanisms in place to ensure continued refinement through the detailed design stage with the discharging planning authority, Fylde Borough Council (FBC). FBC have confirmed that they do not support the use of an Independent Design Review Panel (IDRP) at this pre-consent stage and agree that further consideration of the role / benefits of an IDRP is required. FBC have made it clear that an IDRP should not be imposed on FBC by the ExA.
REP6-188 188.5	3.4. In terms of the wider Transmission Assets alignment of particularly concern is the spatial and visual aspects on landfall area, especially given its essential amenity value. To all areas the duration and the magnitude of visual effects that could be incurred over time (particularly if there should there be considerable delay between the two separate projects) and how this would affect the management, appearance and ultimately restoration of the landscape is still a concern. Restoration should as far as possible be a like for like (accepting trees not planted on cables), but noting that existing pond areas should be replaced in field areas, to continue to provide	The Applicants note LCC's comments regarding the management, appearance and restoration of the landscape associated with the wider Transmission Assets. The Applicants have submitted their approaches to reinstatement and restoration and made clear their commitment to return land to its pre-construction condition, as far as practicable. This information is set out in the numerous documents submitted and supporting outline management plans, and the Design Codes of the oDP (REP6-109).

<table>
<tr><th>Reference</th><th>IP submission</th><th>Applicants' response</th></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>ecological 'stepping stones' throughout the landscape and in accordance with the existing landscape pattern.</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>REP6-188
188.6</td><td>3.5. At this point the County Council would like to state the difficulties that have been experienced with properly engaging with the applicant on these issues. The applicant's need for flexibility in terms of final design is recognised but the design, visual and landscape information that was submitted with the original application, particularly in relation to the substations, was considered to be deficient and did not allow a proper assessment of visual impacts in the County Council's view. Whilst some recent progress has been made with the applicant on these issues, the County Council is disappointed that not more has not been achieved. The sole objective of the County Council has been to ensure a development which would minimise impacts on the Green Belt and countryside and the people who live and work nearby.</td><td>The Applicants firstly consider, as set out above, that the submitted documents appropriately address the potential residual landscape and visual effects through the application of embedded mitigation, proportionate design measures, and a clear framework for ongoing design development secured through the oDP document, which will minimise the impacts on the landscape and the people who live and work nearby.

The Applicants secondly acknowledge the nature of engagement that has taken place since the submission of the DCO application, noting that meaningful dialogue is most effective when all parties approach the process constructively, are prepared to exchange perspectives and explore options through the structured engagement opportunities provided, rather than simply repeating positions set out in previously written representations. To this point, the Applicants have consistently communicated what is achievable within the defined parameters of the Project, as evidenced throughout their submissions to the Examination. While recognising the fast pace of the Examination, the Applicants have made sustained efforts to facilitate constructive and substantive engagement with LCC. This has included a series of meetings, the submission of information, and the provision of work-in-progress materials between Examination deadlines. To the extent that there was follow up on SoCG matters, the Applicants have sought to address these matters and reflect them in the SoCG to ensure the matters of difference are before the ExA.

The Applicants note that the material prepared concerning landscape and visual, Green Belt and Design matters, has been prepared by Chartered Landscape Architects with extensive experience of working on similar development and comparable infrastructure projects. The consultants were appointed to prepare their work in accordance with recognised best practice guidance set out in the GLVIA3 and other relevant industry standards.</td></tr>
<tr><td>REP6-188
188.7</td><td>4. Item 5 Transportation and Traffic Matters

4.1. The following provides Lancashire County Council Highways (as the Local Highway Authority or LHA) Interim Update to the proposals for the Morgan and Morecambe Offshore Wind Farms Transmission Assets.

4.2. Following comments provided by Mr Stevens (on behalf of the LHA) at the Specific Hearing 2 (ISH2) on 30th July 2025, the Issue Specific Hearing 3 (ISH3) on 31st July 2025, and LCC Highways comments submitted at Deadline 4, the applicant has worked collaboratively with the LHA to overcome the LHA's concerns raised at the above events/submissions.</td><td>Noted</td></tr>
<tr><td>REP6-188
188.8</td><td>4.3. At Deadline 4 the LHA had concerns with both accesses and links, whilst much new information has been recently received, which is being reviewed, the current position is:

1. Compound/working area access, are summarised in the Table below:
<table>
<tr><th>Access Number</th><th>Brief description of current concern or where there is lack of information/evidence (that needs to be provided)</th></tr>
<tr><td>A9a and A9b</td><td>Ensuring vehicles do not route between the accesses across the M55 to Heyhouses Link Road.</td></tr>
<tr><td>A33</td><td>Inclusion of hedgerow to be removed, and improving swept path for HGVs.</td></tr>
<tr><td>A38 to A41</td><td>Further detail on the operation of signals and location of signal and signage.</td></tr>
<tr><td>A44 to A47</td><td>Further detail on self-enforcing speed reduction measures and visibility.</td></tr>
<tr><td>A53</td><td>Extension of visibility splay.</td></tr>
<tr><td>A57</td><td>Further detail on the use of the concerns with use of the Guild Wheel for access.</td></tr>
<tr><td>A58</td><td>Further detail on the management of pedestrian/cyclists.</td></tr>
</table></td><td>Following Deadline 4, the Applicant held a series of intensive workshops with LCC to discuss and residual concerns in detail and appropriate mitigation strategies. This has culminated with a revised draft Deadline 7 OCTMP being shared with LCC and agreement on all matters relating to construction accesses, construction (HGV) routes and detail of measures contained in the OCTMP. This agreement is confirmed the Deadline 7 SoCG REF (S_D1_6.1/F05)</td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><th>Reference</th><th>IP submission</th><th>Applicants' response</th></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>
<table>
<tr><td>A59</td><td>Further detail on visibility and management of movements.</td></tr>
<tr><td>A63</td><td>Improvement to pedestrian crossing distance.</td></tr>
</table>

2. Local highway network routes are summarised in the table below:
<table>
<tr><th>Link Number</th><th>Brief description of current concern or where there is lack of information/evidence (that needs to be provided)</th></tr>
<tr><td>22b - Blackpool Road North
102 - The Hamlet / Appealing Ln / Leach Ln
43a - B5260 Fox Lane Ends</td><td>Further detail on the management of existing on street parking.</td></tr>
<tr><td>31a - Ballam Road
39a - B5259 Moss Side Ln / The Green
39b - B5259 Lytham Rd / Saltcotes Rd
41 - Ballam Road
43a - B5260 Fox Lane Ends
43b - B5260 Fox Lane Ends / Station Rd
46 - Bryning Ln / The Green
53 - Kirkham Rd / Freckleton Rd
101 - Howick Cross Ln
102 - The Hamlet / Appealing Ln / Leach Ln</td><td>Further detail on the suitability of the route for HGV movements (including swept path analysis with any resulting necessary mitigation / management measures).</td></tr>
<tr><td>72 - Wallend Rd (Private Road)</td><td>Further detail on the management of pedestrian/cyclists</td></tr>
</table>

3. Other matters relating to the Outline Construction Management Plan:
- Waiting areas for proposed construction vehicles.
- Further detail on monitoring of movements at accesses and routing.
- Constraint specific mitigation measures for links.
- Further detail on road condition monitoring and maintenance.</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>REP6-188
188.9</td><td>4.4. Following the submission of LCC Highways comments at Deadline 4, a series of workshops between the Applicants and the LHA have taken place to obtain necessary clarifications and proposals to mitigate the impacts of the development.
4.5. Dates of workshops between the Applicant and the LHA post Deadline 4:
- Thursday 18th September – 2 hours
- Thursday 25th September – 2 hours</td><td></td></tr>
</table>

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
	- Monday 29th September – 3 hours - Monday 6th October – 1 hour - Friday 10th October – 2 hours - Monday 13th October – 4 hours 4.6. LCC Highways (as LHA) are content with the additional information / changes discussed and presented within the workshops, in regard to the concerns and areas for further detail highlighted above. The workshops included the presentation and discussion of updates to accesses (including the removal of the proposed use of A57 - The Guild Wheel), supporting swept paths for highway links (having regard to carriageway widths) and updates to the outline Construction Traffic Management Plan. Whilst the latest workshop concluded on 13th October, the documentation including the additional information / changes discussed have been provided to the LHA for review via email on 15th and 16th October. This review is currently ongoing. 4.7. Under a scenario that all areas of discussion and agreement have been included, the likely impacts of the development will NOT result in conditions that are considered severe in network reliability and safety terms (severe is referenced in terms as per the NPPF). However, this position can only be confirmed following the LHA's review of the latest documentation, which will be provided by the LHA at Deadline 7.	
REP6-188 188.10	**5. Item 6 Socio-Economic and Land use** 5.1. LCC Public Rights of Way do not agree that all its matters have been concluded for Item 6 (Socio-Economic) and as such further comment will be provided at final deadline 7. 5.2. To enable the Applicants to address LCC's outstanding concerns the following comments on the Outline PRoW Management Plan have been communicated to the Applicants. 5.3. Although the wording of the Outline Public Rights of Way (PRoW) Management Plan (F05) (Rep5a-034) has been improved, the following are to be addressed for the item to be approved.	5.1. The Applicants note this response. 5.2 and 5.3. As per the responses below, the Outline Public Rights of Way (PRoW) Management Plan was updated at Deadline 6 (REP6-087).
REP6-188 188.11	5.4. Signage and information during construction. The seven day notice period remains too short. This should be increased to 2 weeks and to enable sufficient time for the proposed closures and the temporary alternative of such closure, the discharging is to be a minimum of 10-weeks, not 10-weeks as stated within the revised document.	The seven day notice period has been amended to two weeks (refer to section 1.8.2 of the Outline PRoW Management Plan (REP6-087). In line with Requirement 12, paragraph 3(1) of the draft development consent order (REP6-013) that where an application is made to a relevant discharging authority, the discharging period will within a period of ten weeks beginning with— (a) the day immediately following that on which the application is received by the relevant planning authority; or (b) such other period as may be specified in a requirement or otherwise agreed by the undertaker and the relevant planning authority (REP6-013). The change to the notice period to two weeks is agreed with LCC, but the changed wording of the discharge period to 10 weeks is still not agreed with LCC who have requested that this wording is further changed to a "minimum of 10 weeks". The Applicants maintain that the changes made to both the oPRoW plan and the draft DCO addresses the concerns raised by LCC.
REP6-188 188.12	5.5. Figures 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 include gates across the line of the PRoW – gates that would restrict 24/7 access along the diverted route are not supported. The general arrangement figures should exclude the inclusion of any limitation across the diverted public path, providing unrestricted passage. This is not to say there may not be a situation necessitating the inclusion of a limitation, for example a self-closing pedestrian either with or without a meshed hoop to BS 5709:2018 standards, however this would be the exception rather than the rule. The reference to gates other than for stock control should be removed throughout the document.	Figures 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 have been updated to show Public Rights of Way gates, to be installed 'if required' (REP6-087). These would not restrict access along a managed crossing or temporarily diverted route. This change is not agreed with LCC as they would prefer to see no gates shown on the figures. The Applicants maintain that no further change to the outline PRoW plan is required. The figures are illustrations to show how the PRoWs would continue to be available during the construction phase. Detailed management measures, including any requirement for PRoW gates, would be agreed through the development of the detailed PRoW plans which would be subject to consultation and approval by LCC.
REP6-188 188.13	**6. Item 7 Onshore Ecology/Biodiversity** 6.1. The LLC Ecologist was unable to attend ISH4 but has the following additional comments arising from the Examining Authority's General and Cross-Topic Questions, in relation to which responses were previously provided at Deadline 5 and the subsequent discussion at ISH4.	The Applicants note this response.
REP6-188 188.14	Q2:6.1.8 Peat	The Applicants note this response.

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
	6.2. The discussions appear to relate to peat soils rather than peatland habitats. As such, whilst there may be some links to ecology, this is principally a soil management matter.	
REP6-188 188.15	Q2:6.2.4 Biodiversity 6.3. The LCC Ecologist has reviewed Rep5-145 (Biodiversity Benefit - Supporting Statement) in respect of ecology matters. The applicant contends that the delivery of biodiversity benefits is a voluntary matter. However, whilst a mandatory 10% biodiversity net gain does not apply to this application, the County Council considers that the requirements of national policy should be met. Requirements of NPS EN-1 6.4. Section 4.6 of National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1) includes requirements for biodiversity gains, for example: • Section 4.6.6 states that "Energy NSIP proposals, whether onshore or offshore, should seek opportunities to contribute to and enhance the natural environment by providing net gains for biodiversity, and the wider environment where possible"; • Section 4.6.7 states that "In England applicants for onshore elements of any development are encouraged to use the latest version of the biodiversity metric to calculate their biodiversity baseline and present planned biodiversity net gain outcomes. This calculation data should be presented in full as part of their application"; and • Section 4.6.11: states that "Biodiversity net gain can be delivered onsite or wholly or partially off-site. We encourage details of any off-site delivery of biodiversity net gain to be set out within the application for development consent". Requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework 6.5. Paragraph 187 states that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.	The Applicants maintain that their proposed approach to biodiversity benefit is appropriate and proportionate. The Applicants have provided written responses throughout the Examination and oral presentations on this matter at the ISHs and have nothing further to add.
REP6-188 188.16	Whole Order Limits BNG Assessment: Summary 6.6. Table 3 of the Biodiversity Benefit Supporting Statement provides a summary Whole Order Limits BNG Assessment. Whilst it is recognised that the final footprint of habitat losses may not cover the whole of the order limits, the results given in Table 3 indicate significant biodiversity losses, which would not meet the requirements of relevant national policies mentioned above.	
REP6-188 188.17	Departure from the Biodiversity Metric User Guide 6.7. Although the applicant has used the latest version of the DEFRA Biodiversity Metric, it has not been applied in accordance with the DEFRA Biodiversity Metric User Guide. Specifically, it appears that there are habitat losses that will not be restored to baseline type and condition within two years, which have not been taken into account (See section 6 of the DEFRA user guide). As such, time lag impacts/temporal risks on biodiversity have not been properly taken into account, resulting in understated biodiversity losses.	
REP6-188 188.18	Approach of Other DCO Schemes 6.8. Section 1.1.1.2 of the Biodiversity Benefit Statement states that "The Applicants consider that a proportionate and pragmatic approach to BNG has been adopted by only including above ground permanent infrastructure. This is considered to be in line with National Policy Statement (NPS EN-1) and the guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) for the delivery of no net loss and measurable net gains. The approach has also been demonstrated as being acceptable for other similar DCO projects as shown in Table 4". 6.9. However, restricting biodiversity gain calculations to above ground permanent infrastructure is not consistent with the approach taken for the majority of examples given including: Rampion 2 Offshore Wind Farm • Commitment to 10% net gain for all onshore and intertidal (above the low water mark) habitats subject to permanent or temporary losses. North Falls Offshore Wind Farm	

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
	• Habitat losses not considered temporary where reinstatement to baseline condition would not be possible within 2-year timescale. Dogger Bank South Offshore Windfarms • Assumed 50% of the temporary construction compounds would be reinstated within 2 years and therefore excluded from baseline calculations.	
REP6-188 188.19	Hierarchy to delivering Biodiversity Benefit 6.10. Table 5 of the Biodiversity Benefit Supporting Statement introduces a new Hierarchy to delivering Biodiversity Benefit. 6.11. The options given within the proposed hierarchy need not be mutually exclusive. For example, if onsite biodiversity enhancements do not meet the requirements of national policy (or if they need to be reduced for air traffic safety reasons), then they can be combined with off-site measures.	The Applicants agree with this comment and agree that it may be necessary to seek a combined approach to the delivery, which would be agreed post-consent and informed by an updated BNG assessment once the detailed design stage is completed. The delivery mechanism(s) for a minimum 10% net gain for habitats permanently impacted by the Transmission Assets are secured by DCO Requirement 26.
REP6-188 188.20	6.12. Option 3 given within Table 5 relates to providing funding to support alternative biodiversity projects in the nearby area. This option does not currently provide sufficient certainty that the necessary type and quantity of biodiversity units can be delivered. For example, there is currently uncertainty over: • The amount of funding (this could potentially be based on the price of national BNG credits following calculation of losses in line with the DEFRA metric user guide); • Funding mechanisms; • Administration of the proposed system; • Delivery mechanisms; • Potential location of biodiversity enhancement (and the relationship to Lancashire's emerging Local Nature Recovery Strategy); • Type of biodiversity enhancement; • Number of biodiversity units that would be provided; • Securing long-term maintenance;	The wording of DCO Requirement 26 allows flexibility in the approach to delivery (and may require a combined on-site and off-site approach – see comment above for 18a). The details on the delivery of biodiversity benefit for the projects (including details such as funding mechanisms, administration, location(s) and maintenance) would be included within a 30-year Biodiversity Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) post-consent. These details would only be able to be confirmed once an updated BNG assessment had been undertaken post-consent because it requires the completion of the detailed design stage. However, the Applicants are confident that the principles for delivery they have proposed in the Outline Biodiversity Benefit Management Plan submitted at Deadline 6 (REP6-095) demonstrate that they would be able to be deliver a minimum 10% net gain.
REP6-188 188.21	6.13. Option 4 relates to purchase of Biodiversity Credits. It needs to be ensured that there is no confusion between Biodiversity Credits and Biodiversity Units. There appears to be some confusion within the report as follows: • Within Table 2, the applicant discusses: - "purchasing Biodiversity Credits from an offsetting provider to meet the shortfall in units"; and - "alternative provision for offsetting through either funding of suitable projects in the local area or the purchase of offsetting credits from a registered provider"; • Table 5, in relation to Option 4 states that "This could be delivered via a scheme to be approved by the relevant planning authority as set out in a Requirement of the DCO securing biodiversity benefit". 6.14. Statutory Biodiversity Credits are purchased from Government and the applicant would not be able to determine how they are spent. Purchase of Credits could result in biodiversity enhancements outside of the county which would not be a desirable outcome. It would also need to be established that Biodiversity Credits can be made available to a scheme that is not subject to mandatory 10% BNG. 6.15. If the intention is to purchase biodiversity units from an established habitat bank, then it would need to be ensured that the correct types and quantities of biodiversity units are available to purchase, taking into account the location of the habitat bank. It would also need to be established that the Biodiversity Units are available to a scheme that is not subject to mandatory 10% BNG, taking account of the process for registering and allocating units on the national register.	The Applicants note this response. The Applicants reiterate that any requirement for the purchase of either 'biodiversity units' from a private provider and/ or 'statutory biodiversity credits' from the Government cannot be confirmed at this stage. Any requirement for off-site offsetting through this mechanism would be finalised by a revised post-consent BNG assessment when the detailed design had been completed. The Applicants have provided further clarification on their approach to support for local nature recovery schemes and the purchase of biodiversity credits (either statutory or from a private provider) in an update to the outline Biodiversity Benefit Management Plan at Deadline 7 (J11/F07).
REP6-188	Bird Strike Risk	Noted

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
188.22	6.16. Uncertainty around conflicts between ecological mitigation and aviation risk appear to remain. The County Council's ecologist is not qualified to comment on bird strike risk or air traffic safety matters. However, as per the earlier response to the Examining Authority's written questions, as long as the requirements of legislation, national policy and recognised best practice guidance are met, then departures from the applicant's own site selection guiding principles could be allowed, including mitigation outside of wildlife hazard management zones.	
REP6-188 188.23	**7. Item 10 Draft Development Consent Order** 7.1. LCC has the following comments on the revised version of the draft Development Consent Order (REP5-010).	Noted.
REP6-188 188.24	Article 10 (Power to Alter Layout etc. of Streets) 7.2. See Paragraph 8.2 below.	Noted.
REP6-188 188.25	Article 40 Protective Provisions 7.3. The Applicants and the LLFA have worked collaboratively to progress the Protective Provisions. The Applicants provided comments to the LLFA on 30 September. These comments confirmed agreement with the majority of points raised by the LLFA, with a few outstanding points. After reviewing the Applicants' comments, the LLFA returned further revisions on 3 October and 6 October, focussed on notice arrangements and indemnity provisions. A meeting on 16 October 2025 focussed on the LLFA power to enter land, as disapplying s.23 Land Drainage Act 1991 consequentially disapplies s.24 and s.64 (entry power) of that Act. A revision was received on 21st October 2025 from the Applicants including changes seeking to address the concerns, with s.24 and consequently s.64 being reapplied to some degree, and is being actively considered by the LLFA. Both parties remain optimistic that an agreement can be reached on the remaining issues before the examination concludes.	The protective provisions for the Lead Local Flood Authority are not in agreed form at Deadline 7. The LLFA has concerns that the disapplication of sections 23, 30 and 66 of the Land Drainage Act 1991 at article 7(1)(b) and (d) have a subsequent impact on the LLFA's powers of entry under section 24 and 64 of that Act. The Applicants have proposed drafting to provide further comfort, which can be seen at paragraph 9(1) in the version in the Deadline 6 draft DCO (REP6-013). The Applicants have sought to explain that the Planning Act 2008 enables a Development Consent Order to amend and disapply legislation (with the LLFA's consent in this case). The Applicants have directed the LLFA to precedented protective provisions in other DCO's such as the recently granted Byers Gill Solar Order 2025, which contains similar provisions to those in paragraph 9 of the Applicants' proposed protective provisions. There are also outstanding points concerning the indemnity provisions, whereby the LLFA are seeking to widen these provisions further than is acceptable to the Applicants and indeed, in a manner that goes further than other recently granted orders (as referenced above). The Applicants will nonetheless continue to engage with the LLFA in the post-Examination phase with the intention of reaching agreement on the protective provisions and will provide an update on progress at the appropriate time. If they cannot be agreed, the Land Drainage Act disapplications would be removed from article 7 of the DCO.
REP6-188 188.26	Requirement 10 (Highway Accesses) 7.4. See Paragraph 8.4 below.	Noted.
REP6-188 188.27	Requirement 14 (Construction Hours) 7.5. See Paragraph 8.5 below.	Noted.
REP6-188 188.28	Requirement 20 (Operational Drainage Management Plan) 7.6. The LLFA attended ISH4 but did not raise any points during the discussion on Requirement 20 (Operational Drainage Management Plan) as it agrees to and welcomes the updates made to this part of the draft Development Consent Order. 7.7. In the LLFAs view, the revision to Requirement 20 now correctly reflects the approval and consultation bodies for the detailed Operational Drainage Management Plan, and it has no outstanding concerns.	Noted.
REP6-188 188.29	Requirement 25 (Onshore Collaboration) 7.8. See Paragraph 8.7 below.	Noted.
REP6-188 188.30	Requirement 26 (Biodiversity Benefit) 7.9. See Paragraph 8.9 below.	Noted.
REP6-188 188.31	**8. Examining Authority's Action points arising from Issue Specific Hearing 4 (ISH4).** 8.1. The following section sets out LCC's responses to Examining Authority's Action Points (EV10-018) arising from Issue Specific Hearing 4 (ISH4) in relation to questions addressed to LCC.	Noted
REP6-188 188.32	**Agenda item 9 – Draft Development Consent Order** 17. Confirm if the councils have any outstanding comments on Article 10.	The Applicants do not consider that any amendments to Article 10 are necessary or appropriate. The Applicants' wording included in the Deadline 6 draft DCO (REP6-013) is reasonable and appropriate, avoids unnecessary

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
	8.2. LCC as LHA requests the following amendments to Article 10 (with the amendment shown in italics): Article 10: **Power to alter layout etc. of streets** 10.—(1) Subject to paragraphs (2) and (3), the undertaker may, in so far as may be expedient or necessary for the purposes of or in connection with constructing, operating and maintaining the authorised project alter the layout of any street and, without limitation on the scope of this paragraph, the undertaker may— (a) alter the level or increase the width of the street including any kerb, footway, cycle track or verge; and (b) make and maintain passing place(s). (2) The undertaker must restore any street that has been temporarily altered under this article to the reasonable satisfaction of the street authority. (3) The powers conferred by paragraph (1) must not be exercised without the consent of the street authority, *and must be exercised under a signed Highway Act agreement.* (4) Paragraphs (2) and (3) do no not apply where the undertaker is the street authority for a street in which the works are being carried out. *(5) The reference to streets in paragraphs (1), (2), (3) and (4) relate to highway maintainable at public expense.* *(6) Any works subject to (1) must satisfy all individual user needs, highway safety and design standards.* *(7) The developer will be responsible for the consequential impacts of any works under (1), for example, part 1 land compensation claims.*	duplication and reflects precedent. The Applicants would highlight that BBC (as highway authority) confirms in their Deadline 6 submission (REP6-209) that they are content with the drafting of Article 10 as it is set out in the draft DCO. **Paragraph (3)** – as set out at ISH4, the Applicants do not consider that the consent process should be tied to a particular form of consent at this stage. The Applicants' outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (REP6-113) already indicates that the relevant consent may be through Highway Act agreements and Article 15 (Agreements with street authorities) would facilitate this process in the event a Highway Act agreement is considered to be the appropriate mechanism for consent. The Applicants' drafting of Article 10(3) is entirely consistent with precedent and is considered to be reasonable and appropriate. **LCC's proposed paragraph (5) -** The definition of 'Street' for the purposes of this Article and elsewhere in the draft DCO is already defined within Article 2 of Part 1 of the draft DCO (REP6-013). The definition refers to Section 48 of the New Road and Street Works Act 1991. The Applicants note that this goes beyond streets maintainable at public expense. The Applicants do not therefore consider this additional paragraph to be necessary and indeed would cause confusion with already defined terms. **LCC's proposed paragraph (6)** – The Applicants do not consider the inclusion of this additional paragraph is necessary or appropriate. Article 10(3) states that the powers must not be exercised without the consent of the street authority. As part of giving this consent, the highway authority must be satisfied that highway safety and design standards will be appropriately met. In addition, the definition of "user needs" is open ended and unclear therefore not appropriate for inclusion in legislation drafting. LCC have also suggested adding 'for the avoidance of doubt' into paragraph (6). The Applicants consider this would not be aligned with the SI drafting guidance, which states at paragraph 1.3.2 that drafting should 'use no more words than are necessary'. Consequently, 'for the avoidance of doubt' wording would be repeating the same concept in the drafting, which is unnecessary and may cause confusion. **LCC's proposed paragraph (7)** – The Applicants do not consider the inclusion of this paragraph to be necessary or appropriate. The outline CTMP (REP6-113) already includes specifics in relation to monitoring of defects and agreement of a remediation strategy (including appropriate funding of those works) – this text within the oCTMP is understood to be agreed with LCC and appropriately secures responsibility. Compensation claims as they relate to land are not relevant or appropriate to include in Article 10 as compensation claims for exercise of temporary powers over any streets is covered under Article 29(7) and (9). Additionally, the use of "for example" is not appropriate for inclusion in legislation drafting. The Applicants believe this addition is not necessary and therefore updates to the dDCO are not required.
REP6-188 188.33	<u>32.Confirm satisfaction with the wording of Requirement 10 and engage with the applicants on this prior to Deadline 6 where necessary.</u> 8.3. LCC as LHA requests the following amendments to Requirement 10 (with the amendment shown in italics): 8.4. Requirement 10: Highway accesses 10.—(1) No new temporary or permanent means of access to a highway to be used by vehicular traffic, or any temporary or permanent alteration to an existing means of access to a highway used by vehicular traffic, may be formed for the Project A onshore works or Project A intertidal works until a highways access management plan for that access has been submitted to and approved in writing by the relevant *planning authority, in consultation with the appropriate highway authority. Each highways access management plan shall satisfy all individual user needs, highway safety and design standards*, and in relation to the Project A Blackpool Airport works, shall be prepared in consultation with BAOL to the extent specified in the outline highway access management plan. (2) Each highways access management plan must accord with the outline highways access management plan. (3) The highway accesses must be implemented as approved, *under a signed Highways Act agreement*.	The Applicants do not consider that any amendments to requirement 10 are necessary or appropriate. The Applicants wording included in the Deadline 6 draft DCO (REP6-013) is reasonable and appropriate, avoids unnecessary duplication and reflects precedent. As set out in relation to Article 10 above, the Applicants do not consider that the consent process should be tied to a particular form of consent at this stage.
REP6-188 188.34	<u>33.Provide to the Examining Authority any alternative drafting in relation to construction working hours (Requirement 14)</u> 8.5. As set out in LCC's Deadline 5 submission, the County Council considers that the start time for construction works on Saturdays should be amended from 0700 to 0800 where works are proposed with 200m of noise sensitive properties.	The Applicants have moved their position substantially in relation to construction hours during the course of examination, including removal of Saturday afternoon working from the draft DCO (REP6-013) at Deadline 4 and including drafting at Deadline 5 into the draft DCO to make clear that mobilisation activities must be undertaken in accordance with the outline construction noise and vibration management plan. The Applicants consider that the drafting included for this requirement at Deadline 6 in the draft DCO (REP6-013) is reasonable and proportionate and aligns to precedent including with regards to providing for mobilisation activities one

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
	8.6. This could be achieved by including in sub-paragraph (1) of Requirement 14 the following additional wording: The construction of Project A/B onshore works and Project A/B intertidal works, and construction-related traffic movements to or from the site of the relevant work within 200m of any noise sensitive properties, which are be to be identified in the Code of Construction Practice shall take place, only between the hours of 0700 and 1900 from Monday to Friday, and 0800 to 1300 on Saturday, with no activity on Sundays or bank holidays.	hour prior to and one hour after the construction hours specified within the requirement. This is set out in the Explanatory Memorandum (REP6-016) and in REP5-130.
REP6-188 188.35	36.Provide any comments to the applicants on Requirement 25 and the updates to the CoCP and other management plans regarding the Construction Coordination Working Group. 8.7. In response to the comments set out in LCC's Deadline 5 Submission the Applicants have advised that the wording of Requirement 25, paragraph (b) has been amended to state(with the amendment shown in italics): (b) When submitting any plan, scheme, details or document referred to in sub-paragraph (1) for approval, Morgan/Morecambe must submit any comments duly received from Morgan/Morecambe *together with a statement setting out how these have been taken into account or where they have not, why this has been the case or if no comments were received* a statement confirming that no such comments were received. 8.8. LCC is content to agree with the proposed amended wording.	The Applicants updated the wording of requirement 25 at Deadline 6 to incorporate the wording requested by LCC in their Deadline 5 submission. The Applicants consider this also addresses FBC's request as set out in their Deadline 6 submission. The Applicants consider this point is now resolved.
REP6-188 188.36	38.Provide comments to the applicants on the proposed updated drafting. 8.9. LCC requests that the wording of Requirement 26 is amended to state (with the amendment shown in italics): 26. Unless otherwise agreed with the relevant planning authority, written evidence (in the form of the outputs of the biodiversity metric) demonstrating how biodiversity benefit in accordance with the onshore Biodiversity Benefit Statement is to be delivered as part of Project A/B must be submitted to the relevant planning authority *for written approval* no later than the date on which Project A is first brought into commercial operation. *The Biodiversity Benefit Statement shall include details of the timescales for its implementation. The biodiversity benefit shall thereafter be delivered in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Benefit Statement including the approved timescales for its implementation.*	The Applicants note the comments by LCC relate to the previous drafting of Requirement 26 and that these comments either no longer apply, or are now addressed in the drafting in the draft DCO (REP6-013). The Applicants have provided a detailed response to the Rule 17 letter and have provided some further updates to both the outline biodiversity benefit management plan and proposed updates to the wording of requirement 26 within that response to provide greater clarity to the drafting. The Applicants consider their drafting is appropriate and meets the relevant tests and together with drafting updates to Articles 20, 22 and 29 of the draft DCO (REP6-013) at Deadline 6 provides an appropriate balance, ensuring compliance with both policy and the compulsory acquisition tests.

2.4 Natural England (REP6-190-194)

Table 2.5: REP6-190 – Natural England (Appendix N6 – Answers to the Examining Authority's Request for Further Information Rule 17 Letter (PD-016))

Reference	ExA Request	IP submission	Applicants' response
REP6-190.1	**1. Uncertainty in relation to delivering the proposed mitigation areas and impact on Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) conclusions** Due to on-going aviation issues the certainty and feasibility of delivering the proposed mitigation areas has been questioned. During ISH4 (see recording and transcript of ISH4 Part 8 – 08 October 2025 [EV10-016 and EV10-017]) in relation to a request for a without prejudice derogations case issued as Q14 in the Report on Implications for European Sites (RIES) [PD-015], the applicants stated that they will not be providing a without prejudice derogations case and that they don't consider that one is necessary. They stated that additional information will be provided at deadline 6, covering clarifications and alternative mitigation measures that could be applied. They also stated that the conclusions around no adverse effect on integrity are the same. Can you advise what would the implications be on the conclusions of the HRA if any of the mitigation areas: Lytham Moss, Newton-with-Scales and Fairhaven Saltmarsh could not be delivered? If any of the mitigation areas could not be delivered, could the applicants theoretically provide avoidance/ mitigation measures in another form that could avoid/ reduce the potential for adverse effects? If so, what would such measures comprise?	Natural England direct the ExA to our response to Q14 of the RIES in Appendix M6 of our Deadline 6 submissions. Regarding the mitigation areas at Lytham Moss and Newton-with-Scales, if one or both of these could not be delivered then we would be unable to rule out AEOI unless the Applicant brought forward alternative avoidance, reduction and/or mitigation measures that could address the potential for adverse effects. These alternative measures would need to be targeted at the specific ecological requirements of the impacted species, in the case of mitigation land this would include the area being able to be managed in a way that would make it more suitable for those species and being sited in a location with likely connectivity to the SPA/Ramsar site. Regarding Fairhaven saltmarsh, as advised in [REP5-183] and our response to Q16 of the RIES (Appendix M6), the scheme is not required to avoid an AEOI conclusion with respect to the landfall works, as the impacts have been reduced to a non-AEOI level by the on-site mitigation measures proposed by the Applicant. It is an alleviation measure to address the residual impacts of the proposal on the SPA/Ramsar site. Accordingly, if the measure could not be delivered an AEOI could still be ruled out for this proposal, although the residual impacts would not be addressed and therefore they could act in-combination with future projects.	The Applicants would also refer back to their response to Q14 of the RIES (REP6-175) and reiterate that their preferred option is that which has been agreed with Natural England, and for which Adverse Effect on Integrity (AEoI) has now been ruled out (with the provision of additional detail on the long-term monitoring at Newton-with-Scales in Appendix B.2.2 of the Outline Ecological Management Plan (REP6-115)). The Applicants have also highlighted that there are additional avoidance and reduction mitigation measures that are less preferable, but which will reduce and/or avoid impacts at source, which had previously been identified by Natural England "*unless the Applicant brought forward alternative avoidance, reduction … measures that could address the potential for adverse effects*" (see IP submission column and comments received through Examination in regards to responses NE 19 and NE 20 of the Risk and Issues Log (see S_D6_2.6/F02)) and could include scheduling of works in certain areas to avoid key periods. Natural England have previously requested this level of detail during the examination (see RI_H26) and recognise that this could significantly reduce the potential risks to SPA/Ramsar site waterbirds. As the Applicants' preferred option would be to use the mitigation areas (as currently agreed), they have not provided this level of spatio-temporal construction detail to date. However, if required, these measures would ensure that the project avoids AEoI and have accordingly been included in section 1.3.2 of the OEMP updated at Deadline 6 (REP6-115)
REP6-190. 2	**2. Potential impact on the effectiveness of the proposed mitigation areas** An updated Outline Wildlife Hazard Management Plan [REP5-107] has been submitted at deadline 5. A Draft Wildlife Habitats Attractant Risk Assessment is now included within the document (Appendix A) including additional design commitments/management measures to control bird attraction. At ISH4 (see recording and transcript of ISH4 Part 5 – 08 October 2025 [EV10-010 and EV10-011]) a question was asked in relation to those additional proposed measures and the potential downgrade to the quality and effectiveness of the proposed mitigation areas. Could NE comment on this point?	We reiterate our response to Q14 of the RIES (Appendix M6) and ExA Q2 [REP3-095], we cannot provide comment or provide advice on the bird strike risk assessment or attractant risk assessments as this is outside of Natural England's remit. We have provided further detail in response to Q19 and Q21 to the RIES with regards to the mitigation areas. With regards to the proposed measures and the potential downgrade to the quality and effectiveness of the proposed mitigation areas – we have reviewed the transcript of ISH Part 5 and Table 1- 4 of Appendix A of the updated Outline Wildlife Hazard Management Plan (OWHMP) [REP5-107]. We note that the design commitments/management measures to control attraction primarily focus on the design features of the mitigation areas which have previously been discussed with Natural England throughout Examination. Therefore Natural England are satisfied that the design commitments/management measures to control attraction will not impede the quality and effectiveness of the mitigation areas, as they do not differ to those set out in the mitigation proposals. However, we note that the OWHMP states that Active Management Measures (AMM) will be implemented if trigger levels are exceeded. It is currently unclear how the trigger levels will be determined from the application documents, but we note in Section 1.1.4.8 of the document that trigger levels will be determined in consultation with BAE and the DIO and will be set out in the detailed Wildlife Habitat Attractants Risk Assessment. Therefore at	The Applicants share Natural England's view that the proposed mitigations would not increase bird numbers, or risk within either of the 13 km safeguarding zones. However, the Applicants also note that there is a legal requirement (CAP168 and CAP772) on airports and aerodromes to be able to address, where possible, existing and planned developments within 13km of the aerodrome that may have the potential to increase the wildlife strike risk. The Applicants also note that airports and aerodromes have the legal power to undertake control action within their landholdings or operational areas where bird strike risk is increased within their 13 km safeguarding zone (within legal limits, i.e., not on protected species or sites), therefore it is possible that active dispersal measures are currently used in the 13 km safeguarding zones periodically (where risk increases to an unacceptable level). The Applicants and Natural England agree that a slight redistribution of birds will not cause an increase in risk, therefore it follows that there will not be an increase in the baseline level of deployment of active dispersal measures. However, in order to provide assurance to the aviation stakeholders, there needs to be a robust system that monitors risk and reacts if the need arises. The Applicants have set out the details of this process in the Outline Wildlife Hazard Management Plan (REP6-145). Within this, the Applicants have included Natural England, Blackpool Airport and BAE Systems as consultees when targets and trigger levels are set. This is to ensure that ornithological and air safety concerns are appropriately balanced during the post consent phase.

Reference	ExA Request	IP submission	Applicants' response
		this stage it is unclear on how these processes will interact with the Applicant's requirements with respect to the Ribble and Alt Estuary SPA/Ramsar site. We advise that if Active Management Measures are required, these measures would need to be developed in consultation with Natural England, to ensure that the AMM carried out are of a nature that do not affect the ability of the mitigation areas to deliver the required level of resource for the impacted species. Accordingly, we advise that a mechanism is required to ensure that, in the event of AMM being needed, the Applicant will provide Natural England with an updated assessment on how the AMM could impact the SPA/Ramsar birds utilising the mitigation areas, and the potential implication this will have on the effectiveness of the mitigation areas in delivering the required level of benefit. If upon consulting Natural England, it is determined that the management measures will have the potential to downgrade the quality and effectiveness of the proposed mitigation areas, the Applicant would need to amend the AMM in a way that respects the requirements of the mitigation areas whilst still delivering the required level of hazard management, or provide alternative mitigation solutions specific to the affected species. This could be secured through the finalised OWHMP or perhaps directly through the DCO.	
REP6-190. 3	**3.Peat Management Strategy** During ISH4 (ISH4 (see recording and transcript of ISH4 Part 3 – 07 October 2025 [EV10-006 and EV10-007]) a discussion took place regarding the wording of commitment 101 [REP5-026] and NE response to ExQ2, Q2:6.1.8 [REP5-184]. The applicants stated that to put the concerns in context, they have utilised the maps mentioned by NE, and the total area where deep peat could be present constitutes 2.91% of the overall order limits area and that peat disturbance is unlikely. The applicants' position is to update the soil management plan to include a hierarchy of control for peat management but there is no intention to include a specific compensation strategy. Additionally, the applicants have confirmed that they are not proposing to include any specific requirements into the draft development consent order (DCO) in relation to deep peat management and compensation strategy, stating that they don't consider it to be a necessary measure. Could NE further comment on this outstanding issue and if you maintain that compensation strategy is necessary, could you propose suggested drafting for a potential requirement on a without prejudice basis?	Natural England reiterate our advice provided in [REP5-184] to the ExA Q2:6.1.6. Additionally, we advise that at this stage the peat survey data provided by the Applicant are not sufficient to inform the scale, or location of peat losses. Therefore, to determine the appropriateness and adequacy of mitigation or compensation measures, we would first need to fully understand the scale and significance of impacts to the deep peat mass which needs to be informed by targeted peat surveying, as stated in RI_G7 of our R&I Log submitted at Deadline 6. Our specific concerns relate to areas of development at the edge of the peat mass which may include the need for extraction, infrastructure or other building development. Further targeted peat surveys to non-surveyed areas at this location in the pre-construction phase would provide certainty on the extent of peat to be degraded or lost. An overlay of peat depths found during existing peat investigations and use of the England Peat Status Greenhouse Gas and Carbon Storage open data source would identify which areas would benefit from further targeted surveying. This would assist in identifying how far the peat extends to ensure development firstly avoids impacts and to inform measures required to address the impact in line with the mitigation hierarchy principles. However, we note there is insufficient time before the close of Examination for the Applicant to undertake adequate surveys. Therefore, we advise that in the absence of targeted peat surveys, the Applicant should include a commitment outlining that no works can be undertaken in the non-surveyed areas until the further targeted peat surveys are completed to inform whether mitigation and/or compensation are required. If once the impacts are known and are provided alongside the Applicants mitigation or compensation proposals (preferably included in an outline Peat Management Plan, named on the DCO -please see below), Natural England would be happy to provide further advice.	The Applicants have committed to undertaking further detailed peat survey pre-construction within any limited areas of peat that are identified through the 100m interval pre-construction soil survey work, in Section 1.9 of the Outline Soil Management Plan (REP6-091). This peat survey would include observations taken at 50m spacings. The Applicants submitted an overlay of the order limits onto the update Natural England peat map (REP6-177) at Deadline 6 which confirms that survey work has been undertaken by the Applicants within appropriate soil type areas provides a robust baseline dataset for assessment and the development of mitigation measures. Construction works would not be able to commence until the Requirement 8 of the Schedules 2A and 2B have been signed off, including SMP(s) and PMP(s), which would be subject to consultation with relevant stakeholders including Natural England. The Applicants have added further text to Section 1.9 of the Outline Soil Management Plan (REP6-091) at Deadline 6 to explain how the peat hierarchy will be applied within the Onshore Order Limits to avoid, minimise and mitigate potential effects on peat resources. The oSMP therefore meets the request from Natural England to apply the peat mitigation hierarchy. The Applicants consider that this resolves Natural England's concerns in respect of peat.

Reference	ExA Request	IP submission	Applicants' response
		There should be a commitment for a final Peat Management Plan that applies the mitigation hierarchy (i.e. survey - avoid - mitigation-compensate) to be submitted and approved by the relevant Planning Authority in consultation with the relevant SNCB as part of a DCO requirement. For clarity, compensation would only be required should there remain a significant risk to the restorability of the deep peat mass. This option would be a last resort when impacts on restorable peat cannot be avoided through other measures.	
REP6-190. 4	**4.Minimum drill depth beneath the Lytham St Anne's Dunes Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)** The Outline Hydrogeological Risk Assessment [REP5-102] was updated at Deadline 5 and the ExA are awaiting further comments from NE at Deadline 6. In your [REP4-140] you state "Based on this data, a commitment to set the minimum cable depth at >15m (rather than 10m) would fully mitigate our concerns and would hopefully avoid the middle sands too, which form an important part of the aquifer." and "Natural England advises that the Applicant should ensure the cable burial depth is sufficient to be located in the low permeability glacial clays. This should be secured in the project commitment log.". This issue was discussed at the ISH4 (see recording and transcript of ISH4 Part 3 – 07 October 2025 [EV10-006 and EV10-007]) with the applicants maintaining their position that the "Applicants are unable to commit at this stage to increasing the minimum drill depth beneath the Dunes SSSI. Final depths will be determined once contractors are appointed and the detailed design is undertaken. Additional hydrogeological data will be collected, including information on groundwater abstractions from the St Annes Old Links Golf Course, as well as further ground investigation and ground water monitoring as necessary. This information will inform the detailed Hydrogeological Risk Assessment, which will in turn inform the final cable positioning and depths." The detailed Hydrogeological Risk Assessment (HyRA) is secured through Requirement 8(o) of the DCO. The applicants explained that depth of the cables will have an impact on electrical efficiency and that other mitigation measures could be adopted and those would be agreed as part of the discharge of the Requirement 8(o) in consultation with Natural England and the Environment Agency. Could you explain in more detail if you still consider that a specific commitment to increasing the burial depth from 10m to 15m is necessary?	Natural England maintains that our key concern relating to this matter is around the cable burial depth and impacts on Ground Water Dependant Terrestrial Ecosystems (GWDTE). Natural England has provided further information on the updated Outline Hydrogeological Risk Assessment [REP5-102] in Appendix G6 of our Deadline 6 submissions. Comments relating to cable burial depths are provided in Section 1.2 of Appendix G6.	The Applicants consider that the commitment to undertake further ground investigation (CoT128) to inform the detailed Hydrogeological Risk Assessment(s) will provide Natural England with sufficient certainty and security on the risks and mitigation measures for the SSSI/ LNR and BHS. The additional investigations will provide further understanding of the local hydrogeological conditions and ensure that the appropriate mitigation measures are fully defined and secured prior to the commencement of construction. The detailed Hydrogeological Risk Assessment(s) will be developed post consent and will be subject to approval by the relevant planning authorities (Inclusive of Natural England) prior to commencement of construction.
REP6-190. 5	**5.Offshore ecology** At ISH4 (see recording and transcript of ISH4 Part 6 – 08 October 2025 [EV10-012 and EV10-013]) the applicants indicated that NE might not be in a position to set out its final position on outstanding issues relating to physical processes, benthic ecology and matters relating to the	This is noted by Natural England, and our Risks and Issues log has been updated accordingly and where possible provides further advice on issue resolution. Please note this is the authoritative document on all thematic concerns.	The Applicants note the response.

Reference	ExA Request	IP submission	Applicants' response
	Fylde Marine Conservation Zone by deadline 6 (22 October 2025) as required by the examination timetable. The ExA requests that NE makes every effort to comply with the deadline for all offshore ecology issues, in order to allow time for the last-minute clarification of positions (if required) in advance of the close of the examination at deadline 7 (29 October 2025).		
REP6-190. 6	**6.Risk and Issues Log** The ExA notes the latest version of the Risk and Issues Log that has been submitted by NE at deadline 5 [REP5-177]. Within this there are a number of matters that are still colour coded 'Red' or 'Amber'. The ExA notes NE's definition of a matter with an amber colour coding is such that: "Natural England does not agree with the Applicant's position or approach and consider that this could make a material difference to the outcome of the decision-making process for this project. Natural England considers that these matters may be resolved through: • provision of additional evidence or justification to support conclusions; and/or • revisions to impact assessment methodology and/or • assessment conclusions; and/or • minor to moderate revisions to impact modelling; and/or • well-designed mitigation measures that are adequately secured through the draft DCO/dML and/or amendments to draft plans If these issues are not addressed or resolved by the end of the Examination, then they may become a Red risk issue as set out above." Having regard to this can NE in conjunction with its Risk and Issues Log that is to be submitted at deadline 6 (22 October 2025) for all of the matters that still have a red or amber colour coding explain the implications of each of these matters in terms of the conclusions the applicants have reached in either environmental impact assessment (EIA) and/or Habitats Regulations assessment (HRA) terms and whether they are likely to materially affect the applicants' assessment of effects.	With regards to the implications of red or amber matters in HRA terms, Natural England has provided a response to the RIES questions in Appendix M6 to our Deadline 6 submissions. With regards to Fylde Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ), although the Applicant has undertaken and submitted a without prejudice Measures of Equivalent Environmental Benefit (MEEB) case, we highlight to the ExA that there are still outstanding concerns relating to the strategic compensation measures. We are in agreement with the Applicant that the Marine Recovery Fund (MRF) is the preferred and prioritised option. However, Natural England does not consider that realistic Maximum Design Scenario (MDS) figures have been calculated for lasting habitat loss/change for each of the features due to the placement of cable protection. It is our view that this could have implications for the amount of compensation required and what is paid into the MRF. We provided further advice on this and a route to solution in our Relevant Reps [RR-1601], also in our R&I log refs: RI_I4, RI_I5, RI_J1, RI_J31 and our Deadline 2 submission [REP2-062]. We highlight to the ExA that within our R&I Log (Appendix K6), where an amber issue does not turn yellow/green at the end of Examination, these issues are material concerns. Additionally, we have provided an update of Natural England's Principal Areas of Disagreement Summary Statement (PADSS) in the PADSS Tab of our R&I Log submission at Deadline 6. We highlight that our principle areas of disagreement ('red risk' issues) are set out in: • NE3 – Worst Case Scenario (WCS) assessed during construction and operation and maintenance (O&M for benthic ecology and physical processes). Progress has been made with the Applicant including updates to the Chapters at Deadline 5 on the MDS for some elements. However, we maintain we are not in agreement for the MDS presented for: how the sandwave clearance figure was derived, UXO, pre-lay grapnel runs, boulder clearance and jack-ups. Further detail is included in the R&I Log (PADSS, Tab B, Tab C). • NE4 - Removal of infrastructure at the decommissioning stage. We welcome the Applicant's efforts to limit/mitigate cable protection within Fylde MCZ such as the refinement of cable protection parameters and inclusion of the commitment to 'no rock dumping' within Fylde MCZ. However, a commitment has not been made to the removal of cable/scour protection at the end of project life, therefore we maintain our original position which is that all on and above seabed infrastructure (including cable/scour protection) should be removed from benthic designated sites at the time of decommissioning and secured in the DCO. It should be noted that the Applicant and Natural England are not agreed on this matter.	**<u>Onshore and Intertidal Ornithology</u>** There are a number of 'Amber' matters, NE20, H2, H7, H26, H52. However, most of these comments relate to monitoring at Newton-with-Scales. This information has been added at Deadline 6, see below. **NE20, H2, H7, H26, H52** – The Applicants have provided the additional detail on the long-term monitoring at Newton-with-Scales in Appendix B.2.2 of J6 Outline Ecological Management Plan (REP6-115). The monitoring commitment is now: "*There is a commitment to monitor this area for the lifetime of the project (30 years) to inform the long-term success*." The Applicants therefore consider this issue resolved. **H26** - The Applicants note Natural England's closing position on this matter and also note that Natural England are correct in their assertion that the assessment is very much a worst case scenario as not all works will occur at once and that therefore the Applicants' assessment is very precautionary. However, the Applicants are not currently in a position to set out the spatio-temporal programme of works. As Natural England have been able to rule out AEoI under the assessed mitigation plan (see Natural England's response to Q1) the Applicants can confirm that this is not a material concern at the end of Examination. **Onshore ecology** There is one outstanding red issue and several outstanding amber issues in relation to onshore ecology. The Applicants have provided an update to Table 2.9 "REP6-193 - Responses to questions regarding Onshore Ecology" to state their final position on these issues. **Offshore ecology and Fylde MCZ** With regards to the Fylde MCZ, MDS and Marine Recovery Fund, the Applicants have provided a summary of their position in response to RI_I4 in Table 2.17 "REP6-193 - Responses to Questions Regarding the Fylde MCZ". **PADSS** A further five matters have progressed and moved to 'green' status in Natural England's response at Deadline 6. The Applicants have provided an update to NE3, NE4, NE5, NE6, NE9, NE10, NE13, NE14, NE16, NE17 and NE20 in Table 2.8 "REP6-193 - Responses to Principal Areas of Disagreement Summary (PADSS)".

Reference	ExA Request	IP submission	Applicants' response
		• NE5 – Lack of cable protection location and design information. Our final position is that there is still insufficient information and subsequent mitigation on the following: location, height, volume, orientation and type of cable protection within Fylde MCZ and between MLWS and the Depth of Closure. • NE16 – Lack of Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) survey effort. Natural England's final position is that the Applicant should commit to ALC surveys pre-consent. There is a requirement to show how the project avoids impacting best most versatile (BMV) land. We also highlight that our primary outstanding areas of concern ('amber risk' issues) are set out in: • NE6 – We welcome the inclusion of a micro-siting around reef features (only) in the DCO as previously acknowledged. We also note that the Applicants included further wording around application of the mitigation hierarchy in relation to NERC habitats in [REP4-100] but note that this is not a named plan and therefore not secured. Ideally, mitigation measures should also be included in the Benthic and Physical Processes Chapter or within a named plan, noting the potential presence of other NERC Habitats. • NE9 – Ribble Estuary MCZ assessment. Our final position has not changed since our advice at Relevant Representations. Natural England does not agree that smelt should be screened out, further assessment and provision of information is required as EMF could potentially impact the protected feature of the MCZ. • NE10 – Natural England continues to advise that any UXO clearance, whether high order or low order, should be authorised under a standalone marine licence post consent and should be removed from the draft DCO. • NE13 – Impacts to sand dunes at Lytham St Annes Dunes SSSI. Our main outstanding concerns relate to cable burial depth and impacts on Ground Water Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystem's (GWDTE) i.e. dune slack vegetation. • NE14 – Direct Pipe Trenchless Technique. The Applicant have provided an updated version of the outline Landfall Construction Method Statement [REP5-117] at Deadline 5. Table 1, Appendix A provides a review of the risks associated with trenching, including the consideration of the failure of the Direct Pipe method. Primary outstanding concerns relate to the purpose of additional boreholes and distance between cables. • NE17 – Natural England's final position remains that there is insufficient information for Natural England to advise if the proposal will have direct or indirect impacts on peat. We advise that further surveys and evidence is required to identify areas of deep peat and peaty soils. • NE20 – Impacts to Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA/Ramsar terrestrial waterbirds. This issue has progressed throughout Examination, and we are now satisfied with the provision of detail relating to Lytham Moss. Our outstanding concerns are in regard to long-term monitoring/management of the Newton-with-Scales mitigation area. Please see RI_H7 for further detail.	

Table 2.6: REP6-192 – Natural England (Appendix G6 – Natural England's comments on Onshore Ecology)

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
REP6-192 192.1	**1.1. Additional Risks and Issues** Whilst reviewing the documents submitted by the Applicant at Deadline 5, Natural England have added three new comments into the R&I Log, RI_G49, RI_G50 and RI_G51. These points are included in the R&I Log at Deadline 6 (Appendix K6) and summarised below.	The Applicants have responded to each point below and have also responded to Natural England's Risk and Issues Log submitted at Deadline 6 (REP6-193).
REP6-192 192.2	*RI_G49 – Landward extent of Lytham St Annes Dunes SSSI* The NVC survey map (Figure 1.3) of Lytham St Annes Dunes SSSI (Appendix D) [REP5-039] shows a blue dashed line with the approximated dune extent. This extends beyond the Lytham St Annes Dunes SSSI boundary (and into the Ribble Estuary SSSI boundary) and supports transitional embryonic dune habitat along with SD4 *Elymus farctus* ssp. *boreali-atlanticus* foredune community, SD5 *Leymus arenarius* mobile dune community and SD6 *Ammophila arenaria* mobile dune community. We advise the Applicant to confirm the distance of dune growth in meters from the edge of Lytham St Annes Dunes SSSI to confirm the extent of the frontal dunes and if this has the potential to be impacted by construction works at landfall.	The Applicants have acknowledged in the ES and subsequent documents submitted into the examination that there has been seaward accretion of dunes beyond the mapped boundary of the Lytham St Anne's Dunes SSSI, and this is estimated at around 40 – 50 m. This is due to the favourable management interventions undertaken by Fylde Borough Council (FBC) in recent years, which includes the annual planting of donated Christmas trees to encourage the accretion of the dune system. The Applicants can confirm that the 'real' location of the dunes has been taken into account when designing the buffer to the exit pits on the beach (temporary compound 2). The works associated with the exit pits will be at least 100m from the SSSI boundary (which is a fixed boundary marked on the OS base mapping) and would therefore also be at least 60m from the nearest dune habitats. The Applicants can therefore confirm that there would be no direct impacts to the dune habitats either within the mapped SSSI boundary, or in the 'new' section of accreted dunes along the seaward toe.
REP6-192 192.3	The beach working area as defined in the Outline Landfall Construction Method Statement [REP5-117] notes that "*The trenchless technique exit pit locations for the offshore export cables will be at approximately MHWS with a minimum distance of 100m from the western boundary of Lytham St Annes Dunes SSSI (CoT44)*" (para 1.7.1.2). As shown in Figure 1.3 Indicative Beach Working Areas for Trenchless Installation Works, the dunes have expanded beyond the SSSI boundary and are probably within approximately 50m of the working area. It is important to note that whilst the Applicant will be working 100m from Lytham St Annes Dunes SSSI, the works will still be undertaken within the Ribble Estuary SSSI. Although not specifically designated for dunes, they are mentioned with regards to littoral sediment and bird assemblage. As the construction is occurring near to the Priority Habitat Inventory (PHI) dune habitat (which is also considered as an irreplaceable habitat with regards to Biodiversity Net Gain), the Applicant should include detail on how the dunes will be protected during the works e.g. from access by construction workers. This should be included in the Landfall Construction Method Statement.	The Applicants have prepared an Outline Sand Lizard Mitigation Plan (OSLMP) (REP6-149) and have committed to obtaining an EPS mitigation licence for sand lizards from Natural England prior to the commencement of construction works at the landfall site. The OSLMP includes measures to highlight the sensitivities of the dunes to construction personnel through toolbox talks and the presence of a licensed ECoW where necessary. These measures are in place to minimise the risk of any temporary disturbance to dune habitats used by sand lizards, as well as to minimise the risk of noise/ visual disturbance to sand lizards using those habitats. These measures would therefore be equally applicable to the mitigation of risks to Priority Habitats at the coastal location. The Applicants note that the dunes habitat within the Ribble Estuary SSSI will be protected by the implementation of measures within the outline CoCP (REP6-067) and the Outline Landfall Construction Method Statement (REP6-151). As stated in previous responses on this topic throughout the examination, the 100 m offset from the Lytham St Annes Dunes SSSI (CoT44) has been defined to take into account the natural dune accretion, ensuring that no working areas encroach on the dune system (which therefore also includes no working areas on the dunes of the Ribble Estuary SSSI which are located within the 100 m offset). Construction worker access to the beach will be restricted to the defined access points set out in within Schedule 1 of the works descriptions within the final Draft DCO submitted at D6 (REP6-013). These accesses are presented in Figure 1 of the outline Landfall Construction Method Statement (REP6-151), and further set out in Section 1.12 Site Set-up, which confirms that vehicles and plant will access the beach via the existing track from A584/Clifton Drive North (Work No. 7A/7B). On foot (pedestrian) only access (Work No. 42A/42B) will be used to access the beach working areas from the office and welfare facilities located within the North Beach Car Park and will not extend onto the dune habitat. The beach access track will have a maximum width of 6 m and will not encroach upon the Lytham St Annes Dunes SSSI and will not extend onto the dune habitat of the Ribble Estuary SSSI. The use of removable temporary track-matting or similar would be considered along the access track and potentially onto the beach in the Ribble Estuary SSSI, where necessary. It is not proposed to install any temporary exclusion fencing (other than around temporary compound 3) to exclude or restrict access to the dunes because the Applicants believe this would cause unnecessary disturbance to dune habitats (and sand lizards), as well as unnecessarily constraining access to the beach and dunes for recreational users. The Applicants maintain their previously stated position that construction workers would not enter or cross the dunes beyond the defined footways. All construction staff would be clearly directed to not walk onto the dune habitats as part of the site induction process (as set out in the OSLMP), which would highlight the sensitive nature of the area.
REP6-192	*RI_G50 – Presence of rare dune habitat*	The Applicants note this response and agree with Natural England that the area of rare habitat will be taken into account post consent during detailed design to influence the location of the offshore export cables and ground investigation

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
192.4	The St Annes Old Links Golf Course BHS NVC Survey report (Appendix E) [REP5-039] flags the presence of the rare dune habitat – dune heath (H11c) and decalcified form of SD12. A small area of dune heath (referable to the Annex I habitat type H2150) is present within the Order of Limits and depending on the cable alignment may be drilled under. The report notes (para 5.2.15.3) that dune heath "……*are also exceptionally sensitive; any disturbance of surface sands carries significant risk of intermixing calcareous lower sand and decalcified upper horizons, near-permanently destroying the habitat*". The report also notes that it can take over 300-400 years to develop as calcium rich sand is leached over time. While no above ground works are expected within St Annes Old Links Golf Course BHS we advise that the location of this rare habitat should be noted and avoided in the final design stages and for example when undertaking additional ground investigations. We advise to address this issue commitments should be included within a named plan to avoid impacts to this rare dune habitat.	locations. The Applicants reiterate that the Outline Hydrogeological Risk Assessment would be updated as part of the detailed design stage and following additional ground investigation works, and the assessment of risks to Groundwater Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystems (GWTEs) including the dune slacks and heaths of the Lytham St Anne's Dunes SSSI and St Anne's Old Links Golf Course BHS updated. The updated risk assessment would identify any specific mitigation that would be necessary for the protection of these habitats (CoT41, CoT119, CoT128). However, as set out in the Outline Hydrogeological Risk Assessment (REP6-140), it is considered that the depth of the trenches would be sufficient to avoid any impacts to shallow groundwater and thus construction would have no adverse effects on GWTDEs. The Applicants note that the location of the additional ground investigation boreholes will consider the sensitive dune habitats and will be agreed with Natural England and the Environment Agency as part of the scope of the investigation (see response to REP6-192 192.13).
REP6-192 192.5	*RI_G51 – Fencing on saltmarsh habitat* We welcome the measures to reduce recreational pressures to bird features at Fairhaven saltmarsh which may include the use of soft fencing as outlined by the Applicant in [REP5-069]. This is a beneficial measure for the bird features of the Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA. Saltmarsh is a feature of the Ribble SSSI and is a habitat that supports features of the Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA. There is potential for the soft fencing, if not appropriately installed and maintained, to impact the saltmarsh.	The Applicants confirm that a method statement will be provided for the installation of the soft fencing and will be included in the detailed EMP. The method statement will confirm the fencing design (including materials), the method and timing of installation, access routes to be used for the installation and any necessary maintenance measures. The method statement will also confirm the measures for the removal of the fencing post construction. The method statement will be cognisant of case studies and guidance from experts in recreational disturbance and birds. The method statement will form part of the detailed EMP that will be approved by the relevant planning authority in consultation with Natural England. The Applicants consider that the potential for LSE as a result of the soft fencing is low. This position aligns with Natural England's response to Q2.2.12 which stated that based on the information provided on the location of the fencing (see below), '*it is likely the impact would be small, and any risks could be eliminated with additional detail in the OEMP'*. The Applicants would draw attention to the fact that the proposed fencing is not within the SPA, Ramsar or SSSI boundary, nor is the saltmarsh (see below).
REP6-192 192.6	Prior to installation we advise the Applicant should provide Natural England with a method statement giving details of how the fencing will be installed, the final alignment with access routes, machinery and materials (including details of any treated timber) to be used. The OEMP [REP5-069] notes that fencing will remain in situ until the construction is completed. The Applicant should update the OEMP to confirm whether the intention is to leave the fencing in place after construction or remove it. If it is to be removed details of the removal process need to be captured. If the fencing will be left in-situ details of who will be responsible for its repair and maintenance should be included. Therefore, we advise to address this issue commitments need to be included within name plans to ensure that a method statement for installation is agreed in consultation with Natural England prior to construction.	The Applicants confirm that a method statement will be provided for the installation of the soft fencing and will be included in the detailed EMP. The method statement will confirm the fencing design (including materials), the method and timing of installation, access routes to be used for the installation and any necessary maintenance measures. The method statement will also confirm the measures for the removal of the fencing post construction. The method statement will be cognisant of case studies and guidance from experts in recreational disturbance and birds. The method statement will form part of the detailed EMP that will be approved by the relevant planning authority in consultation with Natural England.

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
REP6-192 192.7	**1.2. Comments regarding RI_G1** We welcome the Applicant's submission [REP5-039] which includes the results of the National Vegetation Survey (NVC) of both Lytham St Annes Dunes SSSI/LNR (Appendix D) and St Annes Old Links Golf Course BHS (Appendix E). We also welcome the updates to [REP5-102] which captures the results of the NVC survey.	The Applicants note this response.
REP6-192 192.8	Natural England appreciates that the NVC surveys have been undertaken and follow standard methods (with quadrat sampling and the use of MAVIS to support vegetation community interpretation). Additionally, we confirm that the surveys have been completed at an appropriate time of year, and by a suitably qualified botanist (FISC level 6). Therefore, data requirement concerns in regards to improving certainty around ES conclusions and informing consent, raised by Natural England for dune vegetation and habitats, are now considered sufficiently resolved.	The Applicants welcome this response.
REP6-192 192.9	1.2.1 Survey results The surveys focus on confirming the previous 2016/ 2024 surveys and provide further clarity around the presence of Ground Water Dependant Terrestrial Ecosystems (GWDTE) i.e., dune slack vegetation.	The Applicants note this response.
REP6-192 192.10	We note that in Lytham St Annes Dunes SSSI three dune slack communities were recorded - SD16, SD16/17, SD17 which are all likely to exhibit high groundwater dependency, along with the wetland community S28 (which has a low dependency). At St Annes Old Links Golf Course BHS the areas of wetland/ dune slack have been modified, but the survey shows it still supports small areas of SD15 which have high groundwater dependency. We highlight that although this habitat is only found in small areas within the golf course it is a rare UK habitat type and is not found elsewhere within the dune system. In addition, a number of notable plant species were recorded that are associated with these dune slack / wetland communities. The report provides a detailed summary of each NVC community along with corresponding Annex I habitat i.e. H2190 and identifies those habitats that constitute GWDTE with their groundwater dependency score (as per the UK TAG).	The Applicants note this response.
REP6-192 192.11	The NVC surveys supports the hydrogeological survey findings that there is a shallow water table (within one metre of the surface) at least to the east and middle of the site. However, uncertainty remains as to how far this shallow water table extends to the west, and whether the site has potentially perched groundwater conditions (para's 6.1.1.2 and 6.1.1.4).	The Applicants welcome this advice. The Applicants note that the additional ground investigation and groundwater monitoring will establish the hydrogeological baseline including the lateral extent of the shallow water table. The findings of the ground investigation will inform the detailed hydrogeological risk assessment(s) as secured in DCO Schedules 2A & 2B, Requirement 8 (Code of Construction Practice) (see also response to REP6-192.4).
REP6-192 192.12	1.2.2 Implications from the findings and next steps [REP5-102] includes Next Steps (section 5) which generally align with the approach that Natural England would like to see undertaken. We have provided advice and commentary regarding this below: • Natural England understands data has been requested from St Annes Old Links Golf Course regarding water abstraction and that this information will be added to the detailed Hydrological Risk Assessment (para 5.1.1.2). We also understand that the boreholes used previously by the golf course have been decommissioned and replaced with a new shallower horizontal groundwater abstraction system (para 2.2.1.7). We advise that this data is important in understanding how GWDTE might be affected both during construction and operation phases and would provide details of the position of the water table to the west of the site which is currently not covered in detail. In addition, it would be useful to include information on any potential changes that might occur in the future due to the change from a presumably deep borehole to a shallower horizontal groundwater. We advise that this should be included in a final update version of this document as part of the pre-construction discharge process and included as part of the Hydrological Risk Assessment.	The Applicants note this response. The Applicants will continue to liaise with St Annes Old Links Golf Course to obtain information relating to their boreholes and groundwater abstraction regime. This information will be included in the detailed Hydrogeological Risk Assessment(s) as secured by Requirement 8 of the final dDCO (REP6-013).
REP6-192 192.13	• [REP5-102 para 5.1.1.3] notes that "*Depending on the required depth of burial of the export cables, further ground information may be required to establish site specific groundwater conditions below the Lytham St Annes SSSI/LNR/BHS site including monitoring to establish a suitable hydrogeological conditions baseline to include contamination testing*". Natural	The Applicants note this response and clarify that further ground investigation will be undertaken to inform the detailed Hydrogeological Risk Assessment (as confirmed in the updated CoT128 (Volume 1, Annex 5.3: Commitments Register (REP6-042)). The groundwater monitoring will include monitoring of groundwater levels (in addition to testing of contaminants) to establish a suitable hydrogeological baseline prior to construction. The Applicants note groundwater

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
	England notes that the emphasis of this monitoring appears to be focused on contamination testing which we welcomed. However, we still advise that ongoing monitoring of the position of the water table with a piezometer and borehole (dipwell) is required (depending on cable depth). This should be undertaken prior to cable installation/construction to provide local baseline conditions and inform mitigation measures, during construction and then post-construction i.e., during operation. This will allow ground-water data modelling to be undertaken capturing information on potential fluctuations associated with cabling, which could have a negative impact on GWDTE, that may arise as part of the proposals over the lifetime of the project.	levels are already influenced by the groundwater abstraction at St Annes Old Links Golf Course and this will be confirmed by the groundwater monitoring. The scope of the ground investigation and groundwater monitoring (including the frequency and duration of the monitoring) will be agreed with Natural England and the Environment Agency. The Applicants note that the design of the ground investigation and groundwater monitoring will be appropriate to the detailed design of the landfall installation.
REP6-192 192.14	• The 'Next Steps' Section and commitment logs should also include detail on the frequency of the monitoring and data collection. We advise that a baseline data set should be collected over a year prior to the cable installation, then at a comparable time during construction year/s and then collected over the first year following installation to understand how cables are influencing the ground water. Once the monitoring is established it should be continued on a yearly/ bi-annual basis. We advise that there should also be a commitment to implement adaptive management measures should the monitoring identify significant changes to the ground water table and GWDTE.	The Applicants refer to the response to REP6-192 192.13 and confirm that the duration and frequency of groundwater monitoring will be agreed with Natural England and the Environment Agency (as confirmed in the updated CoT128 (Volume 1, Annex 5.3: Commitments Register (REP6-042)).
REP6-192 192.15	In addition, Natural England should be informed if these additional ground investigations (as noted in para 5.1.1.3) are within the SSSI/or adjacent BHS and the applicant should provide details of these additional surveys in terms of methods and borehole depth to be agreed by the LPA in consultation with the relevant SNCB. The results of any further surveys should be captured in the final Hydrogeological Risk Assessment again submitted to the LPA in consultation with the relevant SNCB. We provide the following further advice:	The Applicants refer to the response to REP6-192 192.13 and confirm that the scope of the additional ground investigations and groundwater monitoring will be agreed with Natural England and the Environment Agency. The scope of the investigations will set out details including the number, location and depth of the boreholes as well as the method of the investigation. The location of the boreholes will take into account the sensitivity of the area and existing access.
REP6-192 192.16	• The Applicant should ensure they utilise the data presented in the final Hydrogeological Risk Assessment to inform site specific crossing design when cabling under Lytham St Annes Dunes SSSI/ St Annes Old Links Golf Course BHS.	The Applicants can confirm that the detailed design of the trenchless crossing would be informed by additional ground investigation work and captured in the detailed Hydrogeological Risk Assessment as set out in CoT128 (Volume 1, Annex 5.3: Commitments Register (REP6-042)).
REP6-192 192.17	• As noted previously Natural England's key concern is around the cable burial depth and impacts on GWDTE. We understand that the proposed burial depth is still to be confirmed and will not be available until the detailed design stage. If the cable is buried in the saturated sand i.e. around 10m deep, the cable could influence horizontal groundwater flow within these permeable strata and therefore potentially impact these habitats. In this instance Natural England would like to see hydrological monitoring established within the dune system with a borehole and piezometer secured in a commitment or named plan (as previously advised). However, if the cable is buried within the deeper glacial clays (at around 30m) our concerns would be alleviated. We therefore advise that if possible, the Applicant should provide clarity on whether a 30m cable burial depth into underlying glacial clay is possible as part of the consenting process to inform our advice to the ExA on possible mitigation measures.	The Applicants refer to the response to REP6-192 192.14 regarding the location and duration of the ground investigation and groundwater monitoring. Furthermore, as stated within the Project Description (Table 3.13, REP2- 008), the drill profile of the trenchless technique underneath the dunes of the SSSI will be a minimum of 10 m, to a maximum of 30 m. Increasing the drill depth would result in a greater thermal path length and soil volume that heat must pass through before it reaches the surface. At greater depths, this results in higher operating temperatures and therefore reduces the current carrying capacity / efficiency of the cables. From a constructability perspective, by committing to a deeper minimum drill depth, this reduces the flexibility in design and could compromise the feasibility of the direct pipe drill technique. The Applicants have appropriately assessed the constructability of the current approach and have committed to a minimum drill depth of 10 m. Any further increase of this parameter will be informed by contractor input and detailed design.
REP6-192 192.18	**1.3. Comments regarding RI_G4** We welcome the additional detail included in the Outline Landfall Construction Method Statement [REP5-117] at Deadline 5 which includes *Appendix A Outline trenchless crossing mitigation plan*. Table 1 provides a review of the risks associated with trenching including consideration of the failure of the Direct Pipe Technique (Micro-Tunnel Boring Machine (MTBM)). We welcome the mitigation measures which include undertaking detailed ground investigations, topographical surveys to confirm expected ground conditions and continuous monitoring during drilling. The mitigation measures also include the inclusion of spare bore holes. It is unclear what the purpose of any additional boreholes would be, whether this relates to GI boreholes or cable drilling boreholes. We have raised concerns in RI_G9 on the required distance between the cables which the Applicant will only provide detail on at the final design stage. Considering the distance between cables and the potential for additional boreholes raises concerns over space within the Order Limits to successfully deliver the outlined construction, clarification is sought and should be included in an updated Outline Landfall Construction Method Statement on the purpose of the spare bore holes.	The Applicants welcome Natural England's response. The purpose of the spare boreholes is to provide a planned contingency route within the order limits in case the primary route encounters unexpected ground features or mechanical failure. In the unlikely event of failure, this allows for drilling to recommence along an alternative route that has been appropriately assessed. The Applicants can confirm there is a suitable amount of space available within the order limits to accommodate the landfall installation of the offshore export cables. The design allows for potential trajectories through either the northern or southern alignment (or both) within Work No. 6A/6B. This flexibility ensures that the installation can be delivered within the defined order limits.

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
REP6-192 192.19	**1.4. Comments regarding RI_G10** As noted in [REP5-102] para 3.4.3.7, the effects of potential cable heating are presently unquantified due to the requirement for detailed design input to cable spacing configuration, burial depths and temperature profiles. However, it is noted in para 3.4.3.13 that given "*a minimum cable burial depth of 10m below ground level and likely position within the saturated zone of the sand deposits, horizontal groundwater flow within these permeable strata will also act to dissipate heating effects around the cables and further limit vertical migration of heat*". In addition, it is understood that the cables will be suitably spaced out to minimise the mutual heating effect which is captured in Table 3-3.	The Applicants note this response and confirm Natural England's understanding.
REP6-192 192.20	Whilst, Natural England accepts the detail currently provided, we advise that the Applicant should provide further detail during the consenting phase on the combined effects of summer drought (which are likely to become worse with climate change), water abstraction and the long-term reduction in groundwater levels due to presence of cable ducting to ensure that measures can be put in place to manage further environmental risks. We advise if this is not addressed as part of the consenting phase then it will be required prior to construction.	The Applicants confirm that the detailed Hydrogeological Risk Assessment will include the established hydrogeological baseline information (as informed by the additional ground investigations and groundwater monitoring) and will consider the future baseline taking into account climate change and the influence of existing groundwater abstraction at St Annes Old link Golf Course. The risk assessment will also be updated accordingly and inform the detailed design of the offshore export cable installation.
REP6-192 192.21	**1.5. Comments regarding RI_G28** Please also consider Natural England's comments for RI_G1.	The Applicants note this response.
REP6-192 192.22	Table 3.2 in [REP5-102] provides the outcome of the risk assessment of the Transition Joint Bay (TJB) working area and Beach working area. It identifies a Low Risk on the Biological Heritage Site caused by a short-term reduction of groundwater levels due to temporary dewatering of TJB excavation, but state there is no risk on the SSSI/ LNR. This risk level is dependent on securing the secondary mitigation options outlined in the table including placement of offshore export cables within low permeability glacial clays to avoid water tables where present. Until the cable depth is known Natural England still has concerns regarding whether the mitigation is satisfactory to reduce the risk.	The Applicants have provided an assessment on the potential radius of influence of dewatering of the TJB excavation in the Outline Hydrogeological Risk Assessment (REP6-140). The offset of the TJBs to the nearest part of the Lytham St Anne's Dunes SSSI/ LNR boundary is 600 m, and therefore the calculated zone of influence of the dewatering does not extend into the SSSI/ LNR (see Section 3.4.1 and Figure 3-1 of the Outline Hydrogeological Risk Assessment (REP6-140). The OHyRA concluded there was a low risk to the SSSI/ LNR.
REP6-192 192.23	Similarly, Table 3-3 provides the outcome of risk assessment of the installation of the export cable via trenchless techniques and the presence of the export cable during operation. Three key risks on the SSSI/LNR/BHS are identified: • Short term reduction in groundwater levels during drilling – low risk; • Long term reduction in groundwater levels due to presence of cable ducting - low risk; and • Impact on groundwater temperature through operational cable heating (noting comments around drought and combined effects of water abstraction in RI_G10) – low risk	The Applicants note this response. Please refer to responses REP6-192 192.13, REP6-192 192.17, REP6-192 192.20, REP6-192 192.22 and REP6-192 192.24.
REP6-192 192.24	For these risks to be considered 'low', secondary mitigation options including placement of offshore export cable within low permeability glacial clays to avoid water tables would need to be secured. Without this commitment, and without further design detail Natural England still has concerns regarding risk to these sites.	The Applicants consider that the process by which an updated Hydrogeological Risk Assessment (informed by further evidence gathered from ground investigations and following the completion of the detailed design and would need to be approved by Natural England), would provide Natural England with sufficient certainty and security on the risks and mitigation measures for the SSSI/ LNR and BHS such that any outstanding concerns on this matter would be adequately addressed prior to the commencement of construction.

Table 2.7: REP6-193 – Natural England's Risks and Issues Log Colour Coding

Description	Colour
Purple Note for Examiners and/or competent authority. May relate to DCO/DML	

Description	Colour
Red Natural England considers that unless these issues are resolved it will have to advise that (in relation to any one of them, and as appropriate) it is not possible to ascertain beyond reasonable scientific doubt that the project will not affect the integrity of an SAC/SPA/Ramsar and/or significantly hinder the conservation objectives of an MCZ and/or damage or destroy the interest features of a SSSI and/or comply fully with the Environmental Impact Assessment requirements. Addressing these concerns may require the following: • new baseline or survey data; and/or • significant revisions to baseline characterisation and/or impact modelling and/or • significant design changes; and/or • significant mitigation In addition, Natural England may use this category to highlight where there is a significant risk that an issue will not be sufficiently addressed within the Examination timescales. Consequently, issues that start out as Amber may progress to Red in the latter stages of the examination.	
Amber Natural England does not agree with the applicant's position or approach and consider that this could make a material difference to the outcome of the decision-making process for this project. Natural England considers that these matters may be resolved through: • provision of additional evidence or justification to support conclusions; and/or • revisions to impact assessment methodology and/or assessment conclusions; and/or • minor to moderate revisions to impact modelling; and/or • well-designed mitigation measures that are adequately secured through the draft DCO/dML and/or • amendments to draft plans If these issues are not addressed or are unlikely to be resolved by the end of the Examination, then they may become a Red risk as set out above.	
Yellow Natural England doesn't agree with the Applicant's position or approach. We would ideally have liked this to be addressed but are satisfied that for this particular project it is unlikely to make a material difference to our advice or the outcome of the decision-making process and would not expect these matters to be an ongoing focus of the examination. However, we reserve the right to revise our opinion should further evidence be presented. It should be noted by interested parties that just because these issues/comments are not raised as significant concerns in this instance, it should not be understood or inferred that Natural England would be of the same view in other cases or circumstances. Once a Risk or Issue has been categorised as yellow, Natural England will not make further comment on the matter at subsequent deadlines, unless specifically requested to through ExA Questions. These rows will then be hidden at subsequent deadlines in order to rationalise the risk and issues log.	
Green Natural England is in broad agreement with the Applicant's approach and has no significant outstanding concerns. As above, we reserve the right to revise our opinion should new evidence be presented. Once a Risk or Issue has been categorised as green, Natural England will not make further comment on the matter at subsequent deadlines, unless specifically requested to through ExA Questions. These rows will then be hidden at subsequent deadlines in order to rationalise the risk and issues log.	

Table 2.8: REP6-193 - Responses to Principal Areas of Disagreement Summary (PADSS)

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	NE Rel Rep RAG rating at D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 5 (in response to NE D4 submission)	Natural England's Comments/Update on Progression at Deadline 6	RAG D6	Applicants' comment at Deadline 7 (in response to NE D6 submission)
Taken from NE's Relevant and Written Representations						
Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets - Principal Areas of Disagreement Summary Statement (PADSS)						
NE1	***Development Consent Order (DCO and deemed Marine Licence (dML)*** Definition of commence with respect to the offshore works. This definition is linked directly to the definition of offshore preparation works and excludes the works detailed under offshore preparation from the definition of commence. We would note that this definition of commence is different to those used and accepted under a wide number of consented offshore wind projects. The definition of commence and offshore preparations works within the DCO and all three DMLs must be amended. It is possible this issue could be progressed following amendments requested.		The Applicants welcome resolution of this point at Deadline 3.			
NE2	Duration of submitting pre-construction plans before construction begins. Due to the increasing complexity of construction of large offshore works, the proposed four month consultation period is no longer appropriate. The Applicant should amend the dMLs to allow for documents to be submitted at least six months prior to commencement. It is possible this issue could be progressed following amendments requested.		The Applicants welcome resolution of this point at Deadline 3.			
NE3	***Benthic Ecology and Physical Processes*** Worst Case Scenario (WCS) during construction, operation and maintenance. Natural England advise that there are a number of potential impacts both on benthic ecology and physical processes which have not been adequately considered or assessed within the Environmental Statement (ES). Natural England advises that the ES and where relevant, Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) assessment, are updated to consider all potential pathways of effect on intertidal and subtidal benthic habitats. It is possible this issue could be progressed if the Applicant follows SNCB advice.		The Applicants have updated Volume 2, Chapter 2: Benthic subtidal and intertidal ecology (F2.2/F02) and the MCZ Screening and Stage 1 Assessment Report (E4/F02) at Deadline 5 to include all additional clarifications / justifications provided in submissions at previous deadlines to address Natural England's comments relating to the MDS.	Not resolved. The Applicant has provided further detail in the updated Chapters at Deadline 5 on the MDS for some elements which have been reflected and resolved in Tabs B and C of the R&I log and other comments at previous deadlines. However, we maintain that we are not in agreement for the MDS/WCS presented for; how the sandwave clearance figure was derived, UXO, pre-lay grapnel runs, boulder clearance, jack-ups, lasting habitat change/loss in Fylde MCZ and impacts in the nearshore and impacts from cable protection.		The Applicants welcome Natural England resolving RI_C15 (consistency of sandwave clearance requirements between applications documents) and RI_20 but are disappointed that the updates that the Applicants have made to the application documents, as requested by Natural England, have not resolved the remaining points relating to the MDS. With respect to the lack of agreement regarding how the MDS has been presented for how the sandwave clearance figure was derived, Natural England only clarified at Deadline 5 (REP5-177) that they required the calculations for spoil volume. The Applicants responded at Deadline 6 (RI_C14; REP6-172) confirming that the spoil volumes assessed have been informed by the

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						results of geophysical surveys as set out in the Outline offshore cable specification and installation plan (CSIP) (APP-220 as updated in REP6-098). The Applicants are confident that the total spoil volumes assessed are correct and realistic. Further, the Applicants acknowledge that it is the Applicants' responsibility to satisfy themselves that the Transmission Assets can be constructed within the parameters specified within the DCO, and that they will need to adhere to those values and the MDS as assessed within the EIA. The Applicants are confident that the MDS for all impact pathways, including those arising from the generation of spoil (both with regards to effects arising from increases in suspended sediment concentration and temporary habitat loss/disturbance), has been correctly calculated and assessed in Volume 2, Chapter 1: Physical processes (APP-042 and updated in REP5-030) and Volume 2, Chapter 2: Benthic subtidal and intertidal ecology (APP-045 and updated in REP5-034) and that this matter is, therefore, not a material concern. With respect to the matters not agreed on the MDS for UXO clearance (and further addressed in RI_C19, RI_B8 and RI_B11), Natural England maintain that insufficient information on craters and SSC's arising from UXO clearance has been provided in the updated chapter. Additionally, detail on backfill of seabed depressions from UXO is lacking. As the Applicants highlighted in Applicants' response to Annex 3.2.9 to RR–Natural England (RR- 1601)- Appendix B (Physical Processes) (PDA-016), based on current information, there is only one known buried UXO within the entire Offshore Order Limits and this is outside the boundary of the Fylde MCZ. However, a precautionary approach has been adopted to the assessment which assumes that up to four UXOs may require clearance within the MCZ. Therefore, the Applicants consider that the risks associated with any potential requirements for UXO clearance in the MCZ are extremely low and assessment undertaken has been thorough and robust, particularly since the Applicants removed high order UXO detonation from the draft DCO (REP2-004) at Deadline 1. All available evidence from monitoring of the seabed impacts from low order

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						clearance of UXOs indicates that anything other than highly localised disturbance to the seabed is not anticipated (e.g. crater formation was not recorded during low order clearance of UXOs at the Moray West Offshore Windfarm). The Applicants updated Volume 2, Chapter 2: Benthic subtidal and intertidal ecology (REP5-034) and MCZ Screening and Stage 1 Assessment Report (REP5-022) at Deadline 5 to include this evidence as requested by Natural England. As outlined in the Applicants' response to Annex 3.2.9 to RR– Natural England (RR- 1601)- Appendix B (Physical Processes) (PDA-016) increased SSCs from UXO clearance would be local, temporary and recoverable and, as such, effects are negligible and so impacts on SSC were considered within the physical processes assessment. The Applicants would highlight that Natural England have never clarified during Examination that they required an assessment of SSCs on benthic receptors from UXO clearance. Given the commitment to low order techniques however, the Applicants consider that this approach is entirely proportionate. With regards to backfill of craters, the Applicants would reiterate that any significant crater formation, if any craters are formed at all, are not predicted with low order detonation based on best available evidence. Therefore, infilling is unlikely to be required but would be within the timeframes outlined by the Applicants in the updated Volume 2, Chapter 2: Benthic subtidal and intertidal ecology (see paragraph 2.11.2.43; REP5-034) and MCZ Screening and Stage 1 Assessment Report (see paragraph 1.8.2.24; REP5-022) submitted at Deadline 5 (i.e. within a couple of tidal cycles during spring tides in offshore areas and, in nearshore areas, in the order of weeks to months). With respect to Natural England's comments that UXOs should be moved outside of designated sites prior to detonation, as outlined in Table 1.15 of the MCZ Screening and Stage 1 Assessment Report (REP5-022) the feasibility of moving UXOs would depend on their condition and safety and no commitments can be made until the Applicants have more information on the presence and types of UXO in the Fylde MCZ (if

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Taken from NE's Relevant and Written Representations						
Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets - Principal Areas of Disagreement Summary Statement (PADSS)						
						any). The Applicants would reiterate that the MDS assessed (i.e. up to 4 UXOs in the MCZ) is highly precautionary and based on current information, there are no known UXOs within the Fylde MCZ. With respect to matters not agreed on boulder clearance and PLGR, the Applicants reiterate that boulder clearance and PLGR have been adequately and correctly assessed in Volume 2, Chapter 2: Benthic subtidal and intertidal ecology (REP5-034). The Applicants clearly outlined the MDS for boulder clearance and PLGR assessed in Volume 2, Chapter 2: Benthic subtidal and intertidal ecology (REP5-034) in the Applicants' response to RR.1601.B.9 (PDA-016) and RR.1601.C.14 (PDA-017) and reorganised the information in their Deadline 4 response for clarity (REP4-100). In summary, over 9% of the offshore export cable routes, the MDS is sandwave clearance, boulder clearance, PLGR and low order UXO clearance with sandwave clearance dictating the width of the disturbance along the installation corridor (up to 60 m for Morgan and 48 m for Morecambe). Over the remaining 91% of the offshore export cable routes, boulder clearance, PLGR and low order UXO clearance dictates the width of the disturbance along the installation corridor which is 20 m wide for all cables. Sandwave clearance, boulder clearance, PLGR and low order UXO clearance are likely to be undertaken at different times within the construction phase, but will be undertaken, and so will affect, the same areas of seabed (i.e. PLGR would only occur within the footprint of other installation activities as this activity is only required as a final activity before the cable is installed). The Applicants have therefore assessed these activities in the Benthic Subtidal and Intertidal Ecology chapter (REP5-034) as 'repeat disturbance', so as to not double count the footprint of disturbance. These activities would still be confined temporally to the overall discrete construction phase. The Applicants would highlight that this is a proportionate approach to assessing site preparation which has been accepted on other projects including the

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Taken from NE's Relevant and Written Representations						
Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets - Principal Areas of Disagreement Summary Statement (PADSS)						
						Morgan Generation Assets and the Mona Offshore Windfarm. Similarly, with respect to physical processes the Applicants clearly outlined the MDS for boulder clearance and outline the approach to PLGR in Volume 2, Chapter 1: Physical Processes (REP5-030). The Applicants refer Natural England to the MDS provided in Table 1.14 of Volume 2, Chapter 1: Physical processes (REP5-030) which notes that with regard to suspended sediments boulder clearance activities and pre-lay grapnel runs will result in minimal increases in suspended sediment concentrations and were therefore not considered in the assessment of this impact. It was noted that pre-lay grapnel runs would only be carried out, if required, after sandwave clearance or boulder clearance has been undertaken and would not change the seabed bathymetry or composition and therefore physical processes would remain unaffected by these activities. However, the impact assessment with regards to boulder clearance is included in sections 1.10.3.11 to 13 if Volume 2, Chapter 1: Physical processes (REP5-030). Further information is provided in response to RI_B5. With respect to matters not agreed on the backfill of seabed depressions from jack-up legs, the Applicants responded in full to this within RR-1601.B.14 of their response to Natural England – Appendix B (PDA-016) and RR-1601.C.22 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017) and further in the Applicants' response at Deadline 4 (REP4-100). As requested by Natural England to resolve this matter, the Applicants updated Volume 2, Chapter 2: Benthic subtidal and intertidal ecology (see paragraph 2.11.2.38; REP5-034) and so the Applicants are disappointed this this has not resolved this matter with Natural England and it is unclear what further detail/information is required. With respect to the comments relating to lasting habitat change/loss in Fylde MCZ, see the Applicants' response to RI_I3. With respect to the feasibility of cable burial in shallow waters please see the Applicants' response to RI_B10 and it is also noted the Applicants responded to this point raised in Natural England's comments on Examining

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						Authority's Written Questions (ExQ1) Q7.1.4 (REP4-100). With respect to impacts from cable protection, the Applicants would highlight that this does not give sufficient information as to what the residual concerns are. However, see the Applicants' response to RI_C2 with respect to limitations on the installation of cable protection in the operation and maintenance phase confirming that the Applicants updated the Outline OOMP(and other relevant documents) at Deadline 7 (J19/F04) to remove the ability to deploy cable protection within the Fylde MCZ beyond the end of the construction phase. See also the Applicants' response to NE5 for detail on the location of cable protection.
NE4	Removal of infrastructure at the decommissioning stage. Natural England is concerned that there is currently no commitment to the removal of cable/scour protection at end of project life. Natural England advise that the Applicant should include a commitment to remove cable/scour protection at end of project life and this should be secured within the DCO. It is possible this issue could be progressed if the Applicant follows SNCB advice.		As per the Applicants' response to Natural England's Deadline 3 submission (REP4-100), the Applicants and Natural England met on 22 July 2025 to review the PADSS and Risks and Issues log with respect to offshore matters, which allowed the Applicants to clarify their position regarding the removal of cable protection/scour protection from the Fylde MCZ at decommissioning during the issue specific hearing on 30th July 2025. It was noted that the Applicants and Natural England are not agreed on this matter.	Not resolved. We welcome the Applicant's efforts to limit/mitigate cable protection within Fylde MCZ such as the refinement of cable protection parameters and inclusion of the commitment to 'no rock dumping' within Fylde MCZ. However, a commitment has not been made to the removal of cable/scour protection at the end of project life, therefore we maintain our original position which is that all on and above seabed infrastructure (including cable/scour protection) should be removed from benthic designated sites at the time of decommissioning and secured in the DCO. It should be noted that the Applicant and Natural England are not agreed on this matter.		As set out in the Applicants' response at Procedural Deadline A to Natural England's representations (PDA-014) and in subsequent submissions (REP4-100), the Applicants consider that the Energy Act 2004 provides sufficient safeguards wherein a written decommissioning programme must be submitted to the Secretary of State for approval prior to the commencement of construction. Requirement 21 of the DCO requires a written decommissioning programme to be provided to the Secretary of State for approval prior to the commencement of any offshore works, and that finalisation of the precise level of decommissioning can only occur when the time for decommissioning is known. On other projects including the Morgan Generation Assets and the Mona Offshore Wind Project, the Secretary of State has aligned with the Applicants' proposed approach that a requirement specifying full removal of offshore infrastructure is not required and avoids any overlapping obligations with the separate process for approval of the written decommissioning plan by the Secretary of State. The Applicants have updated Schedules 14 and 15 in the draft DCO (REP5-011) to prohibit rock dump as a cable/scour protection method in the Fylde MCZ, in acknowledgment that this is the least removable type of cable protection. The specific type of scour/cable protection required will be site specific and details of the design and construction will be detailed within the Offshore

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Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets - Principal Areas of Disagreement Summary Statement (PADSS)						
						CSIP (in accordance with the Outline Offshore CSIP (REP6-097)) developed in consultation with the MMO. Additionally, the Applicants have committed to engaging with the Regulator and stakeholders on the requirements for removal of cable protection within the Fylde MCZ at the time of decommissioning (CoT109).The Applicants would also note that the made Orders for the Sheringham and Dudgeon Extension Projects and Rampion 2 Offshore Wind Farm, which are also associated with MCZs, do not include for decommissioning commitments beyond the written decommissioning programme. The Applicants acknowledge that this is a matter that is not agreed between the Applicants and Natural England.
NE5	Lack of cable protection location and design information. There is currently insufficient information on the anticipated location, extent and design of cable protection measures placed along the Export Cable Corridor (ECC). Therefore, we are unable to fully understand the potential impacts of cable protection on sediment transport pathways, particularly within Fylde MCZ. Natural England advise that where possible, further information is provided on the anticipated location, extent and design of cable protection measures. Potential resolution. This is subject to the Applicant providing further information on cable protection location and design.		The Applicants' position remains as outlined in response to comment RR.1601.43 on the location and design of cable protection (PDA-014). The Applicants have updated the following chapters/reports at Deadline 5 to capture the relevant information/clarifications presented in the Applicants' response to Natural England's Deadline 3 submission (REP4-100) (particularly, the Applicants response to Natural England's response to ExQ1 questions 7.1.4 - 7.1.6 and the Applicants response to Annex C2 (REP3-092)) and all updated commitments: • Volume 2, Chapter 2: Benthic subtidal and intertidal ecology (F2.2/F02); • Volume 2, Chapter 1: Physical processes (F2.1/F02) • MCZ Screening and Stage 1 Assessment Report (E4/F02); and • Stage 2 MCZ Assessment, including a without prejudice, in-principle Measures of Equivalent Environmental Benefit (MEEB) Plan (S_D1_9/F02).	Progressed but not resolved. Further information has been provided by the Applicant throughout Examination to progress this issue, for example submission of the ABPmer report which provides further information on seabed characteristics at landfall and along the ECC. However, our final position is that there is still currently insufficient information and subsequent mitigation on; location, height, volume, orientation and type of cable protection within Fylde MCZ and between MLWS and the Depth of Closure.		The Applicants' position remains as outlined in response to comment RR.1601.43 on the location and design of cable protection (PDA-014) and the detail provided at Deadline 4 (REP4-100). The Applicants had understood that the updates that were made to the chapters / documents at Deadline 5 to capture the relevant information/clarifications presented in the Applicants' response to Natural England's Deadline 3 submission (REP4-100) (particularly, the Applicants' response to Natural England's response to ExQ1 questions 7.1.4 - 7.1.6 and the Applicants' response to Annex C2 (REP3-092)) and all updated commitments would be sufficient to address Natural England's concerns. It is therefore disappointing that Natural England has amended the RAG rating at Deadline 6 to Red with no further details provided on what additional information is required. As set out under paragraph 3.1.1.12 of the Outline offshore CSIP (REP6-097), ground conditions within the Fylde MCZ are largely sand and clay with some areas of slightly gravelly seabed. Whilst slightly gravelly clay or slightly gravelly sand sediments are currently not anticipated to hinder cable burial via the trenching techniques under consideration, more dense areas of gravel, if present, could present a risk of reduced burial, leading to the need for cable protection. Based on the initial survey results from four vibrocores / cone penetration tests (CPTs), the use of additional cable protection for

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						ground conditions within the Fylde MCZ is not envisaged. However, due to the limited survey data used to extrapolate seabed conditions across the MCZ, isolated disparate ground conditions could still be present. As such, the MDS allows for 3% cable protection for ground conditions within the Fylde MCZ as a contingency only (CoT47 in REP6-042) should later surveys indicate discrete areas of harder seabed where cable burial to the target depth cannot be reached. For the Applicants to not include the 3% contingency would risk a delay to completion of construction to engage on a variation to the deemed marine licence(s) and thus, a potential delay to completing the project and commencing contribution to UK Government targets for renewable energy. However, the Applicants have already refined the cable protection contingency post -PEIR from 20% to 3% for the Morgan offshore export cables and from 15% to 3% for the Morecambe offshore export cables but cannot reduce this further in the absence of more detailed vibrocore / CPT data. In the unlikely event that burial to the target depth is not achievable, commitment CoT45 (REP6-042) states that cable protection will be tailored to the specific location and installed to limit change in water depth to no more than 5% (referenced to Chart Datum). The 5% limitation is secured in the draft DCO (REP3-009) under Condition 18(e) of Schedule 14 and 15. Whilst the basis of this limitation, which has been standard in DCOs for many years, is to maintain sufficient under-keel clearance of vessels to minimise the risk of vessel fouling, its applicability to minimising the potential for effects on physical processes and other environmental receptors is valid. In practical terms the 5% limitation means that in 10 m water depth, cable protection, if required, cannot exceed 0.5 m and in 5m water depth, this is reduced to 0.25 m. At water depths of less than 5 m, the potential for any cable protection is effectively none. Additionally, the Outline CSIP (REP5-077) states that, should cable protection be required in shallow water, protection will be sufficiently low profile/tapped to cause minimal changes to wave,

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						tide and sediment transport. In practice this would entail the use of tapered mattress units, typically 0.3m in height, which are specifically designed to allow sediment transport to continue unhindered and sediment sources and sediment transport into the Ribble Estuary would not be impacted by the presence of this infrastructure. Furthermore, the Applicants recognise that the use of cable protection for certain ground conditions, where required, will be further evaluated and considered post-consent in the detailed CSIP(s), following further pre-construction surveys. The detailed CSIP(s) will be prepared post consent and prior to construction. They will identify where cable protection is required in the nearshore and to the Depth of Closure. The CSIPs are secured by DCO Schedule 14 (Marine Licence 1: Morgan Offshore Wind Project Transmission Assets) Part 2 - Condition18(1)(e) (Pre-construction plans and documentation) and DCO Schedule 15 (Marine Licence 2: Morecambe Offshore Wind Farm Transmission Assets), Part 2 - Condition 18(1)(e) (Pre-construction plans and documentation) (REP6-013). Detailed CSIP(s) will be implemented by the Applicants as approved by the MMO in consultation with relevant stakeholders.
NE6	Mitigation measures for Section 41 Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 Habitats. Natural England notes that no further mitigation in relation to physical processes or benthic receptors has been proposed. Additionally, there is no consideration for relevant NERC habitats. Natural England advises that impacts to priority habitats listed under Section 41 of the NERC Act (2006) are avoided and due consideration is demonstrated. We advise that relevant Application documents should be updated accordingly, and this is secured within the DCO/DMLs. It is possible this issue could be progressed if the Applicant follows SNCB advice.		The Applicants' have demonstrated how impacts have been minimised as much as possible within RR-1601.44 of their response to Natural England (PDA-014), and RR-1601.C.4 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017). The Applicants also set this out in full in their response to NE6 in the Applicants' response to Natural England's Deadline 3 submission (REP4-100) and specifically in the Applicants response to Natural England's response to ExQ1 questions 7.1.7 including all new commitments made at Deadline 4. Volume 2, Chapter 2: Benthic subtidal and intertidal ecology (F2.2/F02) and Volume 1, Chapter 1: Physical processes (F2.1/F02) have been updated at Deadline 5 to include all additional clarifications/justifications provided in submissions at previous deadlines to address Natural England's comments including the new commitments made at Deadline 4.	Natural England welcomes the inclusion of a micro-siting around reef features (only) in the DCO as previously acknowledged. We also note that the Applicants included further wording around application of the mitigation hierarchy in relation to NERC habitats in [REP4-100] but note that this is not a named plan and therefore not secured. Ideally, mitigation measures should also be included in the Benthic and Physical Processes Chapter or within a named plan, noting the potential presence of other NERC Habitats.		The assessments presented in Volume 2, Chapter 2: Benthic subtidal and intertidal ecology (APP-045 and updated in REP5-034) concluded that priority habitats listed under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006 were recorded throughout the Order Limits (predominantly subtidal sands and gravels as demonstrated by the baseline surveys). These habitats are widespread within the Irish Sea and wider waters of the UK. The assessment concluded that there will be no significant effects on any benthic receptors, including NERC priority habitats. The Applicants have responded to the points raised by Natural England in full in their Procedural Deadline A submissions (PDA-014 and PDA-017 respectively) and provided full details in the Applicants' Response to Natural England's risk and issues log (Section 7 in REP4-100) and in response to Natural England's response to ExQ1:7.1.7 (Section 5 in REP4-100) explaining

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Taken from NE's Relevant and Written Representations						
Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets - Principal Areas of Disagreement Summary Statement (PADSS)						
						how the mitigation hierarchy has been implemented, as far as reasonably practicable, for the Transmission Assets. In summary, the mitigation hierarchy (see S_D5_5.2 The Applicants' Response to ExQ2:1.1.6 - Mitigation Hierarchy - Rev F01 (REP5-132)) has been applied throughout the pre-application process to avoid and reduce impacts to all benthic receptors including priority habitats. Firstly, through site selection and refinement to avoid areas that would be most susceptible to significant impacts and to select the shortest route from the Generation Assets to the landfall. Secondly, via post-PEIR reductions to the MDS (e.g. for sandwave clearance and cable protection requirements) both within the Fylde MCZ and outside the MCZ, as detailed in Volume 1, Chapter 3: Project description of the ES (REP2-008 and updated in REP5-024) and the MCZ Screening and Stage 1 Assessment Report (APP-019 and updated in REP5-022). In addition to changes made to the project design (embedded mitigation) to minimise impacts, the Applicants have also committed to a number of measures to further reduce impacts to benthic habitats, including NERC priority habitats. To address Natural England's comments a number of additional commitments were made during the Examination: • The Applicants made a commitment to 'no rock dumping within Fylde MCZ' at Deadline 2 in acknowledgment that this is the least recoverable type of protection. Accordingly, the Outline Offshore CSIP was updated at Deadline 2 to include this commitment (REP2-022). At Deadline 4 the Applicants updated the draft DCO (REP4-007) to include this commitment under condition 18(e) of Schedule 14 and 15, with this update reflected in the Outline Offshore CSIP updates at Deadline 5 (REP5-077); • New commitment made at Deadline 4 that "As part of the detailed design process, micro-siting of the offshore export cables within the offshore export cable corridors will be considered where successful burial could pose a challenge or where a higher risk of remedial works such as external cable

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Taken from NE's Relevant and Written Representations						
Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets - Principal Areas of Disagreement Summary Statement (PADSS)						
						protection may be required."" (see CoT134, REP4-018); and • New commitment made at Deadline 4 (and revised at Deadline 6) that "No cable/scour protection shall be deployed in the intertidal area between Mean Low Water Springs (MLWS) and Mean High Water Springs (MHWS) during the construction and O&M phases (see CoT133, REP6-042) The Applicants also updated the Offshore In Principle Monitoring Plan (OIPMP) at Deadline 4 (REP4-075), to include a new commitment to benthic community recovery specific monitoring in the Fylde MCZ through both pre- construction and post- construction benthic community sampling to monitor for temporal and spatial recovery and of the potential colonisation by Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) following construction activities within the Fylde MCZ. As requested by Natural England, the Applicants submitted updated versions of Volume 2, Chapter 2: Benthic subtidal and intertidal ecology (REP5-034) and the MCZ Screening and Stage 1 Assessment Report (REP5-022) at Deadline 5 to include all new commitments made during Examination. The Applicants consider that they have taken all reasonable measures (via project design changes and commitments) to minimise impacts to all benthic habitats, including habitats of principal importance in England listed under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006. The Applicants consider that additional mitigation, to that which has already been secured, is not proportionate to the sensitivity of the habitats present within the Order Limits or to the low level of risk to benthic receptors associated with the Transmission Assets. Further, the Applicants do not consider that there is precedent in the offshore wind industry, or other offshore industries, for avoiding the sedimentary habitats recorded within the Transmission Assets and neither would it possible to do so given their widespread distribution within the benthic subtidal and intertidal ecology study area. The Applicants would highlight that, as outlined in the Statement of Common Ground with Natural England (REP6-179), this is a matter that is not agreed between the parties but is deemed to be not material.

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	NE Rel Rep RAG rating at D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 5 (in response to NE D4 submission)	Natural England's Comments/Update on Progression at Deadline 6	RAG D6	Applicants' comment at Deadline 7 (in response to NE D6 submission)
Taken from NE's Relevant and Written Representations						
Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets - Principal Areas of Disagreement Summary Statement (PADSS)						
NE7	Lasting habitat loss/change from the placement of cable protection. Natural England disagrees with the Applicant that 3.04ha of lasting habitat change/loss of subtidal sand and subtidal mud interest features from Fylde MCZ from the placement of cable protection will maintain the conservation objectives of the site. We advise that the Project is likely to cause lasting impacts on benthic features within Fylde MCZ. Every effort should be made to reduce impacts through the adoption of robust mitigation measures.					
NE8	***Fish and Shellfish Ecology*** Long term loss of supporting habitat and potential loss of prey species (sandeel). Dynamics between predator prey relationships for piscivorous birds and sand eel could be impacted due to loss of prey species. Natural England advise that the loss of prey species (sandeel) due to long term habitat loss (from scour/cable protection) of supporting habitat should be assessed and updated in the final ES chapter. It is possible this issue could be progressed with further provision of information.		The Applicants have updated the HRA Stage 2 ISAA Part 3 (E2.3/F02) and submitted the revised version at Deadline 5.	Resolved. We welcome the updated assessment including further detail on long term loss of habitat supporting prey species included in the ISAA. The detail provided satisfies our concerns relating to features of Liverpool Bay SPA.		The Applicants welcome this response and note that this issue has been resolved.
NE9	Ribble Estuary MCZ assessment. Natural England do not agree that smelt should be screened out, further assessment is required as the activity may be capable of affecting the protected feature of the MCZ. There is potential for electro-magnetic field (EMF) to cause barrier effects that hinder smelt movements in and out of the estuary. Complete an assessment on potential EMF impacts.		The Applicants' position remains the same as at Deadline 4, with this reiterated in the Issue Specific Hearing Day 2 submissions (REP4-104, comments 5(b)(i) 19-22). The Applicants highlighted the increased value of broader industry work streams on EMF monitoring instead of project-specific monitoring and are actively engaged with the Crown Estate to advance this area of research. The Applicants note that MMO and Environment Agency have raised no concerns on this point.	No change.		The Applicants' position remains the same as at Deadline 5, with this reiterated in the Issue Specific Hearing Day 2 submissions (REP4-104, comments 5(b)(i) 19-22). The Applicants highlighted the increased value of broader industry work streams on EMF monitoring instead of project-specific monitoring and are actively engaged with the Crown Estate to advance this area of research. The Applicants note that this matter is not agreed in the SoCG with Natural England (REP6-179). The Applicants note that all matters relating to fish and shellfish are agreed with the MMO in the final SoCG (REP6-130). Additionally, the potential impact of EMF on fish is agreed with the Environment Agency in the final SoCG (REP6-129) where it is noted in Table 1.5 that "*We are satisfied with the conclusion that the depth of cable burial below the River Ribble*

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	NE Rel Rep RAG rating at D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 5 (in response to NE D4 submission)	Natural England's Comments/Update on Progression at Deadline 6	RAG D6	Applicants' comment at Deadline 7 (in response to NE D6 submission)
Taken from NE's Relevant and Written Representations						
Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets - Principal Areas of Disagreement Summary Statement (PADSS)						
						of 7-45m will mean that EMF will be negligible at the riverbed and therefore no impact on fish".
NE10	***Marine Mammals*** UXO clearance UXO clearance is included as a licenced activity in the DCO/marine licence (which includes high order clearance). We advise that a separate licence is sought for UXO clearance due to the lack of information available and the over precaution that must be incorporated into the impact assessment at this stage. Natural England advise that UXO clearance should be authorised under a standalone marine licence post consent and removed from the draft DCO. It is possible this issue could be progressed by removing UXO clearance from the DCO/DML.		The Applicants position remains the same as at Deadline 4. The Applicants position is aligned with the Morgan Generation Assets position, noting that the Secretary of State retained clearance of UXO by low order methods in the recently made Order for Morgan Generation Assets.	No change.		The Applicants maintain their Deadline 5 position that inclusion of low order UXO clearance within the draft DCO is appropriate, particularly given the controls secured under Condition 20 in Schedules 14 and 15 of the draft DCO (REP5a-018), which requires submission of a method statement and MMMP (in accordance with the Outline MMMP (REP4-070)) prior to commencement of licensed activities. The Applicants' position is aligned with the Morgan Generation Assets consent, noting that the Secretary of State retained clearance of UXO by low order methods in the recently made Order for Morgan Generation Assets. The Applicants also highlight that whilst the MMO maintain the same position as Natural England on inclusion of low order UXO clearance in the draft DCO, the MMO confirmed at Deadline 5 (REP5-175) that their 'without prejudice' position is that, should Secretary of State include low order UXO clearance in the DCO, the DML provisions are acceptable to the MMO. The Applicants acknowledge that this is a matter that is not agreed between the Applicants and Natural England as recorded in the SoCG (REP6-179).
NE11	***Offshore Ornithology*** No assessment of long-term loss of habitat supporting prey species for the offshore ornithological features of Liverpool Bay Special Protection Area (SPA). The Applicant has not screened in long term loss of habitat supporting prey species (due to scour/cable protection) for the offshore ornithological features of Liverpool Bay SPA as an impact pathway for Likely Significant Effect (LSE). The Applicant should include an assessment of the indirect effect of long-term habitat loss due to scour/cable protection for prey species of the offshore ornithological features of Liverpool Bay SPA. It is possible this issue could be progressed with further provision of information.		The Applicants confirm that an updated version of the ES chapter (Volume 2, Chapter 5: Offshore Ornithology (F2.5/F02)) and HRA Stage 2 Information to Support an Appropriate Assessment Part Three (E2.1/F02) have been submitted at Deadline 5.	Resolved. We welcome the updated assessment including further detail on long term loss of habitat supporting prey species included in the ISAA [REP5-020]. The detail provided satisfies our concerns relating to features of Liverpool Bay SPA.		The Applicants' welcome this response and note that this matter has been resolved.

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	NE Rel Rep RAG rating at D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 5 (in response to NE D4 submission)	Natural England's Comments/Update on Progression at Deadline 6	RAG D6	Applicants' comment at Deadline 7 (in response to NE D6 submission)
Taken from NE's Relevant and Written Representations						
Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets - Principal Areas of Disagreement Summary Statement (PADSS)						
NE12	"Assessment and conclusion of no adverse effect on site integrity for the red-throated diver and common scoter features of Liverpool Bay SPA. Natural England do not agree that an adverse effect on site integrity for the red-throated diver and common scoter features of Liverpool Bay SPA can be ruled out due to the displacement and disturbance impacts of the Project in-combination with other projects during the sensitive winter period. The Project's impact can be removed by the Applicant committing to a full restriction on construction activity within the wintering months of November-March inclusive. Potential resolution. This is subject to the Applicant bringing forward an appropriate seasonal restriction to address the potential impacts to the species.		The Applicants welcome the resolution of this issue at Deadline 3.			
NE13	***Onshore Ecology and Nature Conservation*** Impacts to sand dune Lytham St Annes SSSI features. Issues remain around certain features particularly changes to the water table, dewatering effects during construction using Transition Joint Bays (TJB) and the impacts on dune slack vegetation. The Applicant needs to more thoroughly assess the impacts on dune slack vegetation and consider a more precautionary approach with regards to the recoverability / resilience of the dune slacks relating to dewatering effects. It is possible this issue could be progressed with further provision of information including additional monitoring of water table pre- and post- construction and sufficient baseline data.		The Outline Hydrogeological Risk Assessment for Lytham St Annes Dunes (S_D3_6/F02) has been resubmitted at Deadline 5 following review of comments received from both the Environment Agency (REP4-132) and Natural England (REP-140). The Applicants would highlight that they have updated the outline Hydrogeological Risk Assessment for Lytham St Annes Dunes (S_D3_6/F02) to include the results of the NVC surveys at Lytham St Annes Dunes SSSI and the St. Annes Old Links Golf Course BHS. The Applicants have made a commitment (CoT128 of Volume 1, Annex 5.3: Commitments Register of the ES (F1.5.3/F06)) to undertake detailed hydrogeological risk assessment(s) in relation to the crossing of the Lytham St Annes Dunes SSSI. These assessment(s) will be used to inform the detailed site-specific crossing design(s) for the installation of the offshore export cables beneath Lytham St Annes Dunes SSSI. This is secured by Requirement 8 of Schedules 2A and 2B of the draft DCO (C1/F07).	Progressed but not resolved. The Applicant have provided the NVC survey report [REP5-039] and incorporated the results into the updated outline Hydrogeological Risk Assessment [REP5-102]. NE are satisfied with the survey effort and standard methodology used. We welcome the detail included in Section 5 outlining the next steps in [REP5-102], further comments regarding this are included in Appendix G6.		The Applicants welcome the confirmation that Natural England is satisfied with the survey effort and methodology employed for NVC surveys of the Lytham St Annes Dunes SSSI/ LNR and St Annes Old Links Golf Course BHS, which the Applicants completed in summer 2025. Further comments regarding the Outline Hydrogeological Risk Assessment are responded to in Appendix G6.
NE14	Additional information required on Direct Pipe Trenchless Technique to be able to fully assess the potential impacts to Lytham St. Annes Dunes SSSI. Insufficient detail on Direct Pipe, to fully assess the potential impacts on the SSSI.		The Applicants have prepared and submitted an Outline Trenchless Crossing Mitigation Plan as Appendix A to the Outline Landfall Construction Method Statement (S_D4_22/F02). The Applicants have received Natural England's comments on the outline hydrogeological risk	Progressed but not resolved. The Applicant have provided an updated version of the outline Landfall Construction Method Statement [REP5-117] at Deadline 5. Table 1, Appendix A provides a review of the risks associated with trenching, including the consideration of the failure of the Direct Pipe		The Applicants note this response and point Natural England to the Applicants response to Appendix G6 (REP6-192) in Applicants' Response to Deadline 6 submissions from IP (S_D7_2).

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	NE Rel Rep RAG rating at D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 5 (in response to NE D4 submission)	Natural England's Comments/Update on Progression at Deadline 6	RAG D6	Applicants' comment at Deadline 7 (in response to NE D6 submission)
Taken from NE's Relevant and Written Representations						
Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets - Principal Areas of Disagreement Summary Statement (PADSS)						
	No inclusion of an outline contingency plan and no assessment of the Worst Case Scenario (WCS) i.e. no other option assessed if Direct Pipe is not an option. Provide further detail on the Direct Pipe methodology to be able to fully assess the potential impacts to the SSSI. Assess the WCS including a contingency should Direct Pipe not be possible. It is possible this issue could be progressed with further provision of information."		assessment at D4 (REP-140) and have provided a response to these at D5 (NE13). In addition, the Applicants have updated the Outline Hydrogeological Risk Assessment (S_D3_6) in line with REP-140 and re-submitted at D5 S_D3_6/F0). The Applicants have made a commitment (CoT128 of Volume 1, Annex 5.3: Commitments Register of the ES (F1.5.3/F06)) to undertake detailed hydrogeological risk assessment(s) in relation to the crossing of the Lytham St Annes Dunes SSSI. These assessment(s) will be used to inform the detailed site-specific crossing design(s) for the installation of the offshore export cables beneath Lytham St Annes Dunes SSSI. This is secured by Requirement 8 of Schedules 2A and 2B of the draft DCO (C1/F07).	method. Primary outstanding concerns relate to the purpose of additional boreholes and distance between cables. Further comments are included in Appendix G6.		
NE15	Lack of sand dune habitat survey effort. From the information provided, Natural England advise that there is insufficient evidence for us to be able to advise on the scale and significance of impacts to dune slacks at St. Annes Old Links Golf Course BHS. The Applicant needs to undertake detailed dune slack surveys across the Study Area to inform the EIA. These surveys need to be undertaken during summer 2025. It is possible this issue could be progressed with further imminent survey effort and provision of information.		The Applicants can confirm that NVC surveys of Lytham St Annes SSSI and St Anne's Old Links Golf Course Biological Heritage Site have been undertaken. The results of these surveys can be found in Appendix D and E of Volume 3, Annex 3.3: Phase 1 habitat, national vegetation classification and hedgerow survey technical report (F3.3.3/F03). In summary the NVC communities at the SSSI are as previously reported and include shallow-groundwater dependent dune slacks primarily on the eastern side of Clifton Drive North. The BHS does not support any groundwater dependent terrestrial ecosystems, which also concurs with the assumptions made in the ecological impact assessment and Outline Hydrogeological Risk Assessment (S_D3_6/F02). In addition, the Applicants have updated the outline hydrogeological risk assessment at D5 (S_D3_6/F02) to reflect the NVC survey findings.	Progressed but not resolved. The Applicant has undertaken an NVC survey at Lytham St Annes Dunes SSSI and St Annes Old Links Golf Course BHS. They have provided the NVC survey report [REP5-039] and incorporated the results into the updated outline Hydrogeological Risk Assessment [REP5-102]. NE are satisfied with the survey effort and standard methodology used. We welcome the detail included in Section 5 outlining the next steps in [REP5-102], further comments regarding this are included in Appendix G6.		The Applicants welcome the confirmation that Natural England is satisfied with the survey effort and methodology employed for NVC surveys of the Lytham St Annes Dunes SSSI/ LNR and St Annes Old Links Golf Course BHS, which the Applicants completed in summer 2025. Further comments regarding the Outline Hydrogeological Risk Assessment are responded to in Appendix G6.
NE16	Lack of Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) survey effort. From information provided, Natural England advise that there is insufficient evidence for us to be able to advise on the scale and significance of impacts to soils. The Applicant needs to undertake a detailed ALC and soil survey of the agricultural land across the full Study Area to inform the EIA. These surveys need to be undertaken during summer 2025. Natural England advises that the commitment to restore land needs to be secured in the DCO.		The Applicants note there is no change on this matter and refer Natural England to NE16 in 'S_D4_2.6 Annex 2.6 to Applicants' Response to Deadline 3 submissions from Statutory Consultees and other organisation: Natural England (REP3-90 - REP3-95, AS-078) - Rev F01' (REP4-100). The Applicants requested a meeting with Natural England to try and understand why they have a different approach to other projects when compared to Transmission Assets. As Natural England have declined a meeting and not given a justification on their approach the Applicants conclude that this is a point where the parties will agree to disagree.	Not resolved. This is a National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) issue. Natural England's final position is that the Applicant should commit to ALC surveys pre-consent. There is a requirement to show how the project avoids impacting best most versatile (BMV) land.		The Applicants position remains the same as set out at Deadline 5.

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	NE Rel Rep RAG rating at D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 5 (in response to NE D4 submission)	Natural England's Comments/Update on Progression at Deadline 6	RAG D6	Applicants' comment at Deadline 7 (in response to NE D6 submission)
Taken from NE's Relevant and Written Representations						
Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets - Principal Areas of Disagreement Summary Statement (PADSS)						
	It is possible this issue could be progressed with further imminent survey effort and provision of information.					
NE17	Developing on areas of restorable peat. There is insufficient information to ascertain whether the proposal will have direct or indirect impacts on deep peat. Provide further evidence to show if restorable peat is present. This should include peat data for the route of the cables and include soil cores in the areas mapped as deep peat England Peat Status Greenhouse Gas and Carbon Storage. It is possible this issue could be progressed with further provision of information.		The Applicants note there is no change on this matter and refer Natural England to NE17 in 'S_D4_2.6 Annex 2.6 to Applicants' Response to Deadline 3 submissions from Statutory Consultees and other organisation: Natural England (REP3-90 - REP3-95, AS-078) - Rev F01' (REP4-100).	Not resolved. Natural England's final position is that there is not enough information for Natural England to advise if the proposal will have direct or indirect impacts on deep peat. Natural England do not support the principle of developing on restorable peat. Natural England advises that there is a requirement to identify areas of deep peat and peaty soils in the area, further evidence and survey data is required.		The Applicants have submitted an overlay of the Onshore Order Limits onto the Natural England Peat Map at D6 (REP6-177). This provides further evidence of the limited extent of any peat resources that could potentially be disturbed during construction, approximately 2.91% of the Onshore Order Limit. For further information, the Applicants point NE to question 3 in the Applicants response to NEs Rule 17 submission (S_S7_2). The Applicants' position on this matter remains the same as set out at Deadline 5.
NE18	***Onshore and Intertidal Ornithology*** Impacts to Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA/Ramsar site intertidal waterbirds due to the landfall works. Natural England advise that the proposed level of restriction to the landfall works is insufficient to avoid an adverse effect on the Ribble & Alt Estuaries SPA/Ramsar site. The Applicant should develop comprehensive seasonal restrictions for the key intertidal species and months of the year. These should be underpinned by updated HRA conclusions based on data from site specific surveys, and a more thorough assessment of the potential habitat loss/disturbance effects and their implications for SPA/Ramsar site species. Potential resolution This is subject to the Applicant bringing forward an appropriate level of seasonal restriction to address the potential impacts to the species.		Following a meeting with Natural England on 16th September 2025 during which extra detail was provided, both Natural England and the Applicants came to agreement that the Project does not represent AEoI for the works in the intertidal area. This is a result of a combination of: • The Nov-Mar seasonal restriction on works at St Annes beach (CoT110 and CoT129) thus avoiding impacts upon wintering features. • The inclusion of the alleviation measures to reduce disturbance on roosting birds at Fairhaven Saltmarsh, and the inclusion of an ECoW at the construction area. • The sporadic use of the area by roosting birds thus removing impacts for the occasionally roosting dunlin, sanderling and ringed plover (the alleviation measures at Fairhaven Saltmarsh will help to reduce SPA level disturbance pressures on these species). • The low numbers of redshank to be impacted (below 1% of the SPA population). • The low numbers of foraging sanderling to be impacted (below 1% of the SPA population). • The limited impacts of construction (only one cable at a time leading to limited habitat loss and disturbance impacts).	Resolved. Natural England's concerns regarding the passage feature of the SPA and Ramsar site from intertidal impacts have now been addressed. Please see RI_H3 for further detail.		The Applicants welcome the closing of this issue.

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	NE Rel Rep RAG rating at D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 5 (in response to NE D4 submission)	Natural England's Comments/Update on Progression at Deadline 6	RAG D6	Applicants' comment at Deadline 7 (in response to NE D6 submission)
Taken from NE's Relevant and Written Representations						
Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets - Principal Areas of Disagreement Summary Statement (PADSS)						
NE19	Lack of an in-principle derogations case for impacts to intertidal SPA/Ramsar site waterbirds. Unless effective seasonal restrictions for the wintering and passage periods can be committed to, we advise that an in-principle derogations case will need to be developed. This would need to demonstrate no alternative solutions to delivering the public interest objectives of the project and Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI). A robust in-principle derogations case should be submitted into the Examination, including a demonstration that a greater degree of seasonal restriction is not achievable, and a far more detailed submission regarding the installation and management of the compensatory measures. Potential resolution. This is subject to the Applicant providing an in-principle derogations case demonstrating that there are no alternative solutions to delivering the project's objectives, including a greater degree of seasonal restriction, and a detailed proposal for compensatory measures."		Following a meeting with Natural England on 16th September, it was agreed that the measures proposed at Fairhaven saltmarsh represent alleviation, and as Natural England are satisfied that the Project's planned activities in the intertidal do not represent AEoI, there is no need for an in-principle derogation case. This is the view of both the Applicants and Natural England.	Resolved. NE18 is also applicable here.		The Applicants welcome the closing of this issue.
NE20	Impacts to Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA/Ramsar terrestrial waterbirds. Natural England advise that there is not currently enough information within the Application to rule out impacts for wintering, passage and terrestrial features of Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA/Ramsar site. We require further clarity from the Applicant on the following aspects: HRA conclusions should be based on data from site specific surveys, habitat loss and its implications for SPA/Ramsar site species should be further quantified, proposed mitigation areas need further justification on their appropriateness. Potential resolution. This is subject to the Applicant providing further information to support their HRA conclusions, consideration of spatial scheduling to reduce the level of impact, and		The Applicants have submitted the following documents at D4 and await Natural England's response: • S_D4_17 Onshore Terrestrial Waterbird Note - Rev F01 (REP4-120) • J6 Outline Ecological Management Plan (Clean) - Rev F04 (REP4-058) The Applicants welcome Natural England's comments on these documents. In addition, The Applicants have updated; HRA Stage 2 ISAA Part 3 (E2.3) and submitted the revised version at Deadline 5 (E2.3/F02); J6 Outline Ecological Management Plan (J6/F05) as requested by Natural England. The detail requested in the oEMP is contained within Appendix B	Progressed but not resolved. We welcome the updates made in documents submitted by the Applicant at Deadline 5. Our concerns for Lytham Moss mitigation area are satisfied. Our outstanding concerns are in regards to long-term monitoring/management of the Newton-with-Scales mitigation area. Please see RI_H7 for further detail.		The Applicants have provided the additional detail on the long-term monitoring at Newton-with-Scales in Appendix B.2.2 of J6 Outline Ecological Management Plan (Clean) - Rev F06 (REP6-115). The monitoring commitment is now: "*There is a commitment to monitor this area for the lifetime of the project (30 years) to inform the long-term success*." The Applicants therefore consider this issue closed.

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	NE Rel Rep RAG rating at D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 5 (in response to NE D4 submission)	Natural England's Comments/Update on Progression at Deadline 6	RAG D6	Applicants' comment at Deadline 7 (in response to NE D6 submission)
Taken from NE's Relevant and Written Representations						
Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets - Principal Areas of Disagreement Summary Statement (PADSS)						
	greater detail on the proposed mitigation habitats."					
NE21	Mitigation of impacts to Newton Marsh SSSI. Impacts to Newton Marsh SSSI have not been sufficiently assessed. There is minimal information on what works will take place in close proximity to this site and how the work will be managed to not affect the site. Natural England advise that further consideration of Newton Marsh SSSI is included and updated within the assessment. Further justification should be provided on how the Applicant has concluded no risk to the site and what mitigation measures might be implemented. It is possible this issue could be progressed with further provision of information.		The Applicants have updated the HRA Stage 2 ISAA Part 3 (E2.3) and submitted the revised version at Deadline 5 (E2.3/F02).	Resolved. We welcome the updated ISAA [REP5-020] which now includes information on features of Newton Marsh SSSI. As this detail in included and informs part of the assessment, this issue is now closed.		The Applicants welcome the closing of this issue.
NE22	***Fylde MCZ*** MCZ assessment and Measures of Equivalent Environmental Benefit (MEEB). Natural England do not agree with the Applicants conclusion of no likelihood of hindering the conservation objectives of Fylde MCZ, which has been designated for subtidal sand and subtidal mud. It is our opinion that the impact on Fylde MCZ will be long term and will alter the extent of the physical attributes and distribution of biological communities supported by these features. Natural England advise that every effort should be made to reduce the impacts through the adoption of robust mitigation measures, including commitments to remove infrastructure at the decommissioning phase. Natural England advise that the MCZ assessment should proceed to a stage 2 assessment and provide a without prejudice MEEB case. Unless the Applicant's position changes, it is unlikely that there will be agreement between the Applicant and Natural England during examination on this issue.		The Applicants welcome the resolution of this issue at Deadline 3.			Resolved at Deadline 3.

Table 2.9: REP6-193 - Responses to Questions Regarding the DCO and dMLs

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 6 (in response to NE D5 submission)	Natural England's Comments/Update on Progression at Deadline 6	RAG D6	Applicants' comment at Deadline 7 (in response to NE D6 submission)
RI_A1	The definition of commence and offshore preparations works within the DCO and all three DMLs must be amended by the Applicant to exclude all works except pre-construction surveys to inform the construction plans and mitigation.					
RI_A2	Due to the increasing complexity of construction of large offshore works, we advise that six months is considered an appropriate period prior to construction, not four months as stated in Schedule 14 and 15 Part 2 Condition 19(10, [APP-005].					
RI_A3	The definition of 'maintain' within the DCO and schedules 14-17 of the deemed Marine Licences (dML) restricts work that is materially different or has materially different impacts. The Applicant should amend the wording to ensure maintenance works do not lead to impacts in excess of those assessed within the ES.					
RI_A4	The Applicant should remove the definition of Natural England in Article 2 (1) [APP-005] and replace with a definition of Statutory Nature Conservation Body (SNCB), all references to Natural England throughout the DCO and DML (and Schedules) should be amended to state the relevant SNCB.					
RI_A5	The Applicant should amend [APP-005] Schedule 2A Table 3 of the DCO to include maximum number and size of UXOs to remove using high order detonations. This should also be updated in Schedule 2B table 4 and in Schedules 14 and 15. If the information required to undertake a full assessment is not yet available, UXO clearance should not be included as a licensed activity in the DCO - a standalone Marine Licence should be sought post-consent from the MMO.		The Applicants' position remains as set out at Deadline 4 (see REP4-100)	No change.		The Applicants' position remains as set out at Deadline 4 (see REP4-100). The Applicants also refer to their deadline 6 response to the MMO (REP6-171). The Applicants maintain that inclusion of low order UXO clearance is appropriate and note that the drafting of Condition 20 follows and aligns to the Morgan Generation Order as consented and ensures that appropriate post consent compliance controls are in place. The Applicants note the MMO confirmed at deadline 5 (REP5-175), on a without prejudice basis, that the MMO is largely content that should the secretary of State (SoS) include low order UXO clearance then the drafting in condition 20 provides for the required information for the UXO clearance works at the post consent stage. The Applicants would also note that the draft DCO (REP6-013) was updated at Deadline 1 (REP1-008) to limit the maximum number of low order UXO clearances under Condition 20 in Schedule 14 and 15 as requested by Natural England.

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 6 (in response to NE D5 submission)	Natural England's Comments/Update on Progression at Deadline 6	RAG D6	Applicants' comment at Deadline 7 (in response to NE D6 submission)
RI_A6	The Applicant has committed to Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), but has not included it as a DCO requirement. The Applicant should include a requirement that secures the delivery and maintenance of BNG as a matter of good practice.					
RI_A7	Micro-siting around features of conservation importance, such as reef of Annex I quality, is a standard mitigation. We request that the requirement to consider micro-siting around features of conservation importance be secured within the DMLs, as it is currently with respect to archaeological interest features.					
RI_A8	a) Natural England requests that a condition to secure an updated Offshore Operations and Maintenance Plan (OOMP) be included, we note this is a standard condition of most OWFs. b) Additionally, it should be stipulated within the OOMP that cable protection may only be deployed under this consent for a period of ten years post-construction outside of Fylde MCZ, and no deployment of cable protection during O&M within Fylde MCZ. Any additional cable protection within Fylde MCZ will require a new Marine Licence.		(a) Condition 11(3) within the draft DCO (REP5-101) secures submission of an OOMP in accordance with the outline OOMP, therefore the Applicants anticipate this point is resolved. (b) The Applicants updated the Outline OOMP at Deadline 4 (REP4-072) to secure limitations on the deployment of cable protection inside and outside the Fylde MCZ to 10 years and two years respectively (or the extent of the marine licensable activity (whichever is first)). As the Outline OOMP is secured by Condition 11(3) of Schedules 14 and 15 of the draft DCO (REP5a-018), the Applicants consider that these measures are appropriately secured in the DCO. Natural England's Advice on the Outline OOMP [REP4-073] does not comment on the 10 year limitation outside the Fylde MCZ, therefore the Applicants assume that this is acceptable to Natural England. Within the MCZ, Natural England advise that cable/scour protection should be deployed during the construction phase, Natural England advise there will be requirement for a greater number of benthic monitoring locations / expanded monitoring periods to mitigate for instances where additional rock protection placed within the 2-year period overlaps or has potential to impact the recovery monitoring locations. Given Natural England's advice, the Applicants assume that the cable / scour deployment periods inside the Fylde MCZ are also acceptable.	Progressed but not resolved. We note that a condition to secure an updated OOMP is included along with CoT71. Additionally we welcome the wording included in the OOMP at Deadline 4 with regards to limiting the deployment of cable/scour protection outside of Fylde MCZ to the first 10 years. However, we maintain that any additional cable protection beyond the construction period i.e. during the operation and maintenance phase within Fylde MCZ will require a new Marine Licence. We also note that the worse case scenario for concurrent cable installation would allow for cable protection to be placed over a 7.5+ year period with recovery hindered due to wider impacts on the designated site. We advise that spatial and temporal impacts are minimised as much as possible. We understand that the Applicant is minded to update this condition to only allow cable protection to be placed during the construction phase in Fylde MCZ. We advise that such a commitment would address this issue.		The Applicants updated the Outline OOMP at Deadline 7 (J19/F04) to specify that within the Fylde MCZ, cable/scour protection may only be deployed during the construction phase. Any deployment of cable/scour protection during the O&M phase would require a marine licence. The SoCG with Natural England states that this update to the Outline OOMP (and other relevant documents) would resolve this matter (NE.BE.2 / C2 in REP6-179).
RI_A9	Schedule 14 and 15 Part 2 Condition 20 relates to the detonation of UXOs, however there is no mention within this condition of securing the use of Noise Abatement					

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	Systems (NAS). Amend the condition to include the need to consider the use of NAS.					
RI_A10	Schedule 14 and 15 Part 2 Conditions 24, 25 and 26 do not include any of the detailed ecological monitoring required, except for monitoring during construction piling. We would expect benthic surveys to be conducted to identify any features of conservation importance. We would also expect post-construction monitoring to be secured for any features of conservation importance identified in the pre-construction surveys that are predicted to be impacted by construction, in order to monitor their recovery. The Applicant should update the monitoring conditions to secure these.		The Applicants' position remains as set out at Deadline 4 (see REP4-100). The Offshore In Principle Monitoring Plan was updated at Deadline 4 to include for benthic monitoring and monitoring of INNS. Condition 24(1) 'Pre-construction monitoring and surveys' of Schedule 14 and 15 of the draft DCO (REP5a-018) states that *"The undertaker must, in discharging condition 18(1)(d) submit a monitoring plan or plans in accordance with the offshore in principle monitoring plan for written approval by the MMO in consultation with the relevant statutory nature conservation body, which must contain details of proposed monitoring and surveys, including methodologies and timings, and a proposed format and content for a pre-construction baseline report"*. Additionally, Condition 26(1) states that *"The undertaker must, in discharging condition 18(1)(d) submit details (which accord with the offshore in principle monitoring plan) for approval in writing by the MMO in consultation with relevant statutory nature conservation bodies of proposed post-construction monitoring, including methodologies and timings, and a proposed format, content and timings for providing reports on the results*." Therefore, details of benthic monitoring are secured in the Offshore IPMP and preparation of the offshore Monitoring Plan, in accordance with the Offshore IPMP for approval by the MMO in consultation with the statutory nature conservation body are secured in conditions 24 and 26 of Schedule 14 and 15 of the draft DCO. The Applicants trust that this allows for resolution of this matter.	No change.		The Applicants' position remains as at Deadline 4. Monitoring requirements are suitably secured through the Offshore IPMP (REP6-103) and therefore secured under Requirement 18.
RI_A11	The recent SoS decision for Sheringham and Dudgeon Extensions Project (SADEP) approved Condition 20 in Schedules 10 and 11 of SADEP DCO based on a recommendation from Natural England and the MMO for particular impacts requiring remediation or further mitigation works. Natural England advises that a similar condition should be included within all offshore wind dMLs.		The Applicants refer to their previous response to this point at REP4-1000 and to their response at REP3-056 to the Examining Authority's Written Question 2.5.1 where the Applicants state that it is unlikely full agreement will be reached on this matter. However, as per the Applicants' response to RI_A10 above, Conditions 24(1) and 26(1) in Schedule 14 and 15 of the draft DCO (REP5a-018) secure the approval of the offshore	No change.		The Applicants maintain that a separate condition is not necessary as adaptive management is suitably controlled through the Offshore IPMP (REP6-103) and therefore secured under Requirement 18.

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			Monitoring Plan (in accordance with the Offshore IPMP) by the MMO in consultation with the statutory nature conservation body.			
RI_A12	Offshore emergency works have not been clearly defined by the Applicant within the outline OOMP or the DCO. We advise that the Applicant should define 'offshore emergency works' in the DCO/dML and this definition should be updated within the outline OOMP. The MMO's guidance on emergency works offshore should be followed and referred to within the Application.		The Applicants have updated the Outline OOMP at Deadline 4 (REP4-072) to clarify that reference to offshore emergency works refers to cable repair or the reburial of cables that have become exposed and which could present a risk to navigation, both of which are included in Table 1.1 of the updated Outline OOMP. The Outline OOMP is secured as set out at RI_A8 above. The Applicants trust that this allows for resolution of this matter.	No change.		The Applicants updated the outline OOMP at Deadline 7 (J19/F04) to remove reference to 'emergency' works, therefore no further explanation of the term is required. The Applicants trust that this addresses this point.
R1_A13						

Table 2.10: REP6-193 - Responses to Questions Regarding Physical Processes

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Risk and Issues Log Deadline 1 – Physical Processes Taken from Natural England's Relevant and Written Representations Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets Appendix B - Physical Processes						
RI_B1	a) There is uncertainty regarding the likely success of the Direct Pipe Trenchless Technique. Further details on the Direct Pipe Trenchless Technique, associated infrastructure, and the sediment geology, is required to be able to fully assess the potential impacts on coastal processes at the landfall. b) An outline contingency plan should be developed, and the worst-case should assessed and included within the relevant Application documents i.e. cable installation failure when using the Direct Pipe Trenchless Technique.		The Applicants updated Volume 2, Chapter 1: Physical processes (REP5-030) at Deadline 5 to include all additional clarifications/justifications provided in submissions at previous deadlines to address Natural England's comments relating to the landfall and to include reference to all new commitments made at previous deadlines. The Applicants await Natural England's response to the updated chapters submitted at Deadline 5 and trust that this allows for resolution of this matter.	Sufficiently resolved. a) The Applicant has provided an updated version of the outline landfall construction method statement at Deadline 5 which includes an appendix on outline trenchless crossing mitigation plan. b) Natural England's notes that there is no change on this matter. The Applicant has only assessed trenchless methods. Therefore, these methods will be the only landfall options permitted (by the DCO/dML) and taken through to construction. However, we note that the Applicant acknowledges further information/evidence and finalised design parameters will be provided post consent which may give raise to uncertainties with these methods. Therefore, we advise this issue could be considered sufficiently addressed		The Applicants welcome Natural England's response on these points. The Applicants recognise that ground conditions will be further evaluated and considered post-consent in the detailed CSIP(s), following further post-consent and pre-construction surveys. The detailed CSIP(s) will be prepared post consent and prior to construction. The CSIPs are secured by DCO Schedule 14 (Marine Licence 1: Morgan Offshore Wind Project Transmission Assets) Part 2 - Condition18(1)(e) (Pre-construction plans and documentation) and DCO Schedule 15 (Marine Licence 2: Morecambe Offshore Wind Farm Transmission Assets), Part 2 - Condition 18(1)(e) (Pre-construction plans and documentation) (REP6-013). Detailed CSIP(s) will be implemented by the

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				on the basis that should it be demonstrated that trenchless techniques are not viable options in the preconstruction/construction phase, then a variation request with associated supporting information will need to be made to the Secretary of State to change the landfall method.		Applicants as approved by the MMO in consultation with relevant stakeholders. As noted by Natural England should it be demonstrated that trenchless techniques are not viable options in the preconstruction/construction phase, then a variation request with associated supporting information would be made to the Secretary of State to change the landfall method.
RI_B2	There is currently no commitment to the removal of cable/scour protection at end of project life (decommissioning). Natural England advises that a commitment to remove all on and above seabed infrastructure associated with the development within benthic designated sites (excluding cable crossings) at the time of decommissioning should be secured in the DCO, to prevent permanent impacts to marine physical processes. Without a commitment in the DCO, the worst-case scenario should assess the impacts of leaving assets permanently in situ. It is also noted that leaving cable protection on the seabed even outside of designated sites is not aligned with OSPAR		See the Applicants' response to NE4 (PADSS).	Not resolved. As outlined at Deadline 5, whilst the Applicant has agreed to 'no rock dumping' within Fylde MCZ, there is no commitment to remove cable/scour protection at the time of decommissioning. We understand this to be the Applicant's final position. Therefore our original position on this matter remains unchanged which is that all on and above seabed infrastructure (including cable/scour protection) should be removed from benthic designated sites at the time of decommissioning and secured in the DCO. This advice is aligned with OSPAR 98/3 and recent Secretary of State decisions requiring removal of cable protection within designated sites at the time of decommissioning.		See the Applicants' response to NE4 (PADDS).
RI_B3	a) There is currently insufficient information on the anticipated location, extent and design of cable protection measures placed along the Export Cable Corridor (ECC). Further information should be provided on location, extent and design of cable protection measures for us to advise on the potential impacts of cable protection on sediment transport pathways, particularly within Fylde MCZ . b) Further consideration within the assessments should be given to changes to sediment transport processes and seabed morphology due to the placement of cable protection measures at these locations. This should be updated within the relevant Application documents. c) Further options to minimise/mitigate impacts from cable protection on physical processes should be explored.		The Applicants updated Volume 2, Chapter 1: Physical processes (REP5-030) at Deadline 5 to include all additional clarifications/justifications provided in submissions at previous deadlines to address Natural England's comments relating to the landfall and to include reference to all new commitments made at previous deadlines. These include commitments and measures outlined in the CSIP (REP5-077) which avoid or minimise the use of cable protection in the nearshore. The Applicants trust that this allows for resolution of this matter.	Progressed but not resolved. We welcome further submissions at Deadline 5 including submission of the ABPmer report and further information on seabed characteristics at landfall and along the ECC. However, our original comments and comment at Deadline 5 with regards to cable protection location, extent and design, impacts to sediment transport processes in the nearshore and mitigation still stand. To resolve this issue, further information is required to provide the necessary comfort to Secretary of State that if required mitigation measures can be applied to identified WCSs, to sufficiently manage down secondary impact zone/indirect impacts to Feature Of Conservation Importance (FOCI) and designated site interest features.		The Applicants welcome that Natural England have acknowledged progress on this point. It is reiterated that, as outlined in response to this point raised in Natural England's comments on Examining Authority's Written Questions (ExQ1) Q7.1.2 (REP4-100), the Outline CBRA (APP-219) details sub-seabed geology and ground conditions and Depth of Lowering (burial depth) for cable burial along the full length of the cable corridor. The first section presented is the Export Cable Landing Section (KP0 – KP13.25) which extends from the Transition Joint Bays (TJBs) onshore out to a distance of 13.25 km offshore at a depth 14.23m chart datum (CD) and incorporates Depth of Closure (DoC) which is circa 10 m CD. Offshore of the DoC sediment transport is dominated by tidal currents (i.e. onshore transport with sediment supply to the shoreline from offshore) and inshore of DoC the sediment transport is also influenced by metrological conditions (i.e. wave climate / littoral currents). This drives longshore and cross-shore transport and provides the sediment source for the Ribble Estuary SPA, a key concern raised by

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						Natural England in their representations and highlighted during a meeting on the 22 July 2025. The information from the Outline CBRA indicates, from Lowest Astronomical Tide (LAT) to DoC, geological conditions are suitable for trenching to required depth. Cable crossings are located further offshore beyond the DoC therefore within this region (LAT to DoC) cable burial will be undertaken. The Outline CSIP (REP5-077) confirms that due to the sediment type found in the nearshore area and Fylde MCZ (i.e. predominantly sand and mud), traditional burial techniques are suitable to achieve the target burial depths and commitment CoT54 (REP6-042) identifies that cable burial is the preferred option for cable protection where practicable. It is therefore not anticipated that external cable protection would be required in the nearshore and this is to be confirmed by pre-construction surveys. However, in the unlikely event that burial to the target depth is not achievable, commitment CoT45 (REP6-042) states that cable protection will be tailored to the specific location and installed to limit change in water depth to no more than 5% (referenced to Chart Datum). The 5% limitation is secured in the draft DCO (REP3-009) under Condition 18(e) of Schedules 14 and 15 to the draft DCO. Whilst the basis of this limitation, which has been standard in DCOs for many years, is to maintain sufficient under-keel clearance of vessels to minimise the risk of vessel fouling, its applicability to minimising the potential for effects on physical processes and other environmental receptors is valid. In practical terms the 5% limitation means that in 10 m water depth, cable protection, if required, cannot exceed 0.5 m and in 5m water depth, this is reduced to 0.25 m. At water depths of less than 5 m, the potential for any cable protection is effectively none. Additionally, the Outline CSIP (REP5-077) states that, should cable protection be required in shallow water, protection will be sufficiently low profile/tapped to cause minimal changes to wave, tide and sediment transport. In practice this would entail the use of tapered mattress units, typically 0.3m in height, which are specifically designed to allow sediment transport to continue unhindered and sediment sources and sediment transport into

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						the Ribble Estuary would not be impacted by the presence of this infrastructure. Furthermore, the Applicants recognise that the use of cable protection for certain ground conditions, where required, will be further evaluated and considered post-consent in the detailed CSIP(s), following further post-consent and pre-construction surveys. The detailed CSIP(s) will be prepared post consent and prior to construction. They will identify where cable protection is required in the nearshore and to the Depth of Closure. The CSIPs are secured by DCO Schedule 14 (Marine Licence 1: Morgan Offshore Wind Project Transmission Assets) Part 2 - Condition18(1)(e) (Pre-construction plans and documentation) and DCO Schedule 15 (Marine Licence 2: Morecambe Offshore Wind Farm Transmission Assets), Part 2 - Condition 18(1)(e) (Pre-construction plans and documentation) (REP6-013). Detailed CSIP(s) will be implemented by the Applicants as approved by the MMO in consultation with relevant stakeholders.
RI_B4	a) We note that limited mitigation in relation to physical processes or benthic receptors during sandwave and boulder clearance has been proposed and further consideration should be demonstrated. b) Natural England advises that impacts to priority habitats under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006 are avoided and due consideration is demonstrated. We advise that relevant Application documents should be updated accordingly and this is secured within the DCO/DMLs.		Volume 2, Chapter 2: Benthic subtidal and intertidal ecology (REP5-034) and Volume 1, Chapter 1: Physical processes (REP5-030) have been updated at Deadline 5 to include the new commitments made at Deadline 4. The Applicants have responded to Natural England's response to ExQ2 7.2.4 in Applicants' Response to IPs' submissions at Deadline 6.	Progressed but not resolved. a) Natural England welcomes the Applicant's comment [REP5-031] to use a controlled flow excavator in areas of sandwaves within Fylde MCZ to minimise increases in Suspended Sediment Concentrations (SSCs) and ensure localised sediment deposition. To resolve this matter consideration should be given to boulder clearance and measures to ensure that impacts will be reduced during removal i.e. not using a boulder plough and ensuring that boulders will be redeposited in similar habitat type and randomly to avoid linear structures which may disrupt sediment transport. b) Natural England welcomes the inclusion of a micro-siting around reef features (only) in the DCO as previously acknowledged. We also note that the Applicants included further wording around application of the mitigation hierarchy in relation to NERC habitats in [REP4-100] but note that this is not a named plan and therefore not secured. Ideally, mitigation measures should also be included in the Benthic and Physical Processes Chapter or within a named plan, noting the potential presence of other NERC Habitats.		The Applicants welcome that Natural England have acknowledged progress on these points. The Applicants highlight that information regarding boulder clearance was provided in the Applicants response to RR-1601.B.15 (PDA-016), Applicants reiterated that, as detailed in the Outline CSIP (REP5-077), any boulders identified as likely to impact installation will need to be moved to the side (side cast), away from the immediate location of the offshore export cable infrastructure. There are two key methods of clearing boulders: boulder plough and boulder grab. Where a high density of boulders is seen, a plough would typically be required to clear the offshore export cable installation corridor. Where medium and low densities of boulders are present, a subsea grab is expected to be employed. The outline CSIP (REP5-077) also details that geotechnical data indicates that boulders are present in a low density across the majority of the study area but distributed sporadically along the offshore export cable corridor routes. Therefore, the method of boulder clearance is likely to be subsea grab, especially within the Fylde MCZ. The outline CSIP (REP5-077) indicates that this portion of the offshore export cable route is largely featureless with small areas of ridge and runnel in the nearshore area, sporadic ripples throughout the

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						MCZ, and mega-ripples along the western edge of the MCZ. The required boulder clearance width is 20 m and boulders would be relocated circa 10 m either side from the centreline of each cable. Due to this limited distance, boulders would, inevitably, be relocated to areas of similar habitat, and seabed characteristics would remain unchanged. Also, due to the low density and sporadic nature of the boulders coupled with the limited relocation distance, linear structures would not be formed to potentially interfere with baseline sediment transport regimes. Therefore, the Applicants consider that no further mitigation measures or commitments are required. The above limitations set out in the outline CSIP (REP5-077) are secured by Condition 18(1)(e) of Schedules 14 and 15 to the draft DCO (REP6-013). With regards to impacts to priority habitats under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006 please see the Applicants' response to NE6.
RI_B5	We advise that the Applicant adequately considers the potential for a four-year gap between the completion of the first project (i.e. Morgan) and the commencement of the second (i.e. Morecambe) for 'Construction Scenario 3b'. We advise the MDS is updated within the Project Description and relevant Chapters to account for this, taking into consideration the potential for the recovery of seabed species and habitats resulting in outdated baseline data. We also advise that the relevant impact assessments are updated and outcomes taken account of in named plans.		The Applicants updated Volume 2, Chapter 1: Physical processes (REP5-030) at Deadline 5 to include all additional clarifications/justifications provided in submissions at previous deadlines including information outlining the justification of the concurrent scenario as the MDS for physical processes rather than the sequential scenario. The Applicants await Natural England's response to the updated chapters submitted at Deadline 5 and trust that this allows for resolution of this matter.	No change.		The Applicants submitted an assessment of construction scenarios in response to the Rule 9 letter (AS-070) and a clarification note at Deadline 1 (REP1-060). These documents detail how a four year gap between projects within the sequential construction scenario has been assessed in the Environmental Statement. The MDS assessed within Volume 2, Chapter 1: Physical processes (REP5-030) has taken due regard of the potential range of construction scenarios including sequential construction with a gap of up to four years. The MDS for physical processes was determined to be concurrent construction as the recovery between phases which is associated with sequential construction is deemed to be beneficial for coastal processes. Additionally, the Applicants updated Volume 2, Chapter 1: Physical processes (REP5-030) at Deadline 5 to include all additional clarifications/justifications provided in submissions at previous deadlines including information outlining the justification of the concurrent scenario as the MDS for physical processes rather than the sequential scenario. Natural England have not provided clarification on further information required to close out this matter.

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RI_B6	It is not clear that the 9% and 10% total cable corridor values for sandwave clearance and cable protection respectively refer to the MDS requirements for each of the individual 6 cables (noting that each will have its own trench) or collectively. Similarly, clarity on the MDS specifications within and outside the Fylde MCZ should be provided. We advise that the MDS for construction and cable protection footprints are reviewed and updated where necessary across all ES chapters and named plans. And specific areas and volumes included for cable protection within and outside Fylde MCZ on the DCO/dML					Resolved at Deadline 3.
RI_B7	Natural England requires a plan showing the location of the proposed exit pits and Transmission Joint Bays (TJB) within the Application documents to be able to fully advise on the potential impacts of cabling under Lytham St Annes Dunes SSSI and St Annes Old Links Golf Course BHS.					Resolved at Deadline 3.
RI_B8	Natural England notes that the MDS for Pre-Lay Grapnel Run (PLGR), Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) clearance and boulder clearance have not been fully assessed within the ES Chapters. It is stated in the documents that "this is to prevent double counting of the seabed footprint parameters". However, there is no certainty that these activities will be undertaken at the same time or within the same footprint as the other site preparation activities especially the relocation of boulders. We advise the MDS figures for each of these activities should be presented in the Project Description and all other relevant chapters in line with Natural England's Best Practice Guidance Phase III.		The Applicants await Natural England's response to the updated chapters submitted at Deadline 5 and trust that this allows for resolution of this matter.	Progressed but not resolved. We welcome the inclusion of UXO clearance parameters in the updated Chapter. However, we maintain that MDS for pre-lay grapnel runs and boulder clearance should be provided for reasons outlined in our original comment.		The Applicants welcome Natural England's response on these points. The Applicants refer Natural England the MDS provided in Table 1.14 of Volume 2, Chapter 1: Physical processes (REP5-030) which notes that with regard to suspended sediments boulder clearance activities and pre-lay grapnel runs will result in minimal increases in suspended sediment concentrations and were therefore not been considered in the assessment of this impact. It was noted that pre-lay grapnel runs would only be carried out, if required, after sandwave clearance or boulder clearance has been undertaken and would not change the seabed bathymetry or composition and therefore physical processes would remain unaffected by these activities. However, the impact assessment with regards to boulder clearance is included in sections 1.10.3.11 to 13 if Volume 2, Chapter 1: Physical processes (REP5-030).
RI_B9	We note that the MDS for sandwave clearance and seabed preparation is 1,426,900m3. However, this has not been broken down any further into individual activities, location, nor has a sandwave clearance impact width and length been provided and assessed. Natural England		The Applicants had not appreciated that Natural England wanted full calculation for prediction of sandwave clearance spoil volume. The spoil volumes assessed have been informed by the results of initial surveys (multi-beam echo sounder, side scan sonar, magnetometer, sub-bottom	No change. Our comment at Deadline 5 is also applicable here. Natural England also queries how the use of a control flow excavator for cable installation in the Fylde MCZ alters sandwave levelling amounts and impact assessments of both direct and indirect impacts from levelling and deposition. To resolve this issue further		The Applicants would highlight that the use of controlled flow excavator does not change the volume of material and the commitment made at Deadline 5 to the use of controlled flow excavator only within the MCZ, and the subsequent Deadline 5 updates to the Outline Cable Specification and Installation Plan (CSIP) (REP5-077) were in direct

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	advises that the Applicant provides all the parameters associated with sandwave clearance and seabed preparation and the tools to be used for sandwave levelling to ensure the MDS and WCS have been assessed. This information should be included and updated within the ES Chapter and/or relevant named plan.		profiler, geotechnical and environmental surveys) to provide an initial analysis of the bathymetry, soils and seabed features. These have been applied in conjunction with the location and requirements of each of the Transmission Assets. The Applicants are confident that the total spoil volumes assessed are correct and realistic. Further, the Applicants acknowledge that it is the Applicants' responsibility to satisfy themselves that the Transmission Assets can be constructed within the parameters specified within the DCO, and that they will need to adhere to those values and the MDSs assessed within the EIA. The parameters of principal importance in the context of the physical processes assessment relate to the breach width, the underlying sediment transport regime (mobile bed sediment features versus geological features) and the availability of material to support sandwave recovery. These parameters have been provided and applied within the assessment. The total spoil volume is of less significance in this context for the understanding of the effects of individual sandwave clearance activities. The Applicants have however provided the MDS for length of and width of sandwave clearance in Table 1.14, Volume 2, Chapter 1: Physical processes (REP5-030). Noting that sandwaves are most prevalent within the Morgan Offshore Wind Project: Generation Assets where sandwave heights can be up to 5 m at the bedforms crest. It is also noted that sandwaves are less prevalent and of smaller magnitude where then occur in shallower water (typically less than 1 m), giving rise the reduced volume associated with Morecambe Offshore Windfarm Transmission Assets. Additionally, the Applicants updated the Outline Cable Specification and Installation Plan (REP5-077), Volume 1, Chapter 3: Project description (REP5-024), Volume 2, Chapter 1: Physical processes (REP5-030) and the Dredging and disposal - site characterisation plan (REP5-081) at Deadline 5 to limit sandwave clearance	information is required to be able to enable us to provide further advice on the scale and significance of impacts.		response to Natural England's concerns (RI_C24) relating to ensuring the retention of sediment within the local sediment cells. At Deadline 6 the Applicants detailed that the spoil volumes assessed have been informed by the results of initial surveys (multi-beam echo sounder, side scan sonar, magnetometer, sub-bottom profiler, geotechnical and environmental surveys) to provide an initial analysis of the bathymetry, soils and seabed features. These have been applied in conjunction with the location and requirements of each of the Transmission Assets. With reference to physical processes, the parameters of principal importance in the context of the physical processes assessment relate to the breach width, the underlying sediment transport regime (mobile bed sediment features versus geological features) and the availability of material to support sandwave recovery. These parameters have been provided and applied within the assessment.

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			methods in the Fylde MCZ to Controlled Flow Excavator only.			
RI_B10	Natural England advises that further assessment of the feasibility of the following cable installation tools: ploughing, jetting, mechanical cutting in shallow waters is required to support the worst-case scenario assessment for nearshore cable installation.		The Applicants updated Volume 2, Chapter 1: Physical processes (REP5-030) at Deadline 5 to include all additional clarifications/justifications provided in submissions at previous deadlines to address Natural England's comments relating to the feasibility of cable installation in shallow waters. The Applicants await Natural England's response to the updated chapters submitted at Deadline 5 and trust that this allows for resolution of this matter.	Progressed but not resolved. The Applicant provided further information on ploughing, jetting, mechanical cutting cable installation tools in the updated Chapter at Deadline 5 for this particular project, the additional information provided and informed by the ABPmer report is sufficient to confirm that cable burial to optimum depth is achievable using those particular tools. However, we note that no consideration has been given to ability to us those tools in shallow water and what the implications may be for direct and indirect impacts to designated site features.		The Applicants welcome Natural England's acknowledgment that progress has been made on this point. The Applicants note that in response to this point raised in Natural England's comments on Examining Authority's Written Questions (ExQ1) Q7.1.4 with regards to the request for further information relating to the feasibility of the cable installation tools in shallow waters (REP4-100), it was noted that the Applicants have responded to this point in full in the Applicants' response to RR.1601.B.11 (PDA-016). In summary, the information presented within the Outline Cable Burial Risk Assessment (CBRA) (APP-219) and Outline CSIP (REP5-077) show that ploughing, jetting and cutting are suitable installation techniques for the sandy and clay sediment types found in shallow waters within the Transmission Assets Order Limits and a worst case scenario has been presented. A combination of burial methods are likely to be adopted, with the Outline CSIP covering all necessary techniques to allow the appropriate method to be selected based on the expected sediment density and strength, ensuring the minimum burial depth is achieved. The Outline CBRA (APP-219) was prepared by Royal HaskoningDHV who have a wealth of experience in undertaking CBRA's and the Applicants' export cable installation team have a combined experience of over 50 years installing subsea cables, including selection of the appropriate burial tools / techniques in shallow water and/ or constructing new machinery to improve the efficiency of cable burial.
RI_B11	a) Natural England advises that the worst case impacts from UXO clearance in relation to marine processes, including recovery is further assessed. b) Whilst the Applicant has stated UXO clearance activities may take place within Fylde MCZ; we advise that UXOs should be moved outside of the MCZ prior to detonation. The Applicant should demonstrate why they have not committed to this mitigation. This information should be included and updated within the ES Chapter and/or relevant named plans.		The Applicants updated Volume 2, Chapter 1: Physical processes (REP5-030) at Deadline 5 to include all additional clarifications/justifications provided in submissions at previous deadlines to address Natural England's comments relating to UXO clearance. The Applicants await Natural England's response to the updated chapters submitted at Deadline 5 and trust that this allows for resolution of this matter.	Progressed but not resolved. We note that the Applicant has now scoped UXO into the EIA assessment for physical processes. Further information/assessment has been provided in relation to WCS, however SSCs have not been assessed. Additionally, we maintain that UXO should be moved outside of designated sites prior to detonation.		The Applicants welcome that Natural England have acknowledged progress on these points. As outlined in the Applicants' response to Annex 3.2.9 to RR– Natural England (RR- 1601)- Appendix B (Physical Processes) (PDA-016) increased SSCs from UXO clearance would be local, temporary and recoverable and, as such, effects are negligible and so impacts on SSC were not considered within the physical processes assessment. With respect to Natural England's comments that UXOs should be moved outside of designated sites prior to detonation, as outlined in Table 1.15 of the MCZ Screening and Stage 1 Assessment Report (REP5-022) the feasibility of moving UXOs would depend on their condition and safety and no

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						commitments can be made until the Applicants have more information on the presence and types of UXO in the Fylde MCZ (if any). The Applicants would reiterate that the MDS assessed (i.e. up to 4 UXOs in the MCZ) is highly precautionary and based on current information, there are no know UXOs within the Fylde MCZ.
RI_B12	We advise that further information is provided by the Applicant on how seabed mobility has been considered with regards to cable protection requirements and locations in relation to this specific Application. This should be updated and included within the ES chapters (including those relating to landfall) and in the Outline CSIP.		Please see the Applicants' response to RI_B5.	Progressed but not resolved. We welcome the submission of the requested 2023 ABPmer report into Examination and updates made to the physical processes chapter at Deadline 5. However, there is still no further information on cable protection detail, location, design extent or requirements in the nearshore.		Please see the Applicants' response to RI_B3.
RI_B13	It is unclear what the potential impacts may be for intertidal Direct Pipe installation, trenching, and temporary infrastructure (e.g. cofferdams) on seabed and coastal morphology, and how recovery of the landfall location will be secured. Natural England advise that (a) the Applicant should consider and assess all potential impacts to seabed morphology that may arise due to trenchless landfall works during the lifetime of the Projects. Including size and duration of installation of cofferdams and potential disruption to coastal processes. And (b) produce an Outline Landfall Method Statement and secure this in the DCO/dMLs. Natural England also advises further information is needed about the location of the export cables across the beach.		The Applicants await Natural England's response to the updated chapters submitted at Deadline 5 and trust that this allows for resolution of this matter.	Progressed but not resolved. The Applicant has submitted an outline landfall construction method statement and inclusion of Appendix A in this document at Deadline 5 which includes a direct pipe risk assessment and proposed mitigation for bentonite breakouts. Further information and clarification around the MDS for exit pits and cofferdams in relation to temporary habitat loss has been provided in the updated Chapter at Deadline 5. However, insufficient evidence on the duration of the impacts and potential changes to Marine Processes has bee presented to support the argument that the benefits of using the cofferdams outweigh the loss of sediment. Equally there is no ability to determine if mitigation measures will be required. In addition, mitigation measures in the form of the first project installing the ducts for both projects has not be considered to help recovery and there is no monitoring of the recovery proposed.		The Applicants welcome that Natural England have acknowledged progress on these points. The Applicants would reiterate that use of cofferdams would not result in the loss or change of sediment. As detailed in response to Natural England's comments on Outline Landfall Construction Method Statement Figure 3 in Appendix B (REP6-151) the Applicants confirm that where exits pits are located in the inter-tidal region trenching will be undertaken within the confines of the coffer dams during low tide events. The excavated material would be removed and stored in a temporary working area(s) so it is not at risk of erosion or dispersion due to tides. Excavated material will therefore be preserved to facilitate backfilling to reinstate the beach to pre-construction sediment type and level. This will ensure limited impacts during the construction phase and a return to baseline conditions following the removal of the coffer dams. Given that backfilling will return the area to both baseline sediment type and level no recovery period will be associated with these activities. The Applicants also highlight that an updated Outline landfall construction method statement submitted at Deadline 6 to include these clarifications (REP6-151).
RI_B14	It is unclear in [APP-042] 1.10.4.1 what is meant my 'foreign material'. Natural England advises that the Applicant secures a commitment that no foreign material will be placed above the surface		Resolved at Deadline 5			

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	(winter beach levels), which could potentially interfere with sediment transport pathways. We advise that this is also secured in the DCO/DMLs.					
RI_B15	Whilst we recognise that several cable protection types have been presented, no commitment to using a specific cable protection has been made. Natural England advises the selection of cable protection should favour those engineering options which reduce potential impacts to marine processes and have the greatest likelihood of successful removal at decommissioning.		Please see the Applicants' response to NE4 (PADSS).	No change. Our comment at Deadline 5 is also applicable here.		See the Applicants' response to NE4 (PADDS).
RI_B16	Natural England advises that an outline Construction Method Statement and outline CSIP are provided/updated as part of the consenting stage to demonstrate that the WCS has been assessed, and any predicted impacts can be sufficiently mitigated.		The Outline Landfall Construction Method Statement has been updated at Deadline 6 (S_D4_22/F03) to address Natural England's comments. See also the Applicants' response to Appendix B (cross-ref) and Appendix G5.3 (cross-ref).	Progressed but not resolved. The Applicant has submitted an outline landfall construction method statement, CMS and CSIP at Deadline 5 which are welcomed. Further information and clarification around the MDS for exit pits and cofferdams in relation to temporary habitat loss has been provided in the updated Chapter at Deadline 5. However, insufficient evidence on the duration of the impacts and potential changes to marine and coastal processes from cofferdams has been presented to support the argument that the benefits of using the cofferdams outweigh the loss and change of sediment. Equally there is no ability to determine if or what mitigation measures will be required.		The Applicants welcome that Natural England have acknowledged progress on these points. Please refer to RI_B13 for response associated with the use of coffer dams.
RI_B17	Natural England advises that surveys of the recoverability of the seabed, with a focus on sandwave reformation are undertaken to confirm predictions of recovery rates, and monitoring of the impacts of construction activities outside of Fylde MCZ on geomorphological receptors should be included for consideration in the Offshore In Principle Monitoring Plan (OIPMP).		The Offshore In Principle Monitoring Plan (IPMP) submitted with the Application for Development Consent includes for monitoring of impacts to sediment transport and sediment transport pathways due to presence of infrastructure and associated potential impacts to physical features and bathymetry. At Deadline 6 the Applicants further updated the Offshore IPMP to specifically include for monitoring of sandwave recovery though comparison of pre and post-construction geophysical data. The Applicants trust that this allows for resolution of this matter.	No change. As with our R&I comment at Deadline 3, we maintain that monitoring of physical processes and geomorphological receptors should be included for consideration in the OIPMP. We provided further advice on our position on this in Appendix B5.		The Applicants reiterate that the Offshore In Principle Monitoring Plan (IPMP) includes for monitoring of impacts to sediment transport and sediment transport pathways due to presence of infrastructure and associated potential impacts to physical features and bathymetry. Furthermore, at Deadline 6 the Applicants further updated the Offshore IPMP (REP6-103) to specifically include for monitoring of sandwave recovery though comparison of pre- and post-construction geophysical data. It is also noted that backfilling of exits pits with excavated material to reinstate the beach to pre-construction sediment type and level will ensure limited impacts during the construction phase.
RI_B18	Natural England do not agree with the Applicants conclusion of no likelihood of hindering the conservation objectives of Fylde MCZ which has been designated for		The Applicants have updated Volume 2, Chapter 1: Physical processes (REP5-030) at Deadline 5 to include all additional clarifications/justifications provided in	Not resolved. Although the Applicant has now undertaken a Stage 2 MCZ Assessment and without prejudice MEEB, we continue to disagree with the Applicant's conclusion of no likelihood of		See the Applicants' response to NE4 (PADDS) with regards to overarching comments relating to cable protection with further detail provide in response to RI_B3.

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	subtidal sand and subtidal mud. Natural England consider that any placement of scour prevention/cable protection has the potential to disrupt sediment process which could disrupt marine processes and have a lasting impact on interest features over the lifetime of the project and beyond which is potentially irreversible.		submissions at previous deadlines to address Natural England's comments relating to the nearshore and Fylde MCZ and to include reference to all new commitments made at previous deadlines. The Applicants await Natural England's response to the updated chapters submitted at Deadline 5 and trust that this allows for resolution of this matter.	hindering the conservation objectives of Fylde MCZ. Additionally, our comment RI_B2 also applies here in relation to cable protection within the MCZ.		
RI_B19	Natural England advises that the Project is likely to cause lasting impacts on benthic features within Fylde MCZ. Natural England have provided further advice on Fylde MCZ in Appendix I.					Resolved at Deadline 2.
RI_B20	We note that the physical processes assessment for Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets was undertaken using a conceptual modelling approach, based off of Mona Offshore Wind Project. The Applicant has stated this is due to the Transmission Assets being located within the same geological formation as the Mona offshore export cable. Ideally, project specific numerical modelling of the impacts of cable protection in isolation should be undertaken to inform in-combination assessments for future projects.		The Applicants updated Volume 2, Chapter 1: Physical Process at Deadline 5 (REP5-030) to include sediment type and cable installation information and provide sufficient detail on the location and design of the cables and associated protection to determine that impacts for sediment transport pathways, including the pathway into the Ribble Estuary, are of negligible to minor significance which is not significant in EIA terms. The conceptual approach was agreed with MMO, Cefas, Environment Agency and Natural England through the consultation processes via the Benthic Ecology, Fish and Shellfish and Physical Processes Expert Working Group Meetings (APP-190). As outlined during the consultation process and in Volume 2, Chapter 1: Physical processes (REP5-030), Table 1.6 and Section 1.9.5, the conceptual approach did not rely solely on Mona OWF project but also included a range of studies such as Morgan Generation EIA and modelling study (which included modelling of cable protection and was supplied in Volume 2, Annex 1.1 Physical processes associated modelling studies – Part 2 of 2 (APP-044)), Awel y Môr Offshore Wind Farm (modelling study and EIA) along with detailed project specific morphological seabed study (included assessment of historical datasets and modelling (ABPmer 2023)). In terms of baseline conditions, the Morgan Generation modelling study included the full	No change.		The Applicants reiterate that the conceptual approach was agreed with MMO, Cefas, Environment Agency and Natural England through the consultation processes via the Benthic Ecology, Fish and Shellfish and Physical Processes Expert Working Group Meetings (APP-190). The Applicants have responded to this point when raised in Natural England's comments on Examining Authority's Written Questions (ExQ1) Q7.1.6 (REP4-100), whereby modelling was requested if the Applicants are unable to provide further information at this stage on the detail around location and design of cable protection. The Applicants highlighted that information has been provided regarding the potential for cable protection in the nearshore (refer response RI_B3) and maintain the position that modelling is not required. Furthermore at Deadline 6 it was reiterated that, as outlined during the consultation process and in Volume 2, Chapter 1: Physical processes (REP5-030), Table 1.6 and Section 1.9.5, the conceptual approach did not rely solely on Mona OWF project but also included a range of studies including detailed project specific morphological seabed study (included assessment of historical datasets and modelling (ABPmer 2023)). Further information was also provided outlining the appropriateness of the data sources applied. The Morgan Generation modelling study included the full Transmission Assets study area. The Morgan Generation model was used to determine the tidal excursion for suspended sediment plumes related to the Transmission project. The project description for both Morgan Generation and Mona

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			Transmission Assets study area. The Morgan Generation model was used to determine the tidal excursion for suspended sediment plumes related to the Transmission project. The project description for both Morgan Generation and Mona OWF and also the Transmission Assets comprised of the same MDS parameters for cable trenching, cable protection, seabed preparation techniques and cable installation techniques owing to same ground conditions. Modelling for Morgan Generation included cable trenching and the influence of cable protection in areas directly adjacent to the offshore extent of the Transmission Assets and were therefore directly comparable. In terms of the similarities between Transmission Assets and the Mona OWF export cable which was used to inform the assessment - at both sites: • Cables run to landfall from an offshore water depth of 50m • Similar tidal flow – for example, peak tidal offshore currents are circa 1.0m/s during spring tides with currents of 0.4 m/s running along the coastline in the nearshore area • Similar wave climate – for example, wave climates vary from a significant wave height of 6.5m offshore to 4m nearshore during a 1:20 year event • Seabed sediments range from gravelly sand to finer sediment with predominantly sand in nearshore areas. Although the orientation of the coastline differs between Mona OWF landfall and Transmission Assets the sites experience a similar range of wave climates and nearshore current directions relative to the coastline. For these reasons the conceptual approach was adopted for use in the physical processes assessment.			OWF and also the Transmission Assets comprised of the same MDS parameters for cable trenching, cable protection, seabed preparation techniques and cable installation techniques owing to same ground conditions. Modelling for Morgan Generation included cable trenching and the influence of cable protection in areas directly adjacent to the offshore extent of the Transmission Assets and were therefore directly comparable. In terms of the similarities between Transmission Assets and the Mona OWF export cable which was used to inform the assessment - at both sites: • Cables run to landfall from an offshore water depth of 50m • Similar tidal flow – for example, peak tidal offshore currents are circa 1.0m/s during spring tides with currents of 0.4 m/s running along the coastline in the nearshore area • Similar wave climate – for example, wave climates vary from a significant wave height of 6.5m offshore to 4m nearshore during a 1:20 year event • Seabed sediments range from gravelly sand to finer sediment with predominantly sand in nearshore areas. Although the orientation of the coastline differs between Mona OWF landfall and Transmission Assets the sites experience a similar range of wave climates and nearshore current directions relative to the coastline. For these reasons the conceptual approach was adopted for use in the physical processes assessment.

Table 2.11: REP6-193 - Responses to Questions Regarding Benthic Subtidal and Intertidal Ecology

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Risk and Issues Log Deadline 1 – Benthic Subtidal and Intertidal Ecology **Taken from Natural England's Relevant and Written Representations Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets** **Appendix C - Benthic Subtidal and Intertidal Ecology**						
RI_C1	Natural England advises that there are a number of potential impacts both on intertidal and subtidal benthic habitats which have not been adequately considered or assessed within the Environmental Statement (ES). The specifics of which are included in the points within this worksheet.		The Applicants updated and submitted Volume 2, Chapter 2: Benthic subtidal and intertidal ecology (REP5-034) and the MCZ Screening and Stage 1 Assessment Report (REP5-022) at Deadline 5 to include all additional clarifications/justifications and new commitments provided in submissions at previous deadlines to address Natural England's comments relating to the MDS. The Applicants trust this this will allow for resolution of this matter.	Progressed but not resolved. The Applicant has provided further detail in the updated Chapter at Deadline 5 on the MDS for some elements which have been reflected and resolved in RI_C15 and RI_C20 and other comments at previous deadlines. However, we maintain that we are not in agreement for the MDS/WCS presented for; how the sandwave clearance figure was derived, UXO, pre-lay grapnel runs, boulder clearance, jack-ups, lasting habitat change/loss in Fylde MCZ and impacts from cable protection.		See the Applicants' response to NE3.
RI_C2	Natural England is concerned that MDS parameters are for cable protection to be installed at any point through the lifetime of the Project (including Operation and Maintenance), rather than the amount that will be required for the construction phase alone. Natural England advises that additional detail is needed on how the potential for the addition of further cable/scour protection during the O&M phase has been considered, and what proportion of the Maximum Design calculations for cable/scour protection the O&M requirements account for both within and outside of the MCZ.		Regarding the update to the Outline Offshore Operations and Maintenance Plan (OOMP) at Deadline 4 (REP4-072) to include for deployment of cable protection limited to the first 2 years of the O&M phase / extent of the marine licensable activity (whichever is first), the Applicants note Natural England's comments that, if for any reason this approach is demonstrated to be impracticable, Natural England advises that there will be requirement for a greater number of monitoring locations / expanded monitoring periods to mitigate for instances where additional rock protection placed within the 2-year period overlaps or has potential to impact the benthic recovery monitoring locations. The Applicants acknowledge this and consider that this can be implemented via the adaptive management approach, as outlined in the updates to Offshore IPMP at Deadline 5 (REP5-079). This can also be managed via the detailed benthic monitoring plans to be developed post-consent (should consent be granted). For example through inclusion of sufficient control and impact monitoring stations at the outset to ensure robustness of design if selected stations are later impacted by cable protection placed within the 2 year post-construction period (i.e. ensuring enough redundancy in the monitoring design).	Progressed but not resolved. We welcome the wording included in the OOMP at Deadline 4 with regards to limiting the deployment of cable/scour protection outside of Fylde MCZ to the first 10 years. We also note that the worse case scenario for concurrent cable installation would allow for cable protection to be placed over a 7.5+ year period within the MCZ, with recovery hindered due to wider impacts on the designated site. We advise that spatial and temporal impacts are minimised as much as possible. We understand that the Applicant is minded to update this condition to only allow cable protection to be placed during the construction phase in Fylde MCZ. We advise that such a commitment would address this issue.		In response to Natural England's submissions, the Applicants updated the Outline OOMP at Deadline 7 (J19/F04) to remove the ability to deploy cable protection within the Fylde MCZ beyond the end of the construction phase. Deployment of any cable protection within the Fylde MCZ during the operation and maintenance phase will require a separate marine licence. The Applicants would note that Natural England agreed in the SoCG (NE.BE.2 / C2 in REP6-179) that subject to the Applicants making the change noted above, this matter would be resolved.

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RI_C3	a) Natural England advises that the Project is likely to cause lasting impacts on benthic features within Fylde MCZ and that the sites 'maintain' conservation objectives will be hindered. b) Every effort should be made to reduce the impacts through the adoption of robust mitigation measures, including commitments to remove infrastructure at the decommissioning phase. c) We advise that the MCZ assessment should proceed to a stage 2 assessment and a without prejudice MEEB case provided.					Resolved at Deadline 2.
RI_C4	Natural England advises that impacts to priority habitats under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006 are avoided and where that is not possible due consideration is demonstrated. Particular consideration should be given to those which are most sensitive and/or listed as threatened/in decline under OSPAR.		See the Applicants' response to NE6 (PADSS).	Progressed but not resolved. Natural England welcomes the inclusion of a micro-siting around reef features (only) in the DCO as previously acknowledged. We also note that the Applicants included further wording around application of the mitigation hierarchy in relation to NERC habitats in [REP4-100] but note that this is not a named plan and therefore not secured. Ideally, mitigation measures should also be included in the Benthic and Physical Processes Chapter or within a named plan, noting the potential presence of other NERC Habitats.		See the Applicants' response to NE3.
RI_C5	Natural England strongly advises that a commitment to remove all infrastructure associated with the development at decommissioning is secured in the DCO. This should be provided in an Outline Decommissioning Plan should also be provided as part of the consent phase to detail the approach to decommissioning.		See the Applicants' response to NE4 (PADSS).	Not resolved. As outlined at Deadline 5, whilst the Applicant has agreed to 'no rock dumping' within Fylde MCZ, there is no commitment to remove cable/scour protection at the time of decommissioning. We understand this to be the Applicant's final position. Therefore our original position on this matter remains unchanged which is that all on and above seabed infrastructure (including cable/scour protection) should be removed from benthic designated sites at the time of decommissioning and secured in the DCO.		See the Applicants' response to NE6.
RI_C6	Natural England notes that the Applicants current EIA assessment fails to consider or assess the potential pressures and impacts on the supporting benthic habitats for Special Protection Area (SPA) features, including Liverpool Bay SPA. Full consideration is required to inform a robust assessment of the		The Applicants have updated the HRA Stage 2 ISAA Part 3 (REP5-21) and submitted the revised version at Deadline 5. The Applicants await Natural England's response to this updated document, which the Applicants trust resolves this matter.	Resolved. We welcome the updated assessment including further detail on long term loss of habitat supporting prey species included in the ISAA. The detail provided satisfies our concerns relating to features of Liverpool Bay SPA.		The Applicants welcome Natural England resolving this matter following the submission of the updated Habitats Regulations Assessment Stage 2 Information to Support an Appropriate Assessment Part Three – Special Protection Areas (SPA) and Ramsar Site assessments (APP-107 as updated in REP6-024) at Deadline 5.

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	likely impacts upon designated ornithological features.					
RI_C7	We advise that the Applicant adequately considers the potential for a four-year gap between the completion of the first project (i.e. Morgan) and the commencement of the second (i.e. Morecambe) for 'Construction Scenario 3b'. We advise the MDS is updated within the Project Description and relevant Chapters to account for this, taking into consideration the potential for the recovery of seabed species and habitats resulting in outdated baseline data. We also advise that the relevant impact assessments are updated and outcomes taken account of in named plans.		The Applicants have updated Volume 2, Chapter 2: Benthic subtidal and intertidal ecology at Deadline 5 (REP5-034) to include information outlining the justification of the relevant construction scenario for each impact pathway, which the Applicants trust resolves this matter.	No change. The worse case scenario for concurrent cable installation would allow for cable protection to be placed over a 7.5+ year period with recovery hindered due to wider impacts on the designated site. There remains no acknowledgement of implications for monitoring of impacts and or recovery. We advise that spatial and temporal impacts are minimised as much as possible. Therefore at the landfall we advise further consideration of mitigation measures in the form of the first project installing the ducts for both projects to partially address these concerns.		With regard to the first point, please see the Applicants' response to RI_C2 confirming that the Applicants updated the Outline OOMP at Deadline 7 (J19/F04) to remove the ability to deploy cable protection within the Fylde MCZ beyond the end of the construction phase. Deployment of any cable protection within the Fylde MCZ during the operation and maintenance phase will require a separate marine licence. Regarding the second point on timing of duct installation, through the examination, the Applicants have explained why it is not possible, at this stage, for the projects to commit to installation of ducts by the first project on behalf of the other project (see the Applicants' response to Issue Specific Hearing 1 Action 28 (REP1-039) and response to Q1:1.1.7 in ExQ1 (REP3-056)). However, while the projects cannot provide an absolute commitment to concurrent construction or construction on behalf of the other, if both projects can progress on aligned programmes (e.g. are awarded CfDs within the same allocation round), all opportunities for coordination will be fully explored. This commitment is secured through various DCO requirements.
RI_C8	It is not clear that the 9% and 10% total cable corridor values for sandwave clearance and cable protection respectively refer to the MDS requirements for each of the individual 6 cables (noting that each will have its own trench) or collectively. Similarly, clarity on the MDS specifications within and outside the Fylde MCZ should be provided. We advise that the MDS for construction and cable protection footprints are reviewed and updated where necessary across all ES chapters and named plans. And specific areas and volumes included for cable protection within and outside Fylde MCZ on the DCO/dML					
RI_C9	Natural England notes that the cable protection types listed within the design envelope (Table 3.7) appear to be contradictory to the commitment for all cable protection to be removable from an environmental perspective. Due consideration should be given to the		Please see the Applicants' response to PADSS NE4.	Not resolved. Our comment for RI_C5 also applies here.		See the Applicants response to RI_C5.

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	nature of the cable protection used and should favour those engineering options with the greatest likelihood of successful removal, from an environmental perspective, at the Projects' end of life.					
RI_C10	a) Natural England advises that clarity is provided within the Application documents on the likely impacts from using Direct Pipe cable installation techniques. We advise that the following is provided and updated within the Application documents: - Scour protection requirements at the direct pipe exit and/or entry locations; - Cable/scour protection requirements in the intertidal and subsequent mitigation; and - MDS for the sum of both projects for 'maximum cofferdam area dimensions' to be included in Tables 3.6 and 3.13. b) We also advise that a landfall management plan should be provided in outline at the time of consent. All landfall impacts, including subtidal impacts, should be considered collectively to determine management/mitigation measures to ensure that significant impacts (both direct and indirect) are avoided to designated site features.		The Applicants await Natural England's response to the updated documents submitted at Deadline 5. The Applicants have responded to Natural England's comments on the Outline landfall construction method statement in their response to Appendix B5 and Appendix G5.3 (REP6-172).	Progressed but not resolved. a) From a benthic perspective we believe that sufficient information on scour protection at exit pit locations, scour protection in the intertidal and cofferdam footprint have been provided, with the additional commitment that no cable/scour protection will be deployed between MLWS and MHWS. Therefore we advise that this resolves this point. b) However, the temporal risks associated with the use of cofferdams remain unknown and therefore we are unable to advise that the mitigation measures are sufficient"		The Applicants welcome Natural England's confirmation that the information provided by the Applicants at Deadline 4 (REP4-100) have resolved the first part (point 'a') of Natural England's comment from a benthic perspective. The Applicants submitted an update to the Outline landfall construction method statement at Deadline 6 (REP6-151) and believe this matter will be readily resolved.
RI_C11	Natural England advises that a further assessment of the feasibility of the cable installation tools in shallow waters is required to support the worst-case scenario assessment.		The Applicants await Natural England's response to the updated chapters submitted at Deadline 5, which the Applicants trust resolves this matter.	Progressed but not resolved. The Applicant provided further information on ploughing, jetting, mechanical cutting cable installation tools in the updated Chapter at Deadline 5 for this particular project, the additional information provided and informed by the ABPmer report is sufficient to confirm that cable burial to optimum depth is achievable using those particular tools. However, we note that no consideration has been given to ability to use those tools in shallow water and what the implications may be for direct and indirect impacts to designated site features.		The Applicants welcome Natural England's confirmation that the updates made to the application documents at Deadline 5 and information in the ABPmer report are sufficient to confirm that cable burial to optimum depth is achievable. With respect to the feasibility in shallow waters please see the Applicants' response to RI_B12.
RI_C12	Natural England advises that storage options for material from the landfall exit pits and open cut trenching are explored to minimise impacts and allow for sufficient back filling.		The Applicants have updated the Outline landfall construction method statement (S_D4_22/F03) at Deadline 6 to address Natural England's comments at Deadline 5 and to clarify storage options for material from the landfall exit pits and open cut dredging.	Resolved. The Applicant has provided further information on storage options for material from the landfall exit pits and open cut trenching in the updated Chapter at Deadline 5.		The Applicants welcome Natural England resolving this matter following the submission of the updated Volume 2, Chapter 2: Benthic subtidal and intertidal ecology (REP5-034) submitted at Deadline 5.

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RI_C13	Natural England notes that the MDS for Pre-Lay Grapnel Run (PLGR), Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) clearance and boulder clearance have not been fully assessed within the ES Chapters. There is no certainty that these activities will be undertaken at the same time or within the same footprint as the other site preparation activities especially in relation to boulder relocation. We advise that the MDS for PLGR, UXO clearance and boulder clearance are presented within the Project Description and all other relevant chapters in line with Natural England's Best Practice Guidance Phase III.		The Applicants await Natural England's response to the updated chapters submitted at Deadline 5, which the Applicants trust resolves this matter.	Progressed but not resolved. We welcome the inclusion of UXO clearance parameters in the updated Chapter. However, we maintain that MDS for pre-lay grapnel runs and boulder clearance should be provided for reasons outlined in our original comment. Please see response to RI_B4 in tab B.		See the Applicants' response to NE3.
RI_C14	Natural England advises that it is not clear how the MDS for sandwave clearance and seabed preparation has been derived. Natural England advises that the Applicant provides all the parameters associated with sandwave clearance and seabed preparation that were used to calculate the total MDS figure for 'sandwave clearance: offshore export cable (m3)' inside and outside of designated sites. These should be included and updated in the Project Description and the relevant Chapters in the ES to ensure that the impacts have been fully assessed.		The Applicants had not appreciated that Natural England wanted full calculation for prediction of sandwave clearance spoil volume. The spoil volumes assessed have been informed by the results of initial surveys (multi-beam echo sounder, side scan sonar, magnetometer, sub-bottom profiler, geotechnical and environmental surveys) to provide an initial analysis of the bathymetry, soils and seabed features as presented in the Cable Burial Risk Assessment (APP-219). These have been applied in conjunction with the location and requirements of the Transmission Assets. The Applicants are confident that the total spoil volumes assessed are correct and realistic. Further, the Applicants acknowledge that it is the Applicants' responsibility to satisfy themselves that the Transmission Assets can be constructed within the parameters specified within the DCO, and that they will need to adhere to those values and the MDSs assessed within the EIA. The Applicants are confident that that the MDS for all impact pathways, including those arising from the generation of spoil (both with regards to effects arising from increases in suspended sediment concentration and temporary habitat loss/disturbance), has been correctly calculated and assessed in Volume 2, Chapter 2: Benthic subtidal and intertidal ecology (REP5-034) and that this matter is, therefore, not a material concern. See also the Applicants' response to RI_B9 for further detail regarding relevance to the assessment of physical processes.	No change. Our comment at Deadline 5 is also applicable here. Natural England also queries how the use of a control flow excavator for cable installation in the Fylde MCZ alters sandwave levelling amounts and impact assessments of both direct and indirect impacts from levelling and deposition. To resolve this issue further information is required to be able to enable us to provide further advice on the scale and significance of impacts.		See the Applicants response to RI_C5 for the response on the calculations of spoil volume point. With respect to the new points raised at Deadline 6 by Natural England, the Applicants would highlight that the commitment made at Deadline 5 to the use of controlled flow excavator only within the MCZ, and the subsequent Deadline 5 updates to the Outline Cable Specification and Installation Plan (CSIP) (REP5-077 and further updated in REP6-097), Project Description (REP5-024) and the Dredging and disposal - site characterisation plan (REP5-081) were in direct response to Natural England's concerns (RI_C24) relating to ensuring the retention of sediment within the local sediment cells. The use of controlled flow excavator does not change the MDS assessed for the Fylde MCZ, in terms of volume of material or area of seabed affected, and the ExA can be confident that the volume of sandwave material levelled using this technique would not exceed the MDS assessed in Volume 2, Chapter 2: Benthic subtidal and intertidal ecology (REP5-034).

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RI_C15	Natural England notes that the MDS sandwave clearance requirements stated are inconsistent between the Project Description [APP-024] and Benthic ES Chapter [APP-045] and named plans. No MDS figures for construction footprints have been presented within the Project Description. Natural England advises the maximum temporary construction footprints are reviewed and updated where necessary across the Application documents.		The Applicants await Natural England's response to the updated chapters submitted at Deadline 5, which the Applicants trust resolves this matter.	Resolved. The Applicant has updated the sandwave clearance parameters in the Benthic Ecology Chapter at Deadline 5. This particular comment is resolved as it related to consistency across the documents but we highlight that our concerns remain with regards to how the sandwave clearance volume was derived (please see comment RI_C14).		The Applicants welcome this response and note that this matter has been resolved.
RI_C16	Natural England notes that within the CSIP it is stated that the distance between the cable crossings means that there will be separation in cable protection (rock armouring/mattress) making one linear line of protection. Natural England is concerned about the potential physical processes and benthic impacts from this which have not been assessed. We also assume that because this protection would be considered as cable crossing it would be considered permanent. Natural England advises that cable crossing requirements and impacts are reassessed to ensure that the MDS/WCS has been assessed.					Resolved at Deadline 3.
RI_C17	Natural England is not clear how 14 cable repairs of a length of 56km has been determined. Currently as written, the cable repairs could be of any length. There is therefore a lack in consistency in WCS for cable repairs presented across the project description and named plans within and outside of designated sites. Natural England advises that clarification is provided by the Applicant on the maximum number of repairs per cable and in total, maximum length of each cable repair. Assessments and named plans should be updated accordingly.		The Applicants thank Natural England for their confirmation that this matter is considered closed.			Resolved at Deadline 5.
RI_C18	Natural England does not agree with the statement that there was a "relatively low abundance of burrows overall" that "were not consistent with a confident classification as the 'sea pen and burrowing megafauna communities'. We note that this statement is contradictory to the findings of the Technical Report [APP-046] which found burrows to be 'common' in some locations, and therefore more numerous than the 'frequent' threshold required to meet the OSPAR definition for 'sea pen and burrowing megafauna communities'. Natural England advises that (a) the ES is updated to accurately reflect the findings and		The Applicants await Natural England's response to the updated Benthic subtidal and intertidal ecology chapter submitted at Deadline 5, which the Applicants trust resolves this matter.	No change. Natural England notes the updated wording at [REP5-035] section 2.6.3.18 and welcomes the precautionary approach of assuming the presence of seapen and burrowing megafauna communities. However, it remains unclear why there is focus on the Fylde MCZ when these features are protected outside of designated sites. Therefore, to resolve this issue the advice provided under RI_C4 should also be applied here.		The Applicants are pleased that Natural England welcome the updates made to Volume 2, Chapter 2: Benthic subtidal and intertidal ecology (REP5-034) at Deadline 5 confirming the precautionary approach adopted with respect to the 'sea pen and burrowing megafauna communities' important ecological feature (IEF). With respect to Natural England's new comments at Deadline 6 querying why there was a 'focus on the Fylde MCZ', the Applicants assume Natural England are referring to the updates made to paragraph 2.6.3.18 of Volume 2, Chapter 2: Benthic subtidal and intertidal ecology (REP5-034).

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	conclusions of the technical report. And (b) where possible, impacts to these Features of Conservation Interest (FOCI) are minimised. To inform the updates Natural England also advises that the EIA should be updated, and appropriate sensitivity attributed to the benthic communities assessed as determined using MarESA.					These updates were added in direct response to Natural England's comments in RI_C28 (which are now resolved) and it is not correct to state that the focus of the assessment was on the MCZ. The Applicants have assessed impacts to the 'sea pen and burrowing megafauna communities' IEF where present across the Offshore Order Limits. See the Applicants' response to RI_C4 for mitigation for NERC habitats.
RI_C19	It does not appear that that the duration, nature or area of seabed impacts from UXO clearance has been quantified or assessed within the ES chapters. We therefore require evidence that seabed depressions from both UXO detonations and jack-up legs will back-fill with similar sediment type and over what duration. Natural England requires the Applicant to quantify and evaluate the worst-case impacts from UXO clearance and jack-up events.		The Applicants await Natural England's response to the updated chapters submitted at Deadline 5, which the Applicants trust resolves this matter.	Progressed but not resolved. We note the Applicant has provided further detail in relation to WCS impacts from UXO to benthic subtidal and intertidal ecology. However, we maintain that there is insufficient information on craters and SSC's arising from UXO clearance. Additionally, detail on backfill of seabed depressions from both UXO and jack-up legs is still lacking. Finally, we maintain that UXO should be moved outside of designated sites prior to detonation.		See the Applicants' response to NE3.
RI_C20	Natural England advises that the ES Benthic Chapter [APP-045] is updated to consider impacts from construction of exit pits and/or cofferdam installation (where necessary) and associated site access and ancillary construction work areas. It has also not been stated whether or not scour protection may be required at the exit pit locations and whether any such requirements would be temporary or permanent.		CoT133 has been updated in the Commitments register (F1.5.3/F07) and the Outline landfall construction method statement (S_D4_22/F03) at Deadline 6 to remove the word 'permanently', i.e. no cable/scour protection shall be deployed in the intertidal area between Mean Low Water Springs (MLWS) and Mean High Water Springs (MHWS) during installation or O&M phase.	Progressed but not resolved. The Applicant has submitted further information and clarification around the MDS for exit pits and cofferdams in relation to temporary habitat loss in the updated Chapter at Deadline 5. It has been stated that no scour protection will be needed at the exit pits and we understand that commitments will be undated by the Applicant such that no cable/scour protection will deployed between MLWS and MHWS. Which addresses most but not all issues, please see RI-B16 in relation to impacts from the presence of cofferdams on coastal processes which remain unresolved. In addition, concerns around the direct pipe installation technique still remain as outlined in RI_B1 and RI_B13 of tab B.		The Applicants are pleased that the updates made to Volume 2, Chapter 2: Benthic subtidal and intertidal ecology (REP5-034) at Deadline 5 resolves most of the issues related to the construction of exit pits and/or cofferdam installation. For the outstanding matters, see the Applicants response to RI_B1 and B13.
RI_C21	Natural England notes that open cut trenching is likely to be required for each of the 6 cables at landfall. However, it does not appear that the MDS duration, nature or extent of benthic and water quality impacts from open cut trenching has been quantified or assessed. Natural England advises that the EIA and where relevant, MCZ assessments and named		The Applicants await Natural England's response to the updated chapters submitted at Deadline 5, which the Applicants trust resolves this matter.	No change. It is not clear if Suspended Sediment Concentrations (SSCs) arising from open cut trenching in the intertidal have been assessed and included in the WCS. This would need to consider spatial and temporal impacts.		The Applicants already confirmed in within RR-1601.C.24 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017) that open-cut trenching represents the MDS for increases in suspended sediment concentrations and sediment deposition as a result of cable installation within the intertidal area as clearly outlined in Table 2.12 of Volume 2, Chapter 2:

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	plans are updated to consider these impacts including an update with accurate worst-case prediction values for Suspended Sediment Concentrations (SSCs) arising from trenching in the Export Cable Corridor (ECC).					benthic subtidal and intertidal ecology (REP5-034).
RI_C22	Natural England notes that for cable landfall works there is a requirement for 2 x jack-up vessel deployments per cable out to KP10. Natural England queries how avoidance of benthic interest features and designated sites have been demonstrated? Natural England advises that as matter of best practice, the use of jack-up vessels should be excluded from benthic MPAs. Otherwise, clear justification as to why this is not possible and evidence of how impacts can be mitigated should be provided with evidence to support successful mitigation. a) We advise more detail and assessment is required regarding cable installation in shallow water depths below 11m in the ES Chapter and named plans. b) We also advise that an Outline Cable Landfall plan is provided and submitted into examination.		The Applicants await Natural England's response to the updated chapters submitted at Deadline 5, which the Applicants trust resolves this matter. The Applicants have responded to Natural England's comments on the Outline landfall construction method statement in their response to Appendix B5 and Appendix G5.3 (REP6-172) and submitted an updated Outline landfall construction method statement at Deadline 6 (S_D4_22/F03) which addresses Natural England's comments.	Progressed but not resolved. The Applicant has refined the MDS for use of 1 x jack-up event per cable in Fylde MCZ and an outline landfall construction method statement has been provided which resolves part (b) of our original comment. However, we maintain our original position that the use of jack-ups should be excluded from benthic MPAs. This advice is consistent with the advice provided for Sheringham and Dudgeon Extension Projects OWF NSIPs and impacts to Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds MCZ.		The Applicants welcome Natural England's confirmation that the information provided by the Applicants at Deadline 4 (REP4-100) have resolved the second part (point 'b') of Natural England's original comment. With regards to Natural England's advice that the use of jack-ups should be excluded from benthic MPAs, the Applicants responded to this point within RR-1601.C.25 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017). While the Applicants are unable to commit to this due to engineering reasons (i.e. the shallow water depths constraining the vessel type that can be used for cable pull in at the landfall) they have sought to limit the requirement for jack-up vessel deployments within the Fylde MCZ where feasible and have refined the MDS as far as possible. The Applicants will continue to explore the alternatives to the use of jack-up vessels in the Fylde MCZ. The use of and locations of jack-ups will be further evaluated and considered post-consent in the detailed CSIP(s), following further pre-construction surveys, secured as part of the detailed Construction Method Statement(s) (CMSs).
RI_C23	Natural England strongly advises that the Applicant's commitments; CoT108 and CoT109 should include removal of all cable protection at the decommissioning phase within Fylde MCZ, rather than only stating it will be designed to be removable. This should be provided in an Outline Decommissioning plan.		Please see the Applicants' response to NE4 (PADSS).	Not resolved. Our comment for RI_C5 also applies here.		See the Applicants' response to NE6.
RI_C24	Natural England notes that dredge disposal activities including sandwave clearance will be conducted throughout the Transmission Assets Order Limits. We highlight that no commitments have been proposed to mitigate impacts either within or outside of benthic designated sites, with the exception of CoT116 which states immediately adjacent to the impact occurring to enable recovery. Natural England advises that mitigation measures should be adopted by the Applicant and the relevant documents updated accordingly. More specifically, disposal options should be		The Applicants await Natural England's response to the updated documents submitted at Deadline 5, which the Applicants trust resolves this matter.	Progressed but not resolved. We welcome commitments CoT47 and CoT116 with regards to material arising from sandwave clearance. However, we maintain that further mitigation regarding impacts from sediment deposition within Fylde MCZ are committed to and secured. This was also outlined in Appendix B5 (Table 1, points 1 and 3). Please also see RI_B4 where we consider that the use of a		The Applicants would highlight that the relevant updates were already made to the Outline Cable Specification and Installation Plan (CSIP)(REP5-077) (additional updates were made at Deadline 6 (REP6-097)), Project Description (REP5-024) and the Dredging and disposal - site characterisation plan (REP5-081) at Deadline 5 to the use of controlled flow excavator only within the Fylde MCZ. At Deadline 6, CoT47 was further updated to clarify that sandwave clearance within the Fylde MCZ will be undertaken via Controlled Flow Excavator only and CoT116 was further

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	explored to ensure that sediment is deposited in areas of similar sediment character, adjacent and upstream of the levelling location, and using a fallpipe so that the risk of permanently altering the sediment character in any given location is minimised.			control flow excavator could potentially resolve this issue.		updated to provide additional clarity on disposal of sediments from sandwave clearance within the Fylde MCZ (REP6-042).
RI_C25	Natural England welcomes the commitment to micro-site the cables to further reduce the need for cable protection. However, this is not included within the commitments log or secured so it can't currently be considered mitigation. Natural England advises that proposed mitigation measures are secured within a named plan or on the face of the DCO/dML.		The Applicants thank Natural England for their confirmation that this matter is considered closed.			
RI_C26	Natural England does not agree with the 35 year duration which has been stated as the duration for which subtidal habitat loss will occur. Natural England advises that in the current absence of commitments to remove cable/scour protection, then the loss should be assessed as permanent. Natural England advises that the EIA should be updated with more appropriate descriptions of the timescales associated with impacts and assessment adjusted accordingly.		The Applicants await Natural England's response to the updated chapters submitted at Deadline 5, which the Applicants trust resolves this matter.	No change. Our comment at Deadline 5 is also applicable here.		See the Applicants' response to NE6.
RI_C27	Natural England advises that the monitoring proposed within the Offshore In Principal Monitoring Plan (OIPMP) currently appears to focus on physical/sediment recovery and lacks sufficient ecological context. Natural England advises that the rationale within Table 1.3 of the OIPMP needs to be updated to additionally include "temporal and spatial changes in benthic communities and their recoverability…." in order for the OIPMP to meet its objective.		The Applicants thank Natural England for their confirmation that this matter is considered closed. The Applicants have responded to the comments made by Natural England with regards to monitoring in the Applicants' response to the IPs' Submissions at Deadline 5 (see Table 2.2).			
RI_C28	From the information and figures presented ([APP-019] 1.8.2.31), it is not possible to determine whether the subtidal mud habitat type and NERC (2006) Priority habitat 'Burrowing megafauna communities' (as mapped in Figure 1.21 of the Benthic Technical report) overlap with the Fylde MCZ boundary. Site-specific benthic characterisation baseline should be presented together with the MCZ boundary in a single figure so that the habitats present can be checked against those assessed within the MCZ assessment report.		The Applicants await Natural England's response to the updated chapters submitted at Deadline 5, which the Applicants trust resolves this matter.	Resolved. Natural England notes the updates within REP5-035 section 2.6.3.18, in which the Applicant has determined that there is no Burrowing Megafauna communities within the MCZ. However this does not address RI_C18.		The Applicants welcome this response and note that this matter has been resolved. Also, please see the Applicants' response to RI_C18.

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RI_C29	Please see comments C28 – C33 regarding mitigation which are equally applicable to this section and Fylde MCZ.		The Applicants await Natural England's response to the updated documents submitted at Deadline 5, which the Applicants trust resolves this matter.	Progressed but not resolved. Our comments for RI_C4, RI_C5, RI_C9, RI_C23, RI_C24 are also applicable here.		See the Applicants responses to RI_C5 and RI_C24.
RI_C30	Natural England advises that the adoption of mitigation measures via a Benthic Mitigation Plan, and associated monitoring in the Offshore In-Principle Monitoring Plan are further considered in order that impacts (particularly permanent loss), on the more sensitive Section 41 Habitats are avoided and/or reduced wherever feasible through mitigation measures such as micro-siting.		The Applicants await Natural England's response to the updated documents submitted at Deadline 5, which the Applicants trust resolves this matter.	No change. Please also see comment RI_C4.		As outlined in the Applicants' response to RI_C4, the habitats present within the Offshore Order Limits are sedimentary habitats that are widespread and common within the Irish Sea. The Applicants have made a number of changes to the project design (embedded mitigation) to minimise impacts, and the Applicants have also committed to a number of measures to further reduce impacts to benthic habitats, including NERC priority habitats, including additional commitments made during the Examination. Additional mitigation, to that which has already been secured, is not proportionate to the sensitivity and widespread nature of the habitats present within the Order Limits or to the low level of risk to benthic receptors associated with the Transmission Assets. Further, the Applicants do not consider that there is precedent in the offshore wind industry, or other offshore industries, for avoiding the sedimentary habitats recorded within the Transmission Assets and neither would it possible to do so given their widespread distribution within the benthic subtidal and intertidal ecology study area.

Table 2.12: REP6-193 - Responses to Questions Regarding Fish and Shellfish Ecology

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 6 (in response to NE D5 submission)	Natural England's Comments/Update on Progression at Deadline 6	RAG D6	Applicants' comment at Deadline 7 (in response to NE D6 submission)
Risk and Issues Log Deadline 1 – Fish and Shellfish Ecology Taken from Natural England's Relevant and Written Representations Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets Appendix D - Fish and Shellfish Ecology						
RI_D1	Natural England do not agree that smelt should be screened out. There is potential for EMF to cause barrier effects that hinder smelt movements in and out of the		The Applicants position remains as at Deadline 5 (REP5-124). The Applicants have responded to Natural England's Appendix L5 in (see Table 2.16). Based on evidence that EMF levels will be reduced to background levels within a few metres of the	No change.		The Applicants' position remains as at Deadline 5 (REP5-124) and Deadline 6 (REP6-172).

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	estuary. Minimum and maximum target burial depths between 0.5 m and 3 m are detailed for the marine component. The Applicant should provide further detail on proposed cable depth below the riverbed and detail pertaining to EMF from the cable below the Ribble Estuary MCZ and this should be used to appropriately assess EMF impacts.		cable, the 7-45m depth of cable burial under the River Ribble will be sufficient to prevent any EMFs above background levels entering the aquatic environment of the Ribble Estuary MCZ and there is no risk of disruption to migration of European smelt. As such, monitoring is not considered appropriate or proportionate to the risk and the Applicants and Natural England are not agreed on this matter.			
RI_D2	Natural England recommend that an assessment of the long-term loss of seabed habitat that potentially supports prey species for the ornithological features of Liverpool Bay SPA is included. This should be based on an assessment of the area of suitable spawning and other supporting habitat for prey species (sandeel) that could be lost due to the construction of the cable corridor. The MDS states that cable protection will be designed to be removable, however there is no commitment to remove upon decommissioning. Sandeel exhibit high site fidelity and leaving cable covering in situ during decommissioning phase would be considered permanent habitat loss. Natural England also advises that the Applicant commit to removing all cable protection within Fylde MCZ at the time of decommissioning or assess permanent habitat loss of supporting prey species for Liverpool Bay SPA.		The Applicants have submitted an updated Habitats Regulations Assessment Stage 2 Information to Support an Appropriate Assessment Part Three – Special Protection Areas (SPA) and Ramsar Site assessments at Deadline 5 (REP5-021), which addresses this matter, and the Applicants await Natural England's response, which the Applicants trust resolves this matter.	Resolved. We welcome the updated assessment including further detail on long term loss of habitat supporting prey species included in the ISAA. The detail provided satisfies our concerns relating to features of Liverpool Bay SPA.		The Applicants welcome this response and note that this matter has been resolved.
RI_D3	There is potential for permanent habitat loss for sandeel and herring resulting from UXO and jack up barges altering sediment compositions. It is not clear whether this has been assessed. UXO clearance and jack up barges need assessing for effects from permanent habitat loss on sandeel and herring.		Impacts of jack up operations and UXO clearance on seabed sediments have been fully assessed under temporary habitat loss/disturbance (see paragraph 3.11.2.34 and 3.11.2.39 of Volume 2, Chapter 3: Fish and Shellfish Ecology (APP-048)). This outlines that although there would be some disturbance to seabed sediments, sediments within the areas affected will recover fully (e.g. infilling of craters/depressions via natural sediment mobility) and therefore there will be no permanent change to sediment composition as a result of these activities. The Applicants have submitted an updated Benthic subtidal and intertidal	No change.		The Applicants position remains as at Deadline 5 (REP5-124) and Deadline 6 (REP6-172).

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			ecology at Deadline 5 (REP5-034), which addresses this matter, and the Applicants await Natural England's response, which the Applicants trust resolves this matter.			
RI_D4	Natural England defers to CEFAS on survey data acquisition, data sources, assessment methodology and its conclusions in relation to herring and sandeel. Natural England advises the Applicant refer to CEFAS comments as advisors to the MMO on this matter.					
RI_D5	It is unclear whether all relevant pathways have been assessed and/or quantified. Where relevant, the calculations for temporary and/ or permanent habitat loss impacts need to be considered with regards to suitable habitat for sandeel and herring. Natural England advise that full consideration of the likely nature, extent, duration, and significance of impacts upon SPA supporting habitats is required to inform a robust assessment of the likely impacts upon designated ornithological features and in turn prey species.		The Applicants have submitted an updated Habitats Regulations Assessment Stage 2 Information to Support an Appropriate Assessment Part Three – Special Protection Areas (SPA) and Ramsar Site assessments at Deadline 5 (REP5-021), which addresses this matter, and the Applicants await Natural England's response, which the Applicants trust resolves this matter.	Resolved. We welcome the updated assessment including further detail on long term loss of habitat supporting prey species included in the ISAA. The detail provided satisfies our concerns relating to features of Liverpool Bay SPA.		The Applicants welcome this response and note that this matter has been resolved.
RI_D6	Natural England largely agree with justification for in-combination assessment impacts for UXO and EMF but see comments D10 & D11 for further consideration.		In the R&I log, RI_D10 and RI_D11 relate to RI_D3 and RI_D2, respectively, therefore please see Applicants' response to points D3 and D2 above.	No change.		In the risk and issues log, RI_D10 and RI_D11 relate to RI_D3 and RI_D2, respectively, therefore please see Applicants' response to point D2 has been resolved. Please see Applicants' response to point D3 above.
RI_D7	Natural England do not agree with the statement that smelt have been shown to habituate to anthropogenic noise sources. There is little evidence to support this. The Applicant should provide more robust evidence to support this conclusion or remove the statement.					

Table 2.13: REP6-193 - Responses to Questions Regarding Marine Mammals

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 6 (in response to NE D5 submission)	Natural England's Comments/Update on Progression at Deadline 6	RAG D6	Applicants' comment at Deadline 7 (in response to NE D6 submission)
Risk and Issue Log Deadline 1 – Marine Mammals Taken from Natural England's Relevant and Written Representations Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets Appendix E - Marine Mammals						
RI_E1	Natural England note that UXO clearance is included as a licenced activity in the DCO/marine licence (which includes high order clearance). This is a live issue for some projects in the consenting process (Mona OWF and Morgan OWF) and it is also applicable for the Transmission Assets. We strongly advise that a separate marine licence is sought for UXO clearance due to the lack of information available regarding the size, type and number etc of UXO that will require clearance and the over precaution that must be incorporated into the impact assessment at this stage. Without further information on what size of devices will proceed to clearance stage, the assessment (and associated mitigation protocols) must consider the worst-case scenario presented. Natural England advise that UXO clearance should be authorised under a standalone marine licence post consent and removed from the draft DCO.		Please see the Applicants' response to NE10 (PADSS).	No change. Natural England maintains its final position that UXO clearance should be subject to a separate marine licence post consent, regardless of whether the removal is low or high order.		Please see the Applicants' response to NE10 (PADSS).
RI_E2	Natural England have outstanding concerns on the assessment methodology. We see the issues as follows: • Dual effect categories in the assessment matrix where in certain cases non-significant and significant effects can result from the same combination of magnitude and sensitivity. It is generally accepted that the assessment should follow the precautionary principle thus further justification is needed when lower effect categories are chosen. Or, ideally, dual categories in the matrix should be avoided. • Terminology used to base the conclusions of the assessment is not defined thus there is uncertainty as to what spatial or temporal scale		The Applicants position remains the same as at Deadline 5. At Deadline 5 the Applicants re-iterated that clear justification had been provided in Volume 2 Chapter 4: Marine mammals (APP-050) for the determined conclusions of significance, (where required) and the Applicants are confident that these conclusions are appropriate and proportionate. The Applicants were confident at Deadline 5 that a robust response was provided within RR-1601 1601.E.2 (PDA-019) and requested that further information on outstanding concerns is provided, however no further information has been offered by Natural England. Finally, an updated version of Volume 2, Chapter 4: Marine Mammals (REP5-032) was submitted at Deadline 5, to reflect that high order UXO has been removed from the DCO.	We maintain our concerns raised in our Relevant Representations regarding the assessment methodology used and continue to advise that in order to address this the Applicant would need to revisit the assessment. However, we do not anticipate that the Applicant will do so before the end of Examination and due to the nature of this project specifically, and the risk associated from potential impacts, Natural England are satisfied to close this issue. Should changes occur to the proposed development which would increase the potential magnitude of impacts, this issue would require further discussion.		The Applicants note this comment and confirm that the Applicants' position remains the same as at Deadline 5. The Applicants welcome the decision by Natural England to close this issue.

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 6 (in response to NE D5 submission)	Natural England's Comments/Update on Progression at Deadline 6	RAG D6	Applicants' comment at Deadline 7 (in response to NE D6 submission)
	terms such 'short term', 'medium term', long term', "temporary", "small scale", "regional', 'highly localised' mean. Natural England advises the assessment methodology be revised and the assessment updated accordingly.					
RI_E3	The effective range of ADDs for harbour porpoises is 7.5 km approximately (JNCC 2022). The Applicant needs to outline how they plan to mitigate the rest of the estimated injury zone up to 15.37 km for high order UXO clearance activities. It is not clear what other measures the Applicant will commit to in order to mitigate for the full injury zone. The Applicant should provide further information on mitigation options for the entire harbour porpoise injury zone from high order UXO clearance for the alone and cumulative effect assessment (CEA).		The Applicants confirm that an updated version of Volume 2, Chapter 4: Marine Mammals (REP5-032) was submitted at Deadline 5, to reflect that high order UXO has been removed from the DCO and to align with the changes related to the impact of Injury and disturbance from elevated underwater sound during UXO clearance made at Deadline 6 for the Morgan Offshore Wind Farm: Generation Assets (Morgan Generation Assets examination Library REP6-031), as requested by Natural England at Deadline 2 for the Transmission Assets (REP-062). The Applicants await further responses from Natural England on this matter and trust that the updates made resolve this matter.	We welcome the updated marine mammal chapter [REP5-033] submitted by the Applicant which includes updates outlining that UXO clearance with high order techniques is not included within the draft DCO, and should this be required, the Applicants will apply for this under a separate marine licence. We also welcome the update to CoT64 which now includes NAS as a secondary mitigation option if required. Should a licence for high order UXO be required, our concerns raised at Relevant Representations [RR-1601] regarding the estimated injury zone to harbour porpoise for high order UXO are still applicable. We continue to advise that appropriate mitigation would be required to mitigate for the full estimated injury zone for harbour porpoise. If a licence for high order is submitted, the assessment will need to be reviewed and the estimated injury zone for harbour porpoise appropriately assessed and mitigated for. Should this not be completed, and a licence for high order be required, the issue would become material.		The Applicants welcome this comment and confirm that, should high order UXO clearance be required, this will fall under a separate marine licence and further assessment will be undertaken at time of the marine licence application. The Applicants also highlight that the Volume 2, Chapter 4: Marine mammals was updated and submitted at Deadline 5 (REP5-032) which includes the references to the recently updated EDR advise for harbour porpoises by the JNCC (September 2025).
RI_E4	Natural England does not support use of scare charges for UXO clearance, and we advise that this measure is not considered in the final Marine Mammal Mitigation Protocol (MMMP). Remove the use of scare charges for UXO clearance from the final MMMP.		The Applicants confirm that the Outline MMMP (REP2-026) was updated at Deadline 2 to focus on low order UXO clearance, removing mitigation for high order UXO detonation, including the use of scare charges as a mitigation option for high order detonation. Also, please see the Applicants' response to RI_E3. The updates made at Deadline 5 to Volume 2, Chapter 4: Marine Mammals (REP5-032) to include the removal of references to deterrence using 'soft start' scare charges for UXO clearance. The Applicants trust that the updates made resolve this matter.	Resolved. We welcome the removal of scare charges/soft start charges from the updated marine mammal chapter [REP5-033].		The Applicants welcome Natural England resolving this matter.
RI_E5	Standard industry measures (such as Marine Mammal Observers (MMOs), Passive Acoustic Monitoring (PAM) and Acoustic Deterrent Devices		In line with the response to RI_E3 above, the Applicants confirm that an updated version of Volume 2, Chapter 4: Marine Mammals (REP5-032) was submitted at Deadline 5, to reflect that high order has	Our comment in RI_E3 also applies here.		The Applicants welcome this comment and should high order UXO clearance be required the point made will be considered during a separate marine licence.

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 6 (in response to NE D5 submission)	Natural England's Comments/Update on Progression at Deadline 6	RAG D6	Applicants' comment at Deadline 7 (in response to NE D6 submission)
	(ADDs)) are intended to minimise the risk of injury, thus they cannot be used as a justification to conclude that there will be no significant disturbance of the species. Mitigation measures aimed to reduce disturbance should be considered instead of relying on measures for reducing the risk of injury. This needs to be revised throughout the assessment.		been removed from the DCO and to align with the changes related to the impact of Injury and disturbance from elevated underwater sound during UXO clearance made at Examination Deadline 6 for the Morgan Offshore Wind Farm: Generation Assets (Morgan Generation Assets examination Library REP6-031), as requested by Natural England at Deadline 2 for the Transmission Assets (REP-062). As such, the Applicants await further responses from Natural England on this matter, and are confident that RI_E5 can be resolved with the submission of the updated Marine Mammal chapter at Deadline 5 (REP5-032).			
RI_E6	Natural England has outstanding concerns regarding the Cumulative Effects Assessment (CEA). Natural England does not agree with the significance of effect for PTS during UXO clearance in the cumulative effects assessment, particularly for harbour porpoise and does not agree with the justification for the conclusions made. Assess population-level consequences of disturbance during the cumulative effects assessment for all scenarios and produce an appropriate mitigation plan if significant effects are predicted. Given the cumulative number of vessels across all projects as well as large disturbance ranges, Natural England does not agree with the assigned magnitude score 'low' for disturbance from elevated underwater sound due to vessel use and other (non-piling) sound producing activities. The assessment provides very limited consideration of the potential significant increase of number of vessels and vessel movements for each project. Revise the CEA for disturbance from elevated underwater sound due to vessel use and other (non-piling) sound producing activities with an increased level of magnitude and commit to implementing the Vessel Traffic Management Plan.		In line with the response to RI_E3 above, the Applicants confirm that an updated version of Volume 2, Chapter 4: Marine Mammals (REP5-032) was submitted at Deadline 5, to reflect that high order has been removed from the DCO and to align with the changes related to the impact of Injury and disturbance from elevated underwater sound during UXO clearance made at Examination Deadline 6 for the Morgan Offshore Wind Farm: Generation Assets (Morgan Generation Assets examination Library REP6-031), as requested by Natural England at Deadline 2 for the Transmission Assets (REP-062). As such, the Applicants await further responses from Natural England on this matter, and are confident that RI_E6 can be resolved with the submission of the updated Marine Mammal chapter at Deadline 5 (REP5-032).	We welcome the updated chapter submitted by the Applicant which includes updates outlining that UXO clearance with high order techniques is not included within the draft DCO, and should this be required, the Applicants will apply for this under a separate marine licence. We also welcome the update to CoT64 which now includes NAS as a secondary mitigation option if required. Should a licence for high order UXO be required, we advise that appropriate mitigation would be required to mitigate for the full estimated injury zones assessed in the CEA. If a licence for high order is submitted, the assessment will need to be reviewed, and the cumulative effects appropriately assessed and mitigated for. Should this not be completed, and a licence for high order be required, the issue would become material. With regard to number of vessels, our original concerns relating to the assessment of cumulative vessels are still applicable, however with the provision of the Vessel Traffic Management Plan, the risk is reduced and we consider there would be no material changes to the conclusions of the CEA, therefore we consider this matter to be resolved.		The Applicants welcome this comment and confirm that, should high order UXO clearance be required, Natural England's comments on appropriate mitigation for injury zones in the CEA will be considered during the application for a separate marine licence.
RI_E7	The Maximum Design Scenario (MDS) for Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) clearance differs between the					

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 6 (in response to NE D5 submission)	Natural England's Comments/Update on Progression at Deadline 6	RAG D6	Applicants' comment at Deadline 7 (in response to NE D6 submission)
	documents. Natural England advise that details relating to UXO clearance MDS should be updated for consistency across all chapters to ensure the Worst Case Scenario (WCS) is appropriately discussed and assessed.					
RI_E8	The MDS for Injury and disturbance to marine mammals from elevated underwater sound due to vessel use and other sound-producing activities in the Marine Mammals chapter [APP-050] differs from the MDS outlined in Chapter 7 Shipping and Navigation [APP-056]. Natural England advise that the MDS should be correctly reported and assessed in all relevant chapters and where chapters make reference to each other ensure all details, e.g. MDS, are consistent.					
RI_E9	Table 4.7 [APP-050] includes all correct protected areas and features. However, the referenced figure 4.1 'SACs and MNRs, designated for the protection of marine mammals within the regional study area' has not been included in Volume 2, Figures [APP-064]. The figure labelled 4.1 in [APP-064] is the marine mammal study area and relevant species MUs not the designated sites. Some figures in accompanying volumes do not have a reference number on the figure but are referenced in the ES. Ensure all figures are appropriately included, labelled, referenced and identifiable from the reference in ES.					
RI_E10	Natural England notes the inclusion of harbour seals in the assessment without a population estimate for the Isle of Man population. Natural England acknowledges the lack of data currently available in the literature to provide an estimate for the Isle of Man.					
RI_E11	Natural England advises that the reference population for grey seal should consider both the GSRP population estimate and the NW MU estimate. Natural England advise					

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	that both should be considered. Revise assessment so that it is undertaken against the NW MU grey seal population alone as the reference population, in addition to the assessment completed against the GSRP population.					
RI_E12	Natural England does not agree with the approach of using a 100km buffer region for grey seal in order to determine connectivity with the Transmission Assets based upon average foraging ranges for the species. maximum foraging distances from Carter et al., 2022 should be used to determine the connectivity from an identified haul out site and the project area. Natural England previously raised this issue during the PEIR stage and it has not been addressed. We do not now anticipate any material changes would be made to the baseline.					
RI_E13	Natural England acknowledges the inclusion in the ES of survey data and other data/ up to date references as requested, e.g. SCANS IV and two years of survey data at Morecambe Offshore Windfarm: Generation Assets and the inclusion of other key references Marine Mammal Welsh Atlas (2023), IAMMWG (2022) and SCOS 2022.					
RI_E14	The significance of auditory injury to harbour porpoise from UXO detonation should be amended to major, in line with the most significant option in the dual matrix category. Update the conclusions for auditory injury for harbour porpoise in the ES.		Please see the Applicants' response to RI_E3. The Applicants await further responses from Natural England on this matter,and are confident that RI_E14 can be resolved with the submission of the updated Marine Mammal chapter at Deadline 5 (REP5-032).	Our comment in RI_E3 also applies here.		The Applicants welcome this comment and confirm that, should high order UXO clearance be required, this will fall under a separate marine licence and further assessment will be undertaken at time of the marine licence application. The point made by Natural England will be considered during this application.
RI_E15	Inconsistency in the approach when assigning the sensitivity score for effects on marine mammals due to changes in prey availability. Minke whale has been assigned a sensitivity of medium, however harbour seal and harbour porpoise have both been assigned a					

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	sensitivity of low. Due to the vulnerability of harbour porpoise and harbour seal to changes in prey availability, their assigned sensitivity score should be medium in the assessment.					
RI_E16	Natural England disagrees that a period of several months can be considered "short term". However, in paragraph 4.11.6.30 the same description of works is described as 'medium term'. Define the terms to describe both temporal and spatial impacts and apply them consistently across the assessment.					
RI_E17	Natural England notes that the predicted disturbance ranges for sub-bottom profilers (SBPs) and vibro-coring are 17.3km and 10.6km respectively. However, no mitigation measures have been discussed for these large disturbance ranges. Natural England acknowledges that there are currently no other mitigation options available for SBP surveys beside those outlines in the JNCC guidelines for minimising the risk of injury to marine mammals from geophysical surveys (JNCC, 2017). Thus, there is a need for monitoring to fill the knowledge gap on the impact of SBP surveys on harbour porpoises. We therefore advise that monitoring should be considered with the aim to collect data before, during and after SBP surveys to examine changes in the baseline. Inclusion of this monitoring in the IPMP would resolve this issue.					
RI_E18	The maximum disturbance ranges predicted for SBP is up to 17.3 km and is described as 'mild disturbance', however in 4.11.6.29 it states that for 'impulsive sound sources there is an understanding of the difference between strong and mild disturbance, whereas for non-impulsive (continuous) sound sources (MBES, SSS, SBES, SBP (chirp/pinger) and vibro-coring), there					

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	is only a single available threshold (120 dB re 1 µPa (SPLrms)), which is classed as the distance beyond which no animals would be disturbed.' This statement contradicts the conclusion of mild disturbance from SBP sound source. Define the terms correctly for impulsive and non-impulsive sound sources and apply them consistently across the assessment.					
RI_E19	Given the cumulative number of vessels across all projects as well as large disturbance ranges, Natural England does not agree with the assigned magnitude score of 'low' for disturbance from elevated underwater sound due to vessel use and other (non-piling) sound producing activities. Revise the CEA for disturbance from elevated underwater sound due to vessel use and other (non-piling) sound producing activities. Ensure the Applicant commits to implementing their Vessel Traffic Management Plan.					
RI_E20	Natural England acknowledge the MMOs advice to the Applicant to commit to using Noise Abatement Systems (NAS) as mitigation during construction. Natural England notes CoT64 where the Applicants has committed to developing and implementing a detailed MMMP which will include the use of low order techniques as the primary mitigation where possible. The detailed MMMP should consider guidelines for minimising the risk of injury to marine mammals from UXO (JNCC, 2025). Natural England advises the Applicant should continue to prioritise other measures, such as avoidance, relocation and low-order clearance methods such as deflagration over high order clearance and to consider and apply new guidelines for minimising the risk of injury to marine mammals from UXO. These other measures should all be included in the final MMMP.					

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 6 (in response to NE D5 submission)	Natural England's Comments/Update on Progression at Deadline 6	RAG D6	Applicants' comment at Deadline 7 (in response to NE D6 submission)
RI_E21	Natural England defers to CEFAS as the underwater sound specialists to comment on the Underwater Sound Technical Report.					
RI_E22	Please note that it is Natural England's remit to provide advice on the assessment in so much as it relates to SACs in English waters. We defer to the relevant SNCBs on the appropriate approach for assessing SACs outside English waters.					
RI_E23	Natural England notes that the Applicant is more likely to carry out sequential UXO clearance, however the assessment states that 'A spatial MDS would occur where UXO clearance activities coincide at all three projects simultaneously'. There remains potential for UXO clearance activities to coincide at all 3 projects simultaneously, therefore there could be a significant impact on marine mammals that could manifest to population level effects based on the PTS figures for high order UXO clearance. Natural England advise the Applicant to produce an appropriate mitigation plan should this scenario occur.		Please see the Applicants' response to RI_E3. The Applicants await further responses from Natural England on this matter and are confident that RI_E23 can be resolved with the submission of the updated Marine Mammal chapter at Deadline 5 (REP5-032).	We welcome the updated chapter submitted by the Applicant which includes updates outlining that UXO clearance with high order techniques is not included within the draft DCO, and should this be required, the Applicants will apply for this under a separate marine licence. Should a licence for high order UXO be required, we advise that appropriate mitigation would be required, and we recommend the Applicant consider the advice in our original comment to produce an appropriate plan to avoid a spatial MDS where Morgan generation, Morecambe generation and the Transmission assets all undertaken high order UXO simultaneously. This should be avoided to avoid a large spatial MDS.		The Applicants welcome this comment and confirm that, should high order UXO clearance be required, Natural England's advice on appropriate mitigation will be considered during the application to the MMO for a separate marine licence.
RI_E24	We note that the mitigation measures to minimise disturbance to marine mammals included within the Offshore EMP are only relevant to the transiting vessels. Consider appropriate measure for all other (non-piling) sound producing activities, not just transiting vessels.					

Table 2.14: REP6-193 - Responses to Questions Regarding Offshore Ornithology

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 6 (in response to NE D5 submission)	Natural England's Comments/Update on Progression at Deadline 6	RAG D6	Applicants' comment at Deadline 7 (in response to NE D6 submission)
Risk and Issues Log Deadline 1 – Offshore Ornithology Taken from Natural England's Relevant and Written Representations Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets Appendix F - Offshore Ornithology						
RI_F1	The Applicant should complete a quantified cumulative assessment of impacts on species sensitive to disturbance and displacement, including mortality figures for each project included in the assessment, and provide clarity on the parameters used to produce those figures. The result should comprise a total abundance of birds that could be affected and a range of final mortality estimates based on a range of possible displacement and mortality rates, as per Natural England best practice guidance.		The Applicants await Natural England's response to the documents submitted at Deadline 5, which the Applicants trust will resolve this matter.	Resolved. The timing restrictions have ruled out project alone impacts, which negates the need for a cumulative assessment of those impacts.		The Applicants welcome this response and note that this issue has been resolved.
RI_F2	Natural England recommend that an assessment of the long-term loss of seabed habitat that potentially supports prey species for the ornithological features of Liverpool Bay SPA is included in the Information to Support Appropriate Assessment. This should be based on an assessment of the area of suitable spawning and other supporting habitat for prey species that could be lost due to the construction of the cable corridor, with consideration of i) diver and in particular scoter densities along those parts of the cable route where rock protection might be needed and ii) the presence of key species/habitats that fall within that area.		The Applicants await Natural England's response to the documents submitted at Deadline 5, which the Applicants trust will resolve this matter.	Resolved. We welcome the updated assessment including further detail on long term loss of habitat supporting prey species included in the ISAA [REP5-020]. The detail provided satisfies our concerns relating to features of Liverpool Bay SPA.		The Applicants welcome this response and note that this issue has been resolved.
RI_F3	Natural England do not agree with the conclusion that adverse effect on site integrity (AEoI) for the red-throated diver and common scoter features of Liverpool Bay SPA can be ruled out due to the displacement and disturbance impacts of the Project alone during the construction phase. Natural England highlights that the conservation advice for these					

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 6 (in response to NE D5 submission)	Natural England's Comments/Update on Progression at Deadline 6	RAG D6	Applicants' comment at Deadline 7 (in response to NE D6 submission)
	features include targets to maintain the distribution of the feature and the extent, distribution and availability of supporting habitat, preventing deterioration from current levels, not just population abundance. The Project's potential to cause AEoI can be avoided by the Applicant committing to a full restriction on all offshore construction and pre-construction (UXO clearance) activity with the potential to cause disturbance within the SPA and a 2km buffer around it during the wintering months of November to March (inclusive).					
RI_F4	Natural England are unable to reach a conclusion regarding the Project's impacts during the operations and maintenance (O&M) phase, either alone or in-combination, as the maximum design scenario (MDS) is set out on an annual basis. Alongside the annual MDS, the Applicant should set out the MDS for the key wintering months of November to March (inclusive), particularly for any activities which have the potential to cause disturbance to sensitive ornithological features within Liverpool Bay SPA and consider the need for a seasonal restriction for O&M activities.		The Applicants welcome resolution of this issue.			
RI_F5	Natural England note that the Applicant has calculated a bespoke regional population for red-throated diver based on the fact that the BDMPS population from Furness (2015), which is generally used as the standard reference for EIA population scales, is smaller than the most recent population estimate for Liverpool Bay alone (HiDef, 2023). The Applicant should calculate a regional population based only on populations that sit within the original BDMPS region and use this for assessing red-throated diver impacts.					

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 6 (in response to NE D5 submission)	Natural England's Comments/Update on Progression at Deadline 6	RAG D6	Applicants' comment at Deadline 7 (in response to NE D6 submission)
RI_F6	We note that the wintering period has been identified as covering November-February inclusive. Natural England considers the key sensitive period for red-throated diver to extend until the end of March. Seasonal restrictions on construction activity to avoid impacts on wintering birds should cover the period from the start of November to the end of March.					
RI_F7	The Applicant should present a range of cumulative quantitative displacement impacts from other projects on red-throated diver and common scoter at an EIA scale in the Irish sea, both those exerting ongoing pressures during their operations and maintenance phase and those whose construction impacts will overlap with the Project, plus the predicted impacts from the Project in its construction stage.		The Applicants welcome resolution of this issue.			
RI_F8	Due to the sensitivity of key ornithological features of Liverpool Bay SPA during the wintering months of November to March (inclusive). Therefore the Applicant should include descriptions of the maximum design scenario for activities causing airborne sound, underwater sound or presence/movement of vessels and infrastructure within the wintering period for each phase of the Project, in addition to the annual descriptions.					
RI_F9	To fully consider the in-combination impacts on the distribution and the extent, distribution and availability of supporting habitat for the red-throated diver and common scoter features of Liverpool Bay SPA, the Applicant should present an assessment of the area and the proportion of the SPA that is subject to displacement and disturbance impacts due to the Project in-combination with other projects and include West of					

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 6 (in response to NE D5 submission)	Natural England's Comments/Update on Progression at Deadline 6	RAG D6	Applicants' comment at Deadline 7 (in response to NE D6 submission)
	Duddon Sands OWF as its 10km buffer overlaps with the SPA.					
RI_F10	Natural England notes the Hynet North West Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) project has been screened out of the offshore ornithology assessment due to low data confidence. There is a high risk of spatial and temporal overlap of the construction of Hynet North West CCS and the Transmission Assets, therefore Natural England advise this project should be screened into the CEA for offshore ornithology and assessed as part of the Tier 2 projects. Further information should be sought from the Hynet project, specifically information on mitigation measures during construction.					

Table 2.15: REP6-193 - Responses to Questions Regarding Onshore Ecology

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 6 (in response to NE D5 submission)	Natural England's Comments/Update on Progression at Deadline 6	RAG D6	Applicants' comment at Deadline 7 (in response to NE D6 submission)
Risk and Issues Log Deadline 1 – Onshore Ecology Taken from Natural England's Relevant and Written Representations Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets Appendix G - Onshore Ecology						
RI_G1	Natural England is unable to rule out significant impacts on sand dune SSSI features associated with Lytham St. Annes Dunes due to uncertainties around changes to the water table (both during construction and operation). We are also concerned about dewatering effects associated with pumping out water from the Transition Joint Bay (TJB) during construction, and the cable acting as a conduit altering water flow through the system. Similar concerns are also flagged for sand dune habitat (S41 priority habitat under the NERC Act 2006) at St. Annes Old Links Golf		The Applicants confirm that the updated F3.3.3 Environmental Statement Volume 3, Annex 3.3: Phase 1 habitat, national vegetation classification and hedgerow survey technical report - Rev F03 (REP5-038) was submitted at Deadline 5 along with the updated S_D3_6 Outline Hydrogeological Risk Assessment of Lytham St Annes Dunes SSSI -Rev F02 (REP5-104). The updated F3.3.3 Environmental Statement Volume 3, Annex 3.3: Phase 1 habitat, national vegetation classification and hedgerow survey technical report - Rev F03 (REP5-038) confirmed that the SSSI/ LNR dunes	In progress. The Applicant has provided the NVC survey report [REP5-039] and incorporated the results into the updated outline Hydrogeological Risk Assessment [REP5-102]. NE are satisfied with the survey effort and standard methodology used. We welcome the detail included in Section 5 outlining the next steps in [REP5-102], further comments regarding this are included in Appendix G6. Our main outstanding concerns relate to cable burial depth and impacts on Ground		The Applicants welcome the confirmation that Natural England is satisfied with the survey effort and methodology for the NVC surveys. Specific comments are provided in response to matters raised in Appendix G6.

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 6 (in response to NE D5 submission)	Natural England's Comments/Update on Progression at Deadline 6	RAG D6	Applicants' comment at Deadline 7 (in response to NE D6 submission)
	Course Biological Heritage Site (BHS) and Lytham Foreshore Dunes and Saltmarsh BHS. a) We advise that Impacts on dune slack vegetation (which is referable to the Annex I habitat H1290) needs to be more thoroughly assessed. b) Natural England advises the Applicant to consider the installation of dipwells (automatic dataloggers) to monitor the position of the water table pre- and post-construction and this commitment should be included as a part of the ongoing Monitoring Plan c) In addition, we advise that modelling is necessary to determine the position of the water table and potential fluctuations that may arise as part of the proposals over the lifetime of the project.		support a rare and nationally important dune habitat and botanical species assemblage, with the groundwater dependent terrestrial ecosystems (GWDTEs) being dominated by the dune slack communities were found during surveys (SD17, SD16 and SD15). In addition, the baseline NVC survey of the St Anne's Old Links Golf Course BHS confirmed previous assumptions within the assessment that the habitats within the golf course have been heavily modified by substantial anthropogenic modifications (including groundwater abstraction) over the past 125 years since the golf course was established on the dunes in 1901. There are some very small areas of marginal pond vegetation (equating to c. 25 square metres in total across the four ponds within the golf course) with affinity to the dune slack community SD15, although the extent to which these small habitat fragments are groundwater dependent given the level of modifications to the surrounding land is unclear, and they are therefore considered to be a 'likely Groundwater Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystem'. S_D3_6 Outline Hydrogeological Risk Assessment of Lytham St Annes Dunes SSSI -Rev F02 (REP5-104) was updated to include the results of the NVC survey (section 2.2.3) to provide an accurate baseline position (especially regarding Groundwater Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystems. The Applicants hope that this matter can now be resolved. The Applicants have updated CoT128 in the commitments register (F1.5.3/F07) at Deadline 6 to note that the hydrogeological risk assessment(s) will be informed by additional ground investigation information. The scope of the ground investigation and groundwater monitoring will be agreed with the Environment Agency and Natural England. These assessment(s) will used to inform the detailed site-specific crossing design for the installation of the offshore export cables beneath Lytham St Annes	Water Dependant Terrestrial Ecosystem's (GWDTE) i.e. dune slack vegetation. Please see Appendix G6 for detailed comments.		

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			Dunes SSSI and St Annes Old Links Golf Course.			
RI_G2	Natural England advises that the limited project specific data collected makes it difficult to assess any potential changes in habitat/ species composition associated, for example, with a modified water table brought about by the dewatering and pumping of water during construction from the TJB. Natural England advises that surveys of St. Annes Old Links Golf Course BHS should be undertaken in June 2025 to fill in the evidence gaps to better assess potential changes to habitats and species from the potential dewatering of the site. Use of fine scale Lidar may help identify low lying areas which may be relict dune slacks.		The Applicants undertook the NVC survey of the Lytham St Annes Dunes SSSI/LNR in July 2025 and of the St Annes Old Links Golf Course in September 2025. The NVC survey is a detailed botanical survey technique designed to identify plant communities. For the surveys of Lytham St Annes Dunes SSSI/LNR and the St Anne's Old Links Golf Course BHS. Quadrats of 2m x 2m were used and within each quadrat, all species were recorded within an estimate of percentage cover and abundance using the Domin Scale (see Table 1.3 in F3.3.3 Environmental Statement Volume 3, Annex 3.3: Phase 1 habitat, national vegetation classification and hedgerow survey technical report - Rev F03 (REP5-038) which outlines the Domin Scale). For the Lytham St Annes Dunes SSSI/LNR, 61 quadrats were utilised and for the St Anne's Old Links Golf Course BHS, 26 quadrats were utilised. Further details on the plant communities recorded in each quadrat are included in Appendix D and Appendix E of Volume 3, Annex 3.3: Phase 1 habitat, national vegetation classification and hedgerow survey technical report - Rev F03 (REP5-038).	Resolved. The Applicant have completed the necessary data collection as advised. The Applicant have provided the NVC survey report [REP5-039] and incorporated the results into the updated outline Hydrogeological Risk Assessment [REP5-102]. NE are satisfied with the survey effort and standard methodology used		The Applicants welcome confirmation from Natural England that this matter is agreed.
RI_G3	Further details (map and GPS locations) as to a) the location of the Transmission Joint Bays (TJBs) in Blackpool Airport, b) exit pits on the foreshore, c) the location of Compound 2 and d) the cable alignment under the sand dunes and cable depth is needed to help rule out impacts on sand dune SSSI features associated with Lytham St. Annes Dunes.		The Applicants note that further clarity has been captured on the location of temporary construction compound 2 within the Landfall Construction Method Statement at Deadline 5 (REP5-116). Temporary construction compound 2 will not be located on the beach between MHWS and MLWS in front of the Thursby Care Home to maintain access for lifeboat recovery by the RNLI. No further information is available on the TJBs, exit pits, location of compound 2 and the cable alignment/ depth beneath the sand dunes at this stage and will not be available until contractors have been appointed and the detailed design work post consent has been undertaken.	No change. Until the provision of final design specifications and the final Landfall Construction Method Statement this matter will not be resolved.		The Applicants reiterate the position previously stated that this information would be provided once the contractors have been appointed and the detailed design work post-consent has been undertaken.

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RI_G4	Natural England advises that further details on the Direct Pipe Trenchless Technique and evidence to support its feasibility is required to be able to fully assess the potential impacts to Lytham St. Annes Dunes SSSI. An outline contingency plan should be developed and the Worst Case Scenario (WCS) should be at least assessed in the assessment, i.e. cable installation failure when using Direct Pipe Trenchless Technique.		The Applicants await Natural England's response to the document submitted at Deadline 5, which the Applicants trust will resolve this matter.	Progressed but not resolved. The Applicant have provided an updated version of the outline Landfall Construction Method Statement [REP5-117] at Deadline 5. Table 1, Appendix A provides a review of the risks associated with trenching, including the consideration of the failure of the Direct Pipe method. Further comments are included in Appendix G6. Primary outstanding concerns relate to the purpose of additional boreholes and distance between cables, which cannot be provided until the final design stage.		The Applicants note this response and point Natural England to the Applicants response to Appendix G6 (REP6-192) in Applicants' Response to Deadline 6 submissions from IP (S_D7_2).
RI_G5	The condition of Lytham St. Annes Dunes SSSI is currently assessed as Unfavourable Recovering (based on a 2014 Natural England assessment). To achieve Favourable condition of the dunes ongoing management of the Fylde Dunes (including Lytham St. Annes Dunes SSSI and Lytham Foreshore Dunes and Saltmarsh BHS as outlined in Skelcher (2024) has been agreed. Natural England advises that the Applicant should consider in the Outline Ecological Management Plan how the required management actions outlined in Skelcher will continue to take place during the duration of the project.		The Applicants note there is no change on this matter and refer Natural England to RI_G5 in S_D5_2.5 Annex 2.5 to Applicants' Response to Deadline 4 submissions from Statutory Consultees and other organisation: Natural England - Rev F01 (REP5-124). In addition, The Applicants have made a commitment (CoT141) (see commitments register (F1.5.3/F07)) that they will ensure that ongoing habitat management works (Skelcher, 2024) within Lytham St. Aness Dunes SSSI and Lytham Foreshore Dunes & saltmarsh will be able to continue during cable installation. The Applicants consider that with this commitment in place, this matter can be closed.	No change. Our comment at Deadline 5 is still applicable.		The Applicants would like to re-state their position at Deadline 5, that they have committed to ensuring that the ongoing dune habitat management works would not be impacted by the cable installation works (CoT141) and that this matter can therefore be closed.
RI_G6	From the information provided Natural England does not consider there to be reasonable justification for the lack of Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) survey effort to date. Natural England advises (a) the Applicant needs to undertake a detailed ALC and soil survey of the agricultural land across the full Study Area to inform the application. And (b) the commitment to restore land needs to be secured in the DCO to not only reinstate the land but to ensure the site will be restored at a minimum to the same ALC grade as before construction, to ensure that land quality will not be negatively affected.		The Applicants point Natural England to REP5-180 Natural England (Appendix G5.1 Natural England's further advice on soils) (Table 2.7) where a full response on ALC survey coverage is provided.	No change. In the absence of soils survey results the issue will not progress.		The Applicants would like to note that their final position on this matter remains as stated at Deadline 5. The Applicants point Natural England to Applicants' Response to Deadline 5 submissions from Statutory Consultees and their organisations: Natural England (Table 2.7) (REP6-172) where a full response on ALC survey coverage is provided. The Applicants maintain their position that the ALC survey presented as part of the DCO application (F3.6.3: Agricultural land classification survey results (APP-106)) is appropriate and provides a robust characterisation of the agricultural land quality and soil types within the Onshore Order Limits.
RI_G7	Natural England utilises the England Peat Status Greenhouse Gas and Carbon Storage which identifies that part of the cable route is situated on deep peat. At this stage there is not enough information for Natural England to advise if the proposal will have direct or		The Applicants point Natural England to REP5-184 2.1 Natural England (Appendix L5 Natural England's comments on ExQ2) (Table 2.16), Q2:6.1.7 and Q2: 6.1.8 where a full response on peat is provided.	No change. We note the updated Outline Soils Management Plan includes additional measures for the handling of peaty soils where they cannot remain in situ during construction. Whilst Natural England welcome this additional information, we		The Applicants note this comment and point NE to Q3 (REP6-190) in the Applicants response to NEs Rule 17 submission (S_S7_2).

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	indirect impacts on deep peat. Natural England do not support the principle of developing on restorable peat. Natural England advises that further evidence and survey data is required. Peat surveys should be carried out in line with the IUCN peatland programme field protocol. A Peat Management Plan will be required for any buried deep peat around the cabling route, even if it is remaining in situ.			advise they do not resolve our previous concerns. Please also see Appendix N6, Q3.		
RI_G8	Natural England advises as per our advice on other joint DCO applications such as the East Anglia offshore windfarms and most recently for Dudgeon and Sheringham Extension Projects that a commitment is made, that whichever project is constructed first installs the onshore cable ducts for both projects to minimise the environmental impacts and the working corridors if construction overlaps. We advise full consideration of all mitigation measures are considered as part of the consenting process.		The Applicants note there is no change on this matter and refer Natural England to RI_G8 in 'S_D4_2.6 Annex 2.6 to Applicants' Response to Deadline 3 submissions from Statutory Consultees and other organisation: Natural England (REP3-90 - REP3-95, AS-078) - Rev F01' (REP4-100).	No change. Please also see RI_B13 and RI_C7		See response to RI_B13 and RI_C7.
RI_G9	To better understand the potential impacts at dune structure and function, Natural England queries the minimum required distance between the 6 proposed cables in order to minimise the effect of heat transfer. Where the cable crosses under Lytham St. Annes Dunes SSSI and St. Annes Old Links Golf Course BHS the Order Limit has been minimised (which is welcomed), but using the current MDS this would mean the route is constrained at its narrowest point to 260m to the north and 220m to the south. Depending on the required distance between the cables this could result in the cables underlying a significant proportion of the SSSI dunes and relict dunes. Natural England advises that clarity is needed regarding the minimum distance between cables. This ideally would be illustrated showing the cable alignment within the Order Limits and the distance between the cables given in metres.		The Applicants submitted an updated outline hydrogeological risk assessment at D5 (REP5-104) in line with Natural England's comments (which were responded to in REP5-124). The Applicants now anticipate that this issue can be closed out.	No change. Until the provision of final design specifications and the final Landfall Construction Method Statement this matter will not be resolved.		The Applicants note this response and confirm that these details would be included in detailed Landfall Construction Method Statement(s) once the detailed design has been completed post-consent. This is secured through Schedules 2A & 2B, Requirement 8 of the draft development consent order (REP6-013).
RI_G10	Natural England advises that the Applicant clarify what temperatures may extend to the surface and across the dune structure when the cable is operational and assess and provide evidence on any possible impact on sand dune vegetation in terms of affecting		The Applicants submitted an updated outline Hydrogeological Risk Assessment at D5 (REP5-104) in line with Natural England's comments (which were responded to in REP5-124). The	In progress. We welcome the updates to [REP5-102] however we have outstanding concerns regarding cable ducting which are outlined in Appendix G6.		The Applicants note this response and point Natural England to the Applicants response to Appendix G6 (REP6-192) in Applicants' Response to Deadline 6 submissions from IP (S_D7_2).

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	water availability and mimicking drought (especially with increased issues of summer drought associated with climate change).		Applicants now anticipate that this issue can be closed out.			
RI_G11	Natural England advises that the ES should present the detailed and semi-detailed Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) survey information. This should include a breakdown of the ALC grades (area, %) in relation to the application site boundary and include ALC and soil data for the cable route and areas of permanent infrastructure and habitat enhancement. A breakdown of the proposed site into disturbed and undisturbed land categories should also be included, split by ALC grade, to help illustrate the potential for impact on agricultural land grade.		The Applicants note there is no change on this matter and refer Natural England RI_G6 above and to RI_G11 in S_D5_2.5 Annex 2.5 to Applicants' Response to Deadline 4 submissions from Statutory Consultees and other organisation: Natural England - Rev F01 (REP5-124).	No change. Our response to RI_G6 is also applicable here.		The Applicants note this response and point Natural England to the Applicants response to Appendix G6 (REP6-192) in Applicants' Response to Deadline 6 submissions from IP (S_D7_2).
RI_G12	Natural England notes the reference to topsoil removal, back filling of topsoil level and replacement of topsoil, but no proposed timeline of activities included. As part of an Outline Soil management Plan [APP-200] Natural England advises that further information on the timeline of proposed soil handling is provided and mitigation measures to minimise the impacts secured.		The Applicants note there is no change on this matter and refer Natural England to RI_G6 above and to RI_G12 in S_D5_2.5 Annex 2.5 to Applicants' Response to Deadline 4 submissions from Statutory Consultees and other organisation: Natural England - Rev F01 (REP5-124).	No change. The Outline Soils Management Plan references best practice but we require the timescales to be provided.		It is noted in the outline soil management plan (REP6-091), paragraph 1.9.3.10 that topsoil and subsoil will be stored in separate stockpiles and managed in line with the DEFRA Construction Code of Practice for the Sustainable Use of Soils on Construction Sites (Defra, 2009) and Good Practice Guide for Handling Soils in Mineral Workings (IQ, 2021). These provide guidance with regard to timescales for topsoil and subsoil storage.
RI_G13	Natural England notes that following installation of ducts and backfilling of trenches the cables will be pulled through the ducts from joint bays. Natural England advises that the depth of the cabling laying be secured in a named plan and on the face of the DCO/dML. This depth is expected to be consistent with the industry standard of 0.9m depth.		The Applicants note there is no change on this matter and refer Natural England to RI_G13 in S_D5_2.5 Annex 2.5 to Applicants' Response to Deadline 4 submissions from Statutory Consultees and other organisation: Natural England - Rev F01 (REP5-124). In summary, the Project Description (REP5-024) outlines that the indicative target trench depth to the top of the protective tile will be 1.2m. However, the precise burial depth of the onshore export cable and the 400kV grid connection cable will be confirmed during detail design (post consent) and will be informed by site specific data, as well as being subject to factors such as ground conditions. Therefore, the Applicants do not consider it is appropriate that the minimum depth of the cable laying be secured in a named plan and on the face of the DCO. As no further comments have been raised on this point, the Applicants consider that this matter can be closed out.	No Change. No further commitments to industry standard have been provided.		The Applicants' position remains as at Deadline 5 (REP5-124) and Deadline 6 (REP6-172).

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RI_G14	Further information on the timings of survey observations, quadrat locations and how wetness of dune slacks was calculated should be provided to better understand the robustness of the survey data. This should include date of NVC surveys (2016 or 2024), map showing quadrant locations and a quadrant data table		The Applicants submitted an updated version of F3.3.3 Environmental Statement Volume 3, Annex 3.3: Phase 1 habitat, national vegetation classification and hedgerow survey technical report - Rev F03 (REP5-028) at Deadline 5. Section 1.3.3 of REP5-028 summarises the results of the 2025 NVC surveys. With this additional NVC survey data included in Volume 3, Annex 3.3: Phase 1 habitat, national vegetation classification and hedgerow survey technical report - Rev F03 (REP5-028), the Applicants consider that this point can be closed out.	Resolved. Natural England welcomes the information provided in [REP5-039] which includes the results of the National Vegetation Survey (NVC) of both Lytham St Annes Dunes SSSI/LNR (Appendix D) and St Annes Old Links Golf Course BHS (Appendix E). The document also provides clarity as to the use of the 2016 Skelcher survey and the 2024 updates undertaken by the Applicant.		The Applicants welcome confirmation that Natural England are satisfied this matter is resolved.
RI_G15	Natural England notes that the maximum design parameter represented in Table 3.23 for the construction cable corridor (temporary) does not align with calculations made elsewhere within the chapter. Natural England advises that the MDS should be consistent across ES chapters and named plans.					
RI_G16	Natural England notes that the document states that proposed biodiversity benefit and ecological mitigation areas have not been subjected to surveys. Natural England advises that soil testing for basic soil properties (pH, SOM and macro-nutrients) should be completed at the same time as the ALC and soil survey.					
RI_G17	Natural England notes that it is stated that the location of representative auger boring surveys were chosen to reflect the main soil types identified within the Onshore Order Limits, according to the desktop information. Natural England advises that this is insufficient. Natural England advises that the ES should present the detailed and semi-detailed Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) survey information across the full Study Area. This should include a breakdown of the ALC grades (area, %) in relation to the application site boundary and include ALC and soil data for the cable route and areas of permanent infrastructure and habitat enhancement.		The Applicants note there is no change on this matter and refer Natural England to RI_G17 in S_D5_2.5 Annex 2.5 to Applicants' Response to Deadline 4 submissions from Statutory Consultees and other organisation: Natural England - Rev F01 (REP5-124).). The Applicants have provided more detailed responses on this point in REP5-180.12 in the Applicants response to Natural England (Appendix G5,1) (Table 2.7).	No change. Our advice is the detailed soils surveys need to be provided post consent.		The Applicants note and agree to this comment. The Applicants point Natural England to CoT81 in Environmental Statement Volume 1, Annex 5.3: Commitments Register - Rev F07 (REP6-042) which is secured through Schedules 2A & 2B, Requirement 8 of the draft development consent order (REP6-013).
RI_G18	It is unclear whether the archaeological trenches would meet the requirements to obtain relevant data (soil properties) to determine ALC grade. Natural England		The Applicants note there is no change on this matter and refer Natural England to RI_G18 in S_D5_2.5 Annex 2.5 to Applicants' Response to Deadline 4	No change. Our response to RI_G6 is also applicable here.		The Applicants note this response and point Natural England to the Applicants response to Appendix G6 (REP6-192) in Applicants' Response to Deadline 6 submissions from IP (S_D7_2).

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	advises that further survey data should be provided to support the ES soils assessment and further monitoring requirements prior to construction agreed.		submissions from Statutory Consultees and other organisation: Natural England - Rev F01 (REP5-124).			
RI_G19	Natural England advises that the commitment needs to be secured in the DCO to not only reinstate the land but to ensure the site will be restored at a minimum to the same ALC grade as before construction, to ensure that land quality will not be negatively affected. The commitment to implementing additional measures to further benefit the land quality/productivity should also be included. We also advise that the Outline Soils Management Plan should include restoration criteria to ensure the land is aligned to the ALC survey results.		The Applicants note there is no change on this matter and refer Natural England to RI_G19 in S_D5_2.5 Annex 2.5 to Applicants' Response to Deadline 4 submissions from Statutory Consultees and other organisation: Natural England - Rev F01 (REP5-124).	No change. Whilst we acknowledge the Outline Soils Management Plan includes some measures for aftercare and handover in section 1.9, it does not include any restoration criteria. Any aftercare plans should be based on detailed ALC surveys, and it should be ensured the site will be restored at a minimum to the same ALC grade it was before construction.		The restoration criteria would be included in the detailed soil management plan(s) in line with CoT81 of the commitments register (REP6-042). This is secured by Schedules 2A and 2B, Requirement 8 of the draft development consent order (REP6-013).
RI_G20	Natural England advises that air quality impacts on ecological features including international and nationally designated sites and their qualifying features should be considered in the chapter.		The Applicants would like to summarise their position in respect to this matter, noting that as the assessment did not identify any significant air quality effects on sensitive ecological receptors, the undertaking of further air quality assessments would not change the outcome of the assessment of significant effects, or subsequently identify any other management measures that may be required. Potential impacts on the following nationally and internationally designated ecological sites as a result of changes in air quality have been considered as follows: - Red Scar and Tun Brook Woods SSSI – as set out in the Applicants' response to Natural England's Relevant Representations in Annex 3.2.14 to Response to RR - Natural England (RR-1601) - Appendix G (Onshore Ecology and Nature Conservation) (PDA-021), no significant effects to this SSSI were predicted. The potential for changes in air quality arising from construction traffic emissions and potential elevated nitrogen oxides (NOx) and ammonia (NH3) concentrations and nutrient nitrogen and acid deposition to the SSSI is identified in paragraph 1.1.1.4 of F3.9.1 Volume 3, Annex 9.1: Air	No change.		The Applicants note this response and maintain their previously stated position (outlined in the fourth column of the table) that air quality impacts on ecological features including international and nationally designated site have been fully identified and assessed in the chapter, to which signposting was provided in the Deadline 6 response (REP6-172). Therefore the Applicants question as to why there is no change.

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			quality impacts on ecologically designated sites (APP-122). The SSSI is located approximately 7.83 km from the Transmission Assets on the eastern side of the M6 motorway (the nearest SSSI unit to the motorway is approximately 10 m from the southbound carriageway). As set out in paragraph 1.3.4.2 of APP-122, the Process Contributions (PC) from annual mean NH3, nutrient nitrogen deposition and acid deposition exceeded the 1% screening threshold of the relevant critical loads/ levels at the SSSI, and was therefore subject to further detailed assessment. This assessment is presented in paragraphs 3.11.5.7 to 3.11.5.20 and the effects were concluded to be minor adverse and therefore not significant. - Ribble & Alt Estuaries SPA, Ribble Estuary SSSI, Newton Marsh SSSI, Lytham St Annes Dunes SSSI – as set out in the Applicants' response to R1_G20 of document S-D4_2.6_Annex 2.6 to Applicants' Response to Deadline 3 submissions from Statutory Consultees and other organisation: Natural England (REP3-90 - REP3-95, AS-078) - Rev F01 (REP4-100), an assessment of potential air quality effects arising from dust deposition during earthworks, construction and trackout on the sensitive features of these sites is presented in Tables 9.34 and 9.35 of Volume 3 Chapter 9: Air Quality (APP-121) and the effects were assessed as negligible (paragraph 9.11.2.1). These receptors were therefore not carried over into the ecology assessment. - Lancaster Canal BHS, Bartle Wetland West BHS, Bartle Wetland East BHS, Haighton Park & Fulwood Park Woods ancient and semi-natural woodland, Brockholes Quarry BHS, Pope Lane Ponds BHS, Brockholes Wood BHS, Cuerdale Wood West ancient woodland & BHS, Mosney Wood ancient woodland, Laund Wood and Ollerton Wood ancient woodland & BHS, Leeds/ Liverpool Canal (Walton			

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			Summit Branch) BHS, Denham Wood BHS, Cuerden Valley Park & River Lostock BHS, Holt Brow Wood and Foxholes Park BHS, Lucas Lane Pastures BHS, Haddock Park Wood ancient woodland & BHS, River Ribble BHS, Fishwick Bottoms & Pope Open Space BHS and Grange Valley LNR – as presented in Tables 1.1 (predicted NOx concentrations), Table 1.2 (predicted NH3 concentrations), Table 1.3 (nutrient N deposition) and Table 1.4 (acid deposition) of F3.9.1 Volume 3, Annex 9.1: Air quality impacts on ecologically designated sites (APP-122), the modelled maximum annual mean NOx, daily mean NOx, annual mean NH3, nutrient N deposition and acid deposition PCs were predicted to not exceed 100% of the relevant critical loads/ levels and therefore impacts were screened out as insignificant.			
RI_G21	Natural England advises that further information is needed regarding the proposed mitigations measures to minimise/mitigate impacts on sand lizards e.g. measures to minimise vibration which could cause sand lizard burrows to collapse. The proposed mitigation (3.11.13.19) has not been previously discussed and agreed and the positioning of the cut-off trenches needs to be considered in terms of potential dewatering effect/damage to the foredunes.		The Applicants confirm they would obtain a Natural England EPS mitigation licence for sand lizards for construction works associated with the landfall at Lytham St Annes beach, including the construction compounds and access tracks. A draft method statement for an EPS licence application was submitted at Deadline 5 (REP5-149). Any incidental handling of sand lizards as part of the ECoW duties would therefore be undertaken by the licensed ecologist working under the EPS licence. The Outline Sand Lizard Mitigation Plan was also updated at Deadline 5 (REP5-112) to reflect comments that were received from Fylde Borough Council ahead of Deadline 5 on the first iteration of the document. Fylde Borough Council formally submitted these comments into the Examination at Deadline 5 (REP5-171) and the Applicants have provided responses to these in Annex 2.3 to Applicants' Response to Deadline 5 submissions from Statutory Consultees and other organisation: Fylde Borough Council (REP5-170, REP5-171, AS-084)	In progress. We note that the Applicant has applied for a draft sand lizard EPS Licence on 14/10/25. On 21/10/25 Natural England issued a Further Information Request (FIR) to the Applicant. The turnaround time for Natural England to process a draft EPS licence application is 30 working days, therefore Natural England cannot provide certainty during examination around whether the Applicant's licence application would be accepted. However, Natural England's Wildlife Licensing Team are processing the request and have provided feedback to the Applicant through DAS.		The Applicants are engaging with NEWLS to obtain a Letter of No Impediment (LONI) and have been working to have this resolved prior to the close of the Examination. If a LONI is not received before the close of the Examination, it would be submitted to the Secretary of State for consideration. Although this matter has not yet been fully resolved, given the temporary nature and small spatial extent of any potential construction impacts on sand lizards/sand lizard habitats, the Applicants are confident that NEWLS would be satisfied that the risks would be adequately mitigated through the EPS licence process such that a LONI would be issued.

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			(S_D6_2.3). Further amendments have been subsequently made to the Outline Sand Lizard Mitigation Plan following further comments received from Fylde Borough Council (some of which were also raised to the ExA by Fylde Borough Council at ISH3), and this document will be submitted at Deadline 6 (S_D4_14/F03). The draft EPS licence documents were updated and issued to Natural England on 14 October 2025. Further engagement is ongoing with the Natural England Wildlife Licensing Service (NEWLS) regarding obtaining a Letter of No Impediment (LONI), and the Applicants hope to resolve this matter with the NEWLS team prior to the close of the examination. If this is not possible, the LONI will be submitted as soon as it is received for the consideration of the Secretary of State.			
RI_G22	Natural England advise that a UXO contingency plan should be provided – should UXO be found within Lytham St. Annes Dunes SSSI.		The Applicants note there is no change on this matter and refer Natural England to RI_G22 in S_D5_2.5 Annex 2.5 to Applicants' Response to Deadline 4 submissions from Statutory Consultees and other organisation: Natural England - Rev F01 (REP5-124).	No change.		The Applicants note there is no change on this matter and refer Natural England to RI_G22 in S_D5_2.5 Annex 2.5 to Applicants' Response to Deadline 4 submissions from Statutory Consultees and other organisation: Natural England - Rev F01 (REP5-124).
RI_G23	The Applicant has outlined the onshore survey area as a 150m buffer around the Onshore Order Limits. Natural England typically advise that a buffer of 200m should be used. Provide justification for why a 150m buffer was chosen and how this can be shown to be a sufficient distance to account for all disturbance incidents to Important Ecological Features (IEFs).					
RI_G24	Natural England notes that for Sand Lizard – timing of works (piling / installation of cofferdams at TJB etc) could be used to minimise risk that vibration cause burrows to collapse when being used by hibernating or breeding Sand Lizard. Natural England advises that further consideration is given to timing restrictions for works near to known Sand Lizard populations.		Timing restrictions for construction activities at the landfall site (for wintering/ passage birds) will mean that there are no construction activities being undertaken including piling/ installation of cofferdams during the sensitive hibernation period for sand lizard. This approach will be included within the EPS licence for sand lizards. Further seasonal restrictions during the activity/ breeding season are not considered proportionate to the level of	No change. Our response to RI_G21 is applicable here.		The Applicants maintain their stated position at Deadline 6 that the risks of disturbance to sand lizard are very low and can be adequately mitigated (under EPS licence) without the need for any further seasonal restrictions. The Applicants would like to question why there is no change on this matter. NE highlight that their response to RI_G21 is applicable here which notes that EPS licencing matters are progressing.

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			risk, which the Applicants believe can be appropriately managed through mitigation measures, the implementation of which would be under an EPS mitigation licence. See response to R1_G21 also.			
RI_G25	Natural England advises that monitoring plans are updated to include pre and post construction monitoring of humid dune slacks. This will help to determine the success of the mitigation measures and confirm the assessment.		The Applicants consider that this matter can now be resolved, given that further NVC surveys of the dunes have now been undertaken (in summer 2025) (and presented in F3.3.3 Environmental Statement Volume 3, Annex 3.3: Phase 1 habitat, national vegetation classification and hedgerow survey technical report - Rev F03 (REP5-038)) and there is a commitment to undertaking a detailed hydrogeological risk assessment (CoT128) for the trenchless crossing of the dunes post-consent, which may identify the need for post-construction monitoring.	No change. Please see Appendix G6 to our Deadline 6 response		The Applicants note this response and point Natural England to the Applicants response to Appendix G6, REP6-192.4, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 20, 22 and 24 in Applicants' Response to Deadline 6 submissions from IP (S_D7_2).
RI_G26	Natural England should be informed of any bentonite breakouts that occur on any SPA, Ramsar or SSSI sites or within any sand dune or foreshore habitats. Ground investigation works should be taken to inform consenting and to ensure the technical feasibility of any proposed mitigation associated with landfall installation methodology. Natural England advises that geotechnical data should be used to ensure that mitigation measures are fit for purpose and are relevant to the proposed installation methodology.		The Applicants consider that this matter is now resolved. These issues are covered within the Outline Landfall Construction Method Statement (REP5-116), which would be updated post-consent following the outcome of ground investigations and detailed design. This commitment (CoT35) is secured by draft DCO Requirement 8 of Schedules 2A&2B of the dDCO (REP5a-018).	Resolved. We welcome the detail included in Appendix A [REP5-117] which includes information on risk and proposed mitigation for bentonite breakouts. Appendix A also states that to reduce the risk of failure of direct pipe. However we note that detailed ground investigations will be completed post consent. Please see Appendix G6 to our Deadline 6 response		The Applicants welcome the confirmation from Natural England that this matter is resolved. The Applicants point Natural England to the Applicants response to Appendix G6 (REP6-192) in Applicants' Response to Deadline 6 submissions from IP (S_D7_2).
RI_G27	Fairhaven Saltmarsh is identified in the Outline Ecological Management Plan (J6) as a permanent mitigation area. Natural England advises that more details regarding the proposed permanent mitigation area at Fairhaven Saltmarsh – for example the fencing specification and installation measures are required The Applicant should also refer to Skelcher (2024) botanical report which covers this area (survey from 2010 & 2016)– showing the saltmarsh and sand dune communities that are present.		See RI_H3. The Applicants hope that this matter can now be closed.	Resolved. We welcome the information included in the updated OEMP [REP5-069] which now satisfies our concerns regarding the deliverability of Fairhaven. The Applicant states that measures at Fairhaven will be informed by the findings of a site specific recreational disturbance survey to understand the site-specific recreational pressures and measures suitable for managing these. The study will also be used to inform delivery of local education and wardening. We welcome this approach. We welcome that ongoing monitoring of the birds will take place at a frequency agreed with relevant stakeholders and we		The Applicants welcome the closing of this issue.

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				look forward to engaging further on the monitoring approach. Concerns over fencing at Fairhaven are included in RI_G51.		
RI_G28	Natural England disagree with the conclusion of effect of changes in hydrogeology on the SSSI and LNR will be minor adverse - not significant. Natural England advises that further survey evidence should be provided to support the Application conclusions.		The Applicants consider that this matter can now be closed - see responses to R1_G25 and R1_G26.	No change. Our response to RI_G1 is also applicable here and detailed comments are provided in Appendix G6. Whilst in-principle the risk levels are appropriate for e.g. installation of TJBs, this is highly dependent on the secondary mitigation options. Until the detailed design stage, the suitability of the secondary mitigation options cannot be confirmed.		The Applicants have made a commitment (CoT128 of Volume 1, Annex 5.3: Commitments Register of the ES (AS-030)) to undertake hydrogeological risk assessment(s) in relation to the crossing of the Lytham St Annes Dunes SSSI. These assessment(s) will be used to inform the detailed site specific crossing design for the installation of the offshore export cables beneath Lytham St Annes Dunes SSSI. This is secured by Requirement 8 of Schedules 2A & 2B of the draft development consent order (REP6-013). Therefore the Applicants consider that Natural England, have sufficient certainty and security on the potential risks and mitigation measures for the SSSI/ LNR and BHS such that any outstanding concerns on this matter would be adequately addressed prior to the commencement of construction. The Applicants also point Natural England RI_G1 above and to the Applicants response to Appendix G6 (REP6-192) in Applicants' Response to Deadline 6 submissions from IP (S_D7_2).
RI_G29	Natural England has focused on coastal habitats and no SAC sites were identified within the Order of Limits. Natural England have not reviewed the HRA reports – but note sand dune habitats which could be classified as an Annex I habitat type have been covered in [APP-018]. Natural England advises that impacts to Ramsar habitats will be required.					
RI_G30	[APP-018] Table 1.24 does not consider all potential impact pathways or relevant European sites, specifically air quality impacts have not been considered. [APP-121] states the Ribble Estuary SPA/Ramsar includes features sensitive to dust within 20m of the Onshore Order Limits, therefore these features need to be considered in the HRA. Natural England advises that air quality impacts on internationally designated sites should be considered.		See response to R1_G20.	No change. Air quality impacts could impact on the supporting habitats the qualifying SPA/ Ramsar bird species rely and hinder the Conservation Objectives of the sites. The Conservation Objectives are to maintain or restore the extent and distribution; the structure and function; and the supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely. Any impacts to these supporting habitats due to impacts via air quality may hinder these Conservation Objectives.		See Applicants' response to the RIES (REP6-175) and Applicants response to Natural England's Response to Questions within the RIES (Q3). The Applicants' approach is in line with industry best practice and maintain that there is no route LSE for the Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA and Ramsar due to the low traffic levels in the zone of influence of these European sites (well below thresholds set out Institute of Air Quality Management (IAQM) guidance; see APP-122). Further, for functionally linked land used by qualifying features of these European sites (and other European sites) the arable and pasture habitats which characterise the landscape surrounding these European sites (and therefore used by qualifying features) are not sensitive to changes in air quality (see the UK Air Pollution Information System; APIS). Therefore there is no potential for negative effects on either the habitats

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						within the SPA/Ramsar themselves or functionally linked land associated with them.
RI_G31	Table 3.17 includes a list of all Important Ecological Features (IEFs) taken forward into assessment. Natural England advise the chapter to be updated to include information demonstrating why other IEFs have been scoped out for further assessment.		The Applicants assume that this issue can be closed out given that no further consultation responses have been provided by Natural England in respect of this outstanding issue.	No change. The IEF criteria include SSSIs, and no additional information has been included to why only Ribble Estuary SSSI and Lytham St Annes Dunes SSSI were taken forward for further assessment. Based on information submitted within other parts of the Environmental Statement (ES) there is the potential for other SSSIs to be impacted by the proposal, but no evidence is provided as to why these sites have been scoped out for further assessment. This includes Redcar and Tun Brook Woods SSSI (which we acknowledge is assessed later within the chapter in section 3.11.5) , Newton Marsh SSSI (which is identified as having notified features which are sensitive to air quality impacts), and Lytham Coastal Changes SSSI (which could be indirectly impacted during the construction works of the proposal as it is hydrologically connected to the same peat mass that the onshore cable route will go through). We advise that all SSSI's that may be impacted are included within the list of IEF's and that rational is provided for screening in/ out of further consideration of impacts based on impacts on designated site features. Further information on specific SSSI interest features can be found on Designated Sites View.		The Applicants maintain their stated position at Deadline 6. With respect to the specific SSSIs referred to in the Deadline 6 response by Natural England: • Red Scar and Tun Brook Woods SSSI – the Applicants provided signposting to the assessment of impacts on this SSSI in the chapter and supporting appendices in their Deadline 6 response to R1_G20 which concluded there would be no significant effects as a result of changes in air quality. • Newton Marsh SSSI – the potential effects of changes in air quality as a result of dust deposition to the SSSI during construction are assessed in Volume 3 Chapter 9 Air Quality (APP-121). The SSSI is identified as being of medium sensitivity to dust trackout in Table 9.34 and the effect on the SSSI during construction, with the implementation of appropriate mitigation (as secured through the dust management plan), is assessed as negligible (paragraph 9.11.2.15). • Lytham Coastal Changes SSSI – as stated in Table 3.5, of Volume 3 Chapter 3: Onshore ecology and biodiversity (APP-075) in its response to Annex 6 of Natural England's consultation response dated November 2023 on this matter, the potential hydrological impacts to this SSSI (which is designated for its geological interest) were assessed in Volume 3 Chapter 1: Geology, hydrogeology and ground conditions (Section 1.11.2) , which concluded there would be no damage/ disturbance impacts on the SSSI.
RI_G32	Table 3.40 and section 3.11.6.2 give the breakdown of coastal saltmarsh loss temp (0.03ha) and permanent (0ha). Natural England advises the Applicant provide further information on where the 0.03ha of saltmarsh loss will occur.		The Applicants clarified in their response at Deadline 4 (REP4-100) that there is no coastal saltmarsh habitat within Lea Marsh BHS despite this being shown on the MAGIC priority habitat layer (which is where the 0.03 ha figure that is referred to in Table 3.40 of Volume 1 Chapter 3: Onshore ecology and biodiversity (APP-075) is identified). The Phase 1 habitat survey undertaken by the Applicants confirmed that the 0.03 ha of habitat that is temporarily impacted at Lea Marsh BHS is species-poor grassland, which was not scoped into the impact assessment as an Important Ecological Feature, and nor is it a designated feature of the BHS. The Applicants therefore have nothing further	No change.		The Applicants maintain their stated position that there is no coastal saltmarsh being directly impacted within the Order Limits, because despite it being indicated as such on the MAGIC Priority Habitat layer, the habitat surveys confirmed that it was species-poor grassland and therefore not coastal saltmarsh Priority Habitat (Volume 3, Annex 3.3: Phase 1 habitat, national vegetation classification and hedgerow survey technical report (APP-077)). The Applicants are therefore unclear why Natural England has not changed its position on this matter.

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			to add on this point and assume that this issue can be closed out.			
RI_G33	Although the Applicant has suggested that they will be using Natural England's District Level Licensing (DLL) Scheme, Natural England has not (as yet) approved the use of the DLL scheme for this project. Natural England has agreed in principle to the project using District level Licensing, however this is dependent on the availability of compensation ponds at the time of enquiry. Until an Impact Assessment and Conservation payment Certificate (IACPC) has been signed by the applicant and counter-signed by Natural England they cannot rely on District Level Licensing as a Licensing approach for this project.					
RI_G34	Natural England notes that in Table 3.15 the summary of key findings for species includes a potential outlying badger sett recorded within the Onshore Order Limits that appears disused. However, badgers are not considered further within Chapter 3, and no evidence is presented to confirm the outlying badger sett is not used. Badgers are a Protected Species under the 1992 Protection of Badgers Act, and it is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure they have sufficient evidence to demonstrate the proposal will not impact on protected species. Therefore, Natural England is unable to provide a Letter of No Impediment for Badger at this time.					
RI_G35	Natural England notes the development is not subject to a mandatory net gain requirement and note the Applicant have outlined how they will deliver biodiversity benefit for areas of permanent habitat loss from permanent above-ground infrastructure using Defra BNG methodology and metric version 4.1 for the calculations. We also note that Lea Marsh BHS will be subject to habitat creation and enhancement measures. Unless there are changes in the design parameters we have no further comment to make during this examination.					
RI_G36	Natural England advise that topsoil bunds should not exceed 3m in height. Natural England advises that Application documents are updated to reflect best practice.					

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RI_G37	Natural England disagrees that the depth of subsoiling operations will depend on the nature of the soil type affected and extent of any compaction that may have occurred. The depth of decompaction should reflect the depth of compaction. Natural England advises that the Applicant reconsider the information around soil compaction and consider producing an outline decompaction strategy to maximise the effectiveness of decompaction methods.					
RI_G38	a) Natural England would welcome further discussion with the Applicant to determine the scale of impacts on the noctule hibernation bat roost and the judgement which their Ecologist has made regarding the possible abandonment of the noctule roost. b) If a licence is required, Natural England advise that quantitative data would be required on the roost, level of activity and use of the surrounding area.		The Applicants have nothing further to add on this issue and assume it can be closed out. The requirement for pre-construction surveys (and EPS licensing for otters, if needed) is covered in the Outline Ecology Management Plan (REP5-068) (via commitment CoT76) and secured by Requirement 12 of Schedules 2A and 2B of the draft DCO (REP5a-018).	No change.		The Applicants maintain their previously stated position that an EPS licence for the roost would be obtained prior to commencement of construction if this was confirmed as necessary following further pre-commencement surveys and detailed design of the works at Penwortham substation. Given that the roost supports a small number of a common species of bat, the Applicants are confident that if impacts to the roost cannot be avoided, adequate mitigation/ compensation measures for alternative roost provision would be able to be agreed with NEWLS to enable an EPS licence to be granted.
RI_G39	Natural England advises that commitments should be made to ensure that updated badger surveys will be undertaken before works commence to confirm that no new setts have been created, and that the outlier sett remains disused.					
RI_G40	Sand lizard: Given the detail contained within Section 3.11.13, the described works would likely require an A46 derogation licence to cover disturbance, damage and possibly destruction of habitat due to the exit pits for the routing of the cable within and beneath known sand lizard habitat. Natural England advise that further detail including population size estimates, mitigation and compensation should follow in a draft licence submission.		The Applicants can confirm they would obtain a Natural England EPS mitigation licence for sand lizard for works associated with the landfall site, including the construction compounds and access tracks. See response to R1_G21.	No change. Our response to RI_G21 is applicable here.		As stated in their response to RI_G21, the Applicants are engaging with NEWLS to obtain a Letter of No Impediment (LONI) and hope to have this resolved prior to the close of the Examination. If a LONI is not received before the close of the Examination, it would be submitted to the Secretary of State for consideration. Although this matter has not yet been fully resolved, given the temporary nature and small spatial extent of any potential construction impacts on sand lizards/sand lizard habitats, the Applicants are confident that NEWLS would be satisfied that the risks would be adequately mitigated through the EPS licence process such that a LONI would be issued
RI_G41	Natural England advises that further information is required on the status of water vole burrows and the works to be undertaken in the water courses with water vole burrows present.					

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RI_G42	a) Natural England advises the Applicant to clarify the location of otter resting places in relation to the watercourses which may be used within the Onshore Order Limits. b) Further information about the cable installation route, associated impacts and proximity to otter resting places would be required to determine the level of impacts posed. c) Natural England would expect works impacting a natal holt to be avoided. d) Natural England welcomes the proposed habitat restoration and CoT76, however there is minimal detail on how this will be monitored to know if this is compensating for the loss and degradation of habitat during construction.		The Applicants have nothing further to add on this issue and assume it can be closed out. The requirement for pre-construction surveys (and EPS licensing for otters, if needed) is covered in the Outline Ecology Management Plan (REP5-068) (via commitment CoT76) and secured by Requirement 12 of Schedules 2A and 2B of the draft DCO (REP5a-018).	No change.		The Applicants maintain their previously stated position that an EPS licence for otters would be obtained prior to commencement of construction if this was confirmed as necessary following further pre-commencement surveys and detailed design of the works. The Applicants have committed to using trenchless techniques beneath all Environment Agency Main Rivers, and therefore at present have assumed that otter EPS licensing or habitat compensation would not be necessary. However, as advised by Natural England, where possible the Applicants would seek to avoid any impacts to otter resting places and holts (including natal holts) as part of the detailed design (informed by the pre-construction surveys). The Applicants are confident that if impacts to otter resting places or holts cannot be avoided, adequate mitigation/ compensation measures would be able to be agreed with NEWLS to enable an EPS licence to be granted. With regards to habitat restoration, there is no proposed compensation for loss or degradation of habitats because all temporarily affected habitats would be returned to their pre-construction state as set out in CoT76. There would be post-construction monitoring for a defined aftercare period for all reinstated habitats (which would be confirmed in the updated Ecology Management Plans). Specific habitat management and monitoring would be undertaken for the habitats delivered for BNG at the substations and Lea Marsh in accordance with a 30-year BNG habitat management plan; there would also be specific post-construction monitoring of reinstated habitats within the Mill Brook Valley BHS, which could be directly impacted by construction activities close to Penwortham substation.
RI_G43	There are several gaps in information regarding air quality emissions on designated sites during the construction, operational and decommissioning periods of the project. As a result, Natural England is unable to provide full comments on this impact pathway and state whether we agree with the conclusions on impacts on designated sites at present. These sites include: Lytham St Annes Dunes SSSI Newton Marsh SSSI Ribble Estuary SSSI Ribble and Alt Estuary SPA Ribble and Alt Estuary Ramsar Red Scar & Tun Brook Woods (Ancient Woodland & SSSI) In particular, Newton Marsh SSSI has been		See response to R1_G20.	No change. Please see our comments for RI_G31.		The Applicants maintain their position as stated in previous response on this topic that all air quality impacts to designated sites have been adequately identified and assessed. The Applicants are therefore unclear as to why Natural England has not changed its position on this matter. See also response to R1_G20.

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	omitted from the air quality assessment and impacts on internationally designated sites (SPA/ SAC/ Ramsar) have not been considered, as highlighted in our previous [RR-1606]. a) We advise that additional information is provided on air quality impacts, as advised in this RR and our previous RR ([RR-1601] Appendix G Onshore Ecology and Nature Conservation). b) Natural England advises for the aforementioned designated sites, air pollution impacts as a result of traffic, machinery and dust are considered and justification is provided for where impacts have been scoped out.					
RI_G44	The air quality assessment for designated ecological sites does not appear to consider sources of air pollution other than traffic and dust. Natural England advises that information on the use of machinery and equipment (including NRMM) is provided. This should include locations, duration of operations and minimum standard of NRMM and equipment with the potential to release pollutants which may impact designated sites, for both the construction areas and all temporary construction compounds. Air quality impacts for this pathway should include all statutory designated sites within a 200m screening distance from the machinery/NRMM, but is not limited to: Lytham St Annes Dunes SSSI Newton Marsh SSSI Ribble Estuary SSSI Ribble and Alt Estuary SPA Ribble and Alt Estuary Ramsar Red Scar & Tun Brook Woods (Ancient Woodland & SSSI) If impacts on these sites can be screened out, please provide justification on this.		See response to R1_G20.	No change. Please see our comments for RI_G31.		See response to RI_G31. In addition, the air quality assessment does consider the sites listed (see section 9.11 of Volume 3, Chapter 9: Air quality (APP-121).
RI_G45	Newton Marsh SSSI is not included within the assessment of air quality impacts on designated sites, despite the SSSI being within 200m of the proposed works. We advise that all air quality impacts and sources of pollution (including impacts from traffic, dust and machinery/ equipment) are assessed for the SSSI.		See response to R1_G20.	No change. Please see our comments for RI_G31.		See response to RI_G31 where details on Newton Marsh SSSI are included.

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RI_G46	Natural England requires clarification of the level of NOx emissions at Red Scar & Tun Brook Woods (Ancient Woodland & SSSI). If the annual-mean NOx PC is 1% of CL or more, then we advise further assessment of NOx emissions on the SSSI is required and should be secured in the Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (OLEM).		See response to R1_G20.	No change.		See previous response to R1_G20. The Applicants reiterate that as clarified in previous responses on this topic, the Process Contributions (PC) from annual mean NH3, nutrient nitrogen deposition and acid deposition exceeded the 1% screening threshold of the relevant critical loads/ levels at the SSSI, and was therefore subject to further detailed assessment, where the effects were concluded to be minor adverse and therefore not significant (paragraphs 3.11.5.7 - 3.11.5.20 of Volume 3 Annex 9.1: Air quality impacts on ecologically designated sites (APP-122). The Applicants are therefore unclear why Natural England has not changed its position on this matter.
RI_G47	NH3, nitrogen deposition and acid deposition. Natural England notes that Paragraph 3.11.5.11 – 3.11.5.17 of [APP-075] assesses the impacts of exceedance of critical levels for NH3, nitrogen deposition and acid deposition. Despite critical levels being exceeded, the Applicant rules out impacts due to absence of lower plant communities or already exceeded thresholds. Natural England advises that evidence is required on the presence/ absence of lower plant species within the area of exceedance of 1% threshold within the SSSI.		See response to R1_G20.	No change.		See response to RI_G46.
RI_G48			The Applicants note that Works no. 42A42B only allows for pedestrian construction access, as secured in Schedule 1, Part 1 of the draft DCO (REP5a-018). However, the Applicants can confirm that gravel aggregate will not be used on either the beach access track or haul roads that may be required on the beach itself. Section 1.12 of the Outline Landfall Method Statement (S_D4_22/F03) has been updated at Deadline 6 to reflect this. Therefore, the Applicants consider that this point can be closed out.	No change.		The Applicants would question why Natural England has written "no change" when clarification has been added to the Outline Landfall Method Statement (S_D4_22/F03).
RI_G49				We welcome the NVC survey undertaken [REP5-039], however we advise the Applicant should include detail on the distance of dune growth in meters from the edge of Lytham St Annes Dunes SSSI to confirm the extent of the frontal dunes and		The Applicants have acknowledged in the ES and subsequent documents submitted into the examination that there has been seaward accretion of dunes beyond the mapped boundary of the Lytham St Anne's Dunes SSSI, and this is estimated at around 40 – 50 m. This is due to the favourable management interventions undertaken by Fylde Borough Council (FBC) in recent

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				if this has the potential to be impacted by construction works at landfall. Additionally, the Applicant should provide detail further detail in [REP5-117] on how dunes will be protected during the works. Please see Appendix G6 for detailed comments.		years, which includes the annual planting of donated Christmas trees to encourage the accretion of the dune system. The Applicants can confirm that the 'real' location of the dunes has been taken into account when designing the buffer to the exit pits on the beach (temporary compound 2). The works associated with the exit pits will be at least 100m from the SSSI boundary (which is a fixed boundary marked on the OS base mapping) and would therefore also be at least 60m from the nearest dune habitats. The Applicants can therefore confirm that there would be no impacts to the dune habitats either within the mapped SSSI boundary, or in the 'new' section of accreted dunes along the seaward toe.
RI_G50				[REP5-039] flagged the presence of rare dune habitat, dune heath and decalcified from of SD12. A small area of dune heath is present within the Order Limits and depending on cable alignment could be drilled under. While no above ground works are expected within St Annes Old Links Golf Course BHS, this area should be noted and avoided in the final design stages and for example when undertaking additional ground investigations. Please see Appendix G6 for detailed comments.		The Applicants note this response. The Applicants reiterate that they have made a commitment (CoT128 of Volume 1, Annex 5.3: Commitments Register of the ES (AS-030)) to undertake hydrogeological risk assessment(s) in relation to the crossing of the Lytham St Annes Dunes SSSI. These assessment(s) will be used to inform the detailed site specific crossing design for the installation of the offshore export cables beneath Lytham St Annes Dunes SSSI. This is secured by Requirement 8 of Schedules 2A & 2B of the draft development consent order (REP6-013). The detailed Hydrogeological Risk Assessment(s) would take into account ground investigation works, and provide an updated assessment of risks to Groundwater Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystems (GWTEs) including the dune slacks and heaths of the Lytham St Anne's Dunes SSSI and St Anne's Old Links Golf Course BHS. The detailed risk assessment(s) would identify any specific mitigation that would be necessary for the protection of these habitats (CoT41, CoT119, CoT128). However, as set out in the Outline Hydrogeological Risk Assessment, it is considered that the depth of the trenches would be sufficient to avoid any impacts to shallow groundwater and thus construction would have no adverse effects on GWTDEs.
RI_G51				We welcome the measures to reduce recreational pressure at Fairhaven saltmarsh which includes the use of soft fencing to deter visitors from accessing the marsh [REP5-069]. Although matters relating to the features of the SPA are now resolved, we have concerns over the potential impacts on the saltmarsh. Provision of detail on installation and removal, or if leaving in situ, detail on		The Applicants note this response. For additional detail, the Applicants point NE to REP6-192.5 in Applicants' Response to Deadline 6 submissions from IP (S_D7_2).

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				proposed plan for future maintenance and repair. Please see Appendix G6 for detailed comments.		

Table 2.16: REP6-193 - Responses to Questions Regarding Onshore and Intertidal Ornithology

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Risk and Issues Log Deadline 1 – Onshore and Intertidal Ornithology Taken from Natural England's Relevant and Written Representations Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets Appendix H - Onshore and Intertidal Ornithology						
RI_H1	Surveys of intertidal and terrestrial wintering birds and terrestrial breeding birds have been completed to a minimal viable level on areas within the onshore order limits, with some areas within the red line boundary only being partially surveyed. Additionally, there is a lack of survey effort of surrounding areas in close proximity to work areas which are likely to be disturbed by construction works. Natural England's expectations are that two years of full survey are undertaken across the whole area plus the buffer to inform decision making. As further survey is unlikely to inform the Examination process due to time constraints, when considering the predictions of the Environmental Statement, the survey data should only be taken as a conservative assessment of the populations present and therefore the level of risk, rather than a precautionary one.		The Applicants note there is no change on this matter and refer Natural England to RI_H1 in S_D5_2.5 Annex 2.5 to Applicants' Response to Deadline 4 submissions from Statutory Consultees and other organisation: Natural England - Rev F01 (REP5-124). The Applicants' position has not changed. The Applicants request that Natural England provide detail to show that appropriate survey design, buffers and coverage has not been used to inform the EIA and HRA assessments. The Applicants stress that these are (a) proportionate to the largely temporary impacts of the project, and, (b) that they are of a similar or higher level than is commonly used to assess similar DCO underground transmission projects.	Sufficiently resolved. Our concerns still remain in relation to the level of survey effort carried out within the Onshore Order Limits. However through our engagement with the Applicant and provision of additional detail, we have been able to reach a position where we can provide an integrity judgement. We will engage with the Applicant post-consent on the monitoring of the efficacy of the mitigation areas including baseline surveys.		The Applicants' closing position is that, these surveys were conducted with a good coverage, over two years and that they included the appropriate buffers to account for disturbance (see the Applicants' Closing Statement S_D7_3)) The Applicants note that well over 400 days were spent conducting the ornithology surveys for this project and that Natural England's assertion that this represents a poor coverage is not proportionate to the Projects potential impacts that are largely temporary in nature, entirely reversible and on intensively farmed land.
RI_H2	The construction works are expected to last 66 months – this is a long term, albeit not permanent, time to be having an impact when measured in avian terms. The WCS could therefore mean that all birds impacted would be displaced from the entire terrestrial work area for the full 66 months. Natural England advise that the Applicant should		The Applicants note there is no change on this matter and refer Natural England to RI_H2 in S_D5_2.5 Annex 2.5 to Applicants' Response to Deadline 4 submissions from Statutory Consultees and other organisation: Natural England - Rev F01 (REP5-124) and their position has not changed.	No change. We highlight that in the absence of clear phasing commitments, it has been necessary for Natural England's advice to be based on a worst case scenario of 66 months of displacement effects throughout the onshore construction zone. Notwithstanding the progress made with the mitigation sites at Lytham Moss and Newton-with-Scales, it		The Applicants note Natural England's closing position on this matter, and also note that Natural England are correct in their assertion that risks will be minimised as not all works will occur at once and that therefore the Applicants assessment is very precautionary. However, the Applicants are not currently in a position to set out the spatio-temporal programme of works.

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	consider phasing the works so that only a proportion of the terrestrial works corridor are impacted at any one time. This will greatly reduce the risk that the works present.			remains our view that spatio-temporal phasing of construction works would significantly reduce the risks to SPA/Ramsar site waterbirds.		
RI_H3	**Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA/Ramsar site – inadequate assessment of wintering intertidal features** There is not currently enough information within the Application to accurately identify and assess the impacts for wintering and passage features of Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA/Ramsar site. Natural England advise that the Applicant should update the report to inform a HRA document to reflect the recorded numbers in the affected area, not a questionable area-based measure of habitat availability. A more detailed assessment of the usage of this area by SPA/Ramsar site species and the spatial and temporal patterns of that usage is required to understand the impacts of the proposal and inform mitigation strategies.		The Applicants welcome Natural England's agreement that there are No AEoI caused by works at the landfall due to: • Commitment to a Nov-Mar restriction (CoT110 and CoT129 updated in the ISAA (REP5-021)). • ECoWs at the landfall during passage (updated in section 1.6.3.26 of the oEMP (REP5-068)). • Screening of works (updated in section 1.6.3.26 of the oEMP (REP5-068)). • Alleviation measures at Fairhaven Saltmarsh (CoT113 and updated in appendix B.2.1 of the oEMP (REP5-068)). • Clarification on the limited nature of the impact (updated in sections 1.6.3.98 and 1.6.3.240 of the ISAA (REP5-021)). • Clarification on the low numbers of birds predicted to be impacted (updated in sections 1.6.3.98 and 1.6.3.240 of the ISAA (REP5-021)). The Applicants hope that this matter can be fully closed out now.	Resolved. The updated ISAA [REP5-020], section 1.6.3.240 - 243 includes further assessment of passage foraging sanderling. The additional detail satisfies our concerns and we now agree that AEoI can be ruled out for the passage features.		The Applicants welcome the closing of this issue.
RI_H4	**Adverse effects on the Ribble and Alt Estuary SPA and Ramsar site due to landfall works** The landfall site and adjacent areas supports very significant numbers of SPA/Ramsar site birds during the winter and passage periods. However, the Applicant only proposes some limitations to working during these sensitive periods – a limit of 5 weeks working in November-February, with no restrictions to working outside this period. This approach both to the winter period (which we consider to run from November to March inclusive) and the lack of any restriction during passage periods will provide insufficient mitigation. In the absence of a full seasonal restriction for the appropriate periods, or a compelling case that a lower level of restriction is acceptable, Natural England advises that an AEOI cannot		See RI_H3 above.	Resolved. RI_H3 is also applicable here.		The Applicants welcome the closing of this issue.

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	be ruled out. A comprehensive seasonal restriction for the sensitive winter and passage periods should be carefully considered in, with the relevant months should be identified with respect to site-specific data and SPA conservation advice.					
RI_H5	Unless an effective seasonal restriction can be committed to, we advise that an in-principle derogations case for the Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA/Ramsar site will need to be developed under the Habitats Regulations, demonstrating that there are no alternative solutions and Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest, including that a greater level of seasonal restriction is not achievable. In this light, the proposed roosting refuge would constitute compensatory measures under the Habitats Regulations~~,~~ Accordingly, a far more detailed submission regarding the installation and management of the compensatory measures is needed addressing Natural England's concerns, and a compensation schedule in the DCO added. To ensure the compensatory measures are targeted and effective, it is critical that the significance of the affected area for SPA and Ramsar site species and their specific requirements from it are adequately described. Additionally, the Applicant should provide evidence that the use of the proposed area is currently compromised by disturbance (noting it falls within the SPA), and that the energy saving for the compensation proposal will be sufficient to offset impacts.		See RI_H3 above.	Resolved. We welcome the information included in the updated OEMP [REP5-069] which now satisfies our concerns regarding the deliverability of Fairhaven. The Applicant states that measures at Fairhaven will be informed by the findings of a site specific recreational disturbance survey to understand the site-specific recreational pressures and measures suitable for managing these. The study will also be used to inform delivery of local education and wardening. We welcome this approach. We welcome that ongoing monitoring of the birds will take place at a frequency agreed with relevant stakeholders and we look forward to engaging further on the monitoring approach.		The Applicants welcome the closing of this issue.
RI_H6	**Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA/Ramsar – inadequate assessment of impacts on terrestrial waterbirds:** Natural England do not agree with the Applicant's HRA conclusions. We note that the current conclusions are based on modelled information on likely habitat availability. This is often based on out-of-date information and models that claim urban/infrastructure areas are available foraging habitat. The focus should be on the populations revealed by the site-specific surveys rather than generic assumptions.		The Applicants welcome Natural England's comments and have updated the oEMP at D5 (J6 Outline Ecological Management Plan - Rev F05 (REP5-068)). The Applicants hope that these amendments address all of Natural England's remaining issues. However, additional updates have been made at D6 (J6/F06) and Natural England are a consultee under Requirement 12 (draft development consent order (REP5a-018)). The updates made to the oEMP reflect Natural England's comments in H5 and include:	Resolved. We welcome the updated OEMP [REP-069] which includes further detail on the measures at each mitigation site and which species will be supported in line with the detail included in [REP4-120]. However, whilst this aspect is resolved, we have outstanding concerns relating to the monitoring and delivery of Newton-with-Scales permanent mitigation. Please see RI_H7.		The Applicants welcome the closing of this issue.

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	Furthermore, there is a lack of information regarding the spatio-temporal implications of the habitat loss. With regards to mitigation, we advise that the Applicant provides further information on how the tunnel end works of the Ribble crossing will be managed to ensure no disruption to SPA/Ramsar site waterbirds moving along the corridor of the estuary. The justification of only using trenchless techniques is inadequate.		• Further text clarifying the frequency and purpose of monitoring (including monitoring of habitats) - **Appendix B** • Clarification around the timing of monitoring and management. **Appendix A** • The addition of detail surrounding the feeding of geese and swans - **Appendix B** • The amendment of the scrape depth to 45cm throughout. • The addition of the updated Terrestrial Waterbird Note appended to provide all detail in one place - **Appendix E**			
RI_H7	**Ribble & Alt Estuaries SPA – mitigation for terrestrial impacts/compensation** The proposed mitigation measures are hoping to support the needs of a number of species with different ecological needs, however no information is included showing clear design and management information to ensure that these areas are going to be fit for purpose. The terrestrial mitigation areas need reviewing against the specifics of the species (and the number of those species) that they need to host, which relates to the above comments around the phasing of works and being able to accommodate all displaced birds from the whole onshore order limits. Detailed site assessments that articulate site management and structure in relation to the role they need to fulfil need to be generated.		The Applicants welcome Natural England's comments and have updated the oEMP at D5 (J6 Outline Ecological Management Plan - Rev F05 (REP5-068)). The Applicants hope that these amendments address all of Natural England's remaining issues. However, additional updates have been made at D6 (J6/F06) and Natural England are included as a consultee under Requirement 12 (draft development consent order (REP5a-018)). The updates made to the oEMP reflect Natural England's comments in H5 and include: • Further text clarifying the frequency and purpose of monitoring (including monitoring of habitats) - **Appendix B** • Clarification around the timing of monitoring and management. **Appendix A** • The addition of detail surrounding the feeding of geese and swans - **Appendix B** • The amendment of the scrape depth to 45cm throughout. • The addition of the updated Terrestrial Waterbird Note appended to provide all detail in one place - **Appendix E**	Progressed but not resolved. We are satisfied with the detail included in the OEMP [REP-069] on the species which will be supported and the proposed approach to monitoring the efficacy of the temporary mitigation area at Lytham Moss. The detail in the OEMP relating to the permanent mitigation area at Newton-with-Scales does progress our concerns further due to the inclusion of more information on each measure and the species this will support. However, we reiterate our advice in [REP5-183] regarding the need for a long-term robust monitoring plan to ensure adequate management of the site. Although we welcome the additional detail on monitoring, we note in Section 1.9.2.5 [REP5-069] that monitoring will only occur for up to 5 years after construction has finished, despite the project lifetime being far longer. In the absence of monitoring after 5 years, we are concerned that long term management of the site for species of interest will not be secured.		The Applicants have provided the additional detail on the long-term monitoring at Newton-with-Scales in Appendix B.2.2 of J6 Outline Ecological Management Plan (Tracked) - Rev F06 (REP6-115). The monitoring commitment is now: "*There is a commitment to monitor this area for the lifetime of the project (30 years) to inform the long-term success*." The Applicants therefore consider this issue closed.
RI_H8	The potential impacts on Newton Marsh SSSI have not been adequately assessed. There is minimal information on what works will take place in close proximity to this site and how the work will be managed to not affect the site with respect to visual and noise disturbance. Further justification should be provided on how the Applicant has concluded no risk to the site. Proper consideration of this area is also applicable to the HRA as the site is well used by SPA birds, particularly in winter.		The Applicants have provided this information as Appendix E of E2.3 Habitats Regulations Assessment Stage 2 Information to Support an Appropriate Assessment: Part Three (Tracked) - Rev F02 (REP5-021) at D5 and hope that this issue can be closed out now.	Resolved. We welcome the updated ISAA [REP5-020] including the updates made in Section 1.7.2.8 and the detail provided in Section 3, Appendix E assessing the potential impacts on ornithological receptors on Newton Marsh SSSI. The information satisfies our concerns.		The Applicants welcome the closing of this issue.

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RI_H9	Reliance on the Functionally Linked Land (FLL) description in Bowland Ecology (2021) is flawed for the purposes of this survey. Natural England do not agree with the criteria used for FLL threshold. Natural England requires further information on reasoning for not using standard 1% threshold for measuring significance of FLL. Further, Natural England advises the Applicant to ensure all figures for species are included and consider the possibility of FLL for the species referenced.		The Applicants welcome this issue being closed out.			
RI_H10	Natural England requires clarification on the lapwing data and queries why the two years of data are being listed out separately, when the data represents two phases of one survey.					
RI_H11	Natural England do not agree with the justification for not following the SNH (2017) guidelines and require further information on mitigation for the impacts. Although construction is temporary, impact risk will largely depend on construction approach (and some permanent infrastructure/potential permanent land use change in mitigation areas), which could last up to 66 months.		The Applicants again refer Natural England to their own advice (RR-045. Outer Dowsing Examination Library at EN010130-000660-Outer Dowsing Examination Library.pdf): "*This best practic* *advice is provided to help support sustainable development within* *North Norfolk and address potential impacts to Annex I Pink Footed Geese….* ***It is Natural England's view that it is possible to extrapolate the principles of this advice in regard to avoidance and supplementary feeding as mitigation for sustainable development projects impacting on Annex I geese at other locations.*** 2. *Excluding Impact Option 2 - Supplementary Feeding Strategic Approach Independently of development-related issues, Natural England has already commissioned energetic modelling and started consulting with farmers about pink-footed goose management following changes to agricultural practice. Provisioning of grain and / or sugar beet at an undisturbed location elsewhere along the Norfolk coast could provide an alternative foraging resource, offsetting any effects of displacement due to development. It is anticipated such work could be delivered at a considerable cost-saving to developers;* ***removing the need for crop-mapping, goose surveys and complex energetic modelling*** *which might, regardless, still lead to a requirement for some form of mitigation. Such an approach is likely to be*	Sufficiently resolved. Our concerns remain regarding the use of the SNH guidance, however through our engagement with the Applicant and the additional detail provided, we have been able to reach a position where, based on our professional judgement, the concerns over the justification for not using the SNH guidance are no longer a significant concern.		The Applicants' closing position remains that of Deadline 6. Natural England's suggestion that the Transmission Assets should be treated in the same manner as for wind turbines is misplaced. The impacts of the Transmission Assets are largely temporary in nature, and entirely reversible.

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			quicker, with an increased likelihood of positive ecological benefits to geese." The Applicants again note that the survey frequency set out in the SNH guidance (2017), is for assessing the impacts on geese for generation aspects of a wind farm (i.e., turbines). The Applicants also note that they have conducted 14 surveys with good coverage (see Figures 1.5 and 1.6 of F3.4.4 Volume 3, Annex 4.4: Onshore and intertidal ornithology survey methodologies (APP-095)) over two winters, proposed supplementary feeding as mitigation and undertaken energetic calculations to base the feeding regime on. The Applicants therefore conclude that, not only have they taken Natural England's own advice and guidance into account when mitigating for pink-footed geese, but that their survey and assessment has been robust enough for temporary impacts on intensively farmed land of low ecological value. The Applicants therefore feel that this issue can be closed out.			
RI_H12	It is unclear from the report for geese, ducks and swans, waders and gulls and terns if this is referring to birds that are actually breeding or commenting on non-breeding birds gathering in the breeding season. Natural England advise the Applicant that reporting on non-breeding gatherings during the breeding season would be better presented as a separate report/separate section.					
RI_H13	Natural England notes the incomplete coverage in the survey (0-9 visits = incomplete coverage.) Natural England advises that all areas should have received some survey visits, and that the gaps in coverage inevitably reduce the confidence in the assessment conclusions as regards number and distribution of birds.					
RI_H14	Natural England note that a number of these species are also non-breeding interest of the Ribble and Alt Estuary SPA and there may be functional linkage. Natural England advises the Applicant to consider the potential for FLL for these species and whether there is potential to impact if so.		The Applicants welcome Natural England's response and would like to note that, following the productive meeting on 16th September, the Applicants have updated the following documents at D5: • E2.3 Habitats Regulations Assessment Stage 2 Information to Support an Appropriate Assessment: Part Three (Tracked) - Rev F02 (REP5-021)	We welcome the updates to [REP-069] which details which species will be supported by each mitigation area. We are satisfied that the full suite of species for which FLL is impacted will be supported by the mitigation areas. We maintain that the ISAA should be updated to reflect the updates on which species FLL is impacted, however as the delivery of the		The Applicants note Natural England's closing position on this matter.

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			• J6 Outline Ecological Management Plan - Rev F05 (REP5-068) The Applicants hope that these amendments address all of Natural England's remaining issues. However, additional updates have been made at D6 (J6/F06) which include a commitment to include Natural England as a stakeholder in ongoing discussions post-application. The updates made to the oEMP reflect Natural England's comments in H5 and include: • Further text clarifying the frequency and purpose of monitoring (including monitoring of habitats) - **Appendix B** • Clarification around the timing of monitoring and management. **Appendix A** • The addition of detail surrounding the feeding of geese and swans - **Appendix B** • The amendment of the scrape depth to 45cm throughout. • The addition of the updated Terrestrial Waterbird Note appended to provide all detail in one place - **Appendix E**	mitigation areas is the key element, we are satisfied that the species will be supported.		
RI_H15	Natural England note the survey limitations are reasonably well characterised, however it is not clear if survey effort was sufficient for 'difficult' species. For example, breeding waterfowl, raptors and crepuscular species. The Applicant should provide clarity on survey effort limitations for species which are considered more difficult to survey.					
RI_H16	Whilst Natural England acknowledges the consideration of Chapter 9 Air Quality [APP-121], as these impacts could also relate to onshore and intertidal ornithology, they should be assessed within this chapter.					
RI_H17	The Applicant still intends to carry out up to five weeks of work during the high sensitivity period of November - March inclusive. Natural England advises that all potentially disturbing works should be excluded over this period. We also advise consistency when defining the over-wintering period, which should be the same across all documents and commitments.					

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RI_H18	Natural England requires more information to ascertain why the following statement could be impossible when there is uncertainty regarding the origin of the birds: *"the 353 lesser black-backed gull reported in Table 1.67 cannot all belong to the Ribble and Alt SPA, Morecambe Bay and Duddon Estuary SPA and Ramsar, and the Bowland Fells SPA."*					
RI_H19	The citation counts and the peak count recorded during the site-specific surveys identifies that many (almost all) species are at >1% of citation value and > 1% of most recent count (noting that this is only noted for Ribble and Alt Estuary SPA for most species). These surveys indicate the importance of the area and the subsequent importance of mitigationg, predominantly all at >1%.					
RI_H20	Natural England advise that Morecambe Bay and Duddon Estuary SPA and Morecambe Bay Ramsar are two separate sites and have different geographical boundaries. Duddon Estuary Ramsar should also be considered and is a separate site.					
RI_H21	Natural England advise the inclusion of the most up to date digital aerial survey for the Bowland Fells Lesser Black-backed Gull Colony Count.					
RI_H22	Over 2% of golden plover were found on the area of permanent habitat loss. Although the area represents 0.04% of the total foraging range, the number of golden plover using the area implies it is an important area. Natural England advises the Applicant consider why it may be preferentially used by golden plover, and how this will be replicated in the mitigation areas.		The Applicants have disputed that there is a permanent loss of FLL for golden plover in a previous response to RR1601 H 1601H.2 8 in Annex 3.2.16 to Response to RR - Natural England (RR-1601) - Appendix H (Onshore and Intertidal Ornithology) (PDA-023): "***As golden plover were only found once out of 14 non-breeding visits spread over two years the Applicants would dispute this, as functionally linked status also needs to account for frequency of usage***." Golden plover were only present at the substation sites on one of 14 survey visits and even when considering all birds that were recorded within the vicinity of the area of permanent habitat loss (i.e., a precautionary approach that includes birds that will not be directly affected but may be displaced by presence	Resolved. The updated OEMP [REP5-069] now includes sufficient detail to satisfy our concerns regarding the suitability of measures to support golden plover. The information now states that the primary objective of Newton-with-Scales is to provide alternative habitat for golden plover and specifies the measures which will support this species e.g. water management, grass land management and rush management. The additional detail for example rotational mowing to maintain a mosaic of habitats that will then be monitored and adjusted as necessary provides NE with greater confidence that the measures will deliver and if not doing so will be managed to improve support to displaced species. This is particularly important for golden plover, where the displacement is permanent.		The Applicants welcome the closing of this issue being resolved. However, the Applicants note that they are still in disagreement with Natural England regarding the conclusion of FLL for permanent impacts. The Applicants refer to their previous response to RI_H22 (REP6-193) as their closing statement on this issue.

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			of the infrastructure) this equates to an average of only 11 birds or 0.3% of the SPA citation that will be impacted. After revising the habitat modelling, the area of permanent loss is only approx. 0.07 to 0.08% of available pasture and arable within 10 km of their roost sites. The Applicants have not received any engagement from Natural England following this but continue to dispute that the substation land represents FLL for golden plover. Natural England clearly state in RR1601 H 1601H.2 9 of Annex 3.2.16 to Response to RR - Natural England (RR-1601) - Appendix H (Onshore and Intertidal Ornithology) (PDA-023): "***Regularity of usage is an important factor to understand if mitigation areas will reliably accommodate the additional displaced birds***" Using an absolute worst-case scenario which includes impacts upon golden plover in fields near (but not inside) the substation sites, this would amount to the average number of birds being impacted as 11 golden plover or 0.3% of the SPA population. Notwithstanding the Applicants' position regarding AEoI on golden plover from the permanent impacts at the substation sites, the Applicants have committed to providing long-term mitigation for non-breeding waders including golden plover at Newton-with-Scales and updates to the Outline Ecological Management Plan (J6/F06) reflecting Natural England's concerns have been made at Deadline 6. These updates include: • Further text clarifying the frequency and purpose of monitoring (including monitoring of habitats) - **Appendix B** • Clarification around the timing of monitoring and management. **Appendix A** • The addition of the updated Terrestrial Waterbird Note appended to provide all detail in one place - **Appendix E**	However, concerns still remain regarding the delivery and monitoring of Newton-with-Scales. See RI_H7 above for more detail.		
RI_H23	Natural England requires further information from the Applicant to understand if any appraisal has been made to quantify if the		See RI_H22	Natural England acknowledge that this issue has not been resolved, however we have been able to come to a view on the likely		Please see response RI_H22.

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	proposed mitigation/compensation ground is sufficient to mitigate the loss. Regularity of usage is an important factor to understand if mitigation areas will reliably accommodate the additional displaced birds.			effectiveness of the mitigation measures (not-withstanding our concerns relating to Newton-with Scales, please see RI_H7).		
RI_H24	Langley et al., (2022). appears to have been omitted from the references. Update the document to include the reference as cited.					
RI_H25	The figures set out in Table 1.76 [APP-017] appear to only represent the area of physical ground disturbance arising from the proposal not visual or acoustic disturbance which will extend some 100's of meters (varying between species) from the works. Temporary habitat loss will therefore be much greater than suggested in the MDS. Further, recovery time of disturbed ground needs to be considered as there is minimal mention of recovery time beyond completion of works.		The Applicants re-iterate that in section 1.6.3 of E2.3 Habitats Regulations Assessment Stage 2 Information to Support an Appropriate Assessment Part Three – Special Protection Areas (SPA) and Ramsar Site assessments (REP5-021) they have assessed: • Permanent habitat loss as the permanent area of actual habitat that will be lost (i.e., the substations). • Temporary habitat loss as the temporary area of actual habitat that will be lost. • Displacement from disturbance as the area of construction plus the appropriate species buffer (i.e., 50m for sanderling, 300m for dunlin, 500m for pink-footed goose). Therefore, all scenarios have been assessed, and it would be incorrect to say that habitat loss covers a greater area than it actually does. The Applicants would note that this an extremely common approach to ornithological assessment and are unclear why Natural England are struggling to understand it, especially as it was used for both Mona Offshore Wind Farm and for the offshore ornithology of the Transmission Assets.	Our concerns regarding the MDS for temporary habitat loss at landfall still remain, however following engagement with the Applicant during Examination and the efforts and commitments made, including reducing impacts at landfall and winter restriction on construction work at landfall between November-March inclusive, AEoI can now be ruled out for both over-wintering and passage features. The updated OEMP [REP5-060] details the measures to reduce impacts at landfall and the measures to be implemented at Fairhaven to alleviate any residual impacts. Therefore the level of risk is now much reduced and we consider this matter closed.		The Applicants' closing position remains that of Deadline 6. The Applicants were clear throughout both the EIA and HRA that they assessed habitat loss and disturbance as separate impacts and have laid out the species-specific areas lost to disturbance in Table 1.93 of the ISAA (APP-017), so there is no gap in assessment.
RI_H26	Natural England strongly advises the Applicant to provide further information on the onshore works and ensuring work is staggered appropriately. We suggest the Applicant either needs to provide information to ensure that the mitigation areas really can support all disturbed features in the terrestrial area for the whole period or the Applicant need to identify a works approach that reduces the risk at any one point in time (but still ensure that the mitigation land can support the scaled down risk).		The Applicants welcome that the response Q1.1.3 of the Applicants' Response to Examining Authority's Written Questions (ExQ1)' [REP3-056] provided some clarity, however reiterate that further detail on the phasing of onshore works cannot be provided until the detailed design stage, following appointment of the contractor.	No change. Our detailed advice on the phasing of works is included in Appendix H5. In the absence of clear phasing commitments, it has been necessary for Natural England's advice to be based on a worst case scenario of 66 months of displacement effects throughout the onshore construction zone. Notwithstanding the progress made with the mitigation sites at Lytham Moss and Newton-with-Scales, it remains our view that spatio-temporal phasing of construction works would significantly reduce the risks to SPA/Ramsar site waterbirds.		The Applicants note Natural England's closing position on this matter and also note that Natural England are correct in their assertion that the assessment is very much a worst case scenario as not all works will occur at once and that therefore the Applicants assessment is very precautionary. However, the Applicants are not currently in a position to set out the spatio-temporal programme of works.

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RI_H27	Natural England notes that there is a definite impact for 24 months at this fixed point (400kV grid connection cable). We further note that there does not appear to be any identified mitigation for the risk of light and noise affecting the river corridor. Natural England advise the Applicant to review work approaches and clarify how risk from sound/light disturbance is to be mitigated for a period of up to 24 months.		The Applicants have appended this information to Appendix E of E2.3 Habitats Regulations Assessment Stage 2 Information to Support an Appropriate Assessment: Part Three (Tracked) - Rev F02 (REP5-021) at D5 and hope that this issue can be closed out.	Resolved. We welcome the updated ISAA [REP5-020] including the updates made in Section 1.7.2.8 and the detail provided in Section 2, Appendix E assessing the potential impacts on ornithological receptors at the River Ribble Crossing. The information satisfies our concerns.		The Applicants welcome the closing of this issue.
RI_H28	Natural England note that while it is correct that pink-footed geese do not forage in the intertidal they do roost on the intertidal, which will not have been captured in the 'overlap analysis' and should be included.					
RI_H29	Natural England do not agree with the whole meta-population approach based on a radius around different roosts. This is not appropriate methodology for SPA site-based assessment. The applicant's survey data identifies the risk they should be considering through their determination of the size of the population that will be impacted. Apportioning by site would be appropriate for the assessment.		The Applicants welcome this issue being closed out.			
RI_H30	"Eleven Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA ornithological features were present within the intertidal environment at the landfall, 9 of which are at >1% SPA. The Applicant should ensure all >1% SPA features are taken through to LSE and AA as significant risks are present to all these features.					
RI_H31	Natural England requires the Applicant to provide clarification on the beach/landfall Direct Pipe Trenchless installation. Natural England note the commitment to minimise time spent in the intertidal period, however we require clarification on whether the stated two-week period of beach works per cable include delivery and set up/removal of equipment and what will be the risk to the foreshore associated with cable pull.					
RI_H32	Natural England notes that Still et al. (2015) is repeatedly cited but is not included in the reference list. The study is heavily used as to discuss various species; however, the study is 10 years old and considers bird distribution					

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	in a dynamic environment, therefore it may not be that it can be relied upon.					
RI_H33	The ES predicts the proposal will affect over 2% of 9 species; of which 3 have more than 10% of population potentially affected. Natural England notes these figures do not account for disturbance, which could potentially affect a greater area, resulting in larger areas of temporary habitat loss. Natural England do not support the assertion that the percentage of features affected is not significant because the SPA is big. For wintering intertidal features; Natural England do not agree with the conclusion of a negligible impact from a temporary loss of supporting habitat and/or resource availability – the Applicant need to identify the actual disturbance footprint and confirm that the figures of birds at risk reflect this and not just the direct area being worked over.		See RI_H3 above.	Resolved. RI_H3 is also applicable here.		The Applicants welcome the closing of this issue.
RI_H34	For passage intertidal features Natural England do not agree with the conclusion that impacts can be ruled out. Reliance on alternate feeding would require knowledge of why this area is so important and consideration in the first instance of seasonal restrictions to works for important passage periods for the species of concern. This also applies to the passage features of the SPA and Ramsar site.		See RI_H3 above.	Resolved. RI_H3 is also applicable here.		The Applicants welcome the closing of this issue.
RI_H35	Natural England do not agree with the logic and discussion on foraging ranges as tracking data from the Ribble doesn't consider spatial displacement by Bowland (which currently supports many of the Ribble birds). Natural England agree that on this occasion there is no LSE.					
RI_H36	Natural England note that Preston Docks birds are assumed to be the displaced SPA colony, therefore it would be helpful to assess risk in the context of observed birds and this population.					
RI_H37	Natural England do not agree with the conclusions and advise the Applicant to consider the recommendations made above regarding conclusions made for wintering		See RI_H3 above.	Resolved. RI_H3 is also applicable here.		The Applicants welcome the closing of this issue.

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	and passage birds and temporary habitat loss/disturbance at landfall (H41/H42).					
RI_H38	Further evidence is required to support the statement that trenchless techniques will avoid habitat loss at the Ribble crossing. Additional information on habitat loss from trenchless techniques, i.e. installation of equipment, onshore infrastructure at trench entry and exit pits needs to be considered and appropriately screened.					
RI_H39	Shelduck numbers are clearly high in the area. More information on the habitats being used may shed light on the required mitigation requirements. Natural England advise the Applicant to include shelduck into the calculations for the mitigation areas currently for pink footed goose and whooper swan and consider in more detail what function the habitats being made unavailable provided for the species. However, the Applicant should also consider the density of birds potentially using the mitigation areas and what risks there may be e.g. disease.		The Applicants note that, following the productive meeting on the 16th September they came to agreement with Natural England. Shelduck have accordingly been added to the J6 Outline Ecological Management Plan (Clean) - Rev F05 (REP5-068) at D5 as a primary target species for mitigation to alleviate the temporary impacts of construction (updates have been made to Appendix B2.2 and B.2.5 of the oEMP (REP5-068)). The Applicants note that Natural England's advice for shelduck has moved from supplementary feeding with grain to the inclusion of muddy areas where shelduck can feed on invertebrates.	Resolved. The information provided in the updated OEMP [REP5-069] satisfies Natural England's concerns for shelduck and that measures at land south of Newton-with-Scales and Lytham Moss have the potential to support this species. Please see comment RI_H7 for our advice relating to monitoring at Newton-with Scales.		The Applicants welcome the closing of this issue. Whilst they are committed to providing mitigation for shelduck, the Applicants still disagree that their data represents evidence of FLL for shelduck in the terrestrial habitats.
RI_H40	Natural England agree that in the long term the conclusions are appropriate for wigeon, but this conclusion does not account for effects in the short-term. Natural England advises the Applicant to consider measures to reduce impacts to wigeon in the short-term, noting that spatial scheduling of the works may reduce the requirements for this and other species. Please see advice above regarding shelduck.		The Applicants have appended the information relating specifically to wigeon and FLL to Appendix E of the oEMP (J6/F06) at D6 to fully close this matter out.	Resolved. The information provided in the updated OEMP [REP5-069] satisfies Natural England's concerns for wigeon and that measures at land south of Newton-with-Scales and Lytham Moss have the potential to support this species. Please see comment RI_H7 for our advice relating to monitoring at Newton-with Scales.		The Applicants welcome the closing of this issue.
RI_H41	Natural England advises the Applicant to consider measures to reduce impacts to teal in the short-term. Please see advice above regarding shelduck and wigeon above.		The Applicants have appended the information specific to teal to Appendix E of the oEMP (J6/F06) at D6 to fully close this matter out.	Resolved. The information provided in the updated OEMP [REP5-069] satisfies Natural England's concerns for teal and that measures at land south of Newton - with Scales and Lytham Moss have the potential to support this species. Please see comment RI_H7 for our advice relating to monitoring at Newton-with Scales.		The Applicants welcome the closing of this issue.
RI_H42	Natural England note the commitment to improving nearby areas of habitat for waders such as golden plover.The Applicant should		The Applicants welcome Natural England's response and would like to note that, following the productive	Resolved. RI_H22 is also applicable here.		The Applicants welcome the closing of this issue.

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	provide more information on the proposed habitat improvements to ensure the measures are appropriate.		meeting on 16th September, the Applicants have updated the following documents at D5: • E2.3 Habitats Regulations Assessment Stage 2 Information to Support an Appropriate Assessment: Part Three (Tracked) - Rev F02 (REP5-021) • J6 Outline Ecological Management Plan - Rev F05 (REP5-068) The Applicants hope that the amendments made to Appendix B, specifically those providing further detail on the grassland management, address all of Natural England's remaining issues. However, additional updates to the grassland management and monitoring sections of Appendix B have been made at D6 (J6/F06) which include a commitment to include Natural England as a stakeholder in ongoing discussions post-application.			
RI_H43	Natural England note that Jourdan et al. (2022) report/paper is repeatedly referenced, but not included in the reference list.					
RI_H44	Natural England do not agree with the conclusion for black-tailed godwit.The Applicant should reassess their assessment framework and consider the proportions of the passage and winter populations that could be affected. If adverse effects could arise, mitigation habitat should be provided that will cater for the requirements of the species.		The Applicants have added the additional detail regarding black-tailed godwit and strengthened the sections on habitat creation and monitoring from (REP4-120) to Appendix E and Appendix B respectively of oEMP (J6/F06) at D6 to fully close this matter out.	Resolved. The information provided in the updated OEMP [REP5-069] satisfies Natural England's concerns for black-tailed godwit and that measures at land south of Newton-with-Scales and Lytham Moss have the potential to support this species. Please see comment RI_H7 for our advice relating to monitoring at Newton-with Scales.		The Applicants welcome the closing of this issue.
RI_H45	Natural England do not agree with the conclusion of no AEOI for temporary loss of supporting habitats and/or resource availability for the features that utilise terrestrial habitats for the Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA. The Appropriate Assessment should focus on the populations revealed by the surveys, rather than modelled information. Natural England advises the following additional evidence is also required: •Details of the locations of the alternative supporting habitat qualifying species can use, including their distance from the proposal boundary and size. •Further details of how the applicant will ensure the recovery of the temporary habitat loss. This should include details of mechanisms that will be put in place to		The Applicants do not understand how RI_H3 is applicable here. The Applicants note there is no change on this matter and refer Natural England to RI_H45 in S_D5_2.5 Annex 2.5 to Applicants' Response to Deadline 4 submissions from Statutory Consultees and other organisation: Natural England - Rev F01 (REP5-124) and their position has not changed. The Applicants have also worked closely with Natural England throughout the pre and post application phases of this project and stand by their assessments which took into account both the number of birds and the proportion of potential habitats available. The Applicants have updated the following documents at D5:	Resolved. Our comments relating to the assessment of temporary habitat loss are still applicable, however in light of the additional information provided by the Applicant and updates made to documents, we consider that, subject to resolution of comment RI_H7, issues around temporary habitat loss can be addressed.		The Applicants welcome the closing of this issue.

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	ensure the supporting habitat recovers, and predicted timescales.		• E2.3 Habitats Regulations Assessment Stage 2 Information to Support an Appropriate Assessment: Part Three (Tracked) - Rev F02 (REP5-021) • J6 Outline Ecological Management Plan - Rev F05 (REP5-068) The Applicants hope that these amendments address all of Natural England's remaining issues. However, additional updates have been made at D6 (J6/F06) which include a commitment to include Natural England as a stakeholder in ongoing discussions post-application.			
RI_H46	The SPA non-breeding waterbird assemblage is a feature in its own right, therefore all the other species that contribute to it also have to be considered, in particular in this case in terms of numbers, as diversity and quality are more likely to be robust at a site scale. Natural England advise the Applicant to revisit the framing of [APP-017] and re-consider impacts/risks and compensation and mitigations options and planning for managing the risks.		The Applicants have updated the following document at D5: • E2.3 Habitats Regulations Assessment Stage 2 Information to Support an Appropriate Assessment: Part Three (Tracked) - Rev F02 (REP5-021) The Applicants have also appended the information from (REP4-120) to Appendix E of the oEMP (J6/F06) at Deadline 6 and hope that these amendments address all of Natural England's remaining issues on the assemblage and look forward to this issue being closed out.	The updated ISAA now provides a table of the impacted species that contribute to the SPA/Ramsar site waterbird assemblage, which is helpful. However it remains the case that the ISAA does not present an impact assessment on the assemblage as a feature in its own right. Nevertheless, progress with the level of information provided regarding the impacts of the proposals and the mitigation measures means that, subject to the resolution of comment RI_H7, concerns regarding the impacts on the waterbird assemblage can be addressed.		The Applicants would like to note that there was an impact assessment carried out on the assemblage in its own right in the initial HRA (see sections 1.6.2.78, 1.6.3.135 and 1.6.3.270 of E2.3 Habitats Regulations Assessment Stage 2 Information to Support an Appropriate Assessment Part Three – Special Protection Areas (SPA) and Ramsar Site assessments (APP-017)). The Applicants closing position remains that they did carry out an assessment of the assemblage, and that the provision of further information did not alter the conclusions made in the initial assessment.
RI_H47	Natural England note the following statement : "*..all features have been assessed independently there is not predicted to be any additional impact ..*" and do not agree with this conclusion and methodology in relation to the breeding waterbird assemblage, but note the conclusion of no AEOI is likely to be correct in this instance.					
RI_H48	Natural England disagrees with the conclusions for Dunlin as a Ramsar site feature for the same reasons as identified for other intertidal waders.		The Applicants welcome this issue being closed out.			
RI_H49	Natural England disagrees with the conclusions for Black-tailed godwit as a Ramsar feature for the same reasons as identified for other terrestrial waders.		The Applicants have updated the following document at D5: • J6 Outline Ecological Management Plan - Rev F05 (REP5-068) The Applicants hope that these amendments address all of Natural England's remaining issues. However, for completeness, the information in REP4-120 has been added to Appendix E of the oEMP (J6/F06), and	Resolved. The information provided in the updated OEMP [REP5-069] satisfies Natural England's concerns for black-tailed godwit and that measures at land south of Newton-with-Scales and Lytham Moss have the potential to support this species. Please see comment RI_H7 for our advice relating to monitoring at Newton-with Scales.		The Applicants welcome the closing of this issue.

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			additional detail surrounding habitat creation and monitoring has been added to Appendix B of the oEMP at Deadline 6. The Applicants hope that this matter can now be fully closed out.			
RI_H50	The assessment of habitat loss during the operational phase is based on habitat loss in a different site (Liverpool Bay SPA). Natural England advises the Applicant to update the report and include the habitat loss during Operation & Maintenance in Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA.					
RI_H51	Fairhaven Saltmarsh is identified as a mitigation area, however questions remain over its suitability. Natural England strongly advise the Applicant to produce some supplemental information clarifying why this proposal is considered likely to be effective, clarifying the management required to support delivery, and justifying its energetic value to the species impacted.		See RI_H3 above.	Resolved. RI_H3 is also applicable here.		The Applicants welcome the closing of this issue.
RI_H52	The level of detail presented in the mitigation area summaries for intertidal mitigation and terrestrial mitigation is not sufficient to fulfil the expectations of the HRA with regards to certainty of outcome. Produce some supplemental information clarifying why this proposal is considered likely to be effective, clarifying management to support delivery, and justifying its energetic value to the species impacted.		See RI_H3 and RI_H7 above.	Progressed but not resolved. RI_H7 is also applicable here.		The Applicants note that RI_H3 has been closed out. The Applicants have provided the additional detail on the long-term monitoring at Newton-with-Scales in Appendix B.2.2 of J6 Outline Ecological Management Plan (Tracked) - Rev F06 (REP6-115). The monitoring commitment is now: "*There is a commitment to monitor this area for the lifetime of the project (30 years) to inform the long-term success*." The Applicants therefore consider this issue closed.
RI_H53	Please note that comments relating to SSSI sites are included in the sections above.					

Table 2.17: REP6-193 - Responses to Questions Regarding the Fylde MCZ

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Risk and Issues Log Deadline 1 – Fylde MCZ **Taken from Natural England's Relevant and Written Representations Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets** **Appendix I - Fylde MCZ**						
RI_I1	Up to 3% of the offshore export cables, including cable crossings within Fylde MCZ may require cable protection and this equates to a total of 0.0304km2 (30,400m2/3.04ha) of lasting habitat change/loss within the site. Natural England does not agree with the Applicants conclusion of no likelihood of hindering the conservation objectives of Fylde MCZ. Unless it can be demonstrated otherwise, the nature, scale and duration of impacts from lasting habitats change/loss from the placement of cable protection is likely to hinder the 'maintain' habitat feature conservation objectives of the site. We advise that the MCZ assessment should proceed to a stage 2 assessment and a without prejudice Measures of Equivalent Environmental Benefit (MEEB) proposal should be produced.					Resolved at Deadline 2.
RI_I2	Natural England agrees with the MMO in considering that in order to fully discharge regulatory duties under section 69 (1) of the MCAA, in combination and cumulative effects must be considered. Natural England considers the O&M phase activities for Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets combined with the projects listed in Table 1.21 and on-going Oil and Gas impacts will result in lasting habitat change / physical disturbance which will further hinder the conservation objectives of the Fylde MCZ. We strongly advise that Applicant's potentially affecting the MCZ will need to intensify their use of the mitigation hierarchy.		The Applicants' position remains as outlined in the Applicants' response to RR-1601.45 (PDA-014). In accordance with the Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1), the MDS for cable protection has been designed in line with the mitigation hierarchy.	No change.		The Applicants' position remains as outlined in the Applicants' response to RR-1601.45 (PDA-014). In accordance with the Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1), the MDS for cable protection has been designed in line with the mitigation hierarchy.

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RI_I3	The most recent condition assessment for Fylde MCZ concluded that subtidal sand and subtidal mud were in a favourable condition. Natural England advises that whilst the cable protection is in situ, the extent and distribution attribute of the site features can neither be maintained or restored. Nor can the impacts be considered temporary even if removal is secured at the end of the 35-year project lifespan. Therefore, we advise that the impacts will result in 'lasting' habitat change from mud and sand to hard substrata which may result in habitat loss as removal and/or recovery post removal is not guaranteed. Additionally, we do not agree with the Applicant that in-filling of cable protection with sediment will occur and be sufficient to provide the same structure and function in the impacted area. Unless the Applicant's position changes it is unlikely that there will be agreement between the Applicant and Natural England during examination on this issue. Please see comment I1 on the provision of a without prejudice MEEB case.		The Applicants await Natural England's response to the updated documents submitted at Deadline 5, which the Applicants trust will resolve this matter.	No change. Please also see RI_C5,C9,C23,C24		As outlined in the MCZ Screening and Stage 1 Assessment Report (APP-019 as updated in REP5-022) and Volume 1, Chapter 4: Site selection, the Offshore Export Cable Corridor search area for the Transmission Assets was defined to minimise interaction with designated sites. A spatial overlap with the Fylde MCZ was, however, unavoidable due to the north-south extent of the Fylde MCZ between the Generation Assets and the point of interconnection at Penwortham. As outlined in Table 1.13 of the MCZ Screening and Stage 1 Assessment Report (APP-019 as updated in REP5-022), the Applicants applied the principles of the mitigation hierarchy throughout the pre-application phase to minimise impacts as far as possible to the features of the Fylde MCZ. This included designing the final offshore export cable route to cross the Fylde MCZ at its the narrowest point and minimising the number of crossings with existing cables (i.e. the Applicants have attempted to move the crossings out with the Fylde MCZ however they are limited by existing infrastructure and engineering constraints). In response to stakeholder comments on the PEIR, the Applicants also substantially reduced the MDS for long term loss from cable protection requirements and MDS for temporary habitats disturbance. The Applicants would note that additional commitments were also made during the examination to further reduce impacts to the Fylde MZC, as outlined in the updated MCZ Screening and Stage 1 Assessment Report submitted at Deadline 5 (REP5-022). As outlined in the MCZ Screening and Stage 1 Assessment Report (REP5-022), the MDS for long term habitat loss arising from the presence of cable protection (for ground conditions and cable crossings) within the Fylde MDS is 0.0304 m^2 / 3.04 hectares (which equates to 0.012% of the MCZ). The Applicants' assessment concluded that this would not result in a significant risk to the achievement of the conservation objectives of the Fylde MCZ and, therefore, a Stage 2 MCZ Assessment is not required. The Wildlife Trust asserted the need for a Stage 2 MCZ Assessment and MEEB for the Fylde MCZ in their written representation (REP1-210). Natural England has also maintained its representations that they consider that 3.04 hectares of lasting habitat change/loss of subtidal sand and subtidal mud

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						interest features from the placement of cable protection within the Fylde MCZ will hinder the conservation objectives of the site and have advised that MEEB will be required. The conclusions of the MCZ Assessment are a matter that is not agreed between Natural England and the Applicants as reflected in the Statement of Common Ground with Natural England (NE.MCZ.1; REP6-179).
RI_I4	The Applicant has stated that the requirement for, and potential locations of any cable protection due to ground conditions within the Fylde MCZ are not yet known. Therefore, the MDS figures have assumed that the cable protection material for the cable crossing could occur wholly within either the subtidal sand or subtidal mud features. Therefore, the MDS for long term habitat loss of each of the features have been provided as: Subtidal sand – 0.0304km2 (0.014% of the area of this feature in the MCZ Subtidal mud – 0.0304km2 (0.069% of the area of this feature in the MCZ) Natural England does not agree with this approach. We advise that an accurate MDS and realistic Worst-Case Scenario (WCS) for each feature is presented and assessed for lasting habitat change/loss and updated withing the Application documents. We highlight the importance in providing specific figures to inform the compensation requirements for a without prejudice MEEB.		The Applicants await Natural England's response to the updated documents submitted at Deadline 5 which the Applicants trust will resolve this matter.	No change. Please see Tab J for more detail.		The Applicants responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.43 of their response to Natural England (PDA-014) and within RR-1601.I.4 of their response to Natural England – Appendix I (PDA-024). The MDS for habitat change/loss within the Fylde MCZ, is based on a total of up to 30,400 m^2 of long-term habitat loss within the Fylde MCZ which equates to 0.012% of the total area of the MCZ. The MDS for each of the features of the Fylde MCZ (i.e. subtidal sand and subtidal mud) is based on the assumption that the cable crossing required within the Fylde MCZ will occur only within the subtidal mud feature but that all of the long-term habitat loss associated with cable protection for ground conditions may occur within either the subtidal mud or subtidal sand feature. The Applicants consider that this represents a precautionary but realistic approach to defining the MDS and, at this stage in the consenting process, the Applicants are unable to refine these assumptions further. The MDS for each of the features of the Fylde MCZ is as follows: •Up to 26,400 m^2 of long term habitat loss of the subtidal sand feature •Up to 30,400 m^2 of long term habitat loss of the subtidal mud feature Following detailed design post-consent, the exact compensation requirements may be refined, in consultation with stakeholders, which would then inform MEEB compensation figures if it is deemed to be required by the Secretary of State.
RI_I5	Natural England disagrees with the Applicant on the scale and significance of the impacts on the interest feature of the Fylde MCZ. Natural England also advises that		The Applicants await Natural England's response to the updated documents submitted at Deadline 5 which the Applicants trust will resolve this matter.	No change.		See the Applicants' response to RI_I3.

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 6 (in response to NE D5 submission)	Natural England's Comments/Update on Progression at Deadline 6	RAG D6	Applicants' comment at Deadline 7 (in response to NE D6 submission)
	impacts considered as a percentage of the whole MCZ is misleading given the size of the site. The lasting habitat change/loss impacts from the Transmission Assets combined are still 0.0304 km2/3.04ha from cable protection. We do not consider this amount of lasting habitat change/loss to be small scale. Natural England does not believe that the respective positions are likely to change in relation to scale and significance of the impact to the Fylde MCZ and therefore we provide no further comment unless design parameters change through the examination.					
RI_I6	Natural England note the commitments; CoT108 and CoT109 from the Applicant that any external cable protection used within the Fylde MCZ will be designed to be removable at decommissioning stage. However, we note that this commitment does not include the action to remove cable protection at the decommissioning phase, only that the protection will be 'removable'. Although some of the cable protection options included within the project description may be removable they are not considered as such from a nature conservation perspective due to further impacts to the designated site features e.g. rock armouring. We advise a commitment to remove all seabed infrastructure at the time of commissioning both inside and outside of Fylde MCZ should be secured in the DCO.		Please see the Applicants' response to NE4 (PADSS).	No change. Please see RI_C5		See the Applicants' response to NE4.
RI_I7	Natural England reiterates concerns around the varying construction scenarios proposed by the Applicant. The most impactful to Fylde MCZ would be option 3b (i.e. sequential construction with a gap of up to a maximum of four years between completion of construction of the		The Applicants await Natural England's response to the updated documents submitted at Deadline 5 which the Applicants trust will resolve this matter.	No change. Please see RI_C7		See the Applicants' response to RI_C7.

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	transmission assets for the first project and commencement of construction for the second project). This is mainly due to the four-year gap which may allow for some recovery of seabed habitats and species from the first works. The Applicant has not considered the potential for recovery and the impact from repeated interventions or the four-year gap, therefore we do not agree that the WCS has fully been assessed.					
RI_I8	Whilst we welcome the refinement work the Applicant has undertaken, we advise there are further mitigation options which should be explored by the Applicant to minimise impacts on Fylde MCZ and included for consideration in the Application, namely: • Commitments should be made and secured to avoid the most sensitive Priority habitats designated under Section 41 of the NERC Act (2206).This is applicable both within and outside of Fylde MCZ; • Exclusion of the use of jack up vessels within the MCZ; • UXO clearance to be moved outside of the MCZ prior to detonation to avoid impacts to the seabed where possible; • Boulder clearance using a grab not a plough; • Remove all cable and scour protection at the time of decommissioning, both within and outside of Fylde MCZ • Further mitigation measures to be adopted with regards to sediment disposal (I10) • Refining long term habitat loss for subtidal mud and subtidal sand within Fylde MCZ to provide more realistic MDS parameters for habitat loss.		The Applicants await Natural England's response to the updated documents submitted at Deadline 5 which the Applicants trust will resolve this matter.	Progressed but not resolved. We welcome further commitments/refinements the Applicant has made on these matters during Examination. However, our initial concerns largely still remain on each of the listed bullet points.		The Applicants have provided cross-references below to where the Applicants have addressed each point in this risk and issue log: • Priority habitats: The Applicants' position on how the mitigation hierarchy has been applied to NERC priority habitats and commitments taken forward is set out in response to NE6 (PADSS). • The Applicants' position on how the MDS for the use of jack-ups in the Fylde MCZ has been refined and why the Applicants cannot make a commitment to excluding their potential use in the MCZ is set out under RI_C22. • The Applicants' position on moving UXO outside the Fylde MCZ prior to clearance is set out under RI_B11. • The Applicants' position regarding why a commitment cannot be made to only clearing boulders by subsea grab is set out in RI_B4. • The Applicants' position on decommissioning is set out in NE4 (PADSS). • The Applicants' commitment to only undertaking sandwave clearance within the Fylde MCZ is set out in RI_C24. • The Applicants' position on refining the MDS for long term habitat loss is set out in RI_I4.
RI_I9	Natural England would welcome further information on dredge and disposal activities with regards to Fylde MCZ. The Application states		The Applicants await Natural England's response to the updated documents submitted at Deadline 5 which the Applicants trust will resolve this matter.	Progressed but not resolved. We welcome commitments CoT47 and CoT116 with regards to material arising from sandwave clearance. However, we maintain that further mitigation regarding impacts		See the Applicants' response to RI_C24.

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 6 (in response to NE D5 submission)	Natural England's Comments/Update on Progression at Deadline 6	RAG D6	Applicants' comment at Deadline 7 (in response to NE D6 submission)
	that disposal activities including sandwave clearance will be conducted throughout the Transmission Assets Order Limits but that no commitments have been proposed to mitigate impacts either within or outside of benthic designated sites. Mitigation options should be adopted and disposal options should be explored to ensure that sediment is deposited in areas of similar sediment character so that the risk of permanently altering the sediment character in any given location is minimised.			from sediment deposition within Fylde MCZ are not committed to and secured. This was also outlined in Appendix B5 (Table 1, points 1 and 3). Please also see RI_B4 where we consider the use of a control flow excavator could potentially resolve this issue.		
RI_I10	Natural England notes that secondary scouring needs further consideration in the Stage I MCZ Assessment in relation to impacts to sediment transportation.		The Applicants await Natural England's response to the updated documents submitted at Deadline 5 which the Applicants trust will resolve this matter.	No change.		The Applicants responded previously to this matter raised by Natural England R-1601.I.10 (PDA-024). Where cable protection measures are required, they will be subject to engineering design to ensure they minimise as much as practical the occurrence of scour which is required in order to provide effective asset security. The exact parameters will be site specific and related to both cable protection type and seabed and hydrographic conditions. Therefore, any residual/secondary scour would be very localised and of negligible magnitude; typically confined to within a few metres of the direct footprint of the scour protection material (as discussed in paragraph 1.8.8.14 of the MCZ Screening and Stage 1 Assessment Report submitted at Deadline 5 (REP5-022)). Cable protection measures will be tailored to the specific location, noting that installation below the bed level within the cable trench and adjacent seabed sediments may be undertaken to ensure compliance with the commitment to limit change in water depth to 5% (unless otherwise approved by Licensing Authority in consultation with the Maritime Coastguard Agency), CoT45. The Applicants can confirm that the height of the cable protection above the seabed may be altered in relation to the given water depth to adhere to this commitment, ensuring that any cable protection is sufficiently low in profile to cause minimal changes to wave, tide and sediment transport. Secondary scour impacts on features of the Fylde MCZ is assessed in section 1.8.8 of the MCZ Screening and Stage 1 Assessment Report (APP-019) which concludes that any effects would be confined to within a few meters of the direct

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 6 (in response to NE D5 submission)	Natural England's Comments/Update on Progression at Deadline 6	RAG D6	Applicants' comment at Deadline 7 (in response to NE D6 submission)
						footprint of that cable protection material. The Applicants are unclear what further information Natural England request to resolve this matter.
RI_I11	Natural England notes that UXO clearance activities are likely to be undertaken within the Fylde MCZ. Natural England continues to advise that UXOs should be detonated outside of Fylde MCZ to avoid the creation of a crater. As a minimum, we advise that further information is required in relation to the depth of any crater and the impacts this may have on the subtidal mud and sand features including any recovery times.		The Applicants await Natural England's response to the updated documents submitted at Deadline 5 which the Applicants trust will resolve this matter.	Progressed but not resolved. We note the Applicant has provided further detail in relation to WCS impacts from UXO in the updated Benthic Subtidal and Intertidal Ecology and Physical Processes Chapters. However, we maintain that there is insufficient information on craters and SSC's arising from UXO clearance. Additionally detail on backfill of seabed depressions from both UXO and jack-up legs is still lacking. Finally, we maintain that UXO should be moved outside of designated sites prior to detonation.		See the Applicants' response to NE3.
RI_I12	We welcome the inclusion of in principal monitoring proposed for benthic subtidal and intertidal ecology in the Offshore In Principal Monitoring Plan (OIPMP). However, the focus seems to be on physical/sediment recovery and lacks sufficient ecological context. Additionally, there is no reference to pre- and post-construction monitoring which is essential to understand and assess recovery. We advise that the rationale within Table 1.3 of the OIPMP needs to be updated to additionally include "temporal and spatial changes in benthic communities and their recoverability….". We also advise that the Applicant provides clarity that monitoring surveys will be undertaken pre- and post-construction and that temporal monitoring over an agreed time period should take place in order to confirm recovery.		The Applicants welcome Natural England categorising this as green at Deadline 5 and that the matter is now resolved.			
RI_I13	Natural England notes that within the Outline O&M plan there is the intention to use the cable protection allowance over the lifetime of the project. However, this is not aligned with Natural England position on cable protection. We advise that post construction and an agreed snagging time a new marine		The Applicants note that Natural England has commented on this matter with regard to the Outline OOMP. Please see the Applicants' response to Appendix B5 (REP5-179) in Table 2.2.	Progressed but not resolved. We note that a condition to secure an updated OOMP is included along within CoT71. Additionally we welcome the wording included in the OOMP at Deadline 4 with regards to limiting the deployment of cable/scour protection outside of Fylde MCZ to the first 10 years. However, we maintain that any additional cable protection beyond the construction period i.e. during the operation and maintenance phase within Fylde MCZ will require a new Marine Licence. We also note that the worse		See the Applicants' response to RI_C2.

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	licence would be required for the placement of further cable protection within Fylde MCZ. Natural England advises that the Applicant refines the O&M requirements to be align with the SNCB and regulatory position on this.			case scenario for concurrent cable installation would allow for cable protection to be placed over a 7.5+ year period with recovery hindered due to wider impacts on the designated site. We advise that spatial and temporal impacts are minimised as much as possible. We understand that the Applicant is minded to update this condition to only allow cable protection to be placed during the construction phase in Fylde MCZ. We advise that such a commitment would address this issue.		

Table 2.18: REP6-193 - Responses to Questions Regarding Benthic Compensation

ID / Appendix J reference	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Deadline 2	Applicants' comment at Deadline 6 (in response to NE D5 submission)	Natural England's Comments/Update on Progression at Deadline 6	RAG D6	Applicants' comment at Deadline 7 (in response to NE D6 submission)
Risk and Issues Log Deadline 1 – Benthic Compensation Taken from Natural England's Relevant and Written Representations Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets Appendix J - Benthic Compensation						
Compensation measure: Strategic Compensation - New site designation or Extension for Subtidal Sand and Subtidal Mud						
RI_J1 / J3	NE does not agree with the approach taken to determine the total WCS for lasting habitat loss. The approach taken assumes that cable protection requirements could occur wholly within either the subtidal sand or subtidal mud feature. In order for us to agree the impact, the habitat loss for each feature should be calculated then summed to provide the total area of habitat loss.		The Applicants await Natural England's response to the updated MCZ Screening and Stage 1 Assessment Report (REP5-022) submitted at Deadline 5, which the Applicants trust will resolve this matter.	No change. Please see NE advice on MEEB requirements included in [REP2-062] which would resolve this matter.		Please see the Applicants response to RI_I4.
RI_J2 / J4	Due to potential uncertainties with the delivery mechanisms and timeframes for successful delivery of the measure, further discussions are required in relation to individual project contributions and compensatory ratios which may be required.		The Applicants thank Natural England for their confirmation that this matter is considered closed.			
RI_J3 / J5	Natural England recognises that there are likely to be time lags between impact occurring and compensation achieving the desired outcomes. We would wish					

ID / Appendix J reference	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Deadline 2	Applicants' comment at Deadline 6 (in response to NE D5 submission)	Natural England's Comments/Update on Progression at Deadline 6	RAG D6	Applicants' comment at Deadline 7 (in response to NE D6 submission)
	to see the project contribution to the measure to be such that it ensures an overall environmental net positive outcome for the impacted feature over the lifetime of the project.					
RI_J4 / J6	The location of the measure is still under consideration by DEFRA, NE and JNCC and as yet nothing has been agreed and/or secured. There is likely to be consultation on potential locations during the examination.					
RI_J5 / J7	Long Term implementation is still under consideration by DEFRA, NE and JNCC and as yet nothing has been agreed and/or secured.					
RI_J6 / J8	Success criteria/Ability to prove additionality is still under consideration by DEFRA, NE and JNCC and as yet nothing has been agreed and/or secured.					
Compensation measure: Biogenic Reef - Native Oyster						
RI_J7 / J10	Natural England advises that reef creation/enhancement is not considered to provide comparable ecological function and is therefore not an appropriate measure for subtidal sand and subtidal mud systems within Fylde MCZ and provide no further comment on this as a potential measure.		The Applicants thank Natural England for their confirmation that this matter is considered closed.			
Compensation measure: Bivalve Seeding inside MCZ						
RI_J8 / J11	It remains unclear what additionally this measure would provide and therefore NE questions this as being compensation for lasting habitat loss/change to subtidal sand and subtidal mud. In addition, the seeding of bivalves is associated with biogenic reef communities on mixed sediment and not subtidal sand and subtidal mud.		The Applicants thank Natural England for their confirmation that this matter is considered closed.			
Compensation measure: Bivalve Seeding outside of designated sites						
RI_J9 / J12	Given the legislative changes that would be required, Natural England does not consider this option is viable within the Project's		The Applicants thank Natural England for their confirmation that this matter is considered closed.			

ID / Appendix J reference	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Deadline 2	Applicants' comment at Deadline 6 (in response to NE D5 submission)	Natural England's Comments/Update on Progression at Deadline 6	RAG D6	Applicants' comment at Deadline 7 (in response to NE D6 submission)
	timeframe. If the Applicant wishes to pursue this there will need to be agreement from The Crown Estate for a seabed lease and management measures put into place.					
RI_J10 / J13	Natural England does not agree with the approach taken to determine the total WCS for lasting habitat loss. The approach taken assumes that cable protection requirements could occur wholly within either the subtidal sand or subtidal mud feature.		The Applicants thank Natural England for their confirmation that this matter is considered closed.			
RI_J11 / J14	The scale/extent of the measure has not been presented in detail and/or agreed with Natural England, JNCC or DEFRA.		The Applicants thank Natural England for their confirmation that this matter is considered closed.			
RI_J12 / J15	We do not believe that this measure will be available in the project timeframes.		The Applicants thank Natural England for their confirmation that this matter is considered closed.			
RI_J13 / J16	The location of the measure has not been presented in detail and/or agreed with TCE, Natural England, JNCC or DEFRA.		The Applicants thank Natural England for their confirmation that this matter is considered closed.			
RI_J14 / J17, J18	There is a requirement for changes in legislation for the delivery of this measure and therefore until that is secured, further long-term implementation and success criteria remains unknown.		The Applicants thank Natural England for their confirmation that this matter is considered closed.			
RI_J15 / J19	We do not believe that is currently suitable as a sole or part measure at this time.		The Applicants thank Natural England for their confirmation that this matter is considered closed.			
Compensation measure: Seagrass habitat creation/restoration						
RI_J16 / J20	Natural England advises that seagrass restoration is a lower preference measure compared to those supporting the same ecological function of the habitat being compensated for.' Natural England also highlights that seagrass is not a feature of subtidal mud and further advice on this measure should be read in this light.					
RI_J17 / J21	Natural England has significant concerns about the deliverability of		The Applicants thank Natural England for their confirmation that this matter is considered closed.			

ID / Appendix J reference	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Deadline 2	Applicants' comment at Deadline 6 (in response to NE D5 submission)	Natural England's Comments/Update on Progression at Deadline 6	RAG D6	Applicants' comment at Deadline 7 (in response to NE D6 submission)
	seagrass restoration, even on a small scale as there have been no long term successes with seagrass restoration in the UK. Subtidal seagrass restoration should only be a minor part of a wider package in terms of the required compensation. It could be retained to supplement other measures, or potentially as an adaptive management response.					
RI_J18 / J22	NE does not agree with the approach taken to determine the total WCS for lasting habitat loss. The approach taken assumes that cable protection requirements could occur wholly within either the subtidal sand or subtidal mud feature. In order for us to agree the impact, the habitat loss for each feature should be calculated then summed to provide the total area of habitat loss.		The Applicants thank Natural England for their confirmation that this matter is considered closed.			
RI_J19 / J23	The scale/extent of the measure has not been presented in detail and/or agreed with the SNCBs.					
RI_J20 / J24	It is unclear if this measure can be delivered prior to the impacts occurring.					
RI_J21 / J25	The location of the measure has not been presented in detail and/or agreed with the SNCBs. More detail is required to address our concerns.					
RI_J22 / J26, J27	Long term implementation and Success/Ability to prove additionality is yet to be considered in detail and agreed with the SNCBs. More detail is required to address our concerns.					
RI_J23 / J28	Natural England advises that this measure could only be considered as part of a package providing <10% of the required compensation and/or potential adaptive management for part delivered compensation. There would also be a requirement for the provision of subtidal seagrass, not intertidal.					

ID / Appendix J reference	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Deadline 2	Applicants' comment at Deadline 6 (in response to NE D5 submission)	Natural England's Comments/Update on Progression at Deadline 6	RAG D6	Applicants' comment at Deadline 7 (in response to NE D6 submission)
Detailed comments **Documents used: [REP1-059] Stage 2 MCZ Assessment**						
RI_J24 / J29	It is unclear why terrestrial issues have been included in the document. NE advises that there should be MEEB for each designated site.					
RI_J25 / J30	Natural England doesn't agree with the Applicant in relation to small scale losses not hindering the conservation objectives of the MCZ. We refer the ExA to Appendix C Annex A of our relevant/written representation [RR-1601]. It is unlikely that either Applicant's or Natural England position on this will change during examination.					
RI_J26 / J32	Natural England advises that lasting habitat change/loss can only be considered if removed at the time of decommissioning. After that timeframe it becomes a permanent impact. We advise that commitments should be made to ensure removal.		The Applicants await Natural England's response to the updated documents submitted at Deadline 5. Please also see the Applicants' response to NE4 (PADSS).	No change. Please see RI_C5		See the Applicants' response to NE4.
RI_J27 / J33	Natural England advises that even where the conservation objectives are set to 'maintain', lasting habitats change/loss would not maintain the extent and distribution of the features; thus hindering them. This would lead to a restore conservation objective being set which can't be achieved whilst the cable protection is in situ, therefore we advise that MEEB is required.		The Applicants await Natural England's response to the updated documents submitted at Deadline 5, which the Applicants trust will resolve this matter.	No change. Please see RI_I1		See the Applicants' response to RI_I3.
RI_J28 / J34	DESNZ guidance on the MRF agrees with the Applicant that there is likely to be a time lag between impacts occurring and the delivery of the compensation. Therefore, allowances will be included in the MRF process for this.					
RI_J29 / J35	The EIA lifespan is 35 years. Therefore Natural England doesn't consider the impacts to be temporary, given that the features extent and distribution will be hindered. Likely leading to changes in other attributes. It is unlikely that					

ID / Appendix J reference	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Deadline 2	Applicants' comment at Deadline 6 (in response to NE D5 submission)	Natural England's Comments/Update on Progression at Deadline 6	RAG D6	Applicants' comment at Deadline 7 (in response to NE D6 submission)
	either Applicant's or Natural England position on this will change during examination.					
RI_J30 / J36	Natural England highlights those consents dating back to 2000 pre-date the MCZ designation and is therefore considered part of the baseline. We advise that the existing cable is not a material consideration in any decision making.					
RI_J31 / J37	As written there is no differentiation between impacts to subtidal sand or subtidal mud except at the cable crossing which is known to be subtidal mud. We advise that unless the lasting habitat loss for the two features can be differentiated then it is likely that compensation will be required for 30,400m2 of subtidal mud, plus 26,400m2 of subtidal sand. We advise that this needs to be clearer.		The Applicants await Natural England's response to the updated documents submitted at Deadline 5, which the Applicants trust will resolve this matter.	No change. Please see RI_J1		See the Applicants' response to RI_I4.
RI_J32 / J38	CoT 109: Natural England advises that it is not sufficient as mitigation. This mitigation measure should be considered further by the Applicant and removal of cable protection should be agreed now as part of a decommissioning plan.		Please see the Applicants' response to NE4 (PADSS).	No change. Our comment at Deadline 5 also applies here.		See the Applicants' response to NE4.
RI_J33 / J39	Natural England advises that the mitigation measure in CoT 116 is not sufficient in relation to sandwave levelling. Further commitments should be included such as the deposition of any sediment from sandwave levelling within the MCZ is placed adjacent to the levelling, in similar sediment and upstream of the sandwave to facilitate recovery.		The Applicants await Natural England's response to the updated documents submitted at Deadline 5. Additionally, the Applicants have updated the wording of CoT116 in the Commitments Register at Deadline 6 (F1.5.3/F07) as "Any material arising from sandwave clearance within the Transmission Assets Order Limits outwith the Fylde MCZ will be deposited in close proximity to the works and within the licensed disposal sites within the Order Limits, as detailed in the Dreding and Disposal - Site Characterisation Plan prepared and submitted as part of the application for development consent. Within the Fylde MCZ, sandwave clearance, which will only be undertaken by Controlled Flow Excavator, will be deposited in close proximity to the works and only within the portion of the Order Limits overlapping the Fylde MCZ." to clarify that it refers to sandwave clearance outside the Fylde MCZ only. The Applicants trust this matter will now be resolved.	Progressed but not resolved. We welcome commitments CoT47 and CoT116 with regards to material arising from sandwave clearance. However, we maintain that further mitigation regarding impacts from sediment deposition within Fylde MCZ are not committed to and secured. This was also outlined in Appendix B5 (Table 1, points 1 and 3). Please also see RI_B4 where we consider the use of a control flow excavator could potentially resolve this issue.		See the Applicants' response to RI_C24.

ID / Appendix J reference	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Deadline 2	Applicants' comment at Deadline 6 (in response to NE D5 submission)	Natural England's Comments/Update on Progression at Deadline 6	RAG D6	Applicants' comment at Deadline 7 (in response to NE D6 submission)
RI_J34 / J40	Natural England advises that the mitigation measure is CoT 117 is considered further by the Applicant. The use of Jack Up Vessels (JUVs) should be avoided in the MCZ due to potential leg depressions.		The Applicants await Natural England's response to the updated documents submitted at Deadline 5, which the Applicants trust will resolve this matter.	No change. Please see RI_C22		See the Applicants' response to RI_C22.
RI_J35 / J41	Natural England advises that we do not believe that there are further measures within the long list of measures that could be taken forward at the project level that would provide the necessary MEEB.					

Table 2.19: REP6-194 – Natural England (Appendix M6 – Natural England's Response to the Report on the Implications for European Sites (RIES) (PD-015))

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
REP6-194 194.1	**Introduction** Natural England has reviewed the Report on the Implications for European Sites (RIES) [PD-015] for the Morgan and Morecambe Offshore Wind Farms Transmission Assets project. In Table 1, we provide answers to the question posed within the RIES.	The Applicants note the responses made by Natural England to the RIES and have responded to each point below.
REP6-194 194.2	**General Comments** Natural England acknowledges that only submissions up to Deadline 5 on the 22nd of September have been considered in the RIES, therefore the RIES does not take account of updated advice on various aspects since then. Where we are able to, we have signposted to our updated advice. Natural England recommends that the RIES is updated before it is included within an ExA report to the Secretary of State (SoS). However, as previously advised to PINS and DESNZ, Natural England does not consider consultation on the RIES adequately discharges the statutory requirement to consult Natural England on Appropriate Assessments, as the RIES draws no Adverse Effect on Integrity (AEoI) conclusions. If it is considered that the conservation objectives for any designated site interest feature will be hindered, or there is reasonable scientific doubt regarding this, then an AEoI cannot be excluded. Please be advised that as a Statutory Nature Conversation Body (SNCB) our remit does not extend beyond advising on the ecological merits of proposals, thus excluding us from making comment on Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI) submissions.	

Table 2.20: REP6-194 – Natural England (Appendix M6 Table 1: Questions within the RIES)

Reference	ExA Question	IP submission	Applicants' response
Q2.2.8	Q3 - To NE: The ExA notes from the R&AE Ramsar site citation that the site does not appear to have any criterion related to sand dune or other habitat types. a) Can NE confirm which qualifying features or criterion you consider to	a) Natural England notes that although habitat features are not designated in their own right for SPA/Ramsar sites, they provide supporting habitats to SPA/Ramsar bird features. Whilst we consider the potential for LSE or AEoI from air quality to supporting habitats of	The Applicants maintain that the approach taken aligns with industry best practice guidance for undertaking air quality assessments. As per the Applicants' response to this question at Deadline 6 (REP6-175), the approach taken is based on Institute of

Reference	ExA Question	IP submission	Applicants' response
	be subject to potential LSE or AEoI from air quality impacts? b) What would the applicants need to provide to demonstrate no LSE (or AEOI) to such features?	the Ribble and Alt Estuary SPA to be low, impacts on such habitats and their ability to support SPA/ Ramsar bird populations has not been considered as a pathway for impact in the Applicant's ISAA [REP5-020]. Therefore we have been unable to advise on the potential for LSE or AEOI from air quality impacts on supporting habitats of the Ribble and Alt Estuary. b) Our original comments in relation to the SPA/Ramsar were that air quality impacts should have been considered or adequate justification provided within the ISAA for scoping it out as a pathway to impact supporting habitats which the SPA/Ramsar bird features depend on. This is in line with the Supplementary Advice for the Ribble and Alt Estuary SPA. This was raised in our R&I Log comments RI_G30 - RI_G31 and RI_G43 - RI_G47. In addition, detailed information on the pollutants which have the potential to harm the Ribble and Alt Estuary SSSI (which underpins the Ribble and Alt Estuaries sites) can be found on APIS.	Air Quality Management (IAQM) guidance as set out in Volume 3, Annex 9.1: Air quality impacts on ecologically designated sites (APP-122), which states: *The DMRB provides a series of traffic screening criteria. These include the change in Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) flows on a given road of 1000 vehicles or 200 heavy duty vehicles (HDVs). These thresholds have been widely used to screen out the need for quantitative assessment of projects/plans in the absence of any other thresholds recognised as being applicable in this context.* With regard to the Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA and Ramsar, at both the landfall and the Ribble Estuary crossing the traffic levels are well below these trigger levels thresholds and those roads where traffic levels would be above these trigger levels are well in excess of 350 m from the SPA/Ramsar boundaries (see Figure 1.1 in APP-122 for the location of the impacted roads); therefore this would not give rise to any effects on these European sites. With regard to effects on functionally linked land associated with the Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA and Ramsar, these largely comprise pasture and arable land (F3.3.3 Volume 3, Annex 3.3: Phase 1 habitat, national vegetation classification and hedgerow survey technical report (APP-077)) and are therefore not sensitive to air quality impacts (i.e. pasture and arable land are not listed sensitive habitats under the UK Air Pollution Information System; APIS). As such, air quality impacts will similarly not result in any effects on functionally linked land associated with any European site.
Q2.2.9	Q4 - To NE: The ExA notes from the R&AE Ramsar site citation that the site does not appear to have any criterion related to sand dune or other habitat types. a) Can NE confirm which qualifying features or criterion you consider to be subject to potential LSE (or AEoI) from direct impacts associated with failure of the direct pipe method? b) What would the applicants need to provide to demonstrate no LSE (or AEOI) to such features?	Natural England notes that there is no change on this matter, with the Applicant only assessing trenchless methods i.e. Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) and Direct Pipe. Therefore, these methods will be the only landfall options permitted (by the DCO/dML) and taken through to construction. However, we note that further information/evidence and finalised design parameters will be provided post consent which may give rise to uncertainties with these methods. Therefore, we advise, on the basis that should it be demonstrated that trenchless techniques are not viable options in the pre-construction/construction phase, then a variation request with associated supporting information will need to be made to the Secretary of State to change the landfall method, that a further HRA and/or impact assessments are not required to inform the decision on the proposals as applied for.	The Applicants note the comments made by Natural England and agree that no other methods are proposed at the landfall for construction. If any other method not set out in the Development Consent Order is proposed as part of the Project, this would need to be consented separately (and be supported by the relevant assessments including HRA), however it is not the Applicants' intention to use any other construction method at the landfall other than those set out in the DCO.
Q2.2.10	Q5 - To NE: The ExA notes from the R&AE Ramsar site citation that the site does not appear to have any criterion related to sand dune or other habitat types. a) Can NE confirm which qualifying features or criterion you consider to be subject to potential LSE or AEoI from bentonite breakout? b) What would the applicants need to provide to demonstrate no LSE (or AEOI) to such features?	At Deadline 6 we have updated point RI_G26 in the R&I Log (Appendix K6). We welcome the detail included in Appendix A [REP5-117] which includes information on risk and proposed mitigation for bentonite breakouts. We advise that the detail provided on the proposed mitigation is sufficient to resolve this issue.	The Applicants welcome the closing of this issue.
Q2.2.11	Q7 - To NE: a) Do you consider the exit pits and the encroachment of gravel haul roads to comprise new unassessed impact pathways with the potential for LSE on the R&AE SPA and Ramsar sites? b) If so, can you confirm which qualifying features or criterion you consider to be subject to potential LSE or AEoI from? c) What would the applicants need to provide to demonstrate no LSE (or AEOI) to such features?	While Lytham St. Annes Dunes SSSI is not designated as part of the Ramsar site, it lies immediately adjacent to it. However, the 6 exit pits, construction compounds (2 and 3) and the temporary haul road (from construction compound 4) [*shown in Fig-4 REP5-117 Outline Landfall Construction Method Statement*] lie within the beach which is part of the Ramsar site (and Ribble Estuary SSSI). We note that sand dunes are not a Ramsar feature and the Ramsar Criterion are focussed on bird species and Natterjack Toad, however there is substantial detail on the importance of the dunes which should be considered as part of the wider assessment of the Ramsar site. The potential impacts of these temporary works should be assessed in terms of how they might affect the free movement of	Q7 – the Applicants have provided further comment in respect of the matters raised below. Temporary compound 3 – small scale upgrade works to the existing compound may be required, but nothing that would potentially have an impact on the dunes. The Applicants have committed to the installation of temporary reptile exclusion fencing around the perimeter of the temporary compound to deter sand lizards, and this would be installed under an EPS mitigation licence from Natural England. Temporary compound 2 and exit pits – under the worst case sequential construction scenario, the Maximum Design Scenario (MDS) has assessed the use of temporary compound 2 on the beach for up to 48 weeks within the total 66-month construction period. As set out in Volume 1, Chapter 3: Project description (APP-024), only one

Reference	ExA Question	IP submission	Applicants' response
		sand from the beach and offshore sandflats into the dunes (which allows future accretion and formation of embryo dunes). In addition, potential impacts to the temporary haul road was in part flagged by NE at Deadline 5 in our R&I Log (RI_G48, Appendix K) (referring to CoT85). In which we asked the Applicant to provide further information around the use of gravel aggregate and the potential for the aggregate to spread and intermix with the sand which has been demonstrated by other similar projects to be difficult to remove at the end of construction and have wider environmental impacts. No further information, impact assessment or mitigation has been provided; therefore this issue has not been resolved. As flagged in the R&I Log (RI_G49, Appendix K) the dunes at Lytham St. Annes are accreting and have grown beyond the original SSSI boundary (approximately 50m seaward, measured from aerial photos) into the adjacent Ramsar/ SPA site boundary. These embryo and mobile dunes support dune vegetation referable to the NVC types SD4, SD5 and SD6 (which are equivalent to the Annex I habitats H2110 and H2120) and support notable plant species such as *Atriplex laciniata* (Frosted Orache), *Salsola kalii* (Prickly Saltwort), *Eryngium maritimum* (Sea-holly), and *Euphorbia paralias* (Sea Spurge). In addition, construction at landfall is anticipated to be in place for a maximum of 48 weeks within 66 months under the worst-case sequential construction scenario. If cable installation works were not undertaken, it is likely that further dune formation would occur over this time period, considering the rate of accretion that is evident here. At Deadline 5 we advised the Applicant to provide further detail in the Outline Landfall Construction Method Statement [REP5-117] on how the dunes will be protected during the works.	project will be able to undertake works on the beach at any one time. The MDS parameter for the footprint of temporary compound 2 is 2,500m^2, which is very small in context with the beach environment; an indicative location for the compound (and exit pits) is shown on Figure 3 of the Outline Landfall Construction Method Statement (AS-081). The working areas for the exit pits are also very small (approximately 25 m x 35 m) in context with the beach environment. Based on the footprints of the compound and exit pits with the 48 weeks of potential use, the compounds and exit pits will not affect the free movement of sand on the beach such that the accretion of dunes would be compromised over the construction period. Should there be any limited effect on sediment transport on the beach (e.g. from presence of the exit pits), this would be temporary and reversible with a return to the natural equilibrium occurring quickly (i.e. within days to weeks) of completion of works on the intertidal. Temporary haul road onto the beach – the Applicants have provided confirmation at Deadline 6 that gravel aggregates would not be used on the temporary haul road to temporary compound 2 (the main section of the track off Clifton Drive North is already a paved surface). The Applicants have committed to considering the use of track matting (or similar) on the temporary haul road, if appropriate, as mitigation for potential disturbance to sand lizards, which would be installed under the EPS mitigation licence. Dune accretion – the Applicants' response remains as per the written representations (REP2-031) and oral presentations at the ISHs (REP4-103). The accretion of the dunes has been factored into the 100 m buffer from the SSSI, which even with the dune accretion provides a significant buffer of at least 50 m between the seaward toe of the dunes and temporary compound 2 and the exit pits (the nearest infrastructure proposed). It is reasonable to assume that any dune accretion that would occur within the 48 week landfall construction period, would not be at such a rate that the seaward toe of the dunes would interact (or even approach) the temporary compound and exit pits on the beach. The Applicants note that 100 m buffer seaward of the SSSI, although is above Mean High Water Springs, is well below Highest Astronomical Tide and below the strandline (Figure 1.27 in F2.2.1 Volume 2, Annex 2.1: Benthic subtidal and intertidal ecology technical report (APP-046)). Extensive dune accretion in this zone is not sustainable. Therefore 50 m is a realistic marker for future accretion and is a significant buffer, either pre or during construction. The Applicants can therefore confirm that there would be no impacts to the dune habitats including accreting embryonic dunes. Details of how sand dune habitats will be protected during construction works are set out in the OEMP (REP6-115). In addition, commitment CoT141 in the Commitments Register submitted at Deadline 6 (REP6-042) sets out that the ongoing habitat management of the dunes will be able to continue unhindered during cable installation
Q2.2.12	Q9 - To NE: a) Do you consider the construction of fencing at Fairhaven Saltmarsh to comprise a new unassessed impact pathway with the potential for LSE on the R&AE SPA and Ramsar sites? b) If so, can NE confirm which qualifying features or criterion you consider to be subject to potential LSE or AEoI from? c) What would the applicants need to provide to demonstrate no LSE (or AEOI) to such features?	We welcome the measures to reduce recreational pressures to bird features at Fairhaven saltmarsh which may include the use of soft fencing as outlined by the Applicant in [REP5-069]. This is a beneficial measure for the bird features of the Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA. Saltmarsh is a habitat that supports features of the Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA. There is in theory the potential for the soft fencing, if not appropriately installed and maintained, to impact the saltmarsh, however we consider the potential for LSE to be low. Based on the information provided on the location of the fencing, it is likely the impact would be small, and any risks could be eliminated with additional detail in the OEMP. Prior to installation we advise the Applicant should provide Natural England with a detailed section in the OEMP, giving details of how the fencing will be installed and maintained, the final alignment with	Q9) The Applicants agree with Natural England that the potential for LSE is low. The Applicants would also draw attention to the fact that the proposed fencing is not within the SPA, Ramsar or SSSI boundary, nor for that matter is the saltmarsh (see below).

Reference	ExA Question	IP submission	Applicants' response
		access routes, machinery and materials (including details of any treated timber) to be used. The OEMP [REP5-069] notes that fencing will remain *in situ* until the construction is completed. The Applicant should update the OEMP to confirm whether the intention is to leave the fencing in place after construction or remove it. If it is to be removed details of the removal process need to be captured in the OEMP. If the fencing will be left in-situ details of who will be responsible for its repair and maintenance should be included. This advice is also included in Appendix G6 submitted at Deadline 6 and RI_G51 (r&I Log, Appendix K).	 The oEMP at Deadline 5 states "*The design of these measures will be cognisant of case studies and guidance from experts in recreational disturbance and birds (e.g., Footprint Ecology)*." The Applicants, in conjunction with the ecological contractor, will ensure that impacts to this non-designated area are minimal, as the purpose of this area is after all to be of benefit for the designated sites. The Applicants are committed to securing these measures under requirement 12 of schedules 2a and 2b of the draft DCO post application and will provide further detail on the fencing to reflect Natural England's advice in the final EMP. The Applicants can confirm that the fencing will be removed post construction as agreed with Natural England.
Q3.1.1	Q13 - To NE: Can you confirm whether your concerns over the assessments undertaken to date by the applicants in relation to the MDS parameters affect your stated position of agreement with the conclusions of no AEOI on the Shell Flats and Lune Deep SAC?	Natural England does not have concerns regarding the conclusion of the HRA screening of Shell Flat and Lune Deep SAC. This is due to the nature of the features present, the proximity of the SAC from the red line boundary and the likely insignificance of secondary pathways of effect in ecological terms. Our concerns over the assessments undertaken to date by the Applicant in relation to the MDS parameters will not affect this position of the conclusions of no AEOI on Shell Flat and Lune Deep SAC. However, we have provided more information on the MDS parameters in the Risk and Issues Log submitted at Deadline 6.	The Applicants welcome confirmation from Natural England that they agree on the HRA screening of Shell Flat and Lune Deep SAC.
NA – in section 3.3.28 of RIES	Q14 - To the applicants (a) and NE (b): (a) In the absence of final, robust bird strike risk assessments to demonstrate the proposed HRA mitigation areas would not increase bird strike risk at Blackpool Airport and Warton Aerodrome, the certainty and feasibility of delivering the proposed mitigation areas remains to be under question. The applicants are requested to provide a without prejudice derogations case should the SoS conclude it is unable to rely upon the proposed mitigation measures to reach a conclusion of no adverse effects on the integrity of the R&AE SPA and Ramsar sites (features listed above). (b) NE are invited to comment.	Natural England's comments in our Relevant Representations [RR-1601] and throughout Examination on the mitigation areas were specifically in relation to the ecological suitability of the measures proposed by the Applicant to address impacts to terrestrial waterbird features of the Ribble and Alt Estuary SPA/Ramsar, due to the temporary and permanent loss of Functionally Linked Land. We agree with the Applicant's point in 3.3.20 [PD-015] that the purpose of the mitigation areas is to provide habitat for species already within the area and Ribble SPA/Ramsar which have been potentially impacted or displaced from FLL habitat as a result of the Project, not to attract birds from elsewhere outside of the SPA. As with our response to the ExAQ2 [REP3-095], we cannot provide comment or provide advice on the bird strike risk assessment as this is outside of Natural England's remit. We provided further detail in response to Q19 and 21 with regards to the mitigation areas.	Q14) The Applicants would refer back to their response to Q14 of the RIES (REP6-175) and reiterate that their preferred option is that which has been agreed, and for which AEoI has now been ruled out (with the provision of additional detail on the long-term monitoring at Newton-with-Scales in Appendix B.2.2 of J6 Outline Ecological Management (REP6-115)). The Applicants have also highlighted that there are additional avoidance and reduction mitigation measures that are less preferable (for further details see Appendix H of J6 Outline Ecological Management Plan (Tracked) - Rev F06 (REP6-116)), but which will reduce and/or avoid impacts at source, this view is shared by Natural England (comments received through Examination in regards to responses NE 19 and NE 20 of the Risk and Issues Log (see section 2.4)) , and could include scheduling of works in certain areas to avoid key sensitive periods. Natural England have requested further detail around scheduling and/or phasing of the construction works during the

Reference	ExA Question	IP submission	Applicants' response
		However, we reiterate that having to locate mitigation beyond the Airport and Aerodrome's area of concern would likely impose a significant energetic impact on species impacted in the FLL area. As a result there is a higher likelihood of any alternative mitigation areas not providing the required ecological functionality of the areas that will be permanently or temporarily lost. Regarding the terrestrial SPA mitigation measures more generally, our concerns have predominantly related to the lack of evidence to show the measures are appropriate for the individual species affected, and minimal detail on monitoring the effectiveness of the mitigation areas. Following review of the Applicant's latest submissions, from an ecological perspective we are now satisfied that the mitigation measures proposed at Lytham Moss and Newton-with-Scales have the potential to deliver for the displaced/disturbed species. Our outstanding concerns are with regard to the long-term monitoring and deliverability of Newton-with-Scales, which is not specified in any great detail despite the requirement for mitigation over the lifetime of the project. Progress of issue resolution and outstanding concerns are included in our R&I Log (Appendix K6).	examination (see RI_H26) and recognise that this could significantly reduce the risks to SPA/Ramsar site waterbirds. The Applicants would also draw attention to the agreement reached with Blackpool Airport (AS-083), and believe that, in collaboration with the DIO/MOD and their subject matter specialists, the same agreement can be reached with BAE Systems. As the Applicants' preferred option would be to use the mitigation areas (as currently agreed), they have not provided this level of spatio-temporal construction detail to date. However, if required, the addition of these measures would ensure that the project avoids AEoI by removing impact pathways and therefore any need for impact assessment. These have accordingly been included in section 1.3.2 of the OEMP updated at Deadline 6 (J6 Outline Ecological Management Plan (Tracked) - Rev F06 (REP6-116)).
3.4.1	Q15 - To NE: (a) The applicants have assessed the impact pathway of direct temporary habitat loss and, as a distinct pathway, the impact of disturbance and displacement. NE's position has not changed on this issue. Recognising this impasse, NE is requested to explain what it its view remains missing from the HRA assessment. (b) The applicants have provided further information on the importance of sediment recovery times to the passage assemblage. Does this alleviate your concerns about recovery times? If not, why not, and what would the applicants need to provide?	Our concerns regarding the Maximum Design Scenario (MDS) for temporary habitat loss at landfall remain due to the assessment format undertaken. However following engagement with the Applicant during Examination, and in particular their efforts to reduce the impacts at landfall (by committing to a winter restriction on construction activity between November-March inclusive, screening of the temporary beach compound and ECoWs to warden the area), we advise that AEoI can now be ruled out for both over-wintering and passage features. The updated OEMP [REP5-060] details the measures to reduce impacts at landfall and the measures to be implemented at Fairhaven to alleviate any residual impacts on the SPA. The Outline Landfall Mitigation Plan also provides additional detail on the works to be undertaken. Therefore, although our advice at Relevant Representations is still applicable, in light of the updated commitments and measures in named documents e.g. OEMP, we consider our difference of opinion regarding the assessment approach to not be a material concern.	Q15) The Applicants welcome the confirmation from Natural England that AEoI can be ruled out for both over-wintering and passage features. The Applicants thank Natural England for their confirmation that the difference of opinion is immaterial. The Applicants note their closing position remains as expressed at Deadline 6. The Applicants were clear throughout both the EIA and HRA that they assessed habitat loss and disturbance as separate impacts and have laid out the species-specific area lost to disturbance in Table 1.93 of the ISAA (APP-017), so there is no gap in assessment.
3.4.2	See question 16 - 3.4.3		
3.4.3	Q16 - To NE: a) Confirm, following sight of DL5 submissions, whether you agree with the conclusions of no AEOI to the R&AE SPA and Ramsar sites' passage bird features from impacts of landfall works. b) Confirm definitively whether the package of measures proposed at Fairhaven Saltmarsh are essential for arriving at the conclusion of no AEOI? If so, why, given the measures proposed at the source of impact? And if so, has your position that the measures at Fairhaven comprise compensation changed?	a) We welcome the detail in the updated ISAA [REP5-020], section 1.6.3.240 - 243 which includes further assessment of passage foraging sanderling. The additional detail in both documents satisfies our concerns and we now agree that AEoI can be ruled out for the passage features, having previously agreed that AEoI can be ruled out for over-wintering features. b) As advised at Deadline 5 [REP5-183] Fairhaven is a necessary alleviation measure to reduce the residual, sub-AEOI impacts on the Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA, not least so that they cannot act in-combination with subsequent plans and projects. We consider that the measures to reduce impacts at landfall greatly reduce, but do not altogether eliminate, the risk to energy intake through disruption of foraging and pose a risk of increased energy loss thorough disruption of maintenance behaviours (preening, resting etc). Consequently, we consider it appropriate that the measures proposed at Fairhaven should be implemented to achieve an overall neutral or net positive energetic balance by minimising energy loss at other points in the	Q16) The Applicants thank Natural England for their agreement that AEoI at the landfall can now be ruled out for the project alone or in combination with other plans and projects. The Applicants see the importance of this area in terms of SPA wide benefits and remain committed to delivering the alleviation area at Fairhaven Saltmarsh as set out in J6 Outline Ecological Management Plan (Tracked) - Rev F06 (REP6-116).

Reference	ExA Question	IP submission	Applicants' response
		species of concern's daily cycle. Natural England also note that management of the roost site at Fairhaven could also deliver energetic benefit for other species, which will be of net benefit for these SPA features. If SPA species are unable to loaf or rest at landfall or at Fairhaven then the impacts could be significant, as there appear to be limited alternative opportunities in the area for these activities.	
3.4.5	See question 16 - 3.4.3		
3.4.10	Q18 - To NE: the applicants argue that given the terrestrial habitat that will be lost is largely made up from intensively farmed arable and pasture, that it is unlikely these habitats would take long to restore [PDA-023]. In addition, the OEMP (paragraph 1.6.4.32 states that the temporary construction mitigation area at Lytham Moss would continue until all habitats that the wildfowl and waders rely upon are restored. Does this satisfy NE's concerns regarding habitat restoration? If not, why not? What would the applicants need to provide to alleviate your concerns? Q19 to NE: Following the updates to the OEMP [REP5-068], is NE satisfied with the mitigation proposed for terrestrial waterbird features of the R&AE SPA and Ramsar sites and do you agree with the applicants' conclusions of no AEOI (provide an answer for each feature listed adjacent)? If not, why not? What would the applicants need to provide to alleviate your concerns?	Q18) Our original comments in our Relevant Representations [RR-1601] relating to habitat loss were in part to highlight that upon construction finishing and habitat restoration occurring, the birds will not immediately return to these areas following months/years of disturbance. However, with the updated detail in the OEMP [REP5-069], we are now satisfied with the detail provided on the temporary mitigation area at Lytham Moss. Q19) We are largely satisfied with the mitigation proposed for terrestrial waterbird features of the SPA and Ramsar site. The proposed measure of scrape creation at Lytham Moss has the potential to support shelduck and the Applicant has now included this within the OEMP detail for Lytham Moss. In addition, greater detail has been added for Newton-with Scales in the OEMP to outline that muddy habitats will be included to support inland feeding of shelduck. The proposed monitoring of the supplementary feeding and wider populations of birds utilising the area at Lytham Moss will provide evidence to support whether the measures are proving to be effective. The Applicant will monitor the supplementary feeding weekly, which will allow early understanding of whether the calculated amount of food is appropriate or whether a greater level of provision is required. The updates to the OEMP at Deadline 5 have largely satisfied our concerns around the proposed mitigation area at Lytham Moss. Additionally, further information has been provided by the Applicant during Examination on mitigation of waterbirds which has been reflected in Tab H of our R&I Log (Appendix K6) and in our previous responses [AS-066], [REP5-183]. For example, further information/mitigation on visual and noise disturbance at the River Ribble crossing. Therefore, we consider the risk of AEOI to terrestrial waterbird features of the Ribble & Alt Estuaries SPA to be much reduced. However, we maintain some concerns relating to the long-term monitoring and management of the permanent mitigation area at Newton-with-Scales which is included in our response to Q21 below. If our concerns regarding the proposed level of monitoring and the long-term management of the mitigation area can be addressed, Natural England would be able to rule out AEOI.	Q18) The Applicants welcome the closing of this issue. Q19) The Applicants welcome that Natural England are largely satisfied with the oEMP updates (including the inclusion of measures at Lytham Moss for shelduck) at Deadline 5 (REP5-069) and note that they have provided the additional detail on the long-term monitoring at Newton-with-Scales in Appendix B.2.2 of J6 Outline Ecological Management Plan (Tracked) - Rev F06 (REP6-115). The monitoring commitment is now: "*There is a commitment to monitor this area for the lifetime of the project (30 years) to inform the long-term success*." The Applicants therefore consider this issue fully closed.
3.4.12	Q21 - To NE: In light of the applicants revised OEMP at DL5 [REP5-068], confirm whether this satisfies your concerns regarding the deliverability and effectiveness of the proposed mitigation measures at Lytham Moss and Newton-with-Scales. Confirm whether the proposed	We welcome the Applicant's updates made at Deadline 5 and the efforts to provide further detail throughout Examination on the mitigation areas. As stated in Q19, we are satisfied with the detail included in the OEMP [REP-069] on the species which will be supported and the	Q21) The Applicants welcome that Natural England are largely satisfied with the oEMP updates (including the inclusion of measures at Lytham Moss for shelduck) at Deadline 5 (REP5-069) and note that they have provided the additional detail on the long-term monitoring at Newton-with-Scales in Appendix B.2.2 of J6 Outline Ecological Management Plan (Tracked) - Rev F06 (REP6-115). The monitoring commitment is now:

Reference	ExA Question	IP submission	Applicants' response
	mitigation is sufficient to conclude no AEOI on the terrestrial waterbird features of the R&AE SPA and Ramsar sites?	proposed approach to monitoring the efficacy of the temporary mitigation area at Lytham Moss. The detail in the OEMP relating to the permanent mitigation area at Newton-with-Scales does progress our concerns further due to the inclusion of more information on each measure and the species these will support. However, we reiterate our advice in [REP5-183] regarding the need for a long-term robust monitoring plan for this site. Although we welcome the additional detail on monitoring provided, we note in Section 1.9.2.5 [REP5-069] that monitoring will only occur for up to 5 years after construction has finished, despite the project lifetime being far longer. In the absence of monitoring after 5 years, we are concerned that long-term management of the site for species of interest will not be secured. In principle, the mitigation areas are suitable to deliver for the species, therefore we consider the risk of AEOI on the terrestrial waterbird features of the R&AE SPA/Ramsar to be low. However, as the effect is permanent, over the lifetime of the project, further detail is needed on the monitoring and management at Newton-with-Scales to ensure the site remains effective for the lifetime of the project. Currently the OEMP indicates monitoring for up to 5 years post construction and there is no detail on what organisation or management would be set up to continue management. We continue to advise that the efficacy of the mitigation will only be proven with monitoring and adaptive management where necessary. If our concerns regarding the proposed level of monitoring and the long-term management of the mitigation area can be addressed, Natural England would be able to rule out AEOI.	"*There is a commitment to monitor this area for the lifetime of the project (30 years) to inform the long-term success*." The Applicants therefore consider this issue fully closed.
3.4.13	See Q19 – 3.4.10		Please refer to response to Q19 reference 3.4.10.

2.5 Newton with Clifton Parish Council and Freckleton Parish Council (REP6-196)

Table 2.21: REP6-196 – Newton with Clifton PC and Freckleton PC (Summary of case presented at ISH4 on 7-8 October 2025 and actions arising)

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
REP6-196 196.1	**Summary of case presented at Issue Specific Hearing 4 on 7-8 October 2025 and actions arising** 1. This is the response from Newton with Clifton and Freckleton Parish Councils on behalf of the Transmission Assets Steering Committee which comprises of the following Parish and Town Councils which cover the entirety of the route in Fylde: • Newton with Clifton Parish Council • Freckleton Parish Council • Kirkham Town Council • Treales, Roseacre and Wharles Parish Council • Ribby with Wrea Parish Council • Weeton with Preece Parish Council • Westby-with-Plumptons Parish Council • St Annes Town Council • Bryning with Warton Parish Council and the Newton Residents Association.	Noted
REP6-196 196.2	**Volume of Information** 2. We support concerns raised by Fylde BC at the hearing about the volume of material being submitted at this late stage of the process. This undermines our ability to respond to the sheer amount of detail being provided and shows that the preparation for the application, and the application itself is seriously flawed.	With regard to Fylde Borough Councils comments on the volume of material being submitted into examination the Applicants refer the Parish Councils to its response to REP5-170 170.2 within the Applicants Response to Deadline 5 submissions from Statutory Consultees and other organisation: Fylde Borough Council (REP6-169).
REP6-196 196.3	**Number of unresolved issues** 3. At the hearings we also noted the high number of outstanding issues to be resolved including those of Blackpool Airport Properties Limited aired at the Compulsory Acquisition hearing and the recent response from the Duchy of Lancaster. Both of these raise concerns with the negotiating approach by the applicants and the extent of either the powers or agreements sought.	Noted
REP6-196 196.4	**Failure to consider updates on the Alternative Route** 4. We remain disappointed that the Examining Authority has not allowed us, and others, the opportunity to directly address the issue of the obviously material Alternative Route at an Issue Specific Hearing. Although we accept that this is a primarily written process, we believe that this issue is important enough to merit oral submissions to allow its adequate examination and for the parish councils to have a fair chance to put their case (see s91(1) of the Planning Act 2008). 5. This has denied us the opportunity to update the Examining Authority about developments with OFGEM and their continuing failure to address issues about the lack of consideration of Stanah in the Holistic Network Review and their responsibilities under EN5 and the Electricity Act 1989. The consideration of connecting at Penwortham had no element of public consultation and yet predetermines that the onshore cables are ten times as long as they need to be. Indeed, at no point have our communities had the opportunity to be consulted, engaged nor have had the opportunity to challenge the decision to ignore Stanah and go straight to Penwortham. Given the savings of £904m for the Morgan and Morecambe route alone, and a total of £1.5 bn including Mooir Vannin, this is disappointing to say the least. So we are forced to place our trust in this process with the Examining Authority to recognise that a serious mistake has been made and there is an obviously materially advantageous alternative. 6. However we do note that the Examining Authority have now visited sites on the alternative route as we have requested. This is welcome. There are some additional points we would like to raise which may not have been obvious from the site inspection and could have been made had it been an accompanied site inspection: a. From public accessible land the Examining Authority will not have been able to see the fact that there is already a shared electricity transmission infrastructure boundary with HTEZ and Stanah, the existing Walney 2 (and other DNO) transmission infrastructure demonstrating the feasibility and the vast space for further transmission infrastructure. b. The Examining Authority will have not been able to see at first hand the available compliant development Hillhouse Technology Enterprise Zone land, demonstrating that there are Very Special Circumstances do not exist to override the conflict with and build over the South Fylde Green Belt.... and of course that this avoids the marine environmental conflict with the Ribble & Alt SPA and avoids the 13km zones around both Blackpool passenger airport and Warton passenger airport & military airfield operations to avoid the consequential birdstrike risk to life.	The Applicants have responded to matters within REP6-196.4 in their response to the Parish Councils at Deadline 5 (REP5-185.1) With regard the proposed landfall locations of the Orsted' East Irish Sea Transmission (OEIST) Project, it should be noted OEIST have stated the following within their Scoping Report (emphasis provided in bold); *The review concluded that the Landfall and onshore and offshore cable routes at Blackpool were comparatively higher risk due to stakeholder feedback, technical constraints at Blackpool Airport* ***and overlap with key project infrastructure order limits with the Morgan and Morcombe Transmission Assets*** *through to Penwortham, giving rise to significant legal, commercial and consenting risk* It can therefore be concluded that the Applicants existing proposal to make landfall to the west of Blackpool Airport was a key factor in OEIST selecting two alternative locations for their proposed landfall.

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
	c. The protected route into HTEZ for the proposed Northern Access road - which could be used as an access route into HTEZ for cabling - would also not have been clear. d. The footpath to the south of the Cala Grand holiday park, which is a further important cabling access route option. **Non-Compliance with NESO's Approach to Government** 7. The current strategy, supported by NESO and National Grid NGET, involves the construction of multiple new underground cable routes inland—totalling seven trenches of over 30km each. This approach disregards the potential coastal connection point and the use of the 400kV Heysham Ring, which links Stanah, Heysham, Penwortham, and national consumers. Critically, this strategy is in conflict with NESO's stated policy, which prioritises maximising and upgrading the existing network before considering the development of new lines. Reference to NESO Clean Power 2030 (section 5.2 and Annex 1) confirms that new lines should only be considered once existing infrastructure capacity is exhausted. 8. Stanah has repeatedly been shortlisted ahead of Penwortham as a connection point since 2008, as evidenced by National Grid's input into the offshore Strategic Environmental Assessments, Celtic Array, Moorside, Walney Extension, and Walney 2 projects. Notably, the Walney 2 project in 2012 3 94390819.1 utilised the Stanah connection and Hillhouse Technical Enterprise Zone to host transmission infrastructure, which was subsequently linked to the Irish Sea shore. **Non-Compliance with HNDR Recommendation Assumptions** 9. NESO's support for the connection to Penwortham and the developers' proposals rely on assumptions set out in the Holistic Network Design Review (HNDR), yet the recommended approach of shared cable corridor, shared substation and export cable is not being implemented. There has been no reassessment by NESO despite significant changes: the cable corridor, substation, and export cable are no longer shared, leading to increased environmental impacts (such as on the Ribble & Alt SPA), greater loss of Green Belt land, heightened bird strike risks, business blight, and the proliferation of network connections. 10. The HNDR Report lacks any assessment against the objectives of the Offshore Transmission Network Review (OTNR), which should cover cost, deliverability, environmental impact, and community impact. The only assessment provided is a technical comparison (table 39), and Penwortham is rated amber for all four parameters in the HNDR. However, based on the presence of both a passenger airport and military airfield, a red rating should apply (table 40), indicating the need for mitigation solutions. The National Policy Statement (NPS) requires a birdstrike assessment, yet the ongoing failure to address this risk highlights a lack of process compliance. Additionally, there has been no assessment of Green Belt impact. **Cumulative Impacts and Lack of Coordination** 11. The HNDR has omitted consideration of the 1.32GW Mooir Vannin EISTP, raising questions about how Ofgem ensures the system remains efficient, coordinated, and economic **Sustainability of Upgrades** 12. Energy systems are sized to meet historical demand levels. National Grid Electricity Transmission (NGET) has submitted to the M&M ExA that Penwortham requires upgrades to accommodate projects such as Morgan, Morecambe, and others, necessitating the compulsory purchase of South Ribble Greenbelt. This does not account for the requirements of Mooir Vannin EISTP. Upgrading Stanah to meet new demand would be equally justifiable, given that the NGET Stanah site has open access to HTEZ, which itself has a 138 hectare site nationally approved to support the energy sector, yet it is being used to discount Stanah. This site could host new transmission infrastructure, eliminating environmental, community, and birdstrike risks and reducing network connections. This challenges NGET's claim that Stanah lacks access or capacity for new transmission infrastructure. No consistent, contemporary, or complete assessments have been produced for routes involving Penwortham/Greenbelt and Stanah/HTEZ connection points. **Adequacy of Coordination and System-Wide Perspective**	

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
	13. There appears to be a lack of system-wide consideration and coordination. The loss of 2.4GW of base load from decommissioning of Heysham 1 & 2 nuclear power plants, missed opportunities to provide green hydrogen energy balancing infrastructure (by leveraging the existing but unimplemented DCO at Thornton – the Preesall Underground Gas Storage Facility Order 2015), and potential for local use of landed power are notable. The adoption of a regulatory sandbox framework could enable delivery that is faster, smarter, and £1.5bn cheaper.	
REP6-196 196.5	**Imbalance of Harms Over Benefits: Lack of Critical National Priority status** 14. The current approach, as stated in public submissions by the three projects, will not achieve the 2030 Government objective. These projects, with capacities between 0.48GW and 1.5GW, would contribute only 1%-3% of the Government's 50GW 2030 offshore wind target and just 0.06%-0.2% of the oversubscribed 750GW pipeline of connections. The associated harms, which outweigh the benefits of this project, mean that it is not a project of critical national priority.	The Applicants refer the Parish Councils to section 3.2 of EN-1 where the need for new electricity generation and the Transmission Assets is clearly stated.
REP6-196 196.6	**Stanah/HTEZ: The Obviously Material Superior Alternative** 15. A transmission route via Stanah/HTEZ and the 400kV Heysham Ring offers several significant advantages: a. Utilises and reinforces the existing transmission network, avoiding surface development on Greenbelt land and countryside, in alignment with NESO's guidance to Government.	See response to REP6-196.4 above.

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
	b. Reduces costs and carbon emissions by eliminating the need for seven cable sets of 30km each for the three projects, serving consumer interests and economic duty. c. Avoids birdstrike risk to life, being over 13km from both passenger airport and military airfield operations. d. Landfall does not conflict with marine protected environments, including Ribble & Alt SPA, which are impacted by M&M's proposal. e. Supports regeneration opportunities, including local low-cost power use, green hydrogen for energy balancing, environmental enhancement, land remediation, and future Greenbelt protection. f. Avoids £1.5bn of unnecessary costs to investors and consumer bills, reduces activities and risks, and facilitates progress for developers, communities, and government in the Net Zero transition.	
REP6-196 196.7	**Addressing Claims of No Less Harmful Alternatives** 16. Despite assertions from M&M that no less harmful approaches exist, Orsted has acknowledged the potential benefits of a Stanah connection, stating they are willing to reconsider HTEZ if not penalised by Ofgem/NESO. Orsted has also proposed two landfall sites that avoid the Ribble & Alt marine SPA, directly contradicting M&M's claims. Furthermore, Orsted has identified sites within 5km of Penwortham for surface converter stations and energy balancing infrastructure, which would avoid the South Fylde Greenbelt, undermining claims that building over the Greenbelt is unavoidable due to "very special circumstances."	
REP6-196 196.8	**Conclusion: The Stanah/HTEZ/Heysham Ring Route** 17. The Stanah/HTEZ/Heysham Ring route stands out as the faster, smarter, and £1.5bn cheaper solution, addressing environmental, community, and economic concerns while supporting rapid progress towards Net Zero.	
REP6-196 196.9	**Noise** 18. We have always understood the balance between hours of operation and the length of the proposed construction works and its impact on local residents. We have come to the conclusion that 6am for implementation works and 7am for construction works is too early and agree with Fylde BC that an 8am start would allow local residents the opportunity for a full night's rest. 19. In addition we support the change giving the Local Authority 48 hours' notice of extended works and request this be extended to all affected residents, businesses and schools and that further consideration by given to the impact on children during school hours.	The Applicants refer the Parish Councils to their response to ExA Question 2:14.1.4 (REP5-130), which sets out their position on working hours in full.
REP6-196 196.10	**Lighting** 20. We have received information from the Civil Aviation Authority showing that the Applicants' assertion that they are responsible for deciding upon lighting on masts is wrong, and that instead that this is a matter for the two airfields. We attach that advice at Annex A.	The Applicants are committed to working with Blackpool Airport and BAE Systems (BAES) Warton to safeguard aviation operations through appropriate lighting of obstacles, in accordance with CAP168, which states: *"The responsibility for marking and lighting obstacles on or near aerodromes must be determined between the aerodrome licence holder and the owners of the structures."* A Cooperation Agreement has been signed between the Applicants and Blackpool Airport which makes provision for the assessment of aviation lighting requirements through the Blackpool Airport Aerodrome Safeguarding Procedures. Requirement 4 of the DCO has also been updated to specifically capture the need to consult on, and secure appropriate approval of, any aviation lighting requirements. BAES, BAOL and MOD are now named consultees within requirement 4; ensuring that any aviation lighting requirements are carried out in line with their safeguarding procedures. All parties have confirmed that they are happy with the drafting of the Requirement.
REP6-196 196.11	**Landscape** 21. We have repeatedly criticised the Applicants for failing to provide 3-D models or landscape renderings of the substations. This dates back to at least November 2023 when the viewpoints in the photographs were from	The Applicants note the comments regarding the level of visual material and engagement undertaken in relation to the Transmission Assets.

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
	vantages away from people homes, and in any case did not show the impact of the substations, as well there being no legible maps – local people resorted to making their own so they could see where the substations were. Indeed the Mooir Vannin applicants in their Approach to Consultation document have already indicated they may use interactive GIS mapping to digitally capture geographically specific data, including for Issue specific working groups, both denied to us by the applicant. 22. This information would have allowed local communities to understand and comment upon the design of the substation. This is in line with the Design Principles for National Infrastructure, quoted by the applicant: "The range of views of communities affected by the infrastructure must be taken into account and reflected in the design." 23. The Applicants say "The Applicants have ..... sought the views of local communities throughout the project to ensure the design complements the local character and culture and provides meaningful benefits to local communities." That is not the case. 24. For the second time the Applicants have claimed local resident feedback helped them with their decision on siting of the substations. Again this is not true. Local residents were repeatedly denied the ability to understand the impact of the substations, including siting options, and denied the opportunity to comment meaningfully. 25. In current versions there has been glacial progress – we now have photos from 4 local viewpoints but there remain no representations of the substations themselves, or the visual impact this will have on our communities. This means there are no indications either of the possible heights of the substations, or the different design of the Morecambe substation which is still undecided between AIS and GIS. Indeed the height of the Morgan substation is still not agreed- so it is still unclear whether the Morgan substation is on top of, or built within the slope rising from Dow Brook, which makes a major impact on local residents overlooking the substation. Instead the height is proposed for post consent subject to planning authority approval. 26. So we are nearing the end of this process and we still do not have full viewpoint representations for local communities to consider and offer views on, let alone have those views taken into account. Likewise you too as the Examining Authority have shared that experience of no illustrative viewpoints with representations of substations, no opportunity to offer views and the decision being taken after this examination. We consider that this means the environmental assessment is incomplete and the consultation undertaken has been inadequate. 27. In addition we note with concern that the substations are still proposed to be maximum design scenario without any recourse to local communities challenging their size on an informed basis. 28. We note the offer of a model by the Applicants, but this should have been in place for the 2023 consultation, and certainly before now in this process. The model should have been offered far earlier in this process, and with proper views points to comply with the Design Principles for National Infrastructure. In our recent conversations with the applicant they indicated that even the offer of a model was under consideration by them and not agreed. 29. All of this is in addition to the fact that the Maximum Design Scenario for the Applicants' substations are far larger than those for equivalent schemes. There has been no explanation for the huge amount of land required by the applicants for their onshore substations.	The Applicants consider that appropriate information has been provided throughout the Examination, including representative viewpoint photography and supporting visual material, in accordance with recognised good practice and proportional to the level of design detail available at this stage. The Applicants refer to their previous submissions, which explain the approach to consultation, design development and assessment, and confirm that these processes have been undertaken in line with applicable guidance and the requirements of the DCO process. The Applicants reiterate that **18 visualisations were submitted**, as part of the DCO Application in September 2024, in support of Volume 3 Chapter 10 Landscape and visual resources (APP-123) in Volume 3, Figures - Part 6 of 7 (APP-136). The submission visualisations have been prepared in accordance with best practices and guidance, representing the Maximum Design Scenario (MDS). The Applicants reaffirm that their purpose is to illustrate the likely scale and proportions of the Transmission Assets at both Year 1 and Year 15, in summer and winter conditions, in support of the LVIA, providing an established and widely accepted technique for understanding changes in views and visual amenity. The Applicants acknowledge, for complete transparency, that the original visualisations were **resubmitted** at Deadline 3 (see REP3-015), in which the Applicants corrected some labelling and presentation of photomontages. No changes were made to the visual representation of each substation's parameters or indicative 3D models depicted in each view. Furthermore, in response to the Examining Authority's First Written Question 13.1.4 (PD-008), the Applicants submitted at Deadline 3 an indicative 3D illustration of each onshore substation site layout, annotated to show typical structures, equipment and buildings. This aligns with the project description in the EIA and the authorised development defined in the dDCO and mirrors the design used for the photomontages.
REP6-196 196.12	**Cumulative Effects Assessment** 30. As mentioned in our previous submissions we remain concerned at the potential for overlap between the construction periods and use of land for the Applicants' proposal and proposed Bluefield's solar farm. Given that this focuses on the sensitive and dangerous use of Lower Lane, and the Eeka Lane which has cattle crossing, horse and pedestrian traffic and construction traffic for both schemes all potentially running at the same time. This is unacceptable.	The Applicants note this comment and have responded previously in REP5-125, which pointed NWCFPC to REP4-097. This sets out the Applicants position with regard to traffic and transport in relation to Bluefield Solar Farm, to the west of Parrox Lane in Newton with Clifton (Ref: 24/0541). The Applicants reviewed the Transport Statement (TS) for Bluefield Solar Farm and this confirmed that net changes in traffic would be less than two vehicles per day. No assessment of traffic effects is presented in the TS, however, the Applicants note that the forecast levels of traffic would be within day to day fluctuations and would be likely to result in negligible effects. The Applicants note the ongoing engagement between LCC and the promoter of the solar farm in regard to access via Lower Lane (rather than Parrox Lane) but would note that the Applicants do not propose any traffic movements via either of these roads. Notwithstanding this, the Applicants would highlight that section 1.14 of the outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (oCTMP) (REP6-113) includes a commitment to the establishment of a Transport Working Group (TWG). The aims of the TWG are to assist the highway authorities in coordinating the

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
		competing requirements from schemes within the traffic and transport study area. The TWG would allow developers to discuss matters and coordinate with the aim of minimising disruption where practicable.
REP6-196 196.13	**Construction Accesses** 31. See Annex B for a letter from Sue Ashton, vice-chair of Westby-with-Plumptons Parish Council, on the issue of construction accesses.	The Applicants note the concerns set out within Annex A. The Applicants will not be implementing road closures on either Ballam Road or Peel Road. Furthermore members of the public will be kept informed on construction works as per the measures set out in Outline Communication Plan (REP6-069).
REP6-196 196.14	**Blackpool Road Recreation Ground** 32. See Annex C for submissions from Cllr Joanne Gardner, Fylde Borough Council Councillor for Kilnhouse Ward, on the issue of the Blackpool Road Recreation Ground. Ilr Joanne Gardner, Councillor for Kilnhouse Ward The TASC group acknowledge that the applicants have made changes to their original proposals at Blackpool North Playing Fields. However we feel that this does not go far enough to fully protect football for children in St Annes. Too many unknown questions remain, particularly around start and finish times due to the dual nature of this project. What is temporary and what is permanent? We do not accept this can be achieved within the 5 month period as indicated the applicants. How long will the children be without football? And where will they go? There are no other suitable facilities in St Annes. So how far will they have to travel? We feel this could close a football club that has been in existence for over 50 years. We maintain that the impact on children's health and well being will be put at risk due to the flawed route of this project	The Applicants note the comments from Councillor Gardner. The Applicants are committed to reducing disruption to users of the Blackpool Road Recreation Ground as evidenced by the inclusion of an Outline Open Space Management Plan which is Appendix A to the Outline Public Management Plan (REP6-087). Sections A.3.2.5 to A3.2.9 of the Outline Open Space Management Plan set out the specific management measures which relate the Recreation Ground. With regard to timescales, the Applicants, through Commitment 123 within the Commitments Register (REP6-042) have committed to the following; *"installation of the Onshore Export Cable Corridor at Blackpool Road Recreation Ground will be undertaken by HDD (or other trenchless techniques). This trenchless technique installation is anticipated to last a maximum of 5 months of total active construction within the grounds. Appropriate exclusion fencing between the entry and exit pits will only be erected for a maximum of 2 months within the 5 months of active construction to mitigate potential impacts to users."* Furthermore, as stated within Fylde Borough Council's response to the Examining Authority's written question 2.12.1.11 (REP5-171), the Applicants are at an advanced stage of negotiation on a section 106 agreement which will further mitigate impacts to users of the Recreation Ground, this includes funding for alternative pitch provision and associated costs. St Annes Football Club have been consulted throughout the development of the section 106 and their feedback has been welcomed. An updated s106 Explanatory Memorandum (S_D4_16/F02) has been submitted at Deadline 7. It contains further details which reflect the positive progress made since Deadline 4 as to what the s106 agreement will cover. The Applicants intention is that through its commitment to the mitigation measures set out, that St Annes Football Club will have the support it needs to continue to thrive for many years to come.
REP6-196 196.15	**Freckleton Road Bridleway** 33. See Annex D for submissions from Cllrs Keith Mackay and Noreen Griffiths about the Freckleton Road Bridleway.	The Applicants acknowledge concerns regarding the use of the Freckleton Road Bridleway (Bridleway 16). The bridleway was used for limited access during the ground investigation surveys that commenced in August 2025, following similar works undertaken in 2024, and is also routinely used for movement of livestock and agricultural machinery. The Applicants' record indicate that the bridleway remains in a condition consistent with its prior use and that no reinstatement is currently required. However, the Applicants will engage further with the surrounding landowners to confirm the need for any reinstatement measures, as appropriate. In regards to the potential noise disturbance during construction, the Applicants confirm they will seek to minimise noise as far as practicably possible at the substations, through the implementation of mitigations, as set out in Construction Noise and Vibration Management Plan(s) (CNVMPs). This will be

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
		developed from REP6-083 which forms part of the Outline Code of Construction Practice (OCoCP). The detailed CoCP(s) are secured by Requirement 8 of Schedules 2A and 2B of the draft DCO (REP6-013).
REP6-196 196.16	**Wrea Green Equitation Centre** 34. We welcome the creation of a communication protocol and as set out later, welcome its introduction for other stakeholders.	The Applicants note this feedback. Given the sensitivities of Wrea Green Equitation Centre (a horse-riding school which caters for disabled users and young people where specific concerns have been raised given the protected characteristics of the users), a bespoke communications plan for the Centre is required (together with the detailed Construction Noise and Vibration Management Plan, Construction Traffic Management Plan and Construction Method Statement) to mitigate potential impacts on the Centre and its users. The Applicants consider the framework for engagement with other stakeholders, and the wider community is already captured within the Outline Communications Plan (REP6-069).
REP6-196 196.17	**Outstanding agricultural land-use and farming matters** 35. See Annex E for submissions from Cllr Keith Mackay on agricultural land use and farming matters	The Applicants note the content of Annex E but have no comment to make on these matters.
REP6-196 196.18	**Commentary on the Biodiversity Benefit Supporting Statement REP5-145** **1) Project results in a net loss to biodiversity** 36. For the first time in this examination, we see the true effect of the project on biodiversity. Table 3 on pages 15-16 of REP5-145 shows the true baseline within the whole of the order limits rather than just for the proposed permanent infrastructure. 37. Before mitigation, the project causes a loss of 447.46 area units, 16.52 hedgerow units and 90.03 water units. The proposed mitigation can be found in tables 1.6, 1.7 and 1.8 of the Biodiversity Benefit Statement (REP5-074) and amounts to an increase of 79.85 area units, 12.32 hedgerow units and 4.07 watercourse units. 38. This means that the project as proposed represents a net loss of biodiversity of: - 447.46 - 79.85 = 367.61 area units, or a 14.1% loss, and - 16.52 – 12.32 = 4.2 hedgerow units, or a 3.93% loss, and - 90.03 – 4.07 = 85.96 watercourse units, or a 47.64% loss 39. Since the project will only be constructed within a corridor that is likely to be narrower than the order limits, it is likely that the eventual figure will be lower, but given the scale of area and watercourse losses in particular is still very likely to result in a net loss. 40. Not stated at the hearing, but a consequence of this: If the Examining Authority recommend and the Secretary of State approve this project then this is likely to be in contravention of the revised duty under s40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, since recommending approval or approving this project would not conserve or enhance biodiversity. Unlike BNG for NSIPs, this has been in force since 1 January 2023.	The Applicants maintain that their proposed approach to BNG is appropriate and proportionate. The Applicants have provided written responses throughout the Examination and oral presentations on this matter at the ISHs. In response to the specific points raised: 36, 37 and 38 – the metric calculations are indicative only and therefore are not an accurate representation of the baseline or the post-construction impacts. The inclusion of the whole Order Limits within the baseline artificially elevates the habitat unit value because it includes habitats that are not impacted at all (including irreplaceable habitats such as coastal sand dunes at the landfall site); however, the metric then factors in a 10% uplift on this habitat type, even though it is not impacted by the projects. 39 – again the Applicants reiterate that the metric calculations were indicative only. The installation of onshore cables would use trenchless crossing techniques for all Environment Agency Main Rivers (CoT10, CoT82); impacts on minor watercourses and ditches crossed using open-cut techniques would be temporary for the duration of construction and would be reinstated post-construction such that there would be no permanent habitat loss. 40 – the Applicants have committed to the delivery of measurable biodiversity benefits through habitat creation and enhancement at the onshore substations and Lea Marsh fields, secured by DCO Requirement 26. Given the nature of the projects, most impacts are temporary and reversible with habitats reinstated post-construction. The Applicants submitted a Biodiversity Benefits Supporting Statement (REP5-145) at Deadline 5 to provide evidence of compliance with planning policy in respect of biodiversity benefits.
REP6-196 196.19	**2) There are threats to highly valuable habitats** 41. Checking the metric for Morgan (REP5-151) as an example (the overall metric document has blanks for the habitats), one can see the following: - 20.5 hectares of 'irreplaceable' habitat is listed (coastal sand dunes), and - 26.9 hectares of 'very high distinctiveness' habitats (fens (upland and lowland), and purple moor grass and rush pastures) are listed 42. It is possible – and likely in the first case – that these habitats will be drilled underneath rather than subject to cut and cover construction and hence will be unaffected, but as we heard in relation to peat, the ends of any HDD section will be at the surface and could intrude upon these habitats, plus there is a disagreement between	41 – the Applicants confirm that the projects would not impact any irreplaceable habitats such as coastal sand dunes as these would be crossed using trenchless techniques; however, the indicative BNG metric calculation prepared for the whole Order Limits required all habitats to be included in the baseline regardless of whether they would be impacted or not. It is therefore not an accurate representation of the impacts of the projects, or the effects on habitats and protected species, which has been assessed within the ecological impact assessment presented in Volume 3 Chapter 3: Onshore ecology and nature conservation (APP-075) of the ES.

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
	the Applicants and Natural England about the depth of drilling under the sand dunes to avoid any effects on them. Essentially from the information provided at this late stage we just don't know whether irreplaceable habitat – which is so valuable as to require its own mitigation and is outside the BNG regime – and very high distinctiveness habitat – which requires bespoke compensation even within the BNG regime – will be affected. 43. If the Applicants had considered BNG properly throughout this process, including as early as site selection, then they may have avoided or reduced the impact on these valuable habitats but do not appear to have done so.	42 – see previous comment; the Applicants have considered potential indirect impacts to the coastal sand dunes within the Outline Hydrogeological Risk Assessment the most recent iteration of which was submitted at Deadline 6 (REP6-140). This document would be updated following further ground investigation work, but the Applicants are confident that any potential risks have been identified and can be adequately mitigated. 43 – the site selection process for the projects has been set out in Volume 1 Chapter 4: Site selection and consideration of alternatives (APP-030). The site selection process considered all environmental issues including onshore ecology and nature conservation.
REP6-196 196.20	**3) The other DCOs cited as similar are not in fact similar** 44. At paragraph 3.2.1.4 the document states that only considering permanent infrastructure is similar to the approach taken for other DCOs but this is simply not true. Without even checking the projects themselves, one can ascertain from Table 4 on pages 18-20 that: - Rampion 2 assessed all permanent and temporary land take; - North Falls did not consider losses taking more than two years to restore as temporary and did exclude HDD areas; - Dogger Bank South excluded HDD areas; - Outer Dowsing excluded HDD areas. 45. The last two reported a small net loss of area habitat.	44 – the Applicants maintain that their approach to the delivery of BNG is reasonable and proportionate. The review of other projects indicated that there were similar approaches in terms of considering permanent and temporary impacts and was provided to highlight to the Examining Authority that there is currently no clear strategy that has been applied across the board for voluntary BNG for NSIPs.
REP6-196 196.21	**4) The 'temporary' impacts to habitats on this project are very long** 46. The Applicants have given the impression that the impacts to habitats on the cable route are short in duration, even if not short enough to fall under the two-year exemption. 47. The test is that the time from when the habitat is first lost to when it is fully restored to its originally-assessed condition must be less than two years. In fact on this project this will be much longer. 48. The use of the land for the projects themselves will be long, even if any particular section will have a relatively short construction time, because the Applicants have reserved for themselves a gap of up to four years between constructing the two projects. Even if the project is not delayed, if the construction time at any particular site is one year per project that could mean six years of loss, and could be significantly longer if the project is delayed or construction time at a site is longer than a year. 49. On top of that is the time that the metric says each habitat will take to restore to its original condition. Along the route this ranges from urban habitats that take no time to restore, to rarer habitats that take 30 years to restore, such as woodland and fens. Essentially only urban habitats, cereal crops and littoral sand from the identified habitats take less than three years to restore. 50. Given that the BNG obligation is only to maintain an enhanced habitat for 30 years, it seems highly inappropriate to consider the loss of habitat for longer than that as 'temporary'.	46, 47 and 48 – the ecological impact assessment presented in Volume 3 Chapter 3: Onshore ecology and nature conservation (APP-075) of the ES has considered the duration of the temporary impacts as set out in the Maximum Design Scenario assumptions, which considered that the habitats could be impacted for up to 66 months. 49 – this comment is noted. 50 – most of the habitats impacted by the projects comprise arable farmland and permanent pasture fields, and the Applicants have committed to fully reinstating the working area to its pre-existing condition post-construction (CoT08). It is reasonable to assume this would be achievable within a timeframe much shorter than 30 years.
REP6-196 196.22	**5) Trading rules affect replacement habitats** 51. Paragraph 4.1.1.4 suggests that all lost habitats could be replaced by enhancing modified grassland in poor condition with other neutral grassland in moderate condition but this is not possible for habitats of medium or higher distinctiveness – they should be replaced with habitat in the same habitat group if they are medium, the exact same habitat if high, and subject to bespoke.	51 – the Applicants reiterate that the whole Order Limits BNG metric calculation was indicative only, and the post-development option for achieving 10% net gain was again provided as an indication only as to the approximate magnitude of habitat creation/ enhancement that could be required (as information for the Examining Authority).
REP6-196 196.23	**6) The proposed hierarchy is flawed** 52. The proposed hierarchy at Table 5 on pages 21-22, reflected in the proposed requirement 26 that was circulated on the evening of 7 October, roughly corresponds to the official biodiversity hierarchy at Article 37A of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) 2015. 53. However, option 3, or part (b) of the requirement, is extremely vague – it does not appear to fulfil the tests of enforceable and precise for a planning condition. It is the equivalent in the official hierarchy of offsite BNG, and our case is that this project should also have to secure registered offsite BNG for any BNG that is not either onsite or being satisfied by buying statutory credits. Although BNG is not yet a legal requirement for DCO applications, land on the register has been allocated to town and country planning projects that were approved before the BNG obligation applied to that regime and so this is possible to achieve. For other comments on the proposed requirement, see under the DCO section.	52 – this comment is noted. 53 - the wording of DCO Requirement 26 allows flexibility in the approach to delivery. The details on the delivery of BNG for the projects (including whether the purchase of any offsetting BNG units from a private provider, or statutory credits from the Government, would be required) would only be able to be confirmed once an updated BNG assessment had been undertaken post-consent because it requires the completion of the detailed design stage. However, the Applicants are confident that the principles for delivery they have proposed in the Outline Biodiversity Benefit Management Plan submitted at Deadline 6 (REP6-095) demonstrate that they would be able to be deliver a minimum 10% net gain.

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
REP6-196 196.24	**Aviation** 54. We have discovered a fundamental failing in the Applicants site selection process. When they used their black/red/amber/green (BRAG) assessment, they used an Amber rating for both Blackpool and Warton airfields. We understand that this is because they believed that Blackpool has no passenger traffic and Warton was a private airfield. 55. However Blackpool is classed as passenger carrying, and is one of the 34 listed passenger airfields. This would require it to be rated it as Red in the BRAG methodology. 56. Warton is classed as private but operates a military type licence, with the fast jets using the aerodrome being military and armed on every flight. Military Operation Airfields are all classed as Red in the BRAG methodology. 57. So the BRAG assessment for site selection is fundamentally flawed and the current substation sites should never have been considered. The whole story of consideration of the effects of the project on the airport and aerodrome is one of too little, too late. 58. If the Applicants do succeed in satisfying BAe Systems with respect to bird strike risk at Warton Aerodrome, then this should not be at the expense of reduced environmental mitigation, especially if that fails fully to mitigate environmental harms. The measures at Table 1-4 of Appendix A (the Outline Wildlife Habitat Attractants Risk Assessment) of the Outline Wildlife Hazard Management Plan (REP5-106) do appear to degrade the habitats so that e.g. ponds have less biodiverse edges, trees are kept short etc. 59. The suitability of these mitigation areas should be reassessed assuming the worst case of having to implement the measures to control attraction. Presumably there is no longer time to do this so it will either have to be done for the decision period or will remain an incompletely assessed area. 60. NFPC.OE.8 – the ecology assessment was inadequate as the risk of bird strike from the two aviation facilities was not taken into account. Those discussions remain deadlocked and expose a fundamental flaw in the application which results from it being prematurely rushed through. The issues with BAe Systems should have been discussed in advance of the application being submitted. The applicants in their rush to avoid BNG have ended up with a fundamental and irresolvable dilemma around both claiming to support environmental net gain and yet denying it for Bae Systems. 61. The parish councils note that BAE Systems are not the only body concerned about the birdstrike Issue. This is a major concern to those Parish and Town Councils that lie under the possible flight paths, as follows: • When a strike occurs, there may be damage to the aircraft, which hopefully can land safely with no further concern: • If the aircraft or crew are damaged, then control may be lost, in which case the crew may eject and land safely, but the aircraft trajectory will be uncertain and may result in a crash on land or at sea. • This raises a third party risk of death to those on the ground. • Anything that knowingly increases this risk has to be prevented	54 – 57. The Applicants cannot find any reference to Amber rating in the BRAG assessment for both Blackpool airport and Warton airfield in the site selection process for substation sites or the Export Cable Corridor (see Volume 1, Annex 4.3: Selection and Refinement of Onshore Infrastructure (AS-028)). The BRAG criteria used for the site selection process for the Onshore Export Cable Corridor was applied to the Scoping Boundary (area of search) and Warton Aerodrome falls outside the boundary of the onshore cable route search area to which the BRAG methodology was applied (See Volume 1, Annex 4.3: Selection and Refinement of Onshore Infrastructure (AS-028)). 58. Bird abundance or diversity does not need to be accounted for in a biodiversity assessment. It is the habitats, which are measured by flora, and only the habitats that count in the assessment metric. The design of these areas is made to be less attractive to large flocking birds and does not impede on the delivery of habitats that are rich in floral diversity. Not all species are of the same threat to aviation safety: large and flocking species present a greater risk, and the national bird strike rate is dominated by gulls and woodpigeons. The primary species of concern are gulls, the flocking waders and wildfowl, and flocking passerines such as starling. Outside of the Ribble & Alt SPA, these species are primarily reliant upon intensively farmed arable and pasture of low ecological value (outside of their importance to the birds). Most of these species are very wary of enclosed habitats and remain within open fields. The de-attractant measures proposed will actually increase biodiversity in most cases. For example, the marginal vegetation cover management is only to prevent reedbeds establishing and does not mean that emergent vegetation will be impacted, indeed emergent vegetation on pond margins is unattractive to many of the flocking birds but adds biodiversity to the habitat and is beneficial to invertebrates and amphibians. The design of hedges and scrubby areas to have shorter trees also does not impact upon biodiversity, in fact regularly coppicing and/or pollarding hedges and woodland (cropping to ground level or a few metres above) is of great importance (e.g., see How each stage of the coppice cycle benefits wildlife | Wildlife Trust for Beds Cambs & Northants (Wildlife Trust, 2022)), this may also benefit many species of red and amber list passerine species that do not pose a risk to aviation safety. 59. As stated above there is no impediment on biodiversity caused by the implementation of the measures to control attraction. 60. The Applicants note that ecology assessment is not relevant to the assessment of the onshore and intertidal ornithology. The Applicants also note that they have been working collaboratively with the Defence Infrastructure Organisation/Ministry of Defence (DIO/MOD) and their birdstrike specialists to resolve these issues. The Applicants note that the DIO/MOD have raised no recent concerns regarding the biodiversity areas since the submission of the Outline Wildlife Hazard Management Plan (REP6-144). 61. Although Newton with Clifton PC and Freckleton PC are concerned about birdstrike, the final decision on this will be made by the DIO/MOD. The decision-making process will be led by their own subject matter experts, who specialise in providing advice on birdstrike and currently manage all birdstrike assessments for the MOD. The Applicants are working collaboratively with the DIO/MOD and by extension, with BAE Systems, but reiterate the view that the bird mitigations only represent a redistribution of birds and will not increase the number of birds within the Order Limits, and therefore risk will remain the same as the current level. This is a view shared by Natural England (Q14 response in REP6-194): "*We agree with the Applicant's that the purpose of the mitigation areas is to provide habitat for species already within the area and Ribble SPA/Ramsar which have been potentially impacted or displaced from FLL habitat as a result of the Project, not to attract birds from elsewhere outside of the SPA*"

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
		The Applicants therefore note Newton with Clifton PC and Freckleton PC's concerns, however, would urge that this is an issue that is being dealt with by the DIO/MOD subject matter experts.
REP6-196 196.25	**Draft Development Consent Order** Article 13 62. At the Open Floor Hearing on 24th June 2025 (01:55:14:21 - 01:55:46:07) the Applicants stated that there would be no road closures ; in that case, why do article 13 and schedules 4A and 4B allow a number of public roads to be closed? 63. Even if there are no road closures, that doesn't mean there won't be significant disruption and delays due to temporary lights and use of banksmen which will cause significant adverse impacts for residents and businesses.	The powers under article 13 must be read in the wider context of the DCO Application and the restrictions on the powers of the DCO. To ensure that access via the highway network can be maintained for all road users, including emergency services, significant commitments have been made to the use of trenchless installation techniques, such as Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) to minimise disruption to all A, B and Classified roads (with the exception of Leach Lane) and railways proposed to be crossed by the Transmission Assets (see CoT02, Volume 1, Annex 5.3: Commitments Register (REP6-042). With regard to Leach Lane, the Applicants have committed to maintaining access, with works completed on a 'half / half basis' with traffic to be controlled through the use of temporary traffic management, such as traffic signals, as such access would be maintained at all times including for emergency services. The approach to managing highway crossings is outlined in Section 1.8 of the Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (oCTMP) (REP6-113). The requirement to produce the detailed CTMP(s) in accordance with the oCTMP in agreement with the relevant highway authority is secured by Requirement 9 of Schedules 2A and 2B of the draft DCO (REP6-013). The Applicants note that the scope of the oCTMP with respect to this matter, has been agreed with LCC. The Applicants would note that Schedules 4A and 4B relate to roads to be 'temporarily closed or restricted'. As for the streets specified in Schedule 4A and 4B, paragraphs (6) and (7) of article 13 require Morgan/Morecambe respectively to first consult with the street authority before temporarily closing or restricting these streets. In the event of a street being temporarily closed or restricted, this would be managed by the measures in a detailed construction traffic management plan as noted above. Potential impacts to Traffic and Transport receptors are addressed within Volume 3, Chapter 7: Traffic and Transport of the Environmental Statement (APP-108) in accordance with the relevant IEMA guidelines (The Environmental Assessment of Traffic and Movement. IEMA. 2023). The IEMA guidelines set out the process for assessing driver delay for all road users (including emergency vehicles).-The ES Volume 3, Chater 7 Traffic and Transport (APP-108) shows that during the most sensitive periods (network peak hours) movements through the local and strategic network are typically no greater than 30 trips an hour, with a peak of 33. On this basis the impacts upon all road users (including emergency services) was assessed to not be significant.
REP6-196 196.26	Article 47 64. We suggest that this article be amended to address the situation identified in the Hillside Supreme Court case, i.e. that implementing a subsequent incompatible planning permission prevents the original permission from continuing to be implemented, e.g. by adding to paragraph (1) words to the effect of 'and the continuing implementation of this Order is not prevented by the implementation of such planning permission'.	The Applicants refer to their response to hearing action point ISH4_25 within the Applicants' response to hearing action points of ISH4 and CAH3 (REP6-176) which confirms that the Applicants have added additional wording to Article 47(3) of the draft DCO (REP6-013) to address this point.
REP6-196 196.27	Requirement 1 65. We stand by our drafting to require the second project to start within six months of the first one (without restricting when that can start during the overall time period). Failing that we would prefer Mr Cliff's suggestion of two years rather than six months, and failing that as much reduction in the overall seven-year commencement period as possible, to bring the maximum separation between the projects closer together.	The Applicants refer to their response to hearing action point CAH3_6 of the Applicants' response to hearing action points of ISH4 and CAH3 (REP6-176). The Applicants have made amendments to requirement 1 of Schedules 2A and 2B of the draft DCO (REP6-013) at Deadline 6 to align the time limits for Project A (the Morgan transmission assets) with the time limit included in the Morgan Offshore Wind Project Generation Order 2025 (Morgan Generation Order). The Applicants have made the same amendment for Project B (the Morecambe transmission assets), noting that the application for the

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
		Morecambe Offshore Windfarm Generation Assets Order (Morecambe Generation Order) has not yet been decided.
REP6-196 196.28	Requirement 4 66. We reiterate our requests: - to add 'external appearance' to the list at (a) to (h) and - to require consultation of the host parishes for the substations, i.e. Newton-with-Clifton and Freckleton.	The Applicants updated the draft DCO (REP6-013) at Deadline 6 to include 'external appearance' within paragraph (1)(e) and consider that this resolves this point. The Applicants do not consider it necessary to name NCFPC as a consultee within requirement 4 but acknowledge that FBC as the discharging authority may choose to consult NCFPC if they consider it appropriate.
REP6-196 196.29	Requirement 5 67. We are grateful that the Applicants have converted to using Ordnance Datum heights. However we request that to facilitate local understanding of what the heights mean, some document, e.g. the explanatory memorandum, gives a reference height to an existing landmark in the area.	The Applicants direct the Parish Council to the updated Outline Design Principles (REP6-109), which contains an updated Figure 15. Further to ISH4_29, as requested, the Applicants incorporated the Freckleton Bridleway to provide a reference point in relation to the onshore substation AOD heights.
REP6-196 196.30	Requirement 14 68. We support Fylde Borough Council's position on construction hours.	The Applicants have moved their position substantially in relation to construction hours during the course of examination, including removal of Saturday afternoon working from the draft DCO (REP6-013) at Deadline 4 **a**nd including drafting at Deadline 5 to make clear that mobilisation activities must be undertaken in accordance with the outline construction noise and vibration management plan. The Applicants consider that the drafting included for this requirement at Deadline 6 in the draft DCO (REP6-013) is reasonable and proportionate and aligns to precedent including with regards to providing for mobilisation activities one hour prior to and one hour after the construction hours specified within the requirement. This is set out in the Explanatory Memorandum (REP6-016) and in REP5-130.
REP6-196 196.31	Requirement 16 69. We reiterate our request that highway reinstatements are also subject to a time limit for completion. We were told that was 'implicit' but would prefer it to be explicit, either in this requirement or the corresponding construction management plan.	The Applicants consider that the wording for this requirement included in the Deadline 6 draft DCO (REP6-013) is reasonable and appropriate, and accords with recent precedent. The Applicants refer to their response to hearing action point ISH4_35 in the Applicants' response to Hearing Action Poins of ISH4 and CAH3 (REP6-176). A detailed response to the points FBC has raised is set out within Annex 2.3 to the Applicants' Response to Deadline 5 submissions from Statutory Consultees and other organisation: Fylde Borough Council (REP6-169). The Applicants refer to their detailed response to hearing action point ISH4_34 in the Applicants' response to Hearing Action Poins of ISH4 and CAH3 (REP6-176) and the relevant updates to the outline construction traffic management plan (REP6-113) made at Deadline 6. The Applicants consider this resolves this point.
REP6-196 196.32	Requirement 26 70. The comments sent to the Applicants on 8 October on their proposed requirement 26 were as follows: - we are glad that [the requirement] is no longer without prejudice and that it commits to a 10% minimum gain; - we do not agree that it should only apply to the permanent works i.e. four of the 54 numbered works, rather than the whole of the order land; - we think the reference to the plan is unnecessary but we accept the points made by Ms Dunn that the plan could commit to a higher figure; - instead of listing the hierarchy it could refer to article 37A of the Development Management Procedure Order 2015; and - if it is to list it in the requirement, then (3)(b) is too vague and should refer instead to securing registered offsite biodiversity units.	The Applicants have provided a detailed response to the Rule 17 letter and have provided some further updates to both the outline biodiversity benefit management plan and proposed updates to the wording of requirement 26 within that response to provide greater clarity to the drafting. The Applicants consider their drafting is appropriate and meets the relevant tests and together with drafting updates to Articles 20, 22 and 29 of the draft DCO (REP6-013) at Deadline 6 provides an appropriate balance, ensuring compliance with both policy and the compulsory acquisition tests.
REP6-196 196.33	Requirement 27 71. We consider that the bird strike issue is sufficiently important that at least while BAe Systems maintain their objection on this issue if not permanently, it is they rather than the local authority who sign off the Wildlife Hazard Management Plan.	The Applicants agreed the wording of requirement 27 with the aviation stakeholders – BAE, DIO and BAOL – at Deadline 6. The updated agreed drafting is included in the Deadline 6 draft DCO (REP6-013) and this includes agreement that the relevant planning authority is the appropriate discharging body for this requirement with the aviation stakeholders identified as named consultees.

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
	72. This is permissible via section 120(2)(b) of the Planning Act 2008, which provides that 'requirements may in particular include … requirements to obtain the approval of the Secretary of State or any other person, so far as not within paragraph (a)' i.e. requirements corresponding to planning conditions.	
REP6-196 196.34	**Outline Communications Plan** 49. We welcome the in-principle commitment that the detailed Communications Plan will cover residents, businesses and the local community. There is reference to other stakeholders; the outline code should explicitly include schools including the three near the substations as well as Town and Parish Councils who cover all of the Fylde. 50. We welcome the in-principle commitment to notify residents in advance of works taking place – the outline code should explicitly include all five groups above i.e. Ballam Road businesses and have a clear timeline of at least 48 hours for notification. 51. We welcome the Equitation Centre Communication Protocol – helpful precedent of the approach to be taken with a range of stakeholders. Expect principle to be included in the outline Code and stakeholders including Town and Parish Councils included in these. 52. We welcome community-based events – these should include a report capturing attendance, points raised and how these will be resolved. These should be held at least monthly in each community. 53. In the preparation of the detailed Communication plan TASC and its members should be consulted. 54. Following the intervention of the Examining Authority we welcome the Applicants' reintroduction of the Local Liaison Committee, whilst expressing some concern that it had been removed by them in the first place.	The Applicants are grateful to Newton and Clifton and Freckleton Parish Councils for their feedback to the Outline Communications Plan, which were subsequently shared with the Applicants following the hearing on the 8 October 2025. The Applicants have reviewed the feedback, and where appropriate, have made updates to the Outline Communications Plan at Deadline 6 (REP6-069). In response to the specific points raised: 49. As part of the Code and Construction Practice (CoCP), detailed Communication plan(s) will be developed and where details of engagement with specific stakeholders would be captured, including nearby schools as well as Town and Parish Councils. 50. Please refer to the Applicants response above. As noted in the Outline Communications Plan (REP6-069), occupiers of nearby properties will be informed in advance of the works taking place and will be kept regularly updated throughout the duration of any nearby works. Notification will be a minimum of 48 hours in advance (with the exception of emergency works). 51. Please refer to REP6-196 196.22 above for the Applicants' response. 52. As noted in the Outline Communications Plan (REP6-069), Community Liaison Officers (CLOs) will provide themed feedback after events for dissemination to the local liaison committee(s). 53. The Outline Communications Plan forms an appendix to the CoCP (REP6-067). As noted in the CoCP, detailed management plans will be prepared in accordance with the outline plans and approved by the relevant planning authority. 54. The Applicants note this feedback.
REP6-196 196.35	55. We would want some firming up of arrangements, a. Noting that Fylde BC is likely not to exist in 2.5 years' time – and the need for future proof with Parish and Town Councils b. Noting Fylde BC's point about the need for several committees to ensure coverage of the different communities on the route, and c. If there is one Local Liaison Committee that Town and Parish Councils should be invited to send relevant local reps or d. if more than one Local Liaison Committee that Town and Parish Councils could form the basis for Local Liaison Committees if they offered or provide members to ensure communication with our local communities e. Some rigour about the frequency of meetings – monthly – and operation as for other Working Groups. f. Content to include (but not be constrained to) i. Construction Co-ordination Working Groups reports and construction updates as stated by the applicant this morning ii. Consultation event feedback as above iii. and complaints as below	The Applicants are grateful for this feedback and will give due consideration to it in the development of the final detailed Communication Plan(s).
REP6-196 196.36	56. We welcome the intention to create a Complaints Management process. This should abide by the 6 Principles of Good Complaint Management (published by the Parliamentary and Health Ombudsman) including the following: a. The process should be simple and clear b. Guidance for complainants to seek help or advice c. Responses should be prompt d. There should be a clear escalation route	As noted in the Outline Communications Plan (REP6-069), the detailed Communications Plan(s) will include a Complaints and Enquiries Management Procedure. The Complaints and Enquiries Management Process will provide formal lines of communication for external stakeholders, to communicate concerns and complaints to the Project(s).

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
	e. Information on making a complaint should be easily available 57. We note the outline Code of Construction commitment to log and record all complaints. 58. Outcomes from all complaints (anonymised) and lessons learned should be shared with the Local Liaison Committees and made public	
REP6-196 196.37	**Application of NPS – NE1** 59. As stated above there is a better route later in the context of critical national priority for low carbon infrastructure.	The Applicants have no further comment to make on these matters.
REP6-196 196.38	**Sequencing of works** 60. We remain of the view that the works should be run concurrently. We reject the attempt by the applicant to extend the potential gap between starting of the two projects to 7 years 7 months. 61. As stated at the hearing local communities do not want to experience the disruption caused by construction for any longer than necessary. We find it unacceptable that the Applicants think it is necessary to provide proof for something which is self-evident to local communities who will have to experience these works in person for several years. 62. We remain of the view that the works should be run concurrently and if that were not agreed by the Examining Authority then constraints should be placed to ensure than any gap were minimised if not eliminated. 63. This exposes the truth that these are two unconnected projects, run for the benefit of the Applicants and without proper regard to the local communities impacted. There has been much made of 'collaboration between the companies' and 'developing the transmission assets together', leading the public to assume that this was going to be a single development. 64. The Applicants chose – or were forced - to submit a single DCO covering all the Transmission Assets. If they wanted to run sequential projects why not link the Offshore Wind Farm and the relevant Transmission Assets as a single DCO i.e. a DCO for Morgan and a DCO for Morecambe. 65. The above aside, REP5-131 which Liz Dunn claimed provided 'evidence' of a detailed assessment covering how adverse impacts would change if development was concurrent or sequential only considers 10 significant adverse impacts out of a total of 155 impacts makes what appears to be subjective judgements about how they would change in different construction scenarios. Only 7 of the 10 entries are related to the impact on local residents and businesses. In addition, the consideration of any difference in impact of at least two of those entries in different construction scenarios is meaningless. e.g Permanent loss of BMV agricultural land is bound to be unaffected by different construction scenarios – once it is permanently gone it is gone. Similarly the impact of the substations on landscape character will not be affected by the construction duration. Furthermore the document states that all the impacts have been fully assessed in the ES. This document is at best a half hearted attempt to gloss over the negative impacts of this scheme on local communities. 66. REP5-131 refers to AS-070. For the impacts that most affect local communities (Table 1.11 onwards) that document only lists a comparison of immediate sequential construction compared to a 4 year gap. It appears to state that sequential construction results in the longest duration of temporary impacts in the majority of cases but then states that there is no need for further justification of a 4 year gap as the assessment of the impacts has been fully considered in the ES. However, there is no proper comparison of the impacts with concurrent vs sequential construction irrespective of any gap between the projects. Simply stating that the impacts of different scenarios have been assessed does not mean that they are the same. 67. Given the construction will have far-reaching and profound adverse impacts on the community and local businesses including visual character, noise, traffic disruption, air quality, land use etc it is blindingly obvious that the longer that construction goes on the worse the impacts will be. Indeed the applicant accepts in AS-070 that the air quality and noise effects would be reduced by concurrent construction in direct contradiction to assertions made at the recent issue Specific Hearing. 68. The Applicants have repeatedly stated that there will be no road closures (despite the dDCO containing road closure powers). However, that does not translate to no disruption. Partial road closures, temporary traffic lights and banksmen restricting traffic flows will have a very significant detrimental impact on residents trying to get to work and to school. Leisure activities will be negatively impacted in terms of both vehicle movements and use of	The Applicants explained their position at the hearings and have no further comment to make.

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
	Public Rights of Way and rural lanes for exercise. Local businesses will be damaged by access restrictions when move goods and materials around the Fylde. The rural lanes and roads in the Fylde area are simply not suitable for the proposed increase in large vehicles and other associated traffic movements associated with this scheme.	
REP6-196 196.39	**Equalities provision** 69. We are concerned that the Applicants have not provided an adequate or accredited approach to equalities provision. This should have been done at the beginning of this process, rather than put together at the end (see above for late submission issues).	The Applicants direct the Council to the updated PSED statement submitted at Deadline 6 (REP6-132) which was updated to reflect and capture discussions with Wrea Green Equitation Centre and further updates to the Outline Communications Plan (REP6-069) and Outline Construction Noise and Vibration Management Plan (REP6-065). This document provides cross references to where the Applicants have had due regard to vulnerable groups in their Environmental Statement, as submitted at the point of application. Nonetheless, the Applicants reiterate, as noted in the first version of this statement submitted at Deadline 1, that private companies such as Morgan OWL and Morecambe OWL are not public authorities for the purposes of the public sector equality duty. Further, there is no 'accredited approach' to the equalities provision. Further, the Applicants submit that impacts on communities are not the only consideration. Each chapter of the ES assessment is important as it demonstrates how impacts have been reduced and that few residual significant effects that remain. The Council's submission does not take into account the substantial material that has been submitted to examination explaining the steps that have and will be made to co-ordinate, noting that not all areas will be impacted at the same time. As noted above, the updated PSED statement reflects the further amends made to the Outline Communications Plan (REP6-069) and accommodation measures that will be put in place. The benefits of the Applicants working together have avoided repeated applications for offshore wind connections into Penwortham that are not aligned and would have placed greater pressure on local communities and the Council and other stakeholders' resources.
REP6-196 196.40	**Pink Footed Geese** 70. Over the last few days tens of thousands of pink footed geese have descended onto fields adjoining the route and substations. We attach videos showing these. The numbers have been so great that an article appeared on BBC North West News showing the 36,000 geese that arrived at Martin Mere Reserve, just south of the Ribble, over this last weekend. It is these birds that come to the fields north of the Ribble to forage in the local fields where the substations would be sited. 71. The link below accesses the BBC report with pictures. We have other photos and videos of the geese along the cabling route and adjacent to the substation sites; a video has been submitted separately for Deadline 6. http://news.bbc.co.uk/local/lancashire/hi/people_and_places/nature/newsid_9113000/9113763.stm	70. There are two issues to cover. a) Population estimates. b) Foraging distribution. a) The Applicants confirmed during the ISH_4 that there were high numbers of pink-footed geese in the area. The HRA (E2.3 Habitats Regulations Assessment Stage 2 Information to Support an Appropriate Assessment Part Three – Special Protection Areas (SPA) and Ramsar Site assessments (APP-017)) assessed pink-footed goose against the citation counts for the various SPAs (some of these are dated but this is what Natural England base their translation of the assessment upon), the north west of England's metapopulation of 55,686 (Devenish, *et al*., (2015), and the latest (at the time of assessment) 5-year average based upon the WeBS data (Woodward, *et al*, 2024). These indicate that there are on average 70,743 pink-footed geese in the region in any given winter. This number fluctuates but the peak recorded at Martin Mere is not unprecedented, for example Calbrade, *et al*. (2025) indicates that 33,250 were recorded during the winter of 2016/17. The pink-footed geese in the northwest region over the winter months belong to the Icelandic breeding population, these geese migrate southwards stopping at a range of estuarine and wetland sites on the journey with many birds continuing their journey across the Pennines to the Humber and then south to the Wash and the North Norfolk Coast. The birds currently at Martin Mere (as of the 21st October) may choose to remain over the winter, or they may move on. Either way, the Applicants are aware that the north-west England metapopulation is one of the key UK wintering populations, and they have assessed the importance of the area as such in the HRA (APP-017). The Applicants also note that, although it is possible that Martin Mere geese forage to the north of the Ribble (and that assumption was assessed in the HRA), the Mosses to the east of Southport are more likely to draw the Martin Mere birds, the Ribble Estuary however normally holds greater or similar numbers (34,155 birds recorded in 2018/19) and it is more likely that these are the birds that have been caught on camera. b) The Applicants are aware of a very similar video submitted at Deadline 4 (REP4-168). With regards to this video, the Applicants noted during ISH4 that they are very aware of pink-footed geese flying over the substation sites. They would also note that Functionally Linked Land (FLL) is just that, **land** outside of a designated area that is of importance in maintaining the population of a species (e.g., where they roost or

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
		forage). The video shows that the airspace around the substation sites is of great importance for transiting geese (i.e., pink-footed geese in flight) and the addition of wind turbines would be of concern in this location as they might pose a collision risk or barrier. However, the substations are not likely to alter the flight lines of geese, and they regularly fly over built-up areas at Lytham and Southport to access foraging grounds. The Applicants again stress to Newton with Clifton PC and Freckleton PC that in order for the area to be functionally linked, it must be of regular importance for the geese, this video evidence only shows birds flying over this land. The Applicants conducted two-years of surveys and consulted numerous desk top sources to determine the locations of FLL for pink-footed geese. Fortunately, these are abundant, detailed, and some are endorsed by Natural England: 1. Mapping and assessing pink-footed goose *Anser brachyrhynchus* usage of land beyond SPA boundaries in northwest England. A collaborative project between Natural England and Manchester Metropolitan University (Devenish, *et al*., 2015). 2. Identification of Functionally Linked Land supporting Special Protection Areas (SPAs) waterbirds in the North West of England First published October 2021 Natural England Commissioned Report NECR361 (Bowland Ecology, 2021). 3. British Trust for Ornithology – Wetland Bird Survey data (Calbrade, *et al*., 2025). 4. Fylde Bird Club data 2014 – 2023. These data sources all point to the land at the substation sites as being of low importance to pink-footed geese with the identified FLL being located at Lytham Moss. Lytham Moss is a highly productive arable area, so it is unsurprising that the geese find it of greater importance. The Applicants are aware that some of these studies use modelled distributions (albeit models based upon actual sightings) and therefore carried out 14 site specific survey visits during the non-breeding period via public roads and using high powered spotting scopes from suitable vantage points. This was collected over two winters, with good visual coverage of the substation sites during all 14 visits (see Figures 1.5 and 1.6 F3.4.4 Volume 3, Annex 4.4: Onshore and intertidal ornithology survey methodologies (APP-095)). These surveys confirmed the desk data, Lytham Moss is indeed of high importance for pink-footed gees whereas the substation sites weren't, with a peak count of 11 pink-footed geese at the substations (Table 1.69 of APP-017). The geese move twice daily, from their roosts in the saltmarsh and intertidal habitats of the Estuary into the surrounding farmland to forage, and to return to the roost at the end of the day. Not all farmland is equal for foraging and pink-footed geese show a definite preference for arable and also show a progression in diet throughout the winter with cereal grains in stubble fields of importance in autumn, moving to root crops such as potato or sugar beet in late autumn, and finally feeding on fresh grass and cereal shoots in spring Devenish, *et al*., 2015). Although the substation sites are largely pasture and the geese may forage or loaf on these in spring, the fields sizes are generally smaller and often on slopes with the larger arable fields on the other side of Freckleton Pool. Pink-footed geese are very wary of predators and prefer larger and flatter fields (Devenish, *et al*., 2015). 71. These videos and the BBC story provide no additional information than that provided by the Applicants at the application stage. In addition, there is a wealth of desk top data sources to give confidence to the Applicants' assessment conclusions, and the Applicants also note that Natural England are fully satisfied that the mitigation proposed for the pink-footed geese at Lytham Moss is suitable to avoid any significant adverse effects on this species (see NE20 of REP4-193).
REP6-196 196.41	**Morecambe financial viability** 72. Given that the joint nature of this application does not extend to either covering each other's projects in the event of ceasing to exist or being able to fund the works we find the financial evidence provided by Morecambe	The Applicants provided a letter at Deadline 6 from Copenhagen Infrastructure Partners (CIP) addressed to Morecambe OWL (REP6-180) which provides further support on the financial standing of Morecambe OWL and which confirms that CIP, acting through its fifth flagship fund Copenhagen Infrastructure V, will meet any liabilities arising from the project development of the Morecambe Offshore Wind Farm,

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
	to be wholly inadequate and showing the potential for stopping work part way through. There should be a letter of support covering the full costs of the works from the host owner.	including the cost of any valid claims made against Morecambe in connection with the development of the Transmission Assets.

2.6 Ørsted East Irish Sea Transmission Limited and Mooir Vanning Offshore Wind Farm Limited (REP6-198)

Table 2.22: REP6-198 – Ørsted East Irish Sea Transmission Limited and Mooir Vannin Offshore Wind Farm Limited (Deadline 6 Submissions)

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
REP6-198 198.1	**1. Introduction** 1.1 This submission is provided in accordance with Deadline 6 of the examination timetable for the application made by Morgan Offshore Wind Limited and Morecambe Offshore Windfarm Limited (the "Applicants") for an order granting development consent for the Morgan and Morecambe Offshore Wind Farms Transmission Assets ("Project"). 1.2 We represent Ørsted East Irish Sea Transmission Limited ("OEIST") and Mooir Vannin Offshore Windfarm Limited ("MVOWFL") (together, "Ørsted"), which filed relevant representations (accepted as additional submissions) in respect of the Project. 1.3 This document contains Ørsted's comments on submissions made by the Applicants at examination deadline 5, namely, the Applicants' Response to Deadline 4 submissions from Statutory Consultees and other organisations [REP5-118] and the Applicants' Response to the Examining Authority's Written Questions (ExQ2) [REP5-130].	Noted
REP6-198 198.2	1.4 Ørsted is pleased that engagement with the Applicants is now underway. Ørsted is committed to working effectively with the Applicants. However, given the short amount of time left in the examination, Ørsted considers it is unlikely that its concerns will be resolved before the examination closes. That being the case, in the absence of an agreement with the Applicants, Ørsted would expect a formal framework to be included in any development consent order ("DCO") issued for the Project which would facilitate the necessary engagement on behalf of the Applicants.	The Applicants have engaged with the Ørsted East Irish Sea Transmission project since June 2024 and have provided information on the intended electricity export cable route of the respective cable corridors leading to the Penwortham Substation which has included the land required for both projects. The EIST project is still at an early stage and has not defined the land area required for its export cable routes. The Applicants reiterate the point that they will enter into commercial negotiations for cable easements and the associated Protective Provisions as required by OEIST as part of OEIST's formal DCO application, as this is when there will be sufficient certainty as to OEIST's proposals to allow for meaningful engagement. It would be premature for a formal framework to be included in the DCO for the Transmission Assets requiring engagement, as the EIST proposals are still at an early stage and may not, in fact, come forward in the timeframes anticipated. Notwithstanding this, the Applicants will continue to discuss and engage with Ørsted following the close of Examination and as Ørsted prepares for the submission of its own DCO application in mid-2027 (which is more than a year after the statutory decision date for the Transmission Assets).
REP6-198 198.3	**2. Response to key matters in Applicants' deadline 5 submissions** *Compliance with national policy* 2.1 In its deadline 4 submission [REP4-169], Ørsted outlined in detail how the relevant policy framework (primarily, National Policy Statement EN-1 ("EN-1") and National Policy Statement EN-5 ("EN-5")) sets a clear expectation that developers will coordinate in order to facilitate the achievement of the UK's clean energy targets. 2.2 In response to these submissions, the Applicants stated that they have complied with EN-1 and EN-5 by coordinating with each other in respect of the Project and that "It is simply not possible for that level of co-ordination to take place with a further project at the early stage of development that EIST is at" [REP5-118]. 2.3 Demonstrating coordination with one other developer is not sufficient to comply with the policy framework and to deliver the goals of the UK Government, as outlined in [REP4-169], particularly where lack of co-ordination with another project may materially affect that project's ability to contribute to the achievement of the UK's clean energy targets. Rather, developers should be coordinating with the range of other projects which contribute to these goals and which may impact one another. 2.4 EN-5 specifically requires that applicants demonstrate "…how the construction planning for the proposals has been co-ordinated with that for other similar projects in the area on a similar timeline." The Applicants cannot ignore other incoming projects simply because they are coordinating with one another. 2.5 As noted in [REP4-169], the Orsted East Irish Sea Transmission Project ("EIST Project") is subject to a section 35 direction declaring it to be a nationally significant infrastructure project because of its role in enabling an energy system that meet's the UK's energy commitments. 2.6 Ørsted acknowledges that the EIST Project is at a relatively early stage of the consenting process, however, the level of coordination Ørsted is seeking is not onerous. The draft DCO requirements proposed by Ørsted at deadline 4 are discussed in detail later in this submission. However, in essence, the effects of those requirements are that the Applicants would be required to confirm details of certain substation connection works, once those are known and for the design of those works to give some	As set out in the Applicants' Closing Submissions (S_D7_3), and in the Planning Statement (J28/F03), the Transmission Assets application has required unprecedented transparency and cooperation between two entirely separate commercial entities to deliver the Government's aim for a co-ordinated approach to transmission networks. No NSIP projects have, to date, taken co-ordination this far. The Applicants have been working together since 2022 to deliver a co-ordinated application, with their Scoping Opinion (APP-230) adopted by the Secretary of State on 8 December 2022. Ørsted's EIST Scoping Opinion was issued on 24 September 2025, substantially towards the end of this Examination. The Applicants reiterate that it is simply not possible to replicate the same level of coordination – or the coordination which Ørsted is requesting – for a project that has only just come to the scoping stage. As the Applicants explained in their response to Deadline 5 submissions (REP6-166 at REP5-188 188.2 and 188.3), the Applicants will only draw down permanent rights over the area of land where the cables are eventually laid and, as such, there will be no sterilisation of the wider area around the Penwortham substation. The Applicants consider that they have been ambitious in their approach to co-ordination, as directed by paragraph 2.13.7 of NPS EN-5, and that they have demonstrated that the construction planning has been co-ordinated with other similar projects in the area on a similar timeline, as directed by paragraph 2.14.2 of EN-5.

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
	consideration to the ability of other developers to connect. They would also provide a forum for coordination between parties with an interest in the substation. 2.7 The overarching goal of Ørsted's draft requirements is to ensure proper communication between developers, in line with the goals of the policy framework and to avoid the sterilisation of land around the Penwortham substation. Ørsted is not seeking that the Applicants make any design changes to the Project. The level of engagement secured by these requirements is commensurate with the importance of the EIST Project (as an NSIP) and is appropriate in terms of the consenting status of the EIST Project.	The Applicants' position is that the Secretary of State can be satisfied that the test under paragraph 2.15.1 of EN-5 has been met and that options for coordination have been considered and evaluated appropriately.
REP6-198 198.4	*Proposed DCO drafting* 2.8 Ørsted reiterates that it considers its concerns are capable of being addressed through a cooperation agreement with the Applicants or protective provisions in the DCO. In the absence of either protective provisions or an agreement, Ørsted submitted draft DCO requirements, which would address the key concerns at deadline 4 [REP4-169]. This reflects the wider public interest in ensuring proper and effective coordination between developers. The Applicants provided some high-level comments on this drafting in their response to ExQ2 [REP5-130] and comments on deadline 4 submissions [REP5-118].	The Applicants will need to enter negotiations to agree Protective Provisions with OEIST in relation to the interaction between the three respective offshore wind projects connecting into Penwortham as part of Ørsted's own DCO application, as and when that comes forward. The Applicants have previously stated that OEIST is targeting a DCO submission date of Q7 2027 [REP5-130] and that OEIST should be seeking the appropriate land rights and Protective Provisions as part of the preparation for OEIST's DCO submission. The Applicant understands the concern that OEIST has expressed in relation to potentially crossing Morgan and Morecambe's export cables in order to access Penwortham. Until the Applicants have completed geotechnical ground investigation and detailed design, the land area over which cable easements pass cannot be refined. This situation is not unusual at 400kV substations around the rest of country as previously noted regarding the Rampion 2 OWF.
REP6-198 198.5	2.9 Ørsted notes that the Applicants' comments in their response to ExQ2 [REP5-130] are unclear. Ørsted has assumed that the Applicants' reference to "(i) of the draft requirement" is intended to address Ørsted's first proposed requirement 'National Grid Penwortham substation connection' and the reference to "point ii) of the draft requirement" is intended to refer to Ørsted's second proposed requirement 'National Grid Penwortham substation liaison group'.	The Applicants confirm that the reference in Q2:1.3.3 [REP5-130] to "(i) of the draft requirement" is to Ørsted's first proposed requirement and the reference to "point ii) of the draft requirement" is a reference to Ørsted's second proposed requirement. As the Applicants have stated throughout Examination, including most recently in their Response to Deadline 4 submissions [REP5-118 at entry REP4-169 169.6], the Applicants do not consider that any of the drafting changes proposed by Ørsted are necessary or justified.
REP6-198 198.6	<u>First draft requirement</u> 2.10 The Applicants consider the first draft requirement will be addressed through protective provisions agreed with National Grid Electricity Transmission ("NGET") [REP5-118] and the respective land agreement. This is not correct. In summary, Ørsted's first draft requirement provides that: 2.10.1 the connection works will be designed in accordance with design principles, which will provide for a level of consideration to be given to the ability of other developers to access the substation; 2.10.2 before the connection works commence, the details of the location and extent of works will be submitted to the planning authority and following this, will be provided to other parties which have secured a grid connection at Penwortham. 2.11 Ørsted considers this requirement ensures the minimum, appropriate, degree of coordination with other projects requiring access to Penwortham. It requires a degree of information sharing by the Applicants following detailed design of the Project, which would facilitate coexistence between renewable energy developments in line with the policy framework. These principles are not secured by the protective provisions and land agreements being developed for NGET. 2.12 Ørsted has explained in numerous previous submissions* that the protective provisions developed for NGET do not protect other developers, including Ørsted. NGET does not have an overarching function or ability to manage interactions between the infrastructure required for different projects to connect at the substation and therefore, the protections provided for NGET are not sufficient to protect the EIST Project. *[REP5-188], [REP4-169], [REP3-102]. 2.13 The Applicants have suggested that the issues regarding access to Penwortham substation will be resolved through the consenting and property acquisition processes for the EIST Project. The Applicants have stated that "…Orsted should seek appropriate land rights and associated agreements as part of its DCO preparation for the OEIST scheme. The ExA cannot grant land rights outside of those sought by the Applicants for the benefit of a third party for land that sits outside of the proposed order limits".**	As previously submitted by the Applicants in their Response to Deadline 5 submissions (REP6-166 at 188.3), it is for NGET and NESO, in offering connection agreements and in compliance with their licence obligations, to provide viable connections, which includes ensuring that the design of any earlier projects does not unduly restrict connections and that there is scope for a viable connection. The EIST project is at the early scoping stage, with two different potential cable routes identified, and the design has not progressed with sufficient certainty such that the Applicants can meaningfully include a requirement for Ørsted's benefit. As with planning conditions, DCO requirements must be necessary, precise and reasonable in all other respects. The Applicants' position is that, given the nascent stage of the EIST proposals and their lack of detail, any requirement would fail the test of being necessary, precise and reasonable. Instead, it can and should be addressed at the point that Ørsted comes forward with more definitive plans which is their DCO submission. As the Applicants explained in their response to Deadline 5 submissions (REP6-166 at REP5-188 188.2 and 188.3), the Applicants will only draw down permanent rights over the area of land where the cables are eventually laid and, as such, there will be no sterilisation of the wider area around the Penwortham substation. Moreover, given the detailed information available regarding the Transmission Assets – information that will only become more refined at the post-consent stage – it is for OEIST to have regard to this and design their proposals accordingly.

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
	** [REP5-130]. 2.14 The Applicants' comments seem to reflect a misunderstanding of the issue. Ørsted will, of course, seek the necessary rights for the EIST Project at the appropriate time and is clearly not asking for land rights to be awarded to it as part of this examination. What Ørsted has expressed concern over throughout this examination, is that the extent of land rights sought surrounding Penwortham substation is so extensive that it risks jeopardising other parties' ability to connect. In order to address this concern Ørsted has sought that the Applicants: 2.14.1 be required to be forthcoming regarding the location of its grid connection works, once that is known, acknowledging that the Applicants wish to preserve significant flexibility regarding the grid connection at this stage; and 2.14.2 give some consideration to the ability of other developers to connect to the substation, in the design of the Project's connection. 2.15 It is not realistic to suggest that Ørsted's concerns regarding access to the substation should simply be resolved through the consenting process for the EIST Project. The acquisition of rights in respect of this type of infrastructure is complex. For example, the ultimate owners of transmission infrastructure (offshore transmission owners) typically require clean assets (i.e. not subject to overlapping property rights in favour of other parties). As such, it would not be straightforward to simply acquire rights over the top of areas which are being acquired for the Project. Additionally, Ørsted is not comfortable waiting until the EIST Project has further progressed to secure a mechanism for engagement with the Applicants. 2.16 In its response to deadline 4 submissions, the Applicants referred to an example from the Sheringham and Dudgeon Extension Project examination ("SEP/DEP") as providing support for its position. The example referred to is that protective provisions sought by Norfolk County Council ("NCC") for the protection of the Norwich Western Link (which had some interface with the project) were not accepted. Ørsted does not consider this example is analogous. 2.17 First, in that example, both the applicant and NCC had agreed, and provided submissions stating that a cooperation agreement was necessary.*** As such, the examining authority and Secretary of State could be confident an agreement was underway between the parties. ***Refer to the Applicant's comments on Norwich Western Link's deadline 7 submission [RE8-057] and final statement of common ground [REP8-051] EN010109 – Sheringham and Dudgeon Extension Projects. 2.19 The Applicants have had sufficient time to consider the draft requirements and were on notice that this drafting should be expected due to the examining authority's request. However, the Applicants have failed to engage with the detail of the drafting or work with Ørsted to resolve its concerns before the examination closes. While Ørsted acknowledges some progress has recently been made towards developing a stronger working relationship with the Applicants, the Applicants' approach throughout the majority of the examination has been to dismiss Ørsted's concerns. None of the Applicants' recent suggestions (discussed below) properly address Ørsted's concerns and, as a result, these issues will likely remain unresolved at the close of the examination. 2.20 Unlike NCC's project in the SEP/DEP examination, the EIST Project is a nationally significant infrastructure project, and Ørsted has consistently raised specific concerns regarding the likely possible consequences of the Applicants' chosen approach.	In respect of comments made by Ørsted on the SEP/DEP example, the Applicants would reiterate that their approach to co-ordination is unprecedented and that no NSIP projects have, to date, taken co-ordination this far. The Applicants' position remains as previously submitted: that Ørsted's first draft requirement is not necessary or justified.
REP6-198 198.7	<u>Second draft requirement: 'National Grid Penwortham substation liaison group'</u> 2.21 In respect of Ørsted's second proposed requirement, the Applicants have stated that it would be "…of limited benefit for the Applicants to have a requirement imposed that would need them to disclose potentially confidential information into the public domain for the purposes of another developer". 2.22 Neither of Ørsted's proposed requirements would require the disclosure of confidential information. The 'National Grid Penwortham substation liaison group' would be a liaison group which could be called to meet at the discretion of NGET to share information and collaborate. Developers would be at liberty to determine which information they wished to share in such a forum. 2.23 Ørsted also do not consider its first proposed requirement would require the disclosure of confidential information. It is difficult to understand why the Applicants would be so reluctant to parties, following detailed design and ahead of works commencing.	The Applicants acknowledge the importance of co-ordination, as is required where possible by NPS EN-1, to reduce impacts and have sought to explore opportunities for co-ordination where possible (including with the EIST Project). As the Applicants have stated throughout Examination, including most recently in their Response to Deadline 4 submissions [REP5-118 at entry REP4-169 169.6], the Applicants do not consider that any of the drafting changes proposed by Ørsted are necessary or justified. The Applicants have offered to explore a working group between the Morgan, Morecambe and OEIST projects to provide a forum to discuss and share plans, and this offer was reiterated in a meeting between the parties on 29 September 2025. However, given the consenting and programme separation between the projects, it is not possible or reasonable for co-ordination to be mandated in the manner which Ørsted suggests.

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
REP6-198 198.8	2.24 The Applicants have also made a general comment that they "…are not against working with other parties collaboratively though it is incongruous to impose a requirement within the dDCO to do so."2.25 Ørsted is not comfortable relying on assurances that the Applicants will engage outside of the examination process and requires provision for such engagement within the DCO. 2.26 Additionally, Ørsted rejects the statement that it is "incongruous" to the principle of collaboration, to establish a formal mechanism providing for such collaboration. DCOs frequently contain provisions which require engagement between parties. For example, many requirements will typically only be able to be discharged following consultation with other parties. Plans which support DCOs (such as communication plans) also frequently specify that engagement must take place with stakeholders and set out how that engagement should be undertaken. 2.27 Ørsted is seeking that a degree of coordination is provided for. It is not clear, specifically, what the Applicants consider would be unduly burdensome as a result of these requirements. In particular, it is difficult to understand why the Applicants would be reluctant to confirm the location of the Project's grid connection, once that is known.	The Applicants are willing to enter into commercial negotiations for land rights required by OEIST as their proposals progress. Ultimately if a voluntary agreement cannot be reached, OEIST can seek compulsory acquisition rights for its cable easement. OEIST has not provided a draft framework agreement and as stated in [REP5-130] the ultimate cable route into Penwortham is yet to be determined. Therefore, the Applicants are not in a position to provide any detail on their connections into the substation until detailed design has been completed. This does not prevent OEIST from progressing technical discussions of their own with NGET.
REP6-198 198.9	**3. Recent correspondence** 3.1 In recent correspondence, the Applicants directed Ørsted to several outline plans which seek to facilitate communication with other developers. While Ørsted does not have an issue with these plans, they do not address Ørsted's concerns because they do not specifically provide for Ørsted's participation, or for their concerns to be taken into account.	The Applicants note that the list of consultees named in respect of individual DCO requirements is not an exhaustive one. Indeed, it is for the relevant planning authority, at the point of approving or otherwise considering an application to discharge a requirement, to consult with any additional parties that it sees fit and it is not for the Applicants to seek to fetter the local authority's discretion to consult as widely as it sees fit.
REP6-198 198.10	3.2 For example, the Outline Communications Plan [REP5-046] provides for a Communications Plan Framework to be developed based on a number of principles, including that there will be "consultation with other offshore energy operators". However, it is not specified how any feedback will be taken into account or how rigorous consultation will be.	The Applicants note that the Outline Communications Plan was updated at Deadline 6 (REP6-069) to include the commitment to consult with other offshore energy operators (CoT137). This is secured by the Code of Construction Practice (Requirement 8 of Schedules 2A and 2B to the draft DCO) which includes a communications plan that must be in accordance with the outline. The Applicants' position is that the specifics around the feedback and consultation process will be for approval as part of the final CoCP and communications plan.
REP6-198 198.11	3.3 The Code of Construction Practice [REP5-044] provides for the establishment of a Construction Coordination Working Group between the Applicants and local planning authorities. While there is scope for planning authorities to invite other stakeholders to participate in the working group on an ad-hoc basis, there is no requirement for parties such as Ørsted to be invited. Additionally, the focus of the working group appears to be on coordination between the Morgan and Morecambe projects, rather than with other developers. As such this mechanism does not allay Ørsted's concerns.	The Applicants consider the risk of interaction during the construction phase of the respective schemes to be low based on the significant divergence in their grid connection dates. Regardless, if the construction phases do overlap the management of the two schemes will be governed by CDM regulations which would require cooperation and coordination between parties. These are legally binding requirements which must be complied with by all developers.
REP6-198 198.12	3.4 The Applicants have also noted that Requirement 3 of the draft DCO requires confirmation of the stages of the onshore works with the relevant planning authority. This is a relatively standard requirement, which Ørsted does not consider addresses its concerns. This requirement would not provide for such information to be shared with Ørsted or for Ørsted to be engaged with. This requirement would not influence the design of access to the substation.	The Applicants would note that the discharge of requirement process (as with the discharge of planning conditions) is primarily a public one, with materials made available and suitable public and neighbour notices given. This requirement provides that the information Ørsted seeks will, in fact, be made publicly available and can then be factored into Ørsted's design as appropriate.
REP6-198 198.13	3.5 Ørsted is eager to continue to engage with the Applicants in order to develop a mechanism for coordination and information sharing. However, at this late stage of the examination, and in the absence of any agreement, Ørsted's concerns remain outstanding and there remains a need for Ørsted's proposed draft DCO provisions. 3.6 After a DCO has been granted and the authorised project progresses it is usually handed over to a development team which works with the appointed contractors to design and build it. The team follow the DCO and commitments that have been made through agreements. That is why, in the absence of an agreement, it is essential that the matters are effectively dealt with in the context of the DCO.	The Applicants reiterate that they – and their appointed contractors – will continue to discuss and engage with Ørsted following the close of Examination and as Ørsted prepares for the submission of its own DCO application in mid-2027. Following a call on 29 September 2025 between all parties, it was discussed that a working group should be established to provide necessary technical information between parties as required and when available. The Applicants offered this without prejudice and will continue to engage with OEIST should a DCO be granted by the Secretary of State.
REP6-198 198.14	**4. Conclusion** 4.1 Ørsted reiterates its position that, due to the scale of land interests being sought surrounding the Penwortham substation, there is a real risk that the Project will cause considerable difficulties for other projects further down the consenting pipeline. This approach is inconsistent with the planning framework established by EN-1 and EN-5. 4.2 Ørsted acknowledges that there are some uncertainties with both the Project and the EIST Project and acknowledges that the Applicants are seeking to preserve a degree of flexibility. However, it is not appropriate to dismiss Ørsted's reasonable concerns on this basis. The EIST Project has secured a grid connection at Penwortham substation. It is also clear that the rights sought by the Applicants surrounding the substation are extensive – they essentially surround the substation. There are, of	As noted by the Applicants above and in previous submissions, a wider swathe of temporary land rights is being sought by the Applicants at this stage to ensure that both projects have sufficient land rights once their designs are finalised post-consent. The Applicants will only draw down permanent rights over those areas of land where the cables are eventually laid, which will represent a much narrower scope of land rights for permanent apparatus. Accordingly, the Applicants will not sterilise the wider area around the Penwortham substation.

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
	course, other constraints around the substation (such as existing utilities). On this basis, Ørsted's concerns regarding possible obstructions to the substation are reasonable. 4.3 The measures Ørsted has sought would not require the Applicants to implement design changes or change the land rights sought at this stage. They would simply facilitate information sharing and engagement and provide for some consideration of other developers access to the substation in the design of the Project. We consider this is the minimum level of engagement communities would expect of developers working in the same area. It is noted that failure of energy developers to coordinate effectively is becoming a growing source of complaints from communities.	The EIST Project (as it has only just completed the scoping stage) is subject to a significantly higher degree of uncertainty than the Transmission Assets (which is now three years on from its own scoping opinion and at the close of a thorough Examination into its detailed application). While the EIST Project has a grid connection, this is still subject to significant design refinement, as evidenced by the two cable corridors being taken through scoping. The Applicants acknowledge the importance of co-ordination, as is required where possible by NPS EN-1, to reduce impacts and have sought to explore opportunities for co-ordination where possible (including with the EIST Project). However, given the consenting and programme separation between the projects, it is not possible or reasonable for co-ordination to be mandated in the manner which Ørsted suggests. The Applicants consider that they have been ambitious in their approach to co-ordination, as directed by paragraph 2.13.7 of NPS EN-5, and that they have demonstrated that the construction planning has been co-ordinated with other similar projects in the area on a similar timeline, as directed by paragraph 2.14.2 of EN-5. The Applicants' position is that the Secretary of State can be satisfied that the test under paragraph 2.15.1 of EN-5 has been met and that options for coordination have been considered and evaluated appropriately.

2.7 Marine Management Organisation (REP6-199-200)

Table 2.23: REP6-199 – Marine Management Organisation (Deadline 6 Summary)

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
1. MMO's Response to Applicants Response to Deadline 4 submission (REP5-123)		
REP6-199 1.1	1.1 The MMO has reviewed the Applicants response and provided comments on the following sections: • MMO's Response to the Applicants' Pre-Examination Procedural Deadline A Submission to the MMO (Table 2.3) • MMO's Comments on Stage 2 MCZ Assessment - Rev F01 Annex A: Review of potential measures of equivalent environmental benefit (MEEB) (Table 2.4, Section 3) • MMO's Comments on Issue Specific Hearing (ISH) 2 (Table 2.4, Section 9)	The Applicants note this comment; see the responses below.
2. Underwater Noise Guidance and Effective Deterrence Ranges (EDR)		
REP6-199 2.1.1	**2.1 Noise Recommendations for Cetaceans** 2.1.1 The MMO would like to make the Applicants aware of a new report published by Whale and Dolphin Conservation in collaboration with SAMS Enterprise: A review of anthropogenic noise and recommendations for reducing its impacts on cetaceans (WDC, 2025).	The Applicants thank the MMO for the identification of a new relevant report by Whale and Dolphin Conservation.
REP6-199 2.2.1	**2.2 EDRs – updated advice** 2.2.1 The MMO wishes to highlight that the Joint Nature Conservation Committee have updated EDRs for assessing the significance of noise disturbance in harbour porpoise Special Areas of Conservation (SACs).	The Applicants confirm that the Volume 2, Chapter 4: Marine mammals was updated and submitted at Deadline 5 (REP5-032) which includes the references to this recently updated JNCC guidance.
REP6-199 2.2.2	2.2.2 The MMO wishes to highlight these specific topics that may be of interest to the Applicants: • High-order UXO clearance (≤ 263 kg) without bubble curtain • High-order UXO clearance (≤ 525 kg) with bubble curtain • ADDs	The Applicants note the MMOs comment and confirm that should high order UXO detonation be required, this will fall under a separate marine licence and further assessment will be undertaken at time of the marine licence application.
3. Statement of Common Ground (SoCG)		
REP6-199 3.1.1	**3.1 General Comments** 3.1.1 The MMO had a meeting with the Applicants on 13 October 2025 and 20 October 2025, and notes that the following topics will remain 'Not Agreed': • DCO – UXO Clearance • DCO - Article 6 – Benefit of the Order • DCO - Force Majeure • DCO – Post Construction Monitoring – Adaptive Management • DML – Cable/Scour Protection (not agreed but not material)	The Applicants note this comment; see the responses below.
4. MMO's comments on updated Environmental Statement Chapters		
REP6-199 4.1.1	**4.1 Physical Processes (REP5-030)** 4.1.1 The MMO notes the potential requirement for cable protection in the nearshore/shallow waters. It notes that standard practice has been to limit protection to 5% of the water depth at a given location; the ES indicates that any protection used in very shallow water should be tapered to ensure limited impact on sediment processes. It is stated that it is unlikely that burial will not be achieved and the magnitude of any potential impact is assessed as low adverse. The MMO is satisfied that this is the case, but the Applicants should take every step to ensure that burial in the nearshore is achievable.	The Applicants welcome and note this comment.

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
REP6-199 4.1.2	4.1.2 The MMO notes that measures to ensure burial in the intertidal and nearshore have been addressed. The MMO is satisfied that the assessment of impacts of these shoreline works is adequate.	The Applicants welcome this comment.
REP6-199 4.1.3	4.1.3 The MMO notes that the amendments have largely addressed the concerns with the assessment of impacts at landfall and in the nearshore. The MMO does not believe there are any further concerns raised in previous advice for the attention of the Applicants that are not addressed.	The Applicants welcome this comment.
REP6-199 4.2.1	**4.2 Marine Mammals (REP5-032)** 4.2.1 The MMO defers to the relevant Statutory Nature Conservation Bodies (SNCBs) to provide comments on the amendments.	The Applicants note this comment.
REP6-199 4.3.1	**4.3 Benthic subtidal and intertidal ecology (REP5-034)** 4.3.1 The MMO is satisfied with the amendments made to this document.	The Applicants welcome this comment.
REP6-199 4.3.2	4.3.2 The MMO defers to the SNCBs regarding the potential impacts to protected features within the Fylde MCZ.	The Applicants note this comment.
REP6-199 4.4.1	**4.4 Offshore Ornithology (REP5-036)** 4.4.1 The MMO notes the amendments made throughout the document and the MMO welcomes these clarifications and commitments.	The Applicants welcome this comment.
5. MMO's comments on the updated Cable Specification and Installation Plan (REP5-077)		
REP6-199 5.1.1	**5.1 General Comments** 5.1.1 The MMO is satisfied with the amendments made at Deadline 5. 5.1.2 The MMO has provided additional comments on the following topics: • Physical Processes • Fisheries and Fish Biology • Underwater Noise.	The Applicants welcome the MMO's comment with regards to amendments made at Deadline 5. Please refer to the Applicants responses to additional comments in Table 2.24.
6. MMO's comments on the Proposed Correction to Cable Protection Volume		
REP6-199 6.1.1	**6.1 General Comments** 6.1.1 The MMO received an email from the Applicants explaining that they had identified a calculation error in the stated total volume of cable protection. 6.1.2 The MMO confirms that these changes do not materially affect the advice provided here within this document.	The Applicants welcome this confirmation from the MMO.
7. MMO's comments on the updated Offshore In Principle Monitoring Plan (REP5-079)		
REP6-199 7.1.1	**7.1 Adaptive Measurements** 7.1.1 The MMO acknowledge the updates made to the In Principle Monitoring Plan (IPMP) to include adaptive management methods and are satisfied with this approach.	The Applicants welcome this comment from the MMO.
REP6-199 7.1.2	7.1.2 The MMO aims to implement a more proactive process to manage issues in the event that monitoring shows a greater impact than that assessed in the ES.	The Applicants and the MMO engaged on this matter through finalisation of the SoCG submitted at Deadline 6 (MMO.DCO.5; REP6-130) where it is noted that inclusion of a condition for adaptive management in the deemed marine licence is not agreed.
REP6-199 7.1.3	7.1.3 The MMO recommends standard Condition wording and refers to our response at Deadline 4.	
8. MMO's comments on the updated Dredge and Disposal Site Characterisation Plan (REP5-081)		
REP6-199 8.1.1	**8.1 General Comments**	The Applicants note this comment and have responded to the points raised by Natural England on the use of controlled flow excavator in the Applicants' response in section 2.4.

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
	8.1.1 The MMO notes that the Applicants have clarified that a Controlled Flow Excavator will be the only method used for sandwave clearance. The MMO defers to NE for its suitability.	
REP6-199 8.1.2	8.1.2 The MMO notes that a new Commitment (CoT134) has been introduced to include micro-siting of the offshore export cables where successful burial could pose risks. The MMO is content with this approach and how its secured within the Schedules.	The Applicants welcome this comment from the MMO.
REP6-199 8.2.1	**8.2 Fisheries and Fish Biology** 8.2.1 The MMO notes a list of mitigation commitments relevant to the export cable installation process and the MMO is content with the measures captured.	The Applicants welcome this comment from the MMO.
REP6-199 8.2.2	8.2.2 The MMO supports the Applicant's preliminary cable burial risk assessment in Section 4 which considers the risk of cable snagging by fishing vessels and anchors, and which has been used inform the recommended cable burial depth of 3 metres.	The Applicants welcome this comment from the MMO.
REP6-199 8.3.1	**8.3 Disposal Site Allocation** 8.3.1 The MMO highlights the issues regarding the proposed disposal site coordinates overlapping.	The Applicants welcome the comment regarding revised condition wording and confirm that they will provide the shapefiles for the proposed disposal sites after the Examination and make sure there are no overlaps. .
REP6-199 8.3.2	8.3.2 The Applicants are looking to amend these in early November 2025. The MMO is content with the revised Condition wording in Part 1, paragraph 2(g) of Schedule 14 and Schedule 15.	
9. MMO's comments on the Cumulative Effects Assessment and In-Combination Assessment (REP5-099)		
REP6-199 9.1.1	**9.1 Fisheries and Fish Biology** 9.1.1 The MMO notes that the amendments reflect the progress made in nearby projects which had been scoped into the cumulative and in-combination assessment at the ES stage.	The Applicants note this comment.
REP6-199 9.1.2	9.1.2 The MMO recognises that information on scheduling may not be available, the Applicants do not fully describe which stages of MMTA project development will overlap with the construction/operation/decommissioning stages of the East Irish Sea Transmission Project and the Mooir Vannin Offshore Wind Farm Project.	The Applicants confirm that these were assessed where relevant to each topic throughout Table 1.12 of the S_D2_10 Review of CEA and In-Combination Assessment (REP6-136) which states "The Mooir Vannin Offshore Wind Farm construction and operation and maintenance phases may overlap with the operation and maintenance phase of the Transmission Assets" and "The construction of East Irish Sea Transmission Project between the Mooir Vannin Offshore Wind Farm and the UK has the potential to occur during the construction phase of the Transmission Assets on the basis that as outlined in the scoping report, it is planned for consent in 2028".
REP6-199 9.2.1	**9.2 Benthic Ecology** 9.2.1 The MMO does not have any comments or concerns regarding the amendments made at Deadline 5.	The Applicants welcome this comment.
REP6-199 9.3.1	**9.3 Physical Processes** 9.3.1 The MMO confirms that the amendments have raised no new concerns that have not been previously raised or addressed during examination.	The Applicants welcome this comment.
REP6-199 9.4.1	**9.4 Underwater Noise** 9.4.1 The MMO does not believe these updates introduce entirely new methodologies or assessments for underwater noise but updates the CEA review to include new temporal and project data that could influence noise-related cumulative effects.	The Applicants note this comment.
REP6-199 9.4.2	9.4.2 The MMO acknowledges that the updates do not escalate cumulative effects beyond the original "minor adverse" or "negligible" significance levels.	The Applicants welcome this comment.
10. MMO's comments on the updated Without prejudice benthic compensation DCO schedule (REP5-108)		
REP6-199 10.1.1	**10.1 General Comments** 10.1.1 The MMO does not have any comments or concerns regarding the amendments made to the document at Deadline 5. The MMO defers to NE for final comments on the MEEB.	The Applicants note this comment.
11. MMO's response to the Applicants' response to Examiner's Questions 2 (ExQ2) (REP5-130)		

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
REP6-199 11.1.1	**11.1 General Comments** 11.1.1 The MMO has reviewed and provided comments on the following topics: • Physical Processes • Habitat Regulation Assessment	Please refer to Applicants responses to the MMO comments in Table 2.24.
12. MMO's comments on ExAs Procedural Decision (PD-010)		
REP6-199 12.1.1	**12.1 General Comments** 12.1.1 The MMO notes that the Applicants submitted an intent to submit a request for changes to the Transmission Assets Application. 12.1.2 The MMO agrees with the conclusions reached by the ExA.	The Applicants note this comment.
REP6-199 12.2.1	**12.2 Examination Timetable Changes** 12.2.1 The MMO notes that Examination deadlines have been adjusted to accommodate the submission of changes. The MMO welcomes these additions, however, the changes proposed are unlikely to affect MMOS jurisdiction. Therefore, we have not made any additional written submissions at Deadline 6.	The Applicants note this comment.
13. MMOs comments on Issue Specific Hearing (ISH) 4 outcomes		
REP6-199 13.1.1	**13.1 General Comments** 13.1.1 The MMO had a meeting with the Applicants on 2 October to discuss the project before the Hearings. 13.1.2 The MMO notes that ISH4 was held to discuss environmental, onshore and offshore matters, and the draft development consent order. The MMO's has provided a response to ISH 4 in this section.	The Applicants note this comment.
14. MMOs comments on other Stakeholders Submissions		
REP6-199 14.1.1	14.1.1 The MMO has reviewed other stakeholder Deadline 5 submissions and have provided comments on other Environment Agency (REP5-168) and Natural England (REP5-177, REP5-179, REP5-184) responses.	The Applicants note this comment.

Table 2.24: REP6-200 – Marine Management Organisation (Deadline 6 Submission)

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
1. MMO's Response to Applicants Response to Deadline 4 submission (REP5-123)		
REP6-200 1.1.1	**1.1 MMO's Response to the Applicants' Pre-Examination Procedural Deadline A Submission to the MMO (Table 2.3)** 1.1.1 The MMO notes that the Applicants have noted that they have reviewed the deemed marine licence of this draft Development Consent Order (DCO) (REP4-007) against the recently granted Morgan Generation Offshore Wind Farm Order and have made amendments to align these where practicable, including the removal of the time limit on the MMO to make decisions at condition 19(2) of Schedules 14 and 15 and 17(2) of Schedules 16 and 17 (C1/F07). The MMO provided additional comments regarding Schedules 14, 15, 16 and 17 at Deadline 5 (REP5-175).	The Applicants note this comment.
REP6-200 1.1.2	1.1.2 The MMO notes that the Applicants provided further information on landfall and shoreline burial depths at Deadline 4. The Applicants note that the information outlined that that in terms of shoreline retreat, the analysis undertaken confirms a trend of sediment accumulation and dune migration seaward, rather than significant shoreline	The Applicants note this comment.

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
	recession, at the selected landfall site. Additionally, the detailed assessment of beach level variability identified a conservative level of +- 1.5m.	
REP6-200 1.1.3	1.1.3 The MMO notes that the Applicants submitted 'Annex to Applicants response to MMO and NE submission at Deadline 3: Assessment of Seabed Level Vertical Variability for Morgan Offshore Wind Farm- Appendix C' at Deadline 4 (REP4-122) which provides analysis relating to the landfall and shoreline burial depths. This has been reviewed and the MMO has provided comments in Section 5 of this document.	Please refer to Applicants responses at Table 2.24 Reference REP6-200 5.2 below.
REP6-200 1.1.4	1.1.4 The MMO notes that the Applicants have highlighted that the Commitments Register was updated at Deadline 4 (REP4-018) to include a new commitment (CoT134) stating "As part of the detailed design process, micro-siting of the offshore export cables within the offshore export cable corridors will be considered where successful burial could pose a challenge or where a higher risk of remedial works such as external cable protection may be required". The MMO has provided comments on the amended document at Deadline 5 (Section 5 of REP5-175).	Please refer to Applicants responses at Table 2.24 reference REP6-200 5 below.
REP6-200 1.2.1	**1.2 MMO's Comments on Stage 2 MCZ Assessment - Rev F01 Annex A: Review of potential measures of equivalent environmental benefit (MEEB) (Table 2.4, Section 3)** 1.2.1 The MMO notes that the Applicants have highlighted that the Applicants and Natural England (NE) have agreed that strategic compensation measures, in the form of a payment into the Marine Recovery Fund (MRF) to access Defra's programme of Marine Protected Area (MPA) designations/extensions, will be the preferred and best method for the delivery of MEEB for the Fylde Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) (should MEEB be required).	The Applicants note this comment.
REP6-200 1.2.2	1.2.2 The Applicants have provided an updated without prejudice MEEB Schedule to reflect NE's comments. The MMO has reviewed this document and our response can be found in Section 10 of this document.	The Applicants note this comment.
REP6-200 1.3.1	**1.3 MMO's Comments on Issue Specific Hearing (ISH) 2 (Table 2.4, Section 9)** 1.3.1 The MMO notes and welcomes that the Applicants have highlighted that they have made a commitment in the updated Outline Offshore Operations and Maintenance Plan (OOMP) submitted at Deadline 5 (REP4-072) to limit the deployment of cable/scour protection in the operations and maintenance phase to the first ten years or limit of the Maximum Design Scenarios (MDS) (whichever is first) outside the Fylde MCZ and the first two years inside the MCZ. Following these periods, any further deployment of cable protection during the operation and maintenance phase would require a new marine licence application.	Further to the Applicants' commitment made at Deadline 5, the Applicants have updated the Outline Offshore Operations and Maintenance Plan (OOMP) (and other relevant documents) at Deadline 7 to remove the ability to deploy cable/scour protection within the Fylde MCZ beyond the end of the construction phase. Deployment of any cable/scour protection within the Fylde MCZ during the operation and maintenance phase will require a separate marine licence.
REP6-200 1.3.2	1.3.2 The MMO notes that the Applicants have updated the Commitments Register at Deadline 4 (REP4-019) to include the commitment to no cable/scour protection shall be permanently deployed in the intertidal area between Mean Low Water Springs (MLWS) and Mean High Water Springs (MHWS) (CoT133). The Applicants also included this commitment within the Outline Landfall Construction Method Statement submitted at Deadline 4 at the discretion of the Examining Authority (ExA) (AS-081).	The Applicants note this comment. Further to the Applicants' commitment made at Deadline 4, the Applicants updated the wording of CoT133 in the Commitments Register (and other relevant documents) at Deadline 6 as "no cable/scour protection shall be deployed in the intertidal area between MLWS and MHWS during construction and O&M phases" (REP6-044)
REP6-200 1.3.3	1.3.3 The MMO notes that the Applicants have highlighted that the Commitments Register was updated at Deadline 4 to include this commitment: "*As part of the detailed design process, micro-siting of the offshore export cables within the offshore export cable corridors will be considered where successful burial could pose a challenge or where a higher risk of remedial works such as external cable protection may be required.*"	The Applicants note this comment.
2. Underwater Noise Guidance and Effective Deterrence Ranges (EDR)		
REP6-200 2.1.1	**2.1 Noise Recommendations for Cetaceans** 2.1.1 The MMO would like to make the Applicants aware of a new report published by Whale and Dolphin Conservation in collaboration with SAMS Enterprise: A review of	The Applicants thank the MMO for the identification of a new relevant report by the WDC (2025).

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
	anthropogenic noise and recommendations for reducing its impacts on cetaceans (WDC, 2025). This report includes recommendations for how regulators, industry and third sectors can address and reduce the impacts of underwater noise.	
REP6-200 2.2.1	**2.2 Effective Deterrence Ranges (EDRs) – updated advice** 2.2.1 The MMO would like to make the Applicants aware of updated EDR advice published by the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) in September 2025.	The Applicants thank the MMO for highlighting the new updated EDR advice published by the JNCC in September 2025. The Applicants confirm that the Volume 2, Chapter 4: Marine Mammals Chapter were updated and submitted at Deadline 5 (REP5-032) which includes the references to this recently updated JNCC guidance.
REP6-200 2.2.2	2.2.2 The MMO wishes to highlight to the Applicants the new EDR guidance is applicable to all relevant activities from the day of publication. This may mean that from September 2025 when submissions are for 2026 activities, the Applicants may want to make updates to these documents which the MMO will support. For further information, please see the JNCC guidance on the EDRs available here.	
REP6-200 2.2.3.1	**2.2.3 The MMO wishes to highlight these specific topics that may be of interest to the Applicants:** *High-order Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) clearance (≤ 263 kg) without bubble curtain (if Marine Licence Application required)* • **For UXOs larger than 263 kg**, noise modelling should be undertaken to derive the distance to the Temporary Threshold Shift (TTS)-onset thresholds (Peak Sound Pressure Level (SPLpk) and frequency-weighted Sound Exposure Level (SEL) as above).	The Applicants thank the MMO for highlighting this advice by the JNCC and confirm that should high order UXO detonation be required, this will fall under a separate marine licence and further assessment will be undertaken at time of the marine licence application.
REP6-200 2.2.3.2	• **If noise modelling results in a distance greater than 20 kilometres (km)**, the modelled distance should be used as the EDR, subject to agreement by the regulator. If lower, then the default 20 km should be used.	
REP6-200 2.2.3.3	*High-order UXO clearance (≤ 525 kg) with bubble curtain (if Marine Licence Application required)* • **For UXOs larger than 525 kg**, noise modelling should be undertaken to derive the distance to the TTS-onset thresholds (SPLpk and frequency-weighted SEL as above). If noise modelling results in a distance greater than 10 km, the modelled distance should be used as the EDR, subject to agreement by the regulator. If lower, then the 10 km default should be used.	
REP6-200 2.2.3.4	• **Should high-order UXO clearance (≤ 525 kg) with bubble curtain occur with the use of an Acoustic Deterrent Device (ADD)**, the EDR required will reflect the ADD device type and duration as outlined in Section 7 if this EDR is higher than 10 km.	
REP6-200 2.2.3.5	*ADDs* • Where the disturbance effect (EDR) from an ADD is greater than the EDR for an activity, the **ADD EDR should be used in assessments**.	The Applicants thank the MMO for highlighting the advice on ADD EDRs by the JNCC.
3. Statement of Common Ground (SoCG)		
REP6-200 3.1.1	**3.1 General Comments** 3.1.1 The MMO has been in discussions with the Applicants throughout the examination period to resolve matters of concern to us. We are satisfied that progress has been made to resolve most of our concerns. However, the MMO wishes to highlight to the Secretary of State (SoS) the following matters are to remain as 'Not Agreed': • DCO – UXO Clearance • DCO - Article 6 – Benefit of the Order • DCO - Force Majeure • DCO – Post Construction Monitoring – Adaptive Management	The Applicants note MMO's comments on these topics. The Applicants and the MMO have engaged on these outstanding matters through finalisation of the SoCG submitted at Deadline 6. The basis for the Applicants' position and the MMO position on each matter is set out in the SoCG (REP6-130).

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
REP6-200 3.1.2	3.1.2 The MMO had a meeting with the Applicants on 13 and 20 October 2025 to discuss these ongoing topics of discussion. We have outlined the outcomes of these discussions below.	
REP6-200 3.1.3	3.1.3 There is also one 'not agreed but not material' within the SoCG this is in relation to Commitment CoT133 "*No cable/scour protection shall be permanently deployed in the intertidal area between Mean Low Water Springs (MLWS) and Mean High Water Springs (MHWS)*". There is a disagreement that this should be on the face of the DML and not just in a plan. The MMO believes this is for the SoS to decide and if on this occasion does not believe this is material.	The Applicants highlight that the CoT133 "*No cable/scour protection shall be deployed in the intertidal area between Mean Low Water Springs (MLWS) and Mean High Water Springs (MHWS) during the construction and O&M phases*" is secured within the Outline Offshore Cable Specification and Installation Plan (REP6-097) and in the Outline Landfall Construction Method Statement (REP6-151), both of which are secured in the draft DCO through Condition 18(1)(e) of Schedules 14 and 15 and Requirement 8(2)(q) of Schedules 2A and 2B respectively. Therefore, the Applicants consider that inclusion of CoT133 within the draft DCO (REP6-013) is unnecessary.
REP6-200 3.2.1	**3.2 DCO – UXO Clearance (DCO.2)** 3.2.1 The MMO's position is that UXO clearances should not be within the Deemed Marine Licence (DML) and the position is not agreed. However, on a without prejudice basis, should SoS include low order UXO clearance, the provisions in the DML are suitable.	The Applicants maintain their position that inclusion of low order UXO clearance within the draft DCO is appropriate, particularly given the controls secured under Condition 20 in Schedule 14 and 15 of the draft DCO (REP6-013), which includes submission of a method statement and MMMP (in accordance with the Outline MMMP (REP4-070)) prior to commencement of licenced activities. The Applicants' position is aligned with the Morgan Generation Assets position, noting that the Secretary of State retained clearance of UXO by low order methods in the recently made Order for Morgan Generation Assets. The Applicants also welcome the MMO's response on the suitability of the provisions in the DML on a without prejudice basis.
REP6-200 3.2.2	3.2.2 The MMO notes that the Applicants have committed to amending Condition 20(2) in Schedule 14 and 15 to change the timing of submission from three months to six months. The updated condition wording will state: *20(2) - The method statement and the marine mammal mitigation protocol must be submitted to the MMO for approval at least six months prior to the date on which low order unexploded ordnance clearance activities are intended to begin unless otherwise agreed in writing with the MMO.* The MMO is content with this amendment.	The Applicants welcome this comment.
REP6-200 3.3.1	**3.3 DCO – Benefit of the Order (DCO.3)** 3.3.1 The MMO notes that the Draft DCO was updated at Deadline 5 to adopt the drafting included withing the Morgan Generation Assets made Order, which includes revisions made by the Secretary of State (SoS). In a meeting on 11 September 2025, the MMO informed the Applicants they we will be maintaining our position on this matter, we welcome the SoS updates but still disagree with the inclusion of the DMLs.	The Applicants have responded in detail in PDA-013, REP2-033, REP3-054, REP3-056 and REP4-099 and maintain that the drafting included in the draft DCO is entirely necessary and appropriate and is in line with precedent including most recently Rampion 2 Offshore Windfarm where the Secretary of State specifically considered this matter in their decision letter as referred to in the Applicants response REP2-033. The Applicants and the MMO have engaged on this outstanding matter through finalisation of the SoCG submitted at Deadline 6. The basis for the Applicants' position and the MMO position on this matter is set out in the SoCG (MMO.DCO.3; REP6-130).
REP6-200 3.4.1	**3.4 DCO – Force Majeure (DCO.4)** 3.4.1 The MMO notes that the draft DCO was updated at Deadline 5 to adopt the drafting included in the Morgan Generation Assets made order, which includes revisions made by the SoS: *19.—(1) If due to stress of weather or any other cause beyond the reasonable control of the master of a vessel, and which the master of a vessel by the exercise of reasonable diligence is unable to prevent, avoid or remove, the master of a vessel determines that it is necessary to deposit the authorised deposits within or outside of the Order limits because the safety of human life or of the vessel is threatened, within 48 hours the undertaker must notify full details of the circumstances of the deposit to the MMO.* *(2) The unauthorised deposits must be removed at the expense of the undertaker unless written approval is obtained from the MMO.*	The Applicants maintain their position on this matter and provided a response to the MMO's position at RR-1414 1414.20 of the Applicants' response to the Marine Management Organisation's Relevant Representation (PDA-013). The Applicants set out in that response how sections 85 and 86 of the MCAA serve a slightly different purpose. Amendments have however been made to Condition 17 to try and address the MMO's concerns. The Applicants included a new paragraph (2) and at deadline 5 (see REP5-010), following the making of the Morgan Offshore Wind Farm Generation Assets Order 2025 (where the same arguments were put forward by the MMO during that examination), the Applicants updated Condition 17 of Schedules 14 and 15 and Condition 15 of Schedules 16 and 17 to align to the wording of the Morgan Offshore Wind Farm Generation Assets Order 2025.
REP6-200 3.4.2	3.4.2 The additional wording proposed by the ExA does assist with the previous negligence and enforcement issues, but the issue remains as that wording is still subjective/broad, but we welcome that the additional words has assisted to aid clarity.	
REP6-200 3.4.3	3.4.3 The MMO notes the term "*outside of the Order*" which we still have issues in regard to what our position is when a deposit occurs outside of the Order limits. This is potentially outside of the licence condition limits and outside of Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (MCAA) Sections 85 and 86 (Enforcement offences).	

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
REP6-200 3.4.4	3.4.4 The MMO notes that MCAA wording states "*safety of a vessel, aircraft or marine structure, or for the purpose of saving life*." Therefore, the MMO is still of the opinion that the appropriate wording ought to be the same as that set out in MCAA as this would alleviate confusion and a potential for a two-tier test approach.	
REP6-200 3.4.5	3.4.5 Although condition 19(2) has been added, which the MMO welcomes, the issue remains around the authority to remove if the deposit is outside of the red line boundary.	
REP6-200 3.5.1	**3.5 DCO – Post-Construction Monitoring – Adaptive Management (DCO.5)** 3.5.1 In a meeting held on 13 October 2025, the Applicants included a further point of discussion regarding adaptive management. The MMO acknowledged the inclusion of adaptive management measures within the Outline IPMP, however, we requested that these measures be secured as conditions within Schedules 14 & 15.	The Applicants maintain their position on the inclusion of adaptive management as a condition within Condition 26 (post-construction monitoring) of Schedule 14 and 15 is not necessary as it is adequately secured in the Offshore IPMP, which is secured under Condition 18(1)(d) of Schedule 14 and 15 which requires approval of a Monitoring Plan in accordance with the Offshore IPMP before licenced activities can commence. The Applicants and the MMO engaged on this matter through finalisation of the SoCG submitted at Deadline 6 where the basis for the Applicants' position and the MMO position on this matter is set out in the SoCG (MMO.DCO.5; REP6-130).
REP6-200 3.5.2	3.5.2 The Applicants position is that the inclusion of these conditions in Schedules 14 & 15 are not necessary as they are adequately secured within the Outline IPMP, which is subsequently secured under Condition 18(1)(d) of Schedules 14 & 15. The MMO refers to the proposed condition wording within Deadline 4 (REP4-137) section 2.2.3.	
REP6-200 3.5.3	3.5.3 The MMO agrees that the outline IPMP is secured within the DML. However, notes a similar condition has been implemented in Sheringham and Dudgeon Offshore Wind farm. This has been requested in the more recent OWF examinations due to issues occurring in older OWF that are in the post construction monitoring phase.	
REP6-200 3.5.4	3.5.4 The MMO wishes to implement a more proactive process to manage issues in the event that monitoring shows a greater impact than that assessed in the Environmental Statement and enable the Applicants to start discussions at the earliest opportunity alongside the monitoring report submission (or before in some circumstances).	
REP6-200 3.5.5	3.5.5 The inclusion of an adaptive management condition ensures that all parties are clear what is required if the monitoring shows greater impacts than predicted during the assessment stage. It also allows the Applicants to themselves provide potential solutions when reviewing the results of monitoring, to be discussed with the MMO and SNCBs.	
REP6-200 3.5.6	3.5.6 The aim of the condition is to provide a clear process to the Applicants, the MMO and any consultees, if in preparing the monitoring reports the Applicants identifies greater impact that the Environmental Statement (ES) predicted rather than just a discussion upon review of the reports.	
REP6-200 3.5.7	3.5.7 The MMO notes that the Applicants have gone further within the IPMP and that a new plan would be produced in this instance but still believes that a standalone condition should be included. The MMO believes this is now for the SoS to decide on if the condition should be included on the face of the DML.	
4. MMO's comments on updated Environmental Statement Chapters		
REP6-200 4.1.1	**4.1 Physical Processes (REP5-030)** 4.1.1 The MMO notes amendments on page 33-35, in response to NE and MMO comments, states that the Applicants commit to no rock dumping within the Fylde MCZ and to deploy no permanent scour protection in the intertidal area MLWS-MHWS.	The Applicants note this comment.
REP6-200 4.1.2	4.1.2 The MMO notes that paragraphs 1.5.4.23 to 1.5.4.28 have been inserted in response to comments regarding the assessment of the nearshore impact, to provide a baseline environmental description. This is welcomed. The paragraphs describe a generally accreting shoreline but with a sediment parting zone potentially affecting the landfall area (depending on future wave climate). The area is generally suitable for cable burial to a suitable depth as proposed, but the site description captures the risk	The Applicants note this comment.

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
	that cable burial depth should take account of potential bed lowering over time. Cable burial is addressed in the CSIP.	
REP6-200 4.1.3	4.1.3 The MMO notes that paragraphs 1.10.3.26 to 1.10.3.30 discuss the potential requirement for cable protection in the nearshore/shallow waters. It notes that standard practice has been to limit protection to 5% of the water depth at a given location; the ES indicates that any protection used in very shallow water should be tapered to ensure limited impact on sediment processes. Paragraph 1.10.3.28 states that it is unlikely that burial will not be achieved and the magnitude of any potential impact is assessed as low adverse. The MMO is satisfied that this is the case, but the Applicants should take every step to ensure that burial in the nearshore is achievable.	The Applicants welcome and note this comment. The Outline CSIP (REP5-078) confirms that due to the sediment type found in the nearshore area and Fylde MCZ (i.e. predominantly sand and mud), traditional burial techniques are suitable to achieve the target burial depths and as per commitment CoT54 (REP6-042) identifies that cable burial is the preferred option for cable protection where practicable.
REP6-200 4.1.4	4.1.4 The MMO notes that paragraphs 1.10.4.4. to1.10.4.8 address the measures to ensure burial in the intertidal and nearshore. The MMO is satisfied that the assessment of impacts of these shoreline works is adequate.	The Applicants welcome this comment.
REP6-200 4.1.5	4.1.5 The MMO notes that the Applicants have retained a slight equivocation in all discussion of commitments to cable burial and avoidance of cable protection at the shore (e.g., "… *subject to further pre-construction surveys*"). However, paragraph 1.10.5.3. states that no monitoring will be needed in the intertidal as they commit to not deploying cable or scour protection here. In view of the qualification of these commitments, it should be noted that monitoring of the adjacent shorelines may still be appropriate if nearshore scour protection with significant potential to affect shoreline processes is deployed. As noted in the baseline description, the landfall site is potentially variable in its accretionary/erosional behaviour, which can signify a shoreline close to an equilibrium with its physical forcing and also sensitive to minor changes in that forcing.	The Applicants recognise that the use of cable protection for certain ground conditions, where required, will be further evaluated and considered post-consent in the detailed CSIP(s), following further post-consent and pre-construction surveys. The detailed CSIP(s) will be prepared post consent and prior to construction. They will identify where cable protection is required in the nearshore and to the Depth of Closure. The CSIPs are secured under Condition 18(1)(e) in Schedule 14 and 15 of the draft DCO (REP6-013). Detailed CSIP(s) will be implemented by the Applicants as approved by the MMO in consultation with relevant stakeholders and amendments to monitoring plans will be agreed where appropriate.
REP6-200 4.1.6	4.1.6 The MMO notes that the amendments have largely addressed the concerns with the assessment of impacts at landfall and in the nearshore. The MMO has made one minor comment to suggest that, though unlikely, some post-construction review of shoreline impacts may be necessary under some circumstances if cable protection measures cannot be avoided in the nearshore. The MMO does not believe there are any further concerns raised in previous advice for the attention of the Applicants that are not addressed.	The Applicants welcome this comment.
REP6-200 4.1.7	4.1.7 The MMO notes that the Applicants have identified that the total volume of cable protection presented under under-calculated in the original submission. The Applicants have noted that this does not affect any of the assessments that have been undertaken. The Applicants highlighted that the environmental assessments were based on key spatial parameters of cable protection, specifically the maximum height, width, and length of cable protection, all of which remain unchanged and were correctly applied. The MMO notes that the application does not use the volume for physical process assessment, so the basic comment premise of the Applicants is supported i.e., the assessments won't change. The MMO notes that the actual volume changes, and the totals, are minor when compared with the volumes of sediment actually directly disturbed by sand wave clearance and cable burial activity (1-2 million metres cubed (m3), so around 5-10%). The MMO notes that a volumetrically based impact calculation would be useful should the volumes be introduced into restricted channels or water depths. The MMO confirms that these changes do not materially affect the advice provided within Section 4.1.	The Applicants welcome this comment and reiterate that the Outline CSIP (REP5-078) confirms that due to the sediment type found in the nearshore area and Fylde MCZ (i.e. predominantly sand and mud), traditional burial techniques are suitable to achieve the target burial depths and as per commitment CoT54 (REP6-042) identifies that cable burial is the preferred option for cable protection where practicable. It is therefore not anticipated that external cable protection would be required in the nearshore and this is to be confirmed by pre-construction surveys. However, in the unlikely event that burial to the target depth is not achievable, commitment CoT45 (REP6-042) states that cable protection will be tailored to the specific location and installed to limit change in water depth to no more than 5% (referenced to Chart Datum) and therefore introduction of cable protection into restricted channels or water depths will be avoided.
REP6-200 4.2.1	**4.2 Marine Mammals (REP5-032)** 4.2.1 The MMO defers to the relevant Statutory Nature Conservation Bodies (SNCBs) to provide comments on the amendments.	The Applicants note this comment.
REP6-200 4.3.1	**4.3 Benthic subtidal and intertidal ecology (REP5-034)** 4.3.1 The MMO is satisfied with the amendments made to this document. These include:	The Applicants welcome this comment.

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
	• A commitment to limit rock dumping to outside of the Fylde MCZ, a commitment within the DCO to limit detonation of UXO to low order (i.e., high order detonation of UXO must be permitted by a separate marine licence) • Clarification about the presence of burrowed sediments and their proximity to the Fylde MCZ, • Inclusion of benthic monitoring of Fylde MCZ in the Offshore IPMP to include colonisation of Project infrastructure by Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS). • Clarification regarding micro-siting offshore export cables to ensure adequate burial depths are achieved, • Inclusion of details regarding the dimension of exit pits associated with trenchless cable installation techniques, • Clarification that deployment of any cable protection within the Fylde MCZ is limited to the first two years of the Operation and Monitoring phase or extent of the licensable activity (whichever is greater). • Commitment to use of a controlled flow excavator for sandwave clearance, controlled flow excavator to be the only method used for sandwave clearance within the Fylde MCZ (equating to 270000 m3 of spoil), cable protection for ground conditions and asset crossing will not exceed 576500 metres squared (m2). • Clarification on potential repeat disturbance to benthic receptors from sequential construction scenario, clarification on boulder clearance maximum design scenario parameters, • Clarification on number of jack-up event per export cable, • Clarification on the maximum design scenario parameters for UXO clearance within the Fylde MCZ. • Confirmation of the minor adverse significance to sea pens and burrowing megafauna receptor because of the cable installation works, • Clarification of the number of cable repair and reburial events, clarification on the use of trenchless techniques in the upper intertidal region at least 100 metres (m) from designated sites, inclusion of details regarding the cofferdams and material excavated and stored from the landfall exit pits, • Clarification on the disturbance of sediment bound contaminants and the construction scenario, commitment to limit the deployment of cable protection outside of the Fylde MCZ to within 10 years of the end of construction *and* a requirement for a new marine licence for installations outside of this limit, • Clarification regarding the same maximum extent of permanent seabed loss for the different construction scenarios, • Commitment to deploy no cable /scour protection in the intertidal area.	
REP6-200 4.3.2	4.3.2 The MMO defers to the SNCBs regarding the potential impacts to protected features within the Fylde MCZ because of construction activities within the site (i.e., six jack-up events (one per cable), sandwave clearance by controlled flow excavator, use of cable protection within the subtidal mud feature in the west of the MCZ resulting in up to 26400m2 of cable protection with a height of up to 2m, and a width of up to 10m and will also include cable protection for cable crossing within the Fylde MCZ will have a height of up to 2m, width up to 20m and a length of up to 50m.	The Applicants note this response. The Applicants responses to Natural England's final comments at Deadline 6 have been provided in section 2.4. The Applicants would clarify that the MDS for habitat change/loss within the Fylde MCZ is based on a total of up to 30,400 m^2 of long-term habitat loss; • Up to 26,400 m2 -due to ground conditions (within either the subtidal mud or subtidal sand feature) • Up to 4,000 m2 -due to the cable crossing (only within the subtidal mud feature) within the Fylde MCZ which equates to 0.012% of the total area of the MCZ. The MDS for each of the features of the Fylde MCZ (i.e. subtidal sand and subtidal mud) is based on the assumption that the cable crossing required within the Fylde MCZ will occur only within the subtidal mud feature but that all of the long-term habitat loss associated with cable protection for ground conditions may occur within either the subtidal mud or subtidal sand feature. The Applicants consider that this represents a precautionary but realistic approach to defining the MDS and, at this stage in the consenting process, the Applicants are unable to refine these assumptions further. The MDS for each of the features of the Fylde MCZ is as follows:

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
		• Up to 26,400 m^2 of long term habitat loss of the subtidal sand feature. • Up to 30,400 m^2 of long term habitat loss of the subtidal mud feature.
REP6-200 4.4.1	**4.4 Offshore Ornithology (REP5-036)** 4.4.1 The MMO notes that an amendment of the wording '*temporary habitat loss*' to '*habitat loss*' has been made throughout the document and the MMO welcomes this clarification.	The Applicants welcome this comment.
REP6-200 4.4.2	4.4.2 Commitment CoT110 has been updated with the wording: "*Construction activities associated with the offshore cable pull in for the Morgan Offshore Wind Project and Morecambe Offshore Windfarm Limited will be undertaken in accordance with the Outline Offshore Cable Specification and Installation Plan (CSIP). This will include a timing restriction on all cable pull activities at landfall on Lytham St Annes beach between November and March (inclusive), unless otherwise agreed with the MMO, in consultation with Natural England. Detailed CSIP(s) will be developed in accordance with the Outline CSIP.*"	The Applicants welcome this comment.
REP6-200 4.4.3	4.4.3 This will be secured in Schedules 14 & 15, Condition18(1)(e) Pre-Construction Plans. The MMO is satisfied with this approach.	The Applicants welcome this comment.
REP6-200 4.4.4	4.4.4 The MMO notes that three new Commitments have been updated in Table 5.15. These commitments have already been discussed in our response at Deadline 5, and we welcome the inclusion of these within the DML conditions.	The Applicants welcome this comment.
REP6-200 4.4.5	4.4.5 For paragraphs 5.11.4.13 – 5.11.4.15, the MMO defers comments to NE as the SNCB.	The Applicants note this comment.
5. MMO's comments on the updated Cable Specification and Installation Plan (REP5-077)		
REP6-200 5.1.1	**5.1 General Comments** 5.1.1 The MMO is satisfied with the amendments made at Deadline 5. These include: • updates to the ownership of Morecambe Offshore Wind Limited (OWL) and Morgan OWL, • correction to the total seabed footprint for jack-up vessels in meters squared, • commitment for no cable/scour protection to be permanently deployed in the intertidal, • commitment to micro-siting of offshore cables where successful burial includes a high risk of remedial works would be required, • sandwave clearance to be undertaken using controlled flow excavator only within the Fylde MCZ, • no rock dumping within the Fylde MCZ.	The Applicants welcome this comment.
REP6-200 5.1.2	5.1.2 The MMO does not believe there are any outstanding concerns that need addressing at this time.	
REP6-200 5.2.1	**5.2 Physical Processes** 5.2.1 The MMO welcomes the amendments made following both ours and NEs comments at Deadline 4.	The Applicants note this comment.
REP6-200 5.2.2	5.2.2 Paragraphs 1.5.4.23 to 1.5.4.28 describe a generally accreting shoreline but with a sediment parting zone potentially affecting the landfall area. The area is generally suitable for cable burial to a suitable depth as proposed, but the site description captures the risk that cable burial depth should take account of potential bed lowering over time.	The Applicants note this comment.

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
REP6-200 5.2.3	5.2.3 The MMO welcomes the clarity of the discussion in *Annex to Applicants response to MMO and NE submission at Deadline 3: Assessment of Seabed Level Vertical Variability for Morgan Offshore Wind Farm- Appendix C* (REP4-122) which explicitly links the observed variability in beach levels with the local forcing, its relation to adjacent beach sectors, and also to the local Shoreline Management Plan (SMP), which will be an important factor in future stability.	The Applicants note this comment.
REP6-200 5.2.4	5.2.4 While the information does not necessarily answer every possible question, and the potential remains for the stable, and in sections accretionary beach levels of the recent past to revert to a stated previous erosional behaviour, the assessment indicates that this is: (i) reasonably unlikely in the near term, and (ii) not necessarily something that will be exacerbated by the resulting changes in cable burial.	The Applicants note this comment.
REP6-200 5.2.5	5.2.5 The current SMP indicates management of the present shoreline via maintenance of 'natural' features, so the cable itself will not be the sole 'unnatural' factor affecting future sediment behaviour here. Also, in the case of an eroding shoreline, the cable will be a minor factor in a large-scale shift driven by other changes e.g., in river training walls. The choice to not maintain these walls is not within the remit of the Applicants. The Applicants state that coastal system responses to such wider changes are difficult to anticipate, which is undeniable – requiring a potentially fascinating substantial additional study, but not something the Applicants can be expected to conduct.	The Applicants note this comment.
REP6-200 5.2.6	5.2.6 Regarding cable protection in the nearshore waters, the MMO notes that the appropriate limitations have been addressed, and we are satisfied with these assertions. However, we highlight that the Applicants should take every step to ensure that burial in the nearshore is achievable.	The Applicants welcome this comment. The Outline CSIP (REP5-078) confirms that due to the sediment type found in the nearshore area and Fylde MCZ (i.e. predominantly sand and mud), traditional burial techniques are suitable to achieve the target burial depths and as per commitment CoT54 (REP6-044) identifies that cable burial is the preferred option for cable protection where practicable.
REP6-200 5.2.7	5.2.7 The MMO has provided more detailed comments in the Physical Processes Environmental Statement (ES) Chapter section of this document (Section 4.1).	Please refer to Applicants responses in Table 2.24 Reference REP6-200 4.1.
REP6-200 5.3.1	**5.3 Fisheries and Fish Biology** 5.3.1 The MMO is generally content with the information presented. A list of the mitigation commitments relevant to the export cable installation process has been provided in Section 3 and the MMO is generally content with the measures captured. The Applicants have carried out a preliminary cable burial risk assessment in Section 4 which considers the risk of cable snagging by fishing vessels and anchors, and which has been used inform the recommended cable burial depth of 3m. The MMO supports this.	The Applicants note this comment.
REP6-200 5.4.1	**5.4 Underwater Noise** 5.4.1 The MMO notes that the updates made at Deadline 6 incorporated feedback and refinements which were primarily structural and refining, with the additions focusing on reduced design parameters, enhanced mitigation hierarchies, and commitments to minimize impacts within the Fylde MCZ.	The Applicants note this comment.
REP6-200 5.4.2	5.4.2 The MMO believes the amendments do not introduce new noise assessments or modelling but refine commitments to reduce activities that could generate noise. For example, the exclusive use of Controlled Flow Excavator for sandwave clearance within the Fylde MCZ is likely to reduce the levels of continuous noise.	The Applicants note this comment.
REP6-200 5.4.3	5.4.3 Therefore, the MMO has no further outstanding concerns that need addressing.	The Applicants note this comment.
6. MMO's comments on the Proposed Correction to Cable Protection Volume		

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
REP6-200 6.1.1	**6.1 General Comments** 6.1.1 On 30 September 2025, the MMO received an email from the Applicants explaining that they had identified a calculation error in the stated total volume of cable protection (required due to ground conditions, outside the Fylde MCZ for the Morecambe project only, which was presented in the MDS table within the following submitted documents: • Project Description Chapter • MCZ Screening and Stage 1 Assessment Report • draft Development Consent Order (DCO)	The Applicants welcome these comments from MMO and confirm that the Applicants the following documents are updated and submitted at deadline 6 to incorporate the corrected cable protection volumes: • Project Description Chapter (Table 3.7 and Table 3.9, REP6-038) • MCZ Screening and Stage 1 Assessment Report (Table 1.4 and Table 1.6, REP6-028) • draft Development Consent Order (Table 4 and Table 8, REP6-013). Please also refer to response in Table 2.24 REP6-200 4.1.7.
REP6-200 6.1.2	6.1.2 The Applicants stated that "*The total volume of cable protection presented was under-calculated in the original submission due to a spreadsheet formula error. For the avoidance of doubt, this does not affect any of the assessments that have been undertaken. The environmental assessments were based on key spatial parameters of cable protection, specifically the maximum height, width, and length of cable protection, all of which remain unchanged and were correctly applied*."	
REP6-200 6.1.3	6.1.3 Therefore, the Applicants are proposing to update all three documents to reflect the corrected volume. The Applicants intend to formally update the Project Description Chapter in Tables 3.7 and 3.9, MCZ Screening and Stage 1 Assessment Report, and DCO at Deadline 6 to incorporate the corrected volume, subject to the MMO's agreement.	
REP6-200 6.1.4	6.1.4 The MMO confirms that these changes do not materially affect the advice provided here within this document. The assessments of impact from the cable protection are generic (broadly based on height and length, rather than volume) and not site-specific, so are unaffected by this change. The MMO has previously advised that the volume may be important in a particular context of low flow depth or constrained channels, and so we reiterate that monitoring may be required in the nearshore should cable protection be required and note that this determination may involve location-specific volumetric consideration.	
7. MMO's comments on the updated Offshore In Principle Monitoring Plan (REP5-079)		
REP6-200 7.1.1	**7.1 General Comments** 7.1.1 The MMO notes that all outstanding matters have been either addressed at Deadline 4 (REP5-123), or further comments can be found below.	The Applicants welcome these comments from the MMO. The Applicants and the MMO engaged on the outstanding matters through finalisation of the SoCG submitted at Deadline 6 where the MMO confirms they are content with the information within the Offshore IPMP, notwithstanding the MMO's position on inclusion of adaptive management in the draft DCO (MMO.OP.2; REP6-130).
REP6-200 7.2.1	**7.2 Adaptive Measurements** 7.2.1 The MMO acknowledges the updates made to the IPMP to include adaptive management methods. The Applicants state: "*In the event that any monitoring report provided to the MMO identifies impacts which are beyond those predicted within the EIA, adaptive management / mitigation may be required. Where relevant, an Adaptive Management Plan to reduce effects to within those predicted within the EIA, including timelines and proposed monitoring to test effectiveness, would be submitted alongside the monitoring reports. The Adaptive Management Plan would be agreed with the MMO in consultation with the relevant SNCBs with the aim of reducing effects to a suitable level. Any such agreed or approved adaptive management plan would be implemented and monitored in full.*"	
REP6-200 7.2.2	7.2.2 The MMO does have a standard condition that has been requested within other examinations. The MMO refers to the proposed condition wording within Deadline 4 (REP4-137) section 2.2.3.	
8. MMO's comments on the updated Dredge and Disposal Site Characterisation Plan (REP5-081)		
REP6-200	**8.1 General Comments**	The Applicants note this comment.

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
8.1.1	8.1.1 The MMO notes that the Applicants queried how the MMO's response at Deadline 4 relates to the MMO's 'Marine Licensing: Sediment Analysis Guidance', which states that "*the data must also have been collected within 3 to 5 calendar years from the date you submitted your marine licence application, and we accepted it*." The Applicants have noted within Table 2.1 (5.3.1 to 5.3.4) that that no other construction works are scheduled to spatially overlap with the Transmission Assets and given the low levels of contaminants recorded in the site-specific survey, significant changes from this baseline which would result in exceedances of Cefas Action Levels, prior to the commencement of construction, are considered highly unlikely.	
REP6-200 8.1.2	8.1.2 On 17 September 2025, the MMO clarified that the wording within the Marine Licensing: Sediment Analysis Guidance is the correct interpretation of the sample analysis timeline.	The Applicants note this comment.
REP6-200 8.1.3	8.1.3 The MMO notes that the Dredging and Disposal – Site Characterisation Plan has been updated at Deadline 5 (J22/F02) to restrict sandwave clearance methods within the Fylde MCZ to Controlled Flow Excavator as requested by NE. The Applicants have also noted that the documents have been amended to include cross reference to the cumulative sections of the relevant ES chapters.	The Applicants note this comment.
REP6-200 8.1.4	8.1.4 The MMO notes that in Table 1.1 – NE Section 42 comments, the Applicants have clarified that a Controlled Flow Excavator will be the only method used for sandwave clearance. This will be secured within the Offshore CSIP. While in principle the MMO is content with this approach, we defer the methodology's suitability to NE.	The Applicants note this comment and confirm that the Offshore CSIP was updated to limit sandwave clearance methods in the Fylde MCZ to Controlled Flow Excavator at Deadline 5 (REP5-077). The Applicants also have responded to the points raised by Natural England on the use of controlled flow excavator in the Applicants' response in section 2.4.
REP6-200 8.1.5	8.1.5 The MMO notes that in Table 1.5, the Applicants have included a new Commitment (CoT134) to include micro-siting of the offshore export cables where successful burial could pose risks. The Applicants will secure this within Schedule 14 and 15, Condition 18(1)(e) Pre-Construction Management Plans. The MMO is content with this approach.	The Applicants note this comment.
REP6-200 8.2.1	**8.2 Fisheries and Fish Biology** 8.2.1 The MMO is generally content with the information presented. A list of the mitigation commitments relevant to the export cable installation process has been provided in Section 3 and the MMO is content with the measures captured.	The Applicants welcome this comment.
REP6-200 8.2.2	8.2.2 The Applicants have carried out a preliminary cable burial risk assessment in Section 4 which considers the risk of cable snagging by fishing vessels and anchors, and which has been used inform the recommended cable burial depth of 3m. The MMO supports this.	The Applicant notes this comment.
REP6-200 8.3.1	**8.3 Disposal Site Allocation** 8.3.1 The Applicants and MMO had a meeting 11 September 2025 and the Applicants requested separate disposal sites (and codes) for the specific areas authorised under Schedule 14 and Schedule 15 of the draft DCO (REP4-007). The MMO is still reviewing these updates and has discussed with the Applicants on an update to the DML so that discussions can continue post consent. As the disposal amount figures are agreed and the DML states "*within the order limits*" the designation of the disposal sites can be completed post consent.	The Applicants welcome and note these comments regarding disposal sites allocation and confirm that they will provide the shapefiles for the proposed disposal sites after the Examination and make sure there are no overlaps as requested by the MMO.
REP6-200 8.3.2	8.3.2 On 15 October 2025, the MMO wrote to the Applicants to explain that the shapefiles they provided for the disposal site locations overlap. Disposal sites cannot overlap and we therefore cannot complete the re-designation. The Applicants either needs to retain the existing single disposal site IS156 or split into three disposal sites; two for the Generation Assets, and one collective one for the Transmission Assets. Disposal sites are only used for the purpose of reporting requirements for which the MMO's scientific advisors process, and we strongly prefer a simpler setup.	

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
REP6-200 8.3.3	8.3.3 The Applicants acknowledged the issues raised above. The MMO recognises that the Applicants will need to extend the Morgan Generation Assets disposal site to cover the Morgan cables within the Transmission Assets Order Limits and the Morecambe Generation Assets disposal site to cover the Morecambe cables within the Transmission Assets Order Limits and make sure that there are no overlaps as requested. However, given the examination workstreams, the Applicants won't be able to pick this up until early November 2025.	
REP6-200 8.3.4	8.3.4 The MMO has agreed that the DMLs can allow for this, and the Applicants will be updating Part 1, paragraph 2(g) in Schedule 14 and Schedule 15 at Deadline 6 to state: "*the disposal of up to 1,080,000 cubic metres of inert material of natural origin within the Order limits produced during seabed preparation for cable works and boulder clearance works at disposal site references, to be provided by the MMO in writing, within the Order limits*" The MMO is content with this approach.	The Applicants welcome this comment and confirm that Part 1 - Paragraph 2(g) of Schedule 14 and 15 of the draft DCO were updated at Deadline 6 (REP6-013).
9. MMO's comments on the Cumulative Effects Assessment and In-Combination Assessment (REP5-099)		
REP6-200 9.1.1	**9.1 General comments** 9.1.1 The MMO notes at Deadline 5, NE still had outstanding concerns relating to cumulative impacts, the MMO notes that the Applicants and NE have continued discussions and believes the position at Deadline 6 will be 'not agreed but not material. The MMO will review the comments and provide final position at Deadline 7.	The Applicants note this comment.
REP6-200 9.2.1	**9.2 Fisheries and Fish Biology** 9.2.1 The MMO has reviewed the Cumulative Effects Assessment (CEA) and In-combination Assessment and have provided our comments within the SoCG.	The Applicants note this comment.
REP6-200 9.3.1	**9.3 Benthic Ecology** 9.3.1 The MMO does not have any comments or concerns regarding the amendments made at Deadline 5. These updates included: • updating the list of projects reviewed for potential cumulative effects • inclusion of a summary of the topic specific screening changes made since their inclusion (Table 1).	The Applicants welcome this comment.
REP6-200 9.4.1	**9.4 Physical Processes** 9.4.1 The MMO notes that the updates made at Deadline 5 result in no substantive changes to the conclusions of the ES. This is in line with expectations given the methods and conditions used for cumulative assessment.	The Applicants note this comment.
REP6-200 9.5.1	**9.5 Underwater Noise** 9.5.1 The MMO has reviewed the CEA and In-combination assessment and have provided our comments within the SoCG.	The Applicants note this comment.
10. MMO's comments on the updated Without prejudice benthic compensation DCO schedule (REP5-108)		
REP6-200 10.1.1	**10.1 General Comments** 10.1.1 The MMO notes within Annex 2.4 (REP5-123), the Applicants have provided an updated without prejudice MEEB Schedule to reflect NEs comments.	The Applicants note this comment.
REP6-200 10.1.2	10.1.2 The MMO does not have any comments or concerns regarding the amendments made to the document at Deadline 5. The term referring to optional compensation measures has been redefined to "measures of equivalent environmental benefit" or "MEEB" throughout.	The Applicants welcome this comment.
REP6-200 10.1.3	10.1.3 The MMO will defer to NE for final comments on the MEEB.	The Applicants note this comment.

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
11. MMO's response to the Applicants' response to Examiner's Questions 2 (ExQ2) (REP5-130)		
REP6-200 11.1.1	**11.1 Physical Processes (Table 2.5)** **Q2:7.1.1**: *In [REP4-134] FBC quote Section 5.6.10 of NPS EN-1 that sets out a clear requirement for applicants to undertake coastal geomorphological and sediment transfer modelling to predict and understand impacts and help identify relevant mitigating or compensatory measures. Concerns are raised that this requirement has not been met and that "if sediment transport systems are interrupted this could impact accretion rates and the effectiveness of the management techniques leading to weakening of the dune system for coastal defence. Major disruption would result in sediment gain being reversed and coastal erosion occurring and accelerating".* *a) Please comment in full on the concerns that are being highlighted.* *b) Is it likely that a resolution will be found during this examination?* *c) If no progress is made by the end of examination, suggest if/ how those issues could be dealt with post consent.* 11.1.1 The Applicants have noted that in the event that burial to the target depth is not achievable, cable protection will be tailored to the specific location and installed to limit change in water depth to no more than 5% (referenced to Chart Datum).	The Applicants note this comment.
REP6-200 11.1.2	11.1.2 The Applicants have noted that should cable protection be required in shallow water, protection will be sufficiently low profile/tapped to cause minimal changes to wave, tide and sediment transport. In practice this is likely to entail the use of tapered cable protection, such as mattress units, typically 0.3 m in height, which are specifically designed to allow sediment transport to continue unhindered and at water depths of less than 5 m the potential for any cable protection, given the '5%' limitation, is effectively none.	The Applicants note this comment.
REP6-200 11.1.3	11.1.3 The MMO notes that the Applicants have made the commitment that no cable/scour protection shall be permanently deployed in the intertidal area between MLWS and MHWS. The MMO has provided further comments on the suitability of cable burial depths in Sections 4.1 & 5.2 of this document.	Please refer to Applicants' responses in Table 2.24 Reference REP6-200 4.1 and 5.2 above.
REP6-200 11.2.1	**11.2 Habitats Regulation Assessment (Table 2.7)** **Q2.9.1.1**: *High tide restriction: Provide an update on the high tide restriction on construction activities, which was left at deadline 3 as still to be agreed with NE (paragraph 1.6.3.15 of [REP4-058].* 11.2.1 The MMO notes that the Applicants and NE have agreed there is no need for a high tide restriction during the passage period (October and April).	The Applicants welcome this comment.
REP6-200 11.2.2	**Q2.9.1.4**: *Further information NE (H31 [RR-1601]) requested further information on the recovery time of the disturbed sediments in the intertidal zone, noting that in the Information to Support Appropriate Assessment (ISAA) there is minimal mention of recovery time beyond completion of works. How long would the habitats be expected to take to return to their previous condition? Does this alter the period of temporary habitat loss assessed?* 11.2.2 The MMO notes that with regards to how long the habitats would be expected to take to return to their previous conditions, the Applicants have noted that recovery times will be dependent upon the species but for most species recolonisation will start immediately upon completion of works. The mobile amphipods and polychaetes that are of highest value to the wading bird assemblage are likely to recover fastest, with bivalves being slower. However, recovery times are of low importance to the passage bird assemblage present at the landfall. The Applicants note that out of the four passage features for which there is potential for impact, three (ringed plover, dunlin and redshank) were recorded using the beach mostly for non-foraging purposes (i.e., loafing and/or roosting). As birds do not require benthic communities to recover in order to roost or loaf, the habitats will be available immediately upon the completion of works.	The Applicants note this comment.

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
REP6-200 11.2.3	**Q2:9.3.2**: *Marine Mammals Adverse Effects on Integrity (AEoI) conclusions: Within your relevant representation [RR-1601], you raised the matter of the inclusion of high and low order unexploded ordnance (UXO) clearance (entries NE10, E1, E17, A6 and A11). Noting the applicants' submissions since the relevant representation where they confirm that high order clearance has been removed from the dDCO and DMLs:* *a) Do you consider that the inclusion of low order UXO clearance has the potential to result in AEoI to any marine mammals qualifying features of the SACs assessed within the HRA ISAA?* *b) If so, (i) outline the relevant sites and qualifying features. (ii) confirm why you consider that the applicants' assessment does not provide the evidence to rule out AEoI (given the applicants position that low order UXO clearance is assessed and mitigated for) and what further evidence you consider is required?* 11.2.3 The Applicants note that the HRA Stage 2 ISAA Part 2 predicted that effects of UXO clearance would not result in adverse effects on integrity of any SAC with Annex II marine mammal features, either alone or in-combination with other plans and projects. This assessment was based on UXO clearance for the MDS of high order UXO clearance for a 907kg UXO. The MMO defers to NE in relation to AEoI.	The Applicants note this comment.
12. MMO's comments on ExAs Procedural Decision (PD-010)		
REP6-200 12.1.1	**12.1 Examination Timetable Changes** 12.1.1 Following the ExAs acceptance of the Applicants' changes, the MMO notes that Examination deadlines have been adjusted to accommodate the submission of changes: • A new **Deadline 5a** on **Thursday 2 October 2025** has been added to the examination timetable for the Applicants to submit updated versions of the relevant application documents to reflect the accepted changed application. • The existing **Deadline 6** on **Wednesday 22 October 2025** now also includes the opportunity for written submissions to be made on the changed application. • The existing **Deadline 7** on **Wednesday 29 October 2025** subsequently now also includes the opportunity for comments on any submissions made at deadline 6 about the changed application.	The Applicants note this comment.
REP6-200 12.1.2	12.1.2 The MMO welcomes these additions. Upon review of the documents submitted at Deadline 5a, the MMO does not have any further comments to make as these were either minor amendments, or not in relation to matters concerning the MMO.	The Applicants welcome this comment.
13. MMO's comments on Issue Specific Hearing (ISH) 4 outcomes		
REP6-200 13.1.1	**13.1 General Comments** 13.1.1 The MMO notes that ISH4 was held on 7 October 2025 and 8 October 2025 to discuss environmental, onshore and offshore matters, and the draft development consent order.	The Applicants note this comment.
REP6-200 13.1.2	13.1.2 The MMO acknowledges that the final statement of common ground for Historic England (HE) was submitted at Deadline 5 and all matters are agreed.	The Applicants note this comment.
REP6-200 13.1.3	13.1.3 The Applicants noted that NE have raised a lack of a commitment to sandwave recovery monitoring. In response, the Applicants will be updating the offshore IPMP at Deadline 6 to incorporate sandwave recovery monitoring through analysis of pre and post construction review of geophysical data.	The Applicants updated the Offshore IPMP at Deadline 6 (REP6-103) to specifically include for monitoring of sandwave recovery though comparison of pre and post-construction geophysical data.
REP6-200 13.1.4	13.1.4 The MMO notes that NE have noted with regards to benthic matters, a lack of a commitment to decommissioning of infrastructure, excluding cable crossings and cable scale protection within the Fylde MCZ, rather than the design to be removable commitment. The Applicants maintain their position that in line with all other offshore	The Applicants note this comment.

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
	wind energy projects, the DCO secures the requirement to submit a written decommissioning programme to SoS prior to offshore works commencing.	
REP6-200 13.1.5	13.1.5 The MMO notes CoT55 in the latest commitment register (REP5-027) that an Offshore Decommissioning Programme(s) will be developed prior to decommissioning and will include information on the consideration of recycling of materials, where practicable, and if opportunities are available. This will be secured within Schedule 2A Requirement 21 (Offshore decommissioning) and DCO Schedule 2B Requirement 21 (Offshore decommissioning).	The Applicants note this comment.
REP6-200 13.1.6	13.1.6 The MMO notes that decommissioning activities have not been fully considered by us, but we recognise that due to the late stage of the examination process, we would welcome a commitment within the commitment register for the MMO to review the initial outline decommissioning plan to be part of the consenting process prior to the SoS	The Applicants have not included a new commitment in the commitments register to consult with the MMO on the draft decommissioning programme prior to submission to the Secretary of State due to the late stage at which this matter has been raised and the Applicants having not had sufficient time to appropriately consider this request. However, the Applicants will engage with the MMO on this matter early post-consent (should consent be granted) alongside engagement on other pre-commencement matters such as the consent compliance discharge programme.
REP6-200 13.1.7	13.1.7 The Applicants raised the issues regarding marine mammals and the inclusion of low order UXO clearance within the marine licence. The Applicants identified that their position hasn't changed, and that inclusion of low order UXO clearance within the DCO is appropriate, particularly given the control secured under Condition 20 of Schedules 14 and 15. In the DCO, which includes submission of a method statement and a marine mammal mitigation protocol (MMMP) prior to commencement. The Applicants asked if NE and the MMO prefer for the low order UXO is not retained in the DCO. The MMO's position is that all UXO clearances should be within a separate MLA. The MMO is content for UXO investigations to be included within the DCO and any relevant conditions to be maintained for this but wishes all UXO clearances to be removed. Please see Section 3.2 and the SoCG for more information. The MMO also refers to our response in Deadline 5 (REP5-175, Section 1.2).	The Applicants note this comment. Please refer to the responses at row REP6-200 3.2.1 in Table 2.24 above.
REP6-200 13.1.8	13.1.8 The Applicants provided an explanation of how the maximum numbers regarding low order UXO were established. The Applicants noted that they commissioned All Tech Limited to prepare an analysis of the potential maximum UXO clearance requirements. The analysis was underpinned by previous UXO hazard and risk assessments undertaken by Ord Tech Limited in connection with pre-application geotechnical sampling that have been undertaken on the projects. The Applicants noted that before they undertake a geotechnical survey, they will commission a risk assessment of the potential for UXO and essentially commencing a geotechnical drilling on top of a UXO. The Applicants have noted that they undertook the predictive assessment based on pre-application geotechnical sampling in addition to an analysis of the MDS. The MMO welcomes this clarification.	The Applicants note this comment and would point out that the company commissioned to undertake the UXO study mentioned in the IP submission was Ordtek Limited.
REP6-200 13.1.9	13.1.9 The MMO notes that the Applicants have confirmed that the wording within Schedules 14 & 15 Condition 11(5) will be updated following the MMOs request in Deadline 5 (REP5-175, Section 8.1).	The Applicants note this comment.
14. MMOs comments on other Stakeholders Submissions		
REP6-200 14.1.1	**14.1 Environment Agency (REP5-168)** 14.1.1 The MMO notes that several ongoing discussions between the Environment Agency and the Applicants have now been closed out at Deadline 5.	The Applicants note this comment.
REP6-200 14.1.2	14.1.2 The only outstanding topics unresolved are: • Outline Hydrological Risk Assessment (HyRA) – Applicants submitted at Deadline 5 • Protective Provisions - two comments that remain to be resolved. Expected to close these out by Deadline 6. The MMO will keep a watching brief over these developments.	The Applicants note this comment.

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
REP6-200 14.2.1	**14.2 Natural England (NE) (REP5-179 & REP5-184)** Environmental Statement Volume 1 Annex 5.3: Commitments Register (REP4-019) 14.2.1 The MMO notes that NE requested a commitment that further mitigation regarding sediment deposition impacts within Fylde MCZ is required.	The Applicants note this comment and have responded to the points raised by Natural England on the use of controlled flow excavator in the Applicants' response in section 2.4.
REP6-200 14.2.2	14.2.2 NE also advises that the adequacy of benthic compensation would be reviewed as part of strategic compensation measures. The MMO defers to NE in relation to compensation measures.	The Applicants note this comment. The Applicants' responses to Natural England's final comments at Deadline 6 are provided in section 2.4.
REP6-200 14.2.3	14.2.3 The MMO notes that NE has highlighted knowledge gaps around impacts during the project lifetime, the maximum duration of deployment, the certainty of successful decommissioning along and impacts would be associated with decommissioning, in relation to cable/scour protection in the intertidal area. However, the MMO is aware that following a meeting between the MMO and the Applicants, the Applicants have stated that no cable/scour protection would occur in the intertidal area and this is welcomed, the MMO will keep a watching brief on this issue between NE and the Applicants.	The Applicants welcome this comment. The Applicants' responses to Natural England's final comments at Deadline 6 are provided in section 2.4. The Applicants secured a commitment (in the Commitments Register) that "No cable/scour protection shall be permanently deployed in the intertidal area between Mean Low Water Springs (MLWS) and Mean High Water Springs (MHWS) (see CoT133, REP5-027). Natural England confirmed, in their Deadline 6 response (REP6-193 that, from a benthic perspective, sufficient information on scour protection at exit pit locations, scour protection in the intertidal and cofferdam footprint has now been provided. The Applicants updated the wording of CoT133 in the Commitments Register at Deadline 6 (REP6/042) and the Outline landfall construction method statement (REP6/151) at Deadline 6 to remove the word 'permanently', i.e. no cable/scour protection shall be deployed in the intertidal area between MLWS and MHWS during construction and O&M phases., Natural England have advised in REP6-193 that this resolves their point.
REP6-200 14.2.4	Offshore In-Principle Monitoring Plan (REP4-075) 14.2.4 The MMO notes that NE has noted that there should be a commitment for the undertaking of remedial actions and further monitoring should impacts be greater than predicted. Please see MMO's comments on adaptive management in Sections 3.5 and 7.2 of this document.	Please refer to Applicants' responses in Table 2.24 REP6-200 3.5 and 7.2 above.
REP6-200 14.2.5	Outline Offshore Operations and Maintenance Plan (REP4-073) 14.2.5 The MMO notes that NE has advised that all construction activities, including the development of the cable protections, occurs within the construction phase due to due to deleterious consequences for both recovery times and the effectiveness of post construction monitoring. NE has stated that where this is not practicable, there will be requirement for a greater number of monitoring locations / expanded monitoring periods to mitigate for instances where additional rock protection placed within the 2-year period overlaps or has potential to impact the recovery monitoring locations. NE also advises that the ES and MCZ will need reviewing in order for the increased recovery times to be appropriately considered and assessed.	The Applicants updated the Outline Offshore Operations and Maintenance Plan (OOMP) at Deadline 7 (J19/F04) to remove the ability to deploy cable protection within the Fylde MCZ beyond the end of the construction phase. Deployment of any cable protection within the Fylde MCZ during the operation and maintenance phase will require a separate marine licence. The Applicants also confirmed in their Deadline 6 response to Natural England's Deadline 5 submission (REP6-172) that concerns relating to implications on monitoring can be implemented via the adaptive management approach, as outlined in the updates to Offshore In principle monitoring plan (IPMP) at Deadline 5 (REP5-079). This can also be managed via the detailed benthic monitoring plans to be developed post-consent (should consent be granted). For, example through inclusion of sufficient control and impact monitoring stations at the outset to ensure robustness of design (i.e. ensuring enough redundancy in the monitoring design).
REP6-200 14.2.6	Outline Landfall Construction Method Statement (AS-081) 14.2.6 The MMO notes that NE has highlighted that should further geotechnical investigations be required in the pre-construction phase, a separate marine licence is sought.	The Applicants note this comment.
REP6-200 14.2.7	14.2.7 The MMO notes that NE has requested further information regarding where excavated sediment will be stored and how this has informed the coastal processes impact assessments.	The Applicants provided information in Applicants' Response to IPs' submissions at Deadline 5, Section 2.2 Natural England (Appendix B5 Natural England's comments on Physical Process and Benthic Subtidal and Intertidal Ecology) at Deadline 6 (REP6-172).
REP6-200 14.2.8	Natural England's comments on Examining Authority's Written Questions (ExQ2) (PD-011) 14.2.8 **Q2:7.2.2**: The MMO notes that the continued disagreement between NE and the Applicants regarding the removal of cable protection. The MMO notes NE states that if cable protection is left in situ it will result in lasting habitat change/loss within the site and hinder the Conservation Objectives for the site which state that 'the protected habitats are maintained in favourable condition if they are already in favourable condition'. NE advised that if a commitment to avoid or minimise cable protection between MLWS and the Depth of Closure, further detail on; location, volume, height, orientation and type of cable protection should be provided to fully inform the assessment on sediment transport processes. The MMO notes that Commitment	The Applicants note this comment. The Applicants' responses to Natural England's final comments at Deadline 6 in relation to the conclusions of the MCZ Assessment and cable protection in the nearshore are provided in section 2.4. CoT133 was updated in the Commitments register (REP6/042) and the Outline landfall construction method statement (REP6/151) at Deadline 6 to remove the word 'permanently', i.e. no cable/scour protection shall be deployed in the intertidal area between Mean Low Water Springs (MLWS) and Mean High Water Springs (MHWS) during construction and O&M phases.

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
	CoT133 states that 'no cable/scour protection shall be **permanently** deployed in the intertidal area between MLWS and MHWS' the MMO will review NE's comments at Deadline 6 to understand any remaining concerns.	
REP6-200 14.2.9	14.2.9 **Q2:7.2.5**: The MMO notes NE's continued position that the nature, scale and duration of impacts from lasting habitat change/loss from the placement of cable protection is likely to hinder the 'maintain' habitat feature conservation objectives of the Fylde MCZ, therefore MEEB is required. The MMO recognises that an updated Without Prejudice Schedule was submitted at Deadline 5 (REP5-108), therefore we will await NE's Deadline 6 response before we provide our final position.	The Applicants note this comment. The conclusions of the MCZ Screening and Stage 1 Assessment (REP6-028) are a matter that is not agreed between Natural England and the Applicants as reflected in the Statement of Common Ground with Natural England (NE.BE.3 / C3; REP6-179). Without prejudice to the Applicants' position on the Stage 1 MCZ assessment, the Applicants submitted a Stage 2 MCZ Assessment at Deadline 1 (REP1-059 which was later updated at Deadline 5; REP5-094), as requested by Natural England, which included a without prejudice, in-principle MEEB Plan. Additionally, the Applicants also provided a without prejudice benthic compensation schedule at Deadline 3 (which was updated at Deadline 5; REP5-109) should the Secretary of State deem it required. The in-principle MEEB Plan and the without prejudice benthic compensation schedule include for the option of a payment into the Marine Recovery Fund (MRF) and project-led options. Project led options would only be considered in the event that the MRF is not made available to the Applicants. As reflected in the Statement of Common Ground with Natural England (NE.BE.3 / C3;REP6-179), both parties are agreed that, should the Secretary of State deem that benthic compensation is required, strategic compensation with a payment into the MRF should be the preferred and prioritised option for this project, as outlined in the Applicant's commitment made at Deadline 4 (CoT136; REP4-018).
REP6-200 14.2.10	14.2.10 **Q2:7.3.1**: The MMO notes NE's continued position regarding site-specific monitoring where the cable is laid under the Ribble Estuary to provide evidence that EMF levels are not elevated above natural background levels. The MMO has already provided our position at Deadline 3 (REP3-085, Table 6.1) on this matter, and we have no further comments to make.	The Applicants note this comment.
REP6-200 14.2.11	14.2.11 **Q2:7.4.3**: The MMO notes that NE has enquired how the maximum number of low order UXO clearances proposed was derived. The MMO notes this was discussed at ISH4 and will review Deadline 6 to understand any concerns.	The Applicants note this comment.
REP6-200 14.2.12	14.2.12 **Q2:9.1.2**: The MMO notes that NE has stated that additional information regarding impacts to foraging sanderling at the landfall site is provided to inform the HRA. NE notes the residual impacts to the SPA/Ramsar site but welcomes the ongoing commitment to delivering Fairhaven saltmarsh as an alleviation measure to reduce these residual impacts. The MMO has no further comments on this matter.	The Applicants note this comment.
REP6-200 14.2.13	14.2.13 **Q2:9.1.5**: The MMO notes that NE has stated that that visual and noise disturbance have not been considered as part of the temporary habitat loss MDS within the HRA. However, the MMO notes that the Applicants provided updates at Deadline 5 which will potentially alleviate NE's concerns around the significance of impacts at the landfall. The MMO will keep a watching brief over these developments at Deadline 6.	The Applicants note this comment.

2.8 BAE Systems (REP6-206)

Table 2.25: REP6-206 – BAE Systems (Deadline 6 Submission)

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
REP6-206.1	1) Discussions with Applicants Since ISH4 BAE Systems has met with the Applicants three (3) times since ISH4 (14 October, 17 October and 20 October 2025) to discuss the draft Wildlife Attractant Habitat Risk Assessment (draft WAHRA), the Statement of Common Ground (SoCG), and the drafting of Requirements 4, 5, and 27 of the draft Development Consent Order (dDCO). The DIO has also attended these meetings. A summary of the matters discussed at these meetings is provided below.	The Applicants note this summary and thank BAE and DIO for their attendance at meetings since ISH4.
REP6-206.2	***Wildlife Attractants Habitat Risk Assessment*** The Examining Authority (ExA) will recall that in oral submissions at ISH4, BAE Systems confirmed that the DIO's subject matter experts (SME) on wildlife attractant and bird strike risk were reviewing the draft WAHRA submitted by the Applicants at Deadline 5. Following an initial review, of the draft WAHRA by the MOD's / DIO's SME, comments were fed back to the Applicants in a meeting on 17 October 2025. Those comments raised concerns relating to the location of the Newton-with-Scales ecological mitigation site. Following discussion and comments from the Applicants at the 17 October 2025 meeting, DIO agreed to seek clarification of certain matters from the SME and to obtain formal feedback on all of the Ecological Mitigation Sites, as well as the Biodiversity Benefit Site at Lea Marsh Fields. We understand that the DIO intends to update the ExA on the latest discussions with the SME at Deadline 6.	The Applicants note this statement. However, the Applicants first introduced a Strategy for Wildlife Hazard Management Plan to address potential bird strike risk at Deadline 2, which was then followed by the oWHMP at Deadline 3. It is disappointing that MOD/DIO and BAE did not involve their technical or subject matter experts (SMEs) until Deadline 5. The Applicants have made every effort to engage since the appointment of SMEs by MOD at Deadline 5; however, the Applicants understand that MOD's SME has not been able to provide any further feedback on the mitigation proposals due to the time constraints
REP6-206.3	***Statement of Common Ground*** BAE Systems, the DIO, and the Applicants have discussed the updates required to the SoCG following ISH4. As mentioned in oral submissions at ISH4, the updated SoCG will include the MOD / DIO as a third party and will also contain a table setting out each party's position on policy in NPS EN-1, as well as an updated section on bird strike risk to reflect the comments received on the draft WAHRA from the MOD's / DIO's SME. The above updates are substantive and as a result, it has not been possible to finalise a SoCG at Deadline 6. BAE Systems, the DIO, and the Applicants will continue to liaise on the SoCG following Deadline 6 and will submit a final signed version by Deadline 7, or earlier if possible.	An updated SoCG with BAE and DIO has been submitted at Deadline 7, please note that this has not yet been fully signed off. Once signed off by all parties it will be submitted into Examination as soon as possible. Whilst there remain areas of disagreement, the Applicants consider that these relate solely to detailed points that are for approval under the terms of a detailed Wildlife Hazard Management Plan to be approved under Requirement 27, the text of which has been agreed by BAE and DIO. The Secretary of State can therefore conclude that there is an appropriate requirement which secures the approval of a detailed Wildlife Hazard Management Plan (in accordance with the oWHMP) and, accordingly, that the Transmission Assets would not impede or compromise the safe and effective use of Warton Aerodrome.
REP6-206.4	***Draft Development Consent Order Drafting*** BAE Systems, the MOD / DIO, and the Applicants have now reached agreement on the drafting of the DCO subject to the comments provided below in response to APs 27 and 39.	The Applicants note this and welcome the confirmation from BAE that the drafting of the DCO is agreed.
REP6-206.5	***Non-Disclosure Agreement*** As the ExA will be aware from previous submissions made by BAE Systems and the Applicants, a non-disclosure agreement (NDA) is required so that BAE Systems can share information and data with the Applicants. Discussions are ongoing and progress has been made since ISH4. It is now hoped that both parties will be in a position to agree an NDA before the end of October 2025. However, it is unlikely that an NDA will be in place before the closure of the Examination.	The Applicants note that the NDA with BAE has still not been signed. BAE confirmed on 28 October 2025 that they are content with the NDA and ready to issue a final clean version, but this is subject to clearance by BAE's internal legal which is being frustrated by the half term holiday. The Applicants have continued to push for this to be entered into in a timely manner during Examination. In the absence of an agreed NDA, the Applicants have demonstrated through the oWHMP (REP6-144), and the commitments contained within the oWHMP, that the Transmission Assets will not materially increase or change bird activity within the 13km safeguarding zone around Warton Aerodrome.
REP6-206.6	**2) Response to ISH4 Action Points** Responses to the ISH4 APs directed to BAE Systems are provided below. AP15 Ensure the SoCG address NPS policy compliance and specifies the level of impact BAE consider would result if BAE considers there is an "unacceptable impact" in policy terms. *NPS Policy Compliance*	The Applicants' position, as set out in Annex 5.3 to Applicants response to ExQ2 4.1.14, 4.1.18 and 4.1.20 - Technical Note Bird Strike Policy Note (S_D5_5.3 F01, REP5-133), is that the necessary assessments required to identify residual effects on aviation (including potential bird strike risk) have been carried out and are included within the oWHMP (REP6-144) and its appendices, which include a Draft Wildlife Attractants Habitat Risk Assessment at Warton Aerodrome.

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
	BAE Systems is not currently in a position where it is able to confirm that the proposed development complies with policy in NPS EN-1. NPS EN-1 requires the Secretary of State to have been informed of the residual impacts of development on aviation so that they are able to balance those residual effects against the benefits of the proposed development (see paragraph 4.1.7 of NPS EN-1). At present, the necessary assessments required to identify those residual effects have not been completed. In order to fully understand the likely residual aviation effects (in so far as they relate to bird strike risk to Warton Aerodrome), the following process needs to be completed in full: 1. The Applicants undertake a draft WAHRA to identify the likelihood that the baseline bird environment would change above the current baseline and identify mitigation measures to reduce any changes to the current baseline level. 1.The Applicants undertake a draft WAHRA to identify the likelihood that the baseline bird environment would change above the current baseline and identify mitigation measures to reduce any changes to the current baseline level. 2.The draft WAHRA is reviewed by the MOD's / DIO's SME and BAE Systems from an operational perspective. 3.The outcome of Stage 2 is fed back to the Applicants, who update the draft WAHRA. 4.A Bird Strike Risk Assessment (to either be undertaken by the Applicants or BAE Systems – see paragraph 2.4 to 2.8 of BAE Systems' Summary of Oral Submissions at ISH4, submitted at Deadline 6) is undertaken, informed by the draft WAHRA, to confirm that the mitigation measures proposed in the draft WAHRA (and secured in the outline Wildlife Habitat Management Plan (oWHMP))are robust. 5.Any amendments to the draft WAHRA arising from the Bird Strike Risk Assessment are incorporated into the draft WAHRA and the oWHMP. 6. We note that this is the process which the Applicant has followed in respect of bird strike risk at Blackpool Airport (although it should be noted that the Bird Strike Risk Assessment for Blackpool Airport does not strictly follow the assessment criteria and terminology defined in Civil Aviation Publication 772 (CAP772). Blackpool Airport has been able to remove its objection to the proposed development because it has completed the above process and a Bird Strike Risk Assessment has been undertaken. At present, BAE Systems and the Applicants are at Stage 2 of the above process. As a result, the residual bird strike risk has not been established and this assessment milestone will not be achieved prior to the end of the Examination. Accordingly, BAE Systems can make no further comment on policy matters at this stage. As referred to above, the SoCG between the Applicants, BAE Systems and the DIO will be submitted at or ahead of Deadline 7 and will summarise the parties' respective positions with regard to planning policy compliance.	While the Applicants note that BAE's and MOD/DIO's input is important to the finalisation of the WHMP, the Applicants consider that this step can take place post-consent and that the oWHMP sets out the process that this must follow. This is secured by Requirement 27 (Schedules 2A and 2B to the DCO (REP6-013)), which requires the approval of the WHMP before any construction activities (which, for the purposes of this requirement, includes any early planting of landscaping works, environmental mitigation works and biodiversity benefit works) can commence and for the approved WHMP to thereafter be implemented as approved. Consequently, the Applicants consider that the test in para. 5.5.60 of EN-1, which states that the Secretary of State must either be satisfied that the impacts of a proposed energy development does not present risks to national security and physical safety or, where it does present risk, appropriate mitigation can be achieved or secured through DCO requirements, is met and that the Secretary of State can therefore be satisfied that consent may be granted.
REP6-206.7	*Unacceptable Impact to BAE Systems* BAE Systems operates a risk matrix that is similar to that identified in CAP772 in that it uses past bird strike data to identify a "lagging" risk rating of either Very High, High, Moderate, Low, or Very Low. Additionally, BAE Systems also dynamically monitors bird data and assigns a "leading" risk level of High, Medium, or Low. The aggregated risk from both the lagging and leading risks is used to provide a risk rating which informs whether additional mitigation or modified flying activity is required. The mitigation and management measures from the aggregated risk are similar to those in CAP772: ▪ "high risk" –additional management actions should be implemented as soon as possible. ▪ "medium risk" –current risk management strategies should be reviewed and additional steps taken. ▪ "low risk" –no additional action above that already being implemented is necessary.	The Applicants note that, despite requesting information on their risk matrix, it is only at Deadline 6 that BAE has provided some of the information as to how it approaches bird strike risk at Warton Aerodrome. This response from BAE sets out, in high-level terms, BAE's risk matrix and approach to managing bird strike risk, and the Applicants note that it is similar to what is identified in CAP772, although it primarily describes the principles of risk management without providing any detail. The Applicants would note that BAE appears to be applying a more conservative interpretation of CAP772 than is required by the guidance itself. For example, BAE notes that any risk above "low" requires operational changes to flying activities, which represents a more precautionary stance than that set out in CAP 772. Individual organisations are, of course, free to adopt stricter internal policies; however, it is important to distinguish such internal policies from regulatory guidance and requirements when assessing the acceptability of impacts. The Applicant's interpretation is therefore that a medium risk rating does not automatically necessitate alterations to flight operations, such as changes to approach paths or cessation of flying activities. Rather, it triggers a review of current measures and consideration of additional steps to

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
	The implications of the above are that where risk indicators are above the "low risk" level (i.e. at "medium" or "high" risk), flight operations at the Aerodrome must be altered. Such measures include restrictions on the approaches to the Aerodrome in terms of direction and height, which may result in some aircraft not being able to operate, or complete cessation of flying activities. Therefore, any increase in bird strike risk that was not able to be mitigated or managed to the "low risk" level would therefore be unacceptable to BAE Systems as it would impact on the ability to undertake flight operations from the Aerodrome.	reduce risk, consistent with the principles of proportionality and continuous improvement embedded in CAP 772. This is the approach taken by Blackpool Airport. The Applicant respectfully submits that its interpretation aligns with the intent and wording of CAP 772, and that the threshold for "unacceptable impact" should be considered in light of the guidance's proportional approach to risk management. Notwithstanding this, the Applicants consider that the approval of a detailed Wildlife Hazard Management Plan (secured under the agreed Requirement 27) in accordance with the oWHMP ensures that the Transmission Assets would not impede or compromise the safe and effective use of Warton Aerodrome.
REP6-206.8	AP27 (a) BAE, DIO, and the Applicants to discuss drafting relating to aviation lighting and whether this is secured through Requirement 4 or a separate Requirement, and (b) in the event that drafting is not agreed, any alternative drafting must be submitted into the Examination. BAE Systems, the MOD / DIO, and the Applicants have discussed the drafting of Requirement 4 following ISH4 and are now in agreement that any requirement for aviation hazard warning lighting on lightning rods can be secured through Requirement 4, subject to drafting changes that have been agreed by all parties and will be submitted to the Examination by the Applicants at Deadline 6. BAE Systems will provide final confirmation of its agreement to the drafting of Requirement 4 at Deadline 7, once it has reviewed the revised drafting submitted by the Applicants at Deadline 6. As a result of the draft change to Requirement 27, a drafting change is also being made by the Applicants to Requirement 5. That drafting change adds to the design parameters of the substation sites any aircraft hazard lighting required to be installed on lightning rods under Requirement 4 and ensures that hazard lighting would be maintained for as long as the Project is operational. BAE Systems is happy with the drafting changes to Requirement 5 that has been proposed by the Applicants and will provide final confirmation at Deadline 7.	The Applicants welcome the confirmation from BAE that the drafting of Requirements 4 and 5 is now agreed and look forward to BAE's confirmation at Deadline 7 that the agreed wording, included in the version of the DCO submitted at Deadline 6, is final.
REP6-206.9	AP39 a) The Applicants, BAE, and DIO to discuss BAE's and DIO's proposed amendments to Requirement 27. BAE Systems, the MOD / DIO, and the Applicants have agreed drafting of Requirement 27 which would secure the approval and implementation of a detailed WHMP. This agreement, however, is provisional and subject to those representing BAE Systems and the MOD /DIO having sight of, and being content with, linked updates to the oWHMP which the Applicants are submitting at Deadline 6. The amendments to the oWHMP that have been requested by BAE Systems and the MOD / DIO include: • Further details being added on what onshore site preparation works can take place ahead of a detailed WHMP being agreed with BAE Systems and submitted to, and approved by, Fylde Council. • Details of triggers for pausing certain onshore site preparation works where they give rise to increased bird attractants and a process for mitigating those increases in consultation and agreement with BAE Systems and MOD / DIO. BAE Systems will provide final confirmation of its agreement to the drafting of Requirement 27 at Deadline 7 once it has reviewed the drafting of both Requirement 27 and the oWHMP submitted by the Applicants at Deadline 6. Subject to the above, BAE Systems have no outstanding comments on any of the other Requirements or Articles in the dDCO but reserves its position to provide comment at Deadline 7 on any further changes made to the dDCO by the Applicants at Deadline 6.	The Applicants welcome BAE's confirmation that the drafting of Requirement 27 is agreed and look forward to BAE's confirmation at Deadline 7 that the agreed wording, included in the version of the DCO submitted at Deadline 6, is final. The Applicants note also that the oWHMP was updated at Deadline 6 to reflect the points raised by BAE and MOD/DIO (S_D3_8 F03). The Applicants' position is that the agreed requirement allows for any further engagement to be carried out post-consent by way of approval of the detailed WHMP.

2.9 Blackpool Borough Council and Blackpool Airport Properties Limited (REP6-210)

Table 2.26: REP6-210 – Blackpool Borough Council and Blackpool Airport Properties Limited (Submission by Peter Roberts)

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
REP6-210 210.1	I am Peter Roberts FRICS CEnv of DWD Property and Planning Limited formerly known as Dalton Warner Davis LLP. I represent Blackpool Borough Council and Blackpool Airport Properties Limited (BAPL) on land matters. No agreements have been reached with the Applicant and progress has been elusive. I should point out from the outset that none of the points I will be raising will be new to the Applicants, and the Council has been consistent in its position since 2023. I note from a review of the minutes of the various meetings that have taken place since 2023, that the Council has met with at least 17 different people from the Applicants' Team over the course of this matter not counting their various advisors and consultants including Dalcour Maclaren. It may therefore be a lack of internal coordination on the part of the Applicants that has led to the absence of progress and current position. Notwithstanding this point and speaking as someone who represents both developers and objectors, the lack of progress and flexibility on the part of the Applicants is both surprising and concerning. Before I address the detail of my clients' representations, it may be helpful to clarify in broad terms the parcels of land that I will be referring to. I have organised this into three main headings as follows: 1) Access over the slipway at Starr Gate from the roundabout down to the beach. 2) Cable easements under the Council owned section of beach and dunes 3) The cable easements, Jointing Bays and Works Compound within the Airport boundary. For the purposes of today, I haven't distinguished between the ownerships of the Council and BAPL in respect of the Airport Land as the issues are essentially the same and the position of both parties aligned. I address each of the three land categories in turn as follows.	The Applicants provided a summary of progress to date in their response to ExQ2 Q2.5.1.16 (Annex 2.2 to Applicants' Response to Deadline 5 submissions from Statutory Consultees and other organisation: Blackpool Borough (S_D6_2.2)). Since then, the Applicants, the Council and BAPL held meetings on 21st, 27th and 28th October 2025. The purpose of the meetings on 21st and 28th October was to discuss the three principal land areas of interest for the Council and the meeting on the 27th October was a technical meeting to discuss interactions between the Transmission Assets and the Blackpool Airport Solar Farm. These meetings resulted in the resolution of several outstanding matters and positive progress in the development of the Heads of Terms (HoTs) and the coexistence between the Transmission Assets with the proposed Blackpool Airport Solar Farm. To facilitate progress with the land agreements, the Applicants have agreed with the Council to separate out the three areas of land identified by Mr Roberts and to provide three individual sets of HoTs for the Council addressing the specific concerns they have for these areas. These are discussed further below. The Applicants and the Council have also agreed to hold fortnightly meetings from November to maintain consistent and meaningful progress on the HoTs negotiations.
REP6-210 210.2	**The Slipway Access** The relevant plots are Plots 02-007, 02-008, 002-09, 002-10, 002-12 as defined within the dDCO Book of Reference (Ref:D3) and comprising that part of Squires Gate Lane leading from the junction of Starr Gate, Clifton Drive North and Squires Gate Lane, located immediately south of the Blackpool Starr Gate Tram Depot, to Blackpool South Sand Dunes. As the Inspectors are already aware, this access is used by members of the public including the Coast Guard, RNLI, ambulances, police, fire bigrade and Beach Patrol and also provides access to the Starr Gate tram depot and a key substation. The Council is therefore unable to agree to any restrictions being placed upon this access which must be kept open at all times. A meeting took place on 28 August 2025 where this was clearly explained to Mr O Brian, Mr Hesleton, Mr Cottam and Ms Stoddard for the Applicants. Following discussions, it transpired that the Applicants do not wish to take possessory rights over the access and that the use of a "Banks person" i.e., a Traffic Management to prevent conflict between the Applicant's traffic and members of the public would suffice. The Applicant's representatives undertook to provide Heads of Terms for this arrangement by 12 September 2025. In the absence of any Heads of Terms being forthcoming I drafted and forwarded Heads of Terms for a "Banks person" agreement on the agreed basis to Dalcour Maclaren on 1 October 2025. However, I understand from Dalcour Maclaren that the Applicants have now resiled from the position as agreed at the meeting and is insisting on taking possession of the entirety of the access. It appears that the Applicants are particularly vexed in respect of that part of the access that has not been adopted. As such, they consider that it is necessary for them to take temporary possession of this land. For clarity, the Council does not exercise any control over this land and all members of the public together with the emergency services have used this access without any interference by the Council. The Council has no intention of preventing the Applicants from crossing over this land	The Applicants provided a summary of progress to date regarding Heads of Terms in their response to ExQ2 Q2.5.1.16 in Annex 2.2 to Applicants' Response to Deadline 5 submissions from Statutory Consultees and other organisations: Blackpool Borough (S_D6_2.2). The Applicants confirm that the Council's interest extends over plots to 02-007, 02-007i, 02-008, 02-008i, 02-008ii, 02-009, 02-010,02-011 & 02-012 shown on the Land Plan – Onshore (REP6-006). The Applicants can confirm that the adopted highway now extends over plots 02-007i, 02-008, 02-008i, 02-009, 02-010, 02-011, 02-012 having now obtained an expedited highways search from the Council as well as a letter from the Council's Head of Highways and Traffic which confirms the adoption. Specifically in relation to the rights required over the slipway, the Applicants have provided detailed responses to Douglas Edwards KC's Opinion and Further Advice within REP5-127 and REP6-178. The Applicants disagree with the Council that the exercise of temporary possession powers at Starr Gate would enable them to take temporary exclusive possession or somehow temporarily close the Starr Gate access. Despite the difference in legal opinion, significant progress has been made in relation to the land plots at Starr Gate following the recent adoption as public highway of additional land at Starr Gate which extends the public highway to the top of the slipway. For those land plots which are public highway, the Applicants do not consider they will need to exercise any temporary possession powers to allow them to use the road as an access. The Applicants therefore included wording in article 29 of the draft DCO (REP6-013) at deadline 6 to restrict the Applicants ability to use temporary possession powers over any plots at Starr Gate which are public highway (being plots 02-007i, 02-008, 02-008i, 02-009, 02-010, 02-011, 02-012). The Applicants consider that any remaining concerns that the Council has in relation to the private land plots at Starr Gate (02-008ii and 02-007 shown on the Land Plan-Onshore (REP6-006) can be addressed through the Starr Gate HoTS and subsequently the voluntary agreement for Starr Gate. Following the meeting on 21st October, draft HoTs in relation the slipway at Starr Gate (the Starr Gate HoTs) were issued to the Council's Agent for consideration on 27th October 2025. The Applicants consider that the Starr Gate HoTs reflect the discussions and agreements made between the Applicants and the Council in recent meetings. Following a meeting with the Council and their agent on 28th October 2025 the Applicants are expecting to receive comments shortly on the Starr Gate HoTs and are hopeful that an agreed position on the Starr Gate HoTs can be reached shortly thereafter.

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
	and it is incorrect for the Applicants to suggest that the Council would prevent access and take a ransom position. The Council is happy to place on record that it will not ransom access over the Slipway and simply seeks to control the manner in which access is taken to ensure that public funds are not expended on repairing damage caused by the Applicants use thereof and that there is no conflict between the Applicants', and their contractors' vehicles and use and members of the public. By definition, a lease, licence or other means of taking possession which, by definition, would exclude others from use of the Slipway, raises significant issues of public safety and liability and is not therefore acceptable to the Council. In simple terms, no one can be allowed to control this access under any circumstances. I have attached a copy of the Council's Heads of Terms to this representation from which it will be apparent that they are more than adequate for the Applicants' purposes notwithstanding that there may be some minor corrections required. In my opinion, the legal arguments raised by the Applicants as justification for not entering into these terms are a distraction and, in the absence of any response from the Applicants to the Heads of Terms, it is apparent that they are seeking powers that are disproportionate to what is actually needed to deliver their scheme. I should also point out that, as I will return to shortly, the Applicants have refused to agree that they will not exercise any CA powers against the Council and/or BAPL and want to reserve the right to over-ride any agreement through the use of CA powers. In my experience this is wholly unjustifiable and unreasonable but, in any event, raises health and safety issues for users of the beach.	
REP6-210 210.3	**Beach Cable Easements** The relevant plots are 01-006, 01-007 and 01-008. The Applicants provided generic Heads of Terms on 8 November 2024 and then further Heads of Terms on 19 March 2025. I will return to these terms in further detail when addressing the Airport land but can, at this stage, highlight the following: 1) The November Heads of Terms did not offer any payment for the grant of the rights. 2) The March Heads of Terms refer to a payment of "£x" – as such, the position remains that no financial offer has been made 3) Dalcour Maclaren advised me on 2 October that the Applicants do not, contrary to the impression given by the dDCO drafting, intend to undertake any physical works on the surface of the beach or take occupation thereof such that the Council would not even be aware that the works were taking place. However, as I have already demonstrated in respect of the Starr Gate negotiations, there is a history of the Council progressing negotiations with the Applicants' representatives in the belief that the Applicant's Representatives have authority to agree matters only for the position to change afterwards hence I have requested formal confirmation of this. Consistent with the Applicants' approach to these matters no confirmation has been forthcoming. The Council's position, therefore, is that it requires the Applicants to engage properly and provide an offer that is consistent with that made to others including the Crown who own the foreshore together with proper detailed plans and Heads of Terms that set out precisely what is actually intended. In effect, if the Applicants confirm that there will be no impact whatsoever on the continuing use of the identified land and contract not to exercise CA powers over that land, the completion of easements for the installation, maintenance and use of the cables should be relatively straightforward.	Following recent detailed discussions regarding this area, separate, revised Heads of Terms are being prepared by the Applicants for the areas of the sand dunes under the ownership of the Council (the Sand Dunes HoTs). Not all of the relevant beach area falls within the Council's ownership, with the remaining area owned by Fylde Council, with whom the Applicants are also in negotiations for the land rights sought. The Applicants relevant plot for the beach cable easement is 01-006 shown on the Land Plan – Onshore (REP6-006). Plots 01-007 and 01-008 are unregistered and the Applicants have not been provided confirmation that these are within the Councils ownership. For the Council-owned land around the Lytham St Annes sand dunes plot 01-006, the Sand Dunes HoTs are being updated by the Applicants to reflect the current position of the negotiations. Following the meeting held on 21st October, the Applicants were able to clarify verbally during the meeting on the 21st October 2025 the construction activities that would take place in the area and the interfaces required to be addressed in the Sand Dunes HoTs. The Applicants will issue the Sand Dunes HoTs to the Council's agent for consideration by 31st October 2025.
REP6-210 210.4	**The Airport Land** The relevant plots are:02-024, 02-026, 02-027, 02-029, 03-005, 03-006, 03-007, 03-008, 03-009,	Following Compulsory Acquisition Hearing 3 ("CAH3") on 8 October 2025, the Applicants committed to provide detailed engineering information to enable the Council to assess any potential interactions between the export cable route and the area identified for the proposed solar farm within Blackpool Airport.

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
	03-010, 03-011, 03-012, 04-001, 04-002, 04-003, 04-004, 04-005, 04-006, 04- 007, 04-008, 04-009, 04-010, 04-011, 04-012, 04-024. The Applicants have advised the Council and BAPL that their position remains as set out in the dDCO and the current Heads of Terms, which state that these plots are required for the installation of cables at a depth of 0.9m together with the purposes of Works 14A and 14B which is described at Schedule 1 of the Order as "temporary working area and permanent access at Blackpool Airport including a) construction compounds of up to 20,000m2". Notwithstanding the fact that this stance is contrary to that agreed in the oBACMS with the Airport, this means that the entire area required for the cables and the compound will be sterilised. I have Mr Green with me who will speak after me to provide further details as to the Council's aspirations for the Solar Farm but, as you may already be aware, the Council wish to develop a Solar Farm within this area which is key component of the wider Silicon Sands project and this has already been delayed due to a lack of certainty in respect of the Applicants' development. This is not just due to the location and positioning of the cables directly preventing the implementation of the Solar Farm as intended but also by virtue of the Applicants' intended occupation of the construction compound. I should point out that Article 21 of the dDCO refers to a DCO term of 7 years beginning on the day on which the Order is made. However, the draft Heads of Terms provided by the Applicants refer to an option period of 8 years. It is therefore implicit that the Applicants do not intend to take occupation of the construction compound for a period of up to 8 years. There will then follow a period of, as yet undetermined duration, before the compound is vacated. It is clear from this that, even if it desirable or viable to bring forward a reduced Solar Farm, it would be delayed indefinitely. The Applicant has not dissuaded me from this conclusion. To the extent that the Applicants should be allowed to use the designated construction compound at all it should only be for a restricted period within a defined period by agreement with the Council and BAPL so that the land is handed back well before it is required for the Solar Farm. It is not appropriate that the Solar Farm should be delayed indefinitely. Whilst I have no direct instructions on the assumed time period, I envisage that the Applicants would be required to complete their use of the construction compound within, say 18 months (to be discussed) of the DCO coming into effect so that the Solar Farm can be constructed immediately afterwards without further delay. It is important to point out, at this juncture, that the Applicants have been well aware of the Council's position from the outset of discussions in 2023 and it was understood that the Applicants' scheme would be designed to achieve co-existence with no disruption or delay. However, I understand from Dalcour Maclaren that, contrary to the record of discussions, the Applicants now dispute that they ever undertook to allow for the delivery of the Solar Farm. This further underlines my observation that there is a lack of internal coordination within the Applicants between those negotiating with the Council and the decision makers. In this regard, the Council met with 12 people from the Applicants on 22 March 2024. This was followed by a further meeting on the 27 March 2024 culminating in a presentation by the Applicants to the Council on 11 June 2024 wherein reference was made to the Solar Farm development. Furthermore, the records of subsequent exchanges in October and November 2024 clearly underline that the Applicants' representatives were fully aware of the position with Ms Jones, Mr Cottam and Mr O Brian confirming that "Coexistence considered achievable [for the Solar Farm] and Morgan & Morecambe support the solar scheme planned." It is therefore surprising that the scheme designs still make no allowance whatsoever for the Solar Farm and, as recently as August this year, Dalcour Maclaren were still questioning why I was still pressing them for confirmation in respect of design matters and cable depths.	The Applicants are seeking rights from the Council for plots: 03-010, 03-010i, 03-011, 04-001, 04-009, 04-010, 04-012 shown on the Land Plan – Onshore (REP6-006). The Applicants are seeking rights from Blackpool Airport Properties Limited for plots: 02-024, 02-029, 03-005, 03-006, 03-007, 03-008, 03-009, 03-009i, 03-012, 04-009, 04-010, 04-012 & 04-024 shown on the Land Plan – Onshore (REP6-006). The following plots were removed from the order limits following the acceptance of the Change Request: 02-026, 02-027. The following plots are unregistered land of which the Applicants are seeking confirmation of title from both Blackpool Borough Council and Blackpool Airport Properties Limited: 04-003, 04-002, 04-003, 04-005, 04-006, 04-007, 04-008, 04-011 The Applicants issued a drawing to the Council on 27th October 2025 to facilitate the ongoing discussions around how the Transmission Assets and the proposed solar farm will be able to coexist. This was discussed at a technical meeting with the Council which took place on Monday, 27Th October 2025. The Applicants await formal feedback from the Council following that meeting. Both parties have agreed to hold a follow-up technical workshop in November to further assess these interactions and to develop design interfaces between the Transmission Assets and the solar farm, including further consideration of potential construction coordination scenarios. The Applicants will issue updated HoTs for the plots listed above once the Council has confirmed agreement on the identified areas that may be subject to constraints arising from project interfaces. The Applicants remain committed to ongoing engagement with the Council to ensure that the design of the Transmission Assets allows for practical coexistence with the proposed solar farm, where feasible. As noted above, the Applicants and the Council have agreed to hold fortnightly meetings from November to maintain consistent and meaningful progress. There is also an additional dedicated technical workshop planned between the Applicants' Engineering teams and the Council in the last week of November to further develop the coexisting designs for the cable corridor and the proposed solar farm. This workshop will also inform the ongoing HoTs discussions for the Airport land, with the intention of reaching agreement as soon as practicable.

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
	In light of this the Council had a meeting on 28 August 2025 with Mr O Brian, Mr Hesleton, Mr Cottam and Ms Stoddard for the Applicants together with two of their engineers. It was agreed at that meeting that the Applicants would redesign their scheme to enable the delivery of the Solar Farm, provide information on areas of no build close to jointing bays and confirm main depth of cable and confirm the position within two weeks. Needless to say, nothing has been received. I spoke to Dalcour Maclaren on 2 October 2025 pointing out that time is very much of the essence, and he agreed to discuss the possibility of the Applicants (i.e., his clients) providing written confirmation to this Examination that they would design their scheme to accommodate the Solar Farm. I was also advised that the Applicants' engineers would confirm that their clients' scheme had been redesigned. Once again, and consistent with the overall approach of the Applicants, nothing has been received. In short, the Applicants have been fully aware of the Council's need to deliver the Solar Farm in its entirety as part of a scheme that is of benefit to local taxpayers , Business and residents since at least 2023 but, as evidenced by the current Heads of Terms, the proposed locations of the cables and the construction yard, and despite the assurances provided by those representatives of the Applicants who have engaged with the Council team, the Applicants' decision makers have made no meaningful effort to accommodate the Council's needs. The benefits to the local community of the solar farm as an integral part of the Silicon Sands project are therefore at significant risk. I do not wish to labour each point, but I would like to highlight the main differences between the Council and the Applicants as set out in the Applicants' Heads of Terms as they go right to the heart of the Applicants' approach in this matter and lack of regard to commonly accepted principles. There are other differences, but these are probably sufficient for today's purposes. For clarity, the Applicants have been well aware of these points for some considerable time hence none of this will be news to them save that they may not have been communicated back up the chain of command.	
REP6-210 210.5	**Compulsory Acquisition powers** The Applicants' position is that they wish to retain full access to compulsory acquisition powers regardless of any voluntary agreements. This means that, in the example of Starr Gate, they will still have the ability to take possession and prevent the RNLI, Coastguard, ambulances, police and other public users from taking this access as well as shutting down the Starr Gate tram depot. With regard to the Airport operations, this also means that the Applicants could effectively rip up the cooperation agreement. The Airport urgently needs a land agreement that is 'back to back' with the Cooperation Agreement PLUS any refinements necessary to accommodate the Council's solar farm project as otherwise BAPL's and Council's objections to the CA powers included in the order will not be withdrawn as the powers sought are considered to be excessive and not in the public interest given that they are sought across an operational airport that is licensed by the CAA. Furthermore, any agreement with the Council in respect of the solar farm would be at risk which, in turn, will impact upon investor appetite thereby undermining the Silicon Sands project. It is wholly unreasonable for the Applicants to be negotiating agreements whilst retaining the ability to over-ride those agreements should they wish to do so at a later date. In summary, it is imperative that the Applicants undertake not to exercise CA powers in respect of the Council, BAPL and the Airport operations because: • The oBACMS/Cooperation Agreement could be over-ruled by the Applicants thereby placing Airport operations at risk to the detriment of users of the Airport and the public • • The funding of the Solar Farm will be at risk as lenders will have no certainty that the Applicants will not simply over-ride any agreement such that the lending risk increases exponentially.	The Statement of Reasons (REP6-018) sets out the Applicants approach to compulsory acquisition powers and temporary possession powers. The Applicants also reiterated and confirmed in their Deadline 6 response to the hearing action point CAH3_3 (REP6-178) that to ensure delivery of both projects, the development consent for each project's works must be underpinned by compulsory acquisition and temporary possession powers. This is an accepted and well-precedented approach for DCO applications. The Applicants can confirm no agreement has been made with any landowners or interest regarding the removal of powers from the draft DCO due to the potential impediment this would have on the delivery of the projects. The Applicants and the Council have had further discussions in relation to how to resolve the Council's concerns through the voluntary agreements and will continue to engage with the Council on this. The Applicants are confident this matter can be resolved through the negotiation of each set of HoTs. In relation to Starr Gate specifically, the Applicants have clearly set out their position in REP5-127 and REP6-178. The Applicants would highlight that, whilst there remains disagreement over two plots of land (the slipway and the beach) which are not public highway but privately owned land plots, significant progress has been made in relation to the land plots at Starr Gate as the majority of these are now adopted public highway and the Applicants have included drafting within Article 29 of the draft DCO (REP6-013) at Deadline 6 to restrict the use of temporary possession powers over the plots that are public highway. The Applicants consider that any remaining concerns that the Council has in relation to the private land plots (02-008ii and 02-007 shown on the Land Plan-Onshore (REP6-006) can be addressed through the Starr Gate HoTS and subsequently the voluntary agreement for Starr Gate.

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
	I understand that the Applicants have agreed to give up their CA powers elsewhere on this project which begs the question as to why they are apparently intent on retaining them against the Council and BAPL. I look forward to the Applicants taking a more appropriate and constructive approach.	
REP6-210 210.6	**Protective Provisions** The Applicants have refused to discuss Protective Provisions for the protection of either the Airport's or the Council's assets. Bearing in mind that they also refuse to give up their compulsory acquisition powers this further undermines the Airport oBACMS agreement. It is not acceptable that the Applicants are seemingly intent on retaining their CA powers and refusing to agree PP's. For clarity, if the Applicants agree not to exercise their CA powers the need for PPs lessens.	The Council provided details of the private drainage further to the Applicants' request in REP2-040 (Applicant's Response to Blackpool Borough Council Local Impact Report). These are part of a private drainage system, rather than apparatus managed by a statutory undertaker, and therefore the most appropriate mechanism for managing this interaction is through the voluntary land agreement that the Applicants and Council are currently negotiating. This is entirely consistent with the approach taken with other landowners. The Applicants consider that, in principle, this approach is now agreed following the latest meetings with the Council on 21st October and 28th October. The Applicants' position remains that protective provisions are not required as the Council is not a statutory undertaker and this drainage apparatus does not therefore fall under section 138 of the Planning Act 2008. The Applicants also highlight that commitments to maintain and, where required, restore existing land drainage systems are contained within the outline Code of Construction Practice (REP6-067) and therefore secured through Requirement 8 of Schedules 2A and 2B of the draft DCO (REP6-013). In relation to the principles of the cooperation agreement between the Applicants and Blackpool Airport, the Applicants would emphasise that this does not include any obligation for the Applicants to remove their compulsory acquisition powers from the draft DCO in relation to the airport land. The principle of the agreement was to establish a framework within which the Transmission Assets could proceed whilst allowing the Airport to continue operating. It covers known impacts for which the parties agreed specific mitigations, and there is a process to deal with any unknown impacts. The Applicants therefore do not consider that their position in relation to protective provisions or compulsory acquisition powers in any way undermines the principles of the cooperation agreement.
REP6-210 210.7	**Cable Depths** The current Heads of Terms still state that the cables will be installed at a depth of 1.2m with restrictions on any works more than 0.9m below the surface. This is incompatible with the oBACMS agreed with the Airport and will also prevent Solar Farm delivery. There is clearly a disconnect between the willingness of the Applicants to agree the oBACMS but apparent refusal to amend the Heads of Terms so that they accord with the oBACMS. The Council cannot agree to anything that prevents the Solar Farm from being delivered in full and in a timely manner. This means that is it incumbent upon the Applicants to commit to installing the cables in a manner and depth that doesn't cause any interference or delay to the delivery of the Solar Farm. The same point applies in respect of the construction yard which should be vacated by the Applicants to enable the Solar Farm to be implemented at the earliest opportunity.	The Applicants provided a draft drawing to the Council (on 27th October 2025) illustrating the maximum potential area of interaction between the transmission cables and the proposed solar farm. This indicative drawing demonstrates that the Applicants do not require sterilisation for the entire area required for the cables and that coexistence between the projects is entirely feasible; with only a requirement to manage design interfaces in two isolated areas of the land. The draft drawing aligns with the agreements already made in the Cooperation Agreement with Blackpool Airport and enables the Council to continue the design of the proposed solar development. The Applicants remain committed to working with the Council to continue the development of both designs ensuring that coexistence remains possible and to facilitate this have offered to provide independent support at the Applicants' cost. Cable depth and alignment considerations will be addressed through the ongoing design coordination process.
REP6-210 210.8	**Compensation** The Applicants have still to make any financial offer which is more than generic (i.e., £x) whilst insisting that the Council and BAPL accept an unspecified lump sum without any ability to have the matter determined by a Third Party. This does not demonstrate a genuine attempt by the Applicants to agree matters in accordance with the Guidance.	The Applicants will continue to discuss compensation with the Council in accordance with the compensation code which considers the diminution in land value as a result of the Transmission Assets. The Applicants understand commercial matters are not a point for the examination but will continue to discuss compensation through the ongoing heads of terms negotiations.
REP6-210 210.9	**Planning Matters** The current Heads of Terms prevent the Council and BAPL from making any planning applications. As such, the Council is prevented from even making a planning application for the Solar Farm. It is unreasonable that, having known about the Council's aspirations since 2023, the Applicants are still unable to advance their design to a stage where it is necessary to request a blanket ban on the Council progressing the Solar Farm. The approach appears to be that they will design it when they are ready to do so and will deal with the Solar Farm by placing the onus on the Council and BALP to make a compensation claim. This ignores the benefits of the Solar Farm scheme to local residents and taxpayers.	The Applicants refer to their response on to the Council's response to ExQ2 Q2.5.1.4 (see REP6-168). The Applicants' position is that co-existence of the project and a solar farm is possible and they will work with the Council to maximise the area available to solar development without prejudicing the construction, operation and maintenance of the Morgan and Morecambe cables. As set out at rows REP6-210.4 and REP6-210.7, the Applicants have provided an indicative drawing to the Council to aid discussions in relation to this matter forwards and will have a further technical meeting in the last week of November. Alongside this, the Applicants have also offered independent specialist advice to help progress the development of the solar proposal.

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
	The Council and BALP are of the view that the Applicants should commit to designing their scheme around the Solar Farm requirements. No credible explanation has been provided as to why this is not acceptable to the Applicant and proportionate to the impact of the Applicant's scheme on the public interest.	
REP6-210 210.10	**Summary** In conclusion the position of the Council and BAPL is that: 1) The Applicants have shown little, if any, real intention to agree mutually acceptable terms despite seeking to give the impression that they were prepared to coordinate their scheme with the Solar Farm 2) The Applicant's decision makers need to honour the agreements reached between their representatives and the Council 3) It is unacceptable that the Applicant is still unable to progress the design of their scheme such that they can provide confirmation that the Solar Farm can be delivered without interference. 4) No reason has been provided to the Council as to why, other than unwillingness on the part of the Applicants, their scheme and the Solar Farm could not be delivered together as originally proposed. 5) The Cables must be buried at sufficient depth so as there to be no impact on the use of the surface 6) The Construction Yard must be relocated away from the Solar Farm development site. Alternatively, the construction yard should only be used up to the point that the Council has obtained all relevant consents and appointed contractors such that it is in a position to deliver the Solar Farm. 7) The so-called Heads of Terms provided by the Applicants are not fit for purpose and do not represent a genuine attempt to reach agreement in accordance with all the discussions that have taken place since 2023 8) The Heads of Terms provided by the Council in respect of the Starr Gate access are entirely fit for purpose and, as acknowledged by the Applicant's representatives at the meeting dated 28 August 2025, they provide the Applicants with everything they need to use that access. No reason has been provided to explain the Applicants about turn and refusal to proceed on the basis agreed at the August meeting. The Council cannot allow there to be any fettering of the use of the access by the emergency services and existing users. 9) The Applicants must commit to forgoing their ability to exercise CA powers against the Council, the Airport and BAPL. 10)Ultimately, the Applicants need to take the significant benefit and need for the Solar Farm development and the Silicon Sands project seriously. In essence, it is the Council and BAPL's position that the Applicants have done little more than pay lip service to the principle of relying on CA powers as a matter of last resort and the clear lack of design finalisation or apparent willingness to appreciate the impact of their schemes on local residents, taxpayers and the wider community, underlines the point that their dDCO application is premature. It is this prematurity that threatens the Council's ability to deliver development that is clearly of significant importance to the local community and is in the Public Interest. There is therefore a clear conflict between the Applicants' understanding of Public Interest in respect of their scheme and the reality of the Council's attempts to deliver development that is genuinely for the benefit of the public. All the identified issues should be capable of being resolved if the Applicants were willing to take the Council and BAPL's position seriously.	The Applicants, the Council and BAPL have engaged in a series of productive meetings and discussions since CAH3 on 9 October 2025. Wider team meetings were held on 21, 27 and 28 October 2025 to discuss interactions at the three areas of Council-owned land. The Applicants and the Council have agreed to hold fortnightly meetings from November to maintain consistent and meaningful progress. There is also an additional dedicated technical workshop planned between the Applicants' Engineering teams and the Council in the last week of November to further develop the coexisting designs for the cable corridor and the proposed solar farm. This workshop will also inform the ongoing HoTs discussions for the Airport land, with the intention of reaching agreement as soon as practicable. The Applicants have issued updated HoTs to the Council for Starr Gate taking into account the Council's previous comments and are awaiting feedback on the document. Upon receipt of feedback from the Council, the Applicants will continue to work to resolve any remaining outstanding matters. The Applicants will be issuing the updated HoTs for the Lytham St Annes dunes by the end of October, taking into account the previous comments from the Council. Following detailed discussions at the meetings on 21 and 28 October, the Applicants believe that significant progress has been achieved, enabling agreement to be reached imminently for this area of land. The Applicants remain committed to ongoing engagement with the Council beyond the Examination and are confident that the positive momentum achieved will enable both parties to finalise the remaining land agreements in the coming months. The Applicants also reaffirm their commitment to ensuring the Transmission Assets and solar farm can coexist effectively through coordinated design and construction planning.

3 Applicants' Response to IPs' submissions at Deadline 6 – People with Interest in Land

3.1 Christine Fare (REP6-212), Fare Farms Limited (REP6-217) and John Fare (REP6-222)

Table 3.1: REP6-212 – Christine Fare, also Fare Farms Limited (REP6-217) and John Fare (REP6-222)

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
REP6-212 212.1	My name is Andrew T Coney and I am instructed on behalf of my clients here to act on their behalf in respect of the Morecambe and Morgan Wind Farm Developments and the current DCO Inquiry into the same. I was first instructed by my clients in late December 2023. During the first half of 2024 we engaged with Dalcour Maclaren, the agents acting on behalf of the Schemes (the Morgan and Morecambe Wind Farm Schemes) to discuss the impact thereof on my client's business and property at L Freckleton. By July 2024 we had supplied a substantive amount of information – all the information the Schemes requested to explain my client's businesses, his tenancy agreements and his farming operation along with a detailed analysis of his business. The purpose for these without prejudice conversations and negotiations from my client's perspective and as I and they understood it from the Scheme's perspective through Dalcour Maclaren, was to explore the possibility of entering into an agreement whereby it would be accepted by all that it would be in the interests of all – to see my client's business cease and the Schemes proceed unfettered by the complications trying to mitigate the Scheme's impact on my client's business because at that stage (and consistently throughout our negotiations) it is my and my client's view (for reasons I have explained already and will explain again) that this cannot continue in a viable manner with the Schemes as proposed in the Draft DCO.	The Applicants thank Mr Coney and his clients for their time and co-operation in engaging with the Applicants and assisting the Applicants with their understanding of the impacts of the Transmission Assets on their business, and of the potential mitigation measures which could be adopted. The Applicants are not seeking to extinguish any business as a result of the Transmission Assets, but are instead seeking to understand in greater detail how landholdings will be impacted and to mitigate those impacts in so far as possible in order to enable the existing business to continue. Mr Coney will appreciate the requirement on the Applicants to take a sequential approach to assessment, considering mitigations and thereafter compensation. Similarly, the Applicants are conscious of the duty on those impacted by compulsory acquisition to mitigate their losses and will continue to work with Mr & Mrs Fare to support them to do that. The Applicants believe it is common ground with Mr Coney that a farming enterprise can continue (a move to beef from dairy) at this landholding during and after construction of the Transmission Assets. However, given the emphasis Mr Coney has placed on the Fares' strong preference to continue dairy farming, the Applicants have also sought to consider the extent to which a grazing dairy farm can continue, both during and after construction of the Transmission Assets. Understanding that position, and the measures which may be required to facilitate this, required the production of a second Grays report and associated assumptions. In order for the Applicants to fully understand the business and how it operates, to ensure that adequate mitigation measures can be considered, it is reasonable and necessary that the Applicants would need to gather more detailed information from the Occupier directly. The Applicants have proactively done this, including making voluntary financial contributions towards time given by Mr & Mrs Fare and their professional advisors, as the information is important given the complexity of the enterprise, and to seek out specialist independent farm business and dairy veterinary advice to understand what mitigation measures are available.
REP6-212 212.2	In November 2024 Dalcour Maclaren on behalf of the Schemes advised that GSC Grays were being instructed to prepare a Business Impact Assessment of the Schemes on my client's property and business. 1.6 With 3 working days' notice GSC Grays came on the 18th December 2024 to inspect the farm and the substantial data pack demanded (including 5 years' worth of accounts). The considerable amount of detailed data requested included past, present and future performance data and this was delivered. It took Grays and the scheme until April 2025 to produce their Draft Report. That report was only made available to my clients by the Schemes after my clients agreed to sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement at the insistence of the Schemes. A redacted copy – merely redacting sensitive commercial financial information about my client's businesses is being submitted by Deadline 6 by the Schemes. We were advised by the Schemes that the purpose of the Grays Report was to help inform the Schemes as to the impact of their proposals on my client's property by an Independent Experts in farm business management.	The Applicants submitted a summary of both Grays reports at Deadline 6 in response to hearing action point CAH3_5 (REP6-182). The Applicants wish to emphasise, as is set out in the Applicants' Rule 17 Response (S_D7_4), the Stage 2 report confirmation that were Landholding 26 marketed, it "would likely generate significant demand from prospective tenants intending to continue as milk production". This supports the position that the site would remain viable as a dairy farming business with appropriate mitigations in place, albeit at a reduced scale.

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
	The conclusions of the Grays Report are self-explanatory and in our submission the key ones from that are as follows – a) There is an agreed assessment of an average profit for my client's business. It is a highly profitable dairy enterprise. b) The Dairy enterprise is incapable of continuing in its current form if the Schemes as proposed proceed. c) That the appropriate alternative mitigation farming system is a beef system. d) For the Inspectorate's ease I attach at Appendix 1 and 2 two plans, the first showing the extent of my client's land holding and whether it is owned or tenanted and at Appendix 2 a plan showing the overall impact of the Schemes on that land holding.	
REP6-212 212.3	The primary issue here is one of access. My client's Dairy enterprise is described in the Grays Report and is a grass based grazing system making highly efficient use of grass as the primary source for production of milk. The cows flows naturally and freely in an undisturbed manner across the entire farm through an extensive network of strategically placed to cow tracks and paddock graze intensively. The impact of the permanent and temporary land take and the uncertainty around the timing and delivery of one or both or either Scheme have led myself and my clients to determine the business as currently constituted cannot operate during the construction and delivery of the Schemes and that furthermore a reduced scale version thereof would not be viable because of the issues of scale and efficiency. In our minds, the Grays Report substantially confirms that. In the six months that have followed the publication of the initial Grays Report, negotiations have continued with the Schemes around a potential settlement agreement. The Schemes have requested further information and advised that they wish to consider whether or not there were any engineering mitigation proposals that could mitigate the impact of the Schemes on my client's business and therefore allow it to continue in some shape or form. This meeting was held on the 13th May. Those engineering mitigation proposals were shared with my clients on 22nd September 2025. At a similar time, the Scheme advised that they wish to take advice from Veterinary Experts on the impact of moving cow flow.	The Applicants recognise the Fares' concerns, however as is recognised by the Stage 2 Report, it is considered that a viable dairy farming business could continue at the site so long as appropriate mitigation measures can be agreed. As set out in the Applicants' response to REP6-212.1, consideration of potential mitigation measures will require additional information from the Fare's such that any proposed measures can fully account for the individual requirements of the business.
REP6-212 212.4	My clients agreed to that proposal and we agreed on the appointment of Mrs E Bland to commission an Independent Report to consider how the construction of the two Sub-stations, 2 – temporary build areas, 2 easements in and 2 easements out, on would have on the Dairy business and my client. At the 22nd September meeting the Vet Mrs E Bland and GSC Gray's representatives was hosted. A discussion of the mitigation options commenced including full farm access, and a real time cow flow demonstration down a mile of track, to help all involved understand the impact to the milking herd.	To fully assess the impact of the projects and the proposed mitigation options, the Applicants felt it was important to commission independent veterinary experts to assess any cow health or behavioural issuesthat could arise and provide independent expert advice on this. The applicants appointed two independent veterinary consultants at the same time to provide advice which was then in turn incorporated into the Grays report. One of the consultants (Mrs E Bland) was suggested by the Fares and the second consultant (Owen Atkinson) was a consultant identified by the applicant. In the interests of fairness and equality, the Applicantd decided to appoint both consultants. It is noted that the Fares did not agree with the appointment of the consultant that was proposed by applicants. The Applicants submitted a summary, which takes into account the evidence provided by both vets, at Deadline 6 in response to hearing action point CAH3_5 (REP6-182). The Applicants wish to place on record our thanks to the Fares for providing a real time cow flow demonstration on the 22nd of September. This demonstration and previous farm walkovers in the past have given the Applicants a good understanding of how the farm practically operates and any challenges and opportunities that exist moving forward.
REP6-212 212.5	At the end of September, the Schemes then instructed Dr Owen Atkinson, a Veterinary Expert, to commission a further Report in respect of the same issues without the knowledge of my client.	The two independent Veterinary Experts' reports have been Appended to the Stage 2 Grays Report (REP6-182). The timeframes receiving these reports following the farm visit (22 September 2025) and the finalisation of the second Grays report, which takes into account the evidence provided by both demonstrates the tight turn around time from receiving the vet reports to sending on the draft for discussion report to Mr Coney.

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
	On Wednesday, 15 th October, the Schemes shared with myself and my clients, a draft of a further report prepared by GSC Grays entitled Business Impact Mitigation Options Assessment of that Report and we believe that a redacted copy is going to be submitted to the Inspectorate by Deadline 6 by the Schemes. The draft of that Report attaches to it, as Appendices, the two Veterinary Reports referred to above. It is interesting to note that Grays were instructed to provide that further report as early as August 2025 and the details here were only shared with my clients a week ago. The DCO Inquiry and the Inspectorate already have my previous Submissions and my verbal evidence given at the Compulsory Purchase Hearings.	The Applicants at CAH_3 explained that the Stage 1 Report was intended to support discussions, and the Stage 1 Report itself confirms that it was preliminary and to be followed by a more detailed report. The Applicants remain willing to discuss the results of the Stage 2 Report and explore any further support or mitigations which could be offered to Mr Coney's client.
REP6-212 212.6	Throughout the last 21 months, my clients and I have done all we have been asked of in terms of supplying information to the Schemes on the clear understanding as to what we were trying to achieve – a negotiated settlement between the Parties in advance of the confirmation of the DCO. We have accommodated every visit, every conversation, every request for information. In total, my clients have committed in excess of 535 hours of their time dealing with matters pertaining to the Schemes so far as it affects their property. The vast majority of that has been co-operating with the Schemes rather than objecting to the Schemes. Whilst committing all that time and emotional commitment to these negotiations, Mr Fare has continued to run his farming business and Mrs Fare has continued to run her Independent Consultancy. Mr and Mrs Fare have entered into these negotiations in good faith. As I have previously advised, they don't want the Scheme to proceed, but if the Scheme has to proceed, they rather it proceeded in such a manner as it did not affect .	The Applicants thank Mr Coney and his clients for their time and co-operation in understanding the impacts of the Transmission Assets on their business and have ensured that the time given by him and Mr & Mrs Fare has been recompensed. The Applicants confirm that compensation for time spent on the project has been settled in agreement with Mr Coney and Mr and Mrs Fare.
REP6-212 212.7	**THE PROPOSED MITIGATION** Having set the background here, the Schemes as I advised above, only very recently shared their proposed mitigation strategy. The Schemes requested a meeting to discuss the further Report from GSC Grays, Business Impact Mitigation Options having supplied the same to us on Wednesday of last week (15.10.2025), we met them on Friday (17.10.2025). The dates please should be noted – Grays were instructed in August to prepare this report and it is only shared with us this last week and a week in advance of Deadline 6. The Schemes wanted to discuss with my clients and I the Grays further Report and we declined to do so, advising the Scheme that they could submit a redacted copy (in respect of commercially sensitive financial information) to Deadline 6 with both Parties then making their own representations in respect of the same and hence these further Representations. As a consequence, and over the last week, my clients and I have considered the further Grays Report, we have not had the time to prepare or submit detailed Counter Proposals because we have not had time to properly consider the same. I would, however, on behalf of my clients, like to make the following observations of the further Report that would allow the Inspectorate and the Examining Body to draw their own conclusions when considering this further Report and the outcomes of the first Grays Report.	The Applicants have previously explained the complexities in preparing the Stage 2 Report and this was shared with Mr and Mrs Fare at the earliest opportunity. The Applicants acknowledge that this was one week before Deadline 6, however it was not possible to share this sooner and it was then necessary to also submit this to the examination. The Applicants would also like to note that that the farm visit to inform the reports was carried out on 22 September 2025, with the reports from the vets received on 1 October 2025 and 17 October 2025. The turn around time of issuing the draft report for discussion required these, hence the timeframes. However, the Applicants remain committed to proactively engaging further with the Fares in order to continue discussion on suitable mitigations, in order to facilitate the continued operation of the land as a dairy farming business.
REP6-212 212.8	The following, therefore, is a summary of the observations we have on the further Grays Report in respect of the Business Impact Assessment. The scope of the report and the general approach is clearly stated in the Executive Summary, crucially Grays are instructed to assume that where the provision of new and/or amended	The Applicants note Mr Coneys comments in regard to the mitigation proposal and would advise that the executive summary states that it should not be read in isolation from the remainder of the report and that the instructions to Grays are noted earlier in the report. It is clear that the instructions to Grays does not seek for them is to provide their advice "assuming that the mitigation proposals will work" as stated by Mr Coney.

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
	infrastructure and/or mitigations is required to deliver the continuance of Dairy Farming, the Projects will provide such infrastructure and their own expense and to the appropriate standard. Grays are assuming that the mitigation proposals will work. Careful examination needs to be given to the two Veterinary Reports, Mrs E Bland is a well respected Dairy Veterinary Expert who specialises in grass based systems. She has inspected the farm visited the location and reviewed the cow flow and assessed the potential cow behaviour.	Under section 1.2 of the terms of reference for the Grays report, it states the scope of our assessment was to include: 1. Analysis of how a farm business could continue to operate in light of the anticipated impacts on the farm holding from the Development. 2. Identification of any necessary changes to business practices or land use that may be required to maintain a viable farming operation on the holding 3. Identification and recommendation of reasonable mitigation measures that could be implemented by the Projects to reduce adverse impacts on the Businesses, including: a. engineering solutions b. farming practice solutions c. any other support - financial, technical or otherwise The Applicants note that the Grays reports were independently produced, and as per the terms of reference, an assessment was carried out as to the practicalities of implementing the mitigation solutions. Grays have reported "that the business could generate sufficient profits both during and after construction to service a remuneration to Mr Fare, and concluded that the business could continue to be financially viable" The Applicants would welcome the opportunity to meet with Mr and Mrs Fare to consider the report once they have had more time to review and provide further feedback noting Mr Coneys comments about "not having enough had the time to prepare or submit detailed Counter Proposals". The Applicants have a robust, evidence based, independent report from Grays as farm business consultants advising the business is financially viable and the engineering mitigation solutions are workable.
REP6-212 212.9	The Grays' conclusions in the Executive Summary clearly rely on the assumptions that the Projects will provide the unproven mitigation proposals. It relies on Dr Atkinson's views and cheerfully ignores Mrs E Blands and it acknowledges that the reduction in scale will require a different management approach from Mr Fare of which they feel is not unreasonable to expect a prudent person seeking to mitigate his losses in such a situation. A sea change from their first Report where they clearly state the appropriate mitigation here is a beef based enterprise. At a high level under Section 2 of their Report and development scenarios we don't believe that Grays have taken sufficient account of the impact of temporary land take and/or the unknown timings of the Schemes proceeding, neither do we believe the mitigation proposals proposed adequately deal with this. Dairying enterprises have at least a three year lead in terms of breeding replacement stock in advance of committing to breeding replacement stock. We have to be able to predict what land that will be available three years' in advance of committing to breeding replacement stock. As I have previously advised, both in writing and verbally, the uncertainty around the timing and delivery of these Schemes is one of the major factors impacting my client's business and mental well being and the ability of the business to be sustained going forward throughout the construction phase.	The Applicants would note that the Grays reports were independently produced, and would welcome the opportunity to meet with Mr and Mrs Fare to consider the comments now provided. The Applicants have submitted a comprehensive summary of both reports, taking into account the veterinary evidence from both experts, at Deadline 6 in response to hearing action point CAH3_5 (REP6-182).
REP6-212 212.10	The review of the mitigation options is clearly based on the statements and assumptions made. It acknowledges that Dr Atkinson concludes that it would be challenging but feasible to continue a grazing system while Mrs E Bland's view it is not feasible to maintain a Dairy enterprise. The	

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
	Grays Report and the Schemes then choose to ignore Mrs E Bland's view and proceed to argue that the impact here can be mitigated to allow a Dairying System to continue. If I am being charitable that is a very convenient line of argument to take and I do not believe that Grays would be able to sustain, as a professional Expert, the line they have taken here, without the clear assumptions and instructions that they have been told to act under by the Schemes. If you ask a question in a manner that can only be answered one way, that does not make the answer correct.	
REP6-212 212.11	There is no evidence in the further Business Impact Assessment other than the assertion and view of Dr Atkinson that the proposed mitigation measures are or will be capable of being delivered or working and indeed, in his own words, Dr Atkinson concludes that even under his proposals it will be challenging to do so. The financial viability of the proposed mitigation solution is fundamentally flawed because again, there is no evidence in the Business Impact Assessment to show that the mitigation proposals proposed will actually work, in fact the evidence is to the contrary. The Grays conclusions are again, based on Dr Atkinson's views and completely ignore those of Mrs E Bland who was appointed by the Schemes as an Independent Expert. So far as the financial information contained in the Appendices are concerned, we have neither had the time or frankly the inclination to consider it in any detail because we believe that the Grays Report is so fundamentally flawed because of the instructions upon which were given to Grays and the assumptions that they have made.	
REP6-212 212.12	However, what is worthy of further commentary is in respect of the Draft Expert Report of Dr Owen Atkinson. I have already highlighted the lateness of his instructions and the fact that this is a desktop assessment. Again, I think it is interesting to note his instructions and the assumed facts. If you ask a question in a certain way, you get the answer you want. We would fundamentally disagree with Dr Atkinson's statements in Section 3 of his Report on the performance of this business when compared to average Dairying businesses. He is not comparing like with like. My client's business is widely recognised as one of the most efficient Dairying businesses in the North West of England and that recognition has been made by many and independently. How Dr Atkinson can at Paragraph 44 say admit that he does not know how precisely the grazing rotation routine works and then go on to argue that it could be sustained by the mitigation proposals demonstrates a fundamental misunderstanding of my client's business and how the operation works Dr Atkinson's mitigation proposals are again fundamentally flawed. Neither he nor the Schemes have any idea as to the timing or nature of construction or the length of the construction periods, so how he can state that the disruption will not be long lasting is frankly beyond us. Whilst the provision of underpasses or over bridges might assist, to base recommendations on the assumptions that there could be communication between the construction of these Schemes and my client is frankly laughable. These Schemes have already demonstrated through the Environmental and Ground Investigation Survey that they have been undertaking in the last eighteen months that communication between the Schemes, their Agents, their Contractors and	

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
	those affected is frankly appalling, a point that is made widely to the Inspectorate and the Inquiry throughout the DCO Inquiry.	
REP6-212 212.13	At Section 4, Dr Atkinson accepts that he has not considered beef rearing in any depth, in fact I don't think he has considered it at all and the assumptions that he makes as to 150 or a 200 cow dairy herd going forward are made without any actual evidence that can be the case, this is all based on opinion and as with the Grays Report it is an opinion caveated by the nature of the instruction and assumptions made and no evidence has been submitted to show that the mitigation proposals, assumptions and instructions can be delivered successfully. Dr Atkinson's conclusions are based on assumptions rather than the facts and the performance of my client's Farming Business. At Paragraph 1.15 Dr Atkinson accepts continuation of the Dairy Enterprise at during construction is feasible but challenging and the proposed mitigation strategies are sound and yet gives no evidence, just opinion, as how he arrives at those conclusions. To say that we disagree with Dr Atkinson's conclusions is an understatement. Alternatively, Mrs E Bland gives a considered balanced and evidenced Report as to the impact of the proposed mitigation on my client's business and concludes that although various mitigation factors have been considered, the reduction in herd size require to continue the Business as Dairy would be so large that the Business would be unlikely to be viable financially and would be unlikely to meet compliance issues with the ARLA contract in several areas. Mrs E Bland is a recognised Expert in grazing systems and has inspected the Farm and knows the Farm.	
REP6-212 212.14	**CONCLUSIONS** It is my submission and it is my client's view here that regrettably if these Schemes are to proceed then his Dairying Enterprise will have to cease, that is not something they wish to contemplate but they are being forced to do. They have entered into in a completely bona fide manner, what they felt would be an open and honest negotiation with the Schemes to provide a solution and an outcome that would see them compensated for the closure of my client's business and allow the Schemes to proceed unfettered with the construction of the largest engineering elements of this Scheme – the two Sub-Stations and all the cable runs in and out along with the permanent accesses thereto. That would be achieved by effectively severing 75% of my client's Farm, i.e. everything north of the new permanent access road to the Sub-Stations. As previously advised and stated, my client's highly profitable Dairy Business is only profitable and so successful for the following reasons – a) It is ruthlessly efficient on the use of grass for milk production. b) It is ruthlessly efficient in keeping all other costs in the Business to a minimum. c) The grassland management is second to none and drives those efficiencies. d) The paddock grazing system delivers all of that and the free movement of cattle throughout the Farm on the cow track system and the paddock grazing system is what delivers that.	The Applicants refer to the responses provided at REP6-212 212.1 and REP6-212 212.5. The Applicants recognise the concerns raised and remain fully committed to working with Mr & Mrs Fare to mitigate the impact of the Transmission Assets on the farming business in so far as practicable, in order that a viable farming business may continue.
REP6-212 212.15	With a three year lead time for breeding replacement livestock my clients have to know what land is going to be available to them reliably over three years in advance. Simply providing additional replacement cow tracks to unknown quantities of land with unknown dates as to when it will be available is not mitigating the losses here, it is merely going to compound them.	The Applicants refer to the responses provided at REP6-212 212.1 and REP6-212 212.5. The Applicants recognise the concerns raised and remain fully committed to working with Mr & Mrs Fare to mitigate the impact of the Transmission Assets in so far as practicable, in order that a viable farming business may continue.

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
	I regret to advise that in my view the manner in which the Schemes have conducted these negotiations and their investigations is wholly regrettable, they are putting huge pressure on my clients both from a practical, physical and mental perspective over the last twenty months, constantly promising answers and only coming up with further questions. Without the economies of scale and the efficiencies in the Business, the Dairying Business at is not sustainable and is not profitable, I know that, Mr and Mrs Fare know that and Mrs E Bland knows that.	
REP6-212 212.16	Dr Atkinson and GSC Grays are only able to conclude otherwise because of the instructions they have been given and the assumptions upon which their views are made and I have demonstrated this and other evidence given to the Inquiry on behalf of my clients that those instructions and assumptions are fundamentally flawed because the mitigation proposals upon which they are based are completely unproven to work. The Inspectorate have acknowledged that is the most severely impacted property on the Scheme, they like we, have pushed the Scheme to engage in meaningful dialogue and updates with regard to the impact of their proposals on and whilst the Schemes have spent a lot of time, and I am sure money, in considering this, they have not actually done anything to provide any mitigation that can work. It would be my submission that the only way to reduce the impact of these Schemes on is to see them redesigned so as to move the Sub-Stations and the cable runs into them off or for the Schemes not to proceed at all. Failure to do either of those things will necessitate the closure of my client's Dairying Business with all the implications it has for my clients.	The Applicants refer to the responses provided at REP6-212 212.1 and REP6-212 212.5. The Applicants recognise the concerns raised and remain fully committed to working with Mr & Mrs Fare to mitigate the impact of the Transmission Assets in so far as practicable, in order that a viable farming business may continue.
REP6-212 212.17	I and my clients remain available, as we have been throughout this process, to the Schemes and indeed the Inspectorate to further address any questions or concerns they have in respect of the impact of these Schemes on and Mr Fare's businesses and we would happily address any questions or concerns the Inspectorate have in respect of this further Submission and any further Submission made by the Schemes so far as they affect	The Applicants refer to the responses provided at REP6-212 212.1 and REP6-212 212.5. The Applicants recognise the concerns raised and remain fully committed to working with Mr & Mrs Fare to mitigate the impact of the Transmission Assets in so far as practicable, , in order that a viable farming business may continue.

3.2 Deryck Lund and Michelle Fare REP6-216

Table 3.2: REP6-216 – Deryck Lund and Michelle Fare

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
REP6-216 216.1	Deryck Lund and Michelle Fare are the owners and business partners of which is directly impacted by the Projects proposed acquisition of permanent rights across the farm land and along their private farm road, together with a proposal to occupy land for temporary working areas which could be for several years during substation construction.	The Applicants note the response and are engaging with Deryck Lund and Michelle Fare on the mitigation measures suitable to ensure continued operation of the farming business along with negotiations to agree heads of terms for land rights sought.
REP6-216 216.2	SI Works 34A40A41A – The landowner has reiterated time after time that it is not acceptable to use their private farm road for any Project traffic which was seemingly understood when the Project used alternative access for the licence surveys, plus the Project has a permanent access road from the A583 which can quite easily link to the green lane environment mitigation access route. However without any consultation with the landowner the Project has included in the DCO this permanent right of access along their private road crossing the front of their two houses and through their yard as well as Project construction traffic.	The Applicants refer to their response RR-0458 458.3 (PDA-007)
REP6-216 216.3	SI Works 34A states –permanent access including— (a) creation and improvement of access to highway; and (b) works to visibility splays. Improvements to the private road is not acceptable. The Project cannot improve visibility as the splay required are is separate land ownership. We reiterate this is wholly unnecessary when a permanent haul road is proposed from the A583	The Applicants refer to their response RR-0458 458.4 (PDA-007). The proposed access for the Morgan Onshore Substation, work number 23A does not adjoin the existing track to access work number 49A and therefore the proposed route for permanent access to the mitigation land and onshore export cable from Lower Lane is imperative to ensure continued access for operation and maintenance.
REP6-216 216.4	**Land Rights Tracker Comments of the Affected Landowner** Negotiations with Dalcour MacLaren over amendments required to the draft compulsory purchase order to remove SI Works 34A40A41A from the schedule have been rejected due to the advanced stage of the examination hearing, however our concerns and absolute resolve to not agree to access along the farm road has been expressed from the outset of meetings with both Dalcour MacLaren and the Projects from over 18 months ago. Dalcour MacLaren advised the landowner by email on 21 November 2024 that the farm road would not be used for HGV traffic as HGV traffic will use the A583 permanent haul road. Dalcour MacLaren also stated by email on 21 November 2024 that Works No 40A was for temporary construction traffic to create the pond mitigation area Works No 49A	Work No. 34A provides permanent access to the cable corridor, including the creation and improvement of access where it does not currently exist. Section 3.15.6 of Volume 1, Chapter 3: Project Description explains that the operational access routes have been designed and included along the onshore export cable corridor and 400kV grid connection corridor, from the landfall to the national grid, to enable periodic access for routine operations and maintenance activities (e.g. routine inspections of joint bays via link boxes). Routine inspections are likely to take place on an annual basis. Work No. 40A as specified within Part 1 (Authorised Development) of Schedule 1 to the draft DCO (REP6-013) is construction access for Work No 35A and Work No. 49A. It is to provide construction access for the permanent environmental mitigation area west of Morgan's onshore substation. Work No. 41A as specified within Part 1 (Authorised Development) of Schedule 1 to the draft DCO (REP6-013) is a permanent environmental access for Work No. 49A. The Applicants acknowledge that the landowner understands the requirement for work number 40A as set out in their response REP6-216 216.6 below.
REP6-216 216.5	Dalcour MacLaren and Morgan Project have verbally expressed that the Morgan Project will enter into a written agreement to vary the DCO SI Works to extinguish Works No 34A and 41A which were permanent access on the farm road. It was verbally agreed that permanent rights on the farm road were not necessary as permanent access can and would be taken from the A583 permanent haul road however this written agreement has not been forthcoming to date other than an expression of agreement not to enforce permanent access rights under Works No's 34A and/or 41A.	The Applicants require the rights sought for Works No 34A and 41A as set out within the order limits and the application. The rights sought are essential to provide access to the cable corridor for maintenance works. The Applicants are discussing alternative options that are outside of the order limits with the landowner, however these are not yet secured and therefore the Applicants require the rights set out in the order to ensure delivery of the project.
REP6-216 216.6	In addition Work No 40A which is the construction access to create the mitigation area Works No 49A is accepted by the landowner as part of this proposed agreement not to enforce Works No's 34A and/or 41A. on the understanding that this temporary access will be for a track digger delivered on a trailer and workmen vehicles ingress and egress for the time period required to create the mitigation ponds if this is indeed required to be created prior to the A583 permanent haul road being made available for access.	The Applicants can confirm this requirement is correct.

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
REP6-216 216.7	The proposed written agreement has not been drafted by Dalcour MacLaren therefore as at Deadline 6 there is no agreement between the parties which the landowner is disappointed with given the principle was agreed months ago.	The Applicants confirm that the agreement of this is also subject to acceptance of the proposals by a neighbouring landowner and therefore requires their agreement prior to negotiations moving forward.
REP6-216 216.8	The landowner has therefore not agreed heads of terms for the proposed permanent acquisition of land for the A583 permanent haul road Works No 23A insofar as it affects this land ownership. The landowner has therefore not agreed heads of terms for the proposed temporary working area of land adjoining te proposed Morgan Substation Works No 22A insofar as it affects this land ownership. Heads of terms are otherwise in an agreed format subject to contract and could have been concluded several months ago however this unresolved issue of permanent access along the landowner's farm road is unnecessary, unacceptable and remains an unresolved objection.	The Applicants acknowledge the position which is reflected in the land rights tracker (REP6-123) the Applicants will continue to engage with the land owner and their representative to agree heads of terms for the rights and permanent acquisition sought past the end of examination in hope to reach an agreeable position on these matters.

3.3 Gordon Ashworth REP6-219

Table 3.3: REP6-219 – Gordon Ashworth

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
REP6-219 219.1	My name is Gordon Ashworth and a land owner and resident of this area . I want to make it clear we are not against progress or renewable energy, we are against the destruction of our country side in the name of convenience. The proposed cabling corridor would cut through productive farm land, our protected green belt, and vital wildlife habitats. These are not empty fields, they are living, working landscapes that feed families, substain local businesses and provides sanctuary for migrating birds that have crossed our skies for generations.	The Applicants note the response and are engaging with all landowners within the order limits to discuss the land rights sought and potential mitigation measures to reduce the disruption to their holdings. The Applicants have provided a summary of landholdings, consideration of interaction and accommodation measures that could be suitable to minimise impact (REP4-111) and are continuing to engage with landowners on these matters.
REP6-219 219.2	One of the many farms affected belongs to my brother in law (redacted). It's a place that's been cared for and worked responsibly for decades and now faces the prospect of a huge substation being built on it .the impact would be devastating to the farm future and a deep emotional toll on the family that has dedicated its life to the land . Once farm land like that is torn up, it's gone , soil, drainage, biodiversity. They don't just recover. The green belt exists to protect communities like ours from this kind of irreversible damage, and it should not be treated as expendable. Local people and small businesses will face years and years of disruption, blocked access, noise and traffic on roads never designed for heavy machinery.	The Applicants have engaged with the Occupier and have undertaken two assessments on the farm which consider the impacts and mitigations that would reduce the impacts on the business. These reports and finding have been shared within the Farm Business Assessment (REP6-182). The Applicants acknowledge that the proposals will result in substantial change in character within the site. The landscape of the site is characterised as '15d Coastal Plain – The Fylde' in the published Landscape Character Assessment [Lancashire County Council, 2000] and correctly recognised as of 'medium value' in accordance with Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment [Landscape Institute, 2013] due to its predominately agricultural land use in the landscape and visual assessment. The Applicants acknowledge that planning policy directs planning authorities and development promoters to recognise 'the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside' NPPF para 187 b) [Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, 2024]. The assessment of change in landscape character is an important part of the planning process for the Examining Authority and the effects during construction and in the longer term, in operation, are detailed in the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) para 10.12.3.12 - 28 [APP-123]. Green Belt policy has a defined aim and purposes which are recorded in the Green Belt Technical Note section 1.2 [REP4-092]. Green Belt is specifically designated to keep land permanently open with specific 'tests' if it is to be developed. The Applicants have undertaken those tests and these are reported in section 1.8. The Applicants note the concerns regarding impacts to local businesses. Section 2.12.2 of Volume 4, Chapter 2: Socio-economics (APP-141) assesses the potential impacts on businesses as a result of the construction of the Transmission Assets
REP6-219 219.3	For us this project offers no real local benefits, only loss. Let me be clear I will not be bullied into giving my land up for cost our livelihoods and our heritage are not for sale . No amount of compensation can replace what we stand to lose . We are not saying NO to development we are saying " DO It RIGHT " there are alternative routes and less damaging options available and they must be properly considered. So I ask you to look beyond the lines on a map and see the real families, farms, businesses and wildlife that the proposed cable corridor will destroy . This land is more than soil , it's our history, our community and our future and we will stand to protect it !!	The need for and benefit of the Transmission Assets is set out within section 1.4 of the Statement of Reasons (REP6-018) The Transmission Assets would: • make a contribution towards the UK's part in meeting the recently agreed COP28 Global Renewables and Energy Efficiency Pledge to triple the world's installed renewable energy generation capacity by 2030; • contribute towards the British Energy Security Strategy's target of 50 GW of offshore wind by 2030, as set out in the UK Government's 2022 Energy Security Statement; • assist in meeting the UK Government's target in the Climate Change Act of 'net zero' greenhouse gas emissions for the year 2050 (i.e., to be 100% lower than the 1990 levels) in order to meet its obligations under international climate change agreements; • assist in meeting future increases in electricity demand as significant sectors of energy demand switch from being powered by fossil fuels to using electricity; • result in significant beneficial effects in terms of the cumulative assessment on climate change; and • result in beneficial effects from increase on Gross Value Added (GVA). Furthermore, in accordance with the Onshore Biodiversity Benefit Supporting Statement (REP5-145), there would also be potential for long term benefits associated with onshore biodiversity, for example via the biodiversity benefit area at Lea Marsh. A full socio-economic impact is presented in Volume 4, Chapter 2: Socio-economics of the ES (APP-141). An Outline Employment and Skills Plan (OESP) has been prepared (document reference J31) to support the delivery of wider benefits associated with the Transmission Assets. Section 1.7 includes outline principles, ranging from engagement with all stages of the education system to approaches to recruitment and ongoing workforce training and development. Table 1.4 sets out outline initiatives that aim to work to support employment and skills development in alignment with the outline

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
		principles. Further detail on initiatives will be taken forward and developed by each of the Applicants in consultation with the relevant stakeholders. The requirement to produce a detailed Employment and Skills Plan(s) in accordance with the OESP for approval by Fylde Borough Council is secured by Schedules 2A and 2B of Requirement 19 of the draft Development Consent Order (document reference C1). The Applicants provided an initial response on site selection and the assessment of alternatives at section 2.31.1 of The Applicants' Response to Relevant Representations Part 1 - Introduction and thematic responses (PDA-005). Following discussions relating to site selection and alternatives at Issue Specific Hearing 1 and in response to a number of the Examining Authority's Hearing Action Points, the Applicants provided a detailed technical response on these matters including explaining why the proposed alternative connection to Stanah or via an alternative route or Point of Interconnection for the Transmission Assets is not feasible. This was provided at Deadline 1 in Annex 5.2 to the Applicants response to Hearing Action Points: ISH1 6, 8, 9, 19, 26 & 28 - Rev F01 (REP1- 039).In relation to costs and the hypothetical "Northern Route" via Stanah and Hillhouse, the Applicants' refer to their response to REP2-064 – Newton with Clifton and Freckleton Parish Councils, submitted at Deadline 3 (REP2-035). See also the submission from National Grid at Deadline 3 - NGET Responses to ExQ1(103122766.1) (REP3-088)

3.4 Midgeland Riding School and Livery REP6-229

Table 3.4: REP6-229 – Midgeland Riding School and Livery

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
REP6-229 229.1	We refer to entry 55. The Land Owners agent attended the Landowner engagement event on 24th September 2025 to discuss outstanding issues. As of 21st October 2025 a revised offer and updated HoTs are still awaited.	The Applicants can confirm that updated heads of terms were issued to Midgeland Riding School and Livery on 23rd October 2025. The Applicants will continue to negotiate to secure the land rights through a voluntary agreement beyond the close of examination.

3.5 Paul Hamilton Ellis and Patrick Frank Ellis REP6-232

Table 3.5: REP6-232 – Paul Hamilton Ellis and Patrick Frank Ellis

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
REP6-232 232.1	We refer to entries 59 & 60 on the Land Rights tracker which state "The Applicant is optimistic that agreement on HoTs for the Cable Easement and Temporary Construction Compounds is imminent. " This is the first time that Temporary Construction Compounds have been mentioned with respect to these land owners. No plans or HoTs including them have been supplied or discussed. HoTs remain and will remain unsigned pending clarification and full discussion of this issue. We urge the ExA to investigate this matter as a matter of urgency.	The Applicants can confirm that the reference to a temporary construction compound within the land rights tracker update at Deadline 5 (REP5a-040) was made in error and there is no temporary construction compound required on the land owned by Paul Hamilton Ellis and Patrick Frank Ellis. The applicants have also informed the land interests agent of the error and negotiations for a voluntary agreement remain positive.
REP6-232 232.2	We refer to our earlier representation and have now been notified by the projects that references to Temporary Construction Compounds on the landowners property were made in error and no such compounds are required on this landowners' property. We therefore withdraw our comments regarding Temporary Construction compounds for these landowners.	The Applicants acknowledge the removal of the above statement in REP6-232.1.

3.6 T Kirkham, JE Worlock and JA Myerscough REP6-235

Table 3.6: REP6-235 – T Kirkham, JE Worlock and JA Myerscough

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
REP6-235 235.1	Our clients have on the 16th October 2025 received an initial response from the Projects Agents indicating that on Ballam Road the Projects will use only the southern access off Ballam Road as shown on the attached Option Plan Drawing Number 22003214_PLN_OP_12356.1_B and further state the Project with white land the northern access and remove any powers to create or use it temporarily. We attach a copy of the said plan and would be pleased if the Examining Authority will remove that access from the application.	The Applicants have removed the northern access. This has been updated within the Land Plans (REP6-006) and Book of Reference (REP6-020) submitted at Deadline 6 and no rights are being sought over the northern access initially proposed.
REP6-235 235.2	The Projects have also indicated that post consent they will consult with the Landowner, prior to construction, to agree the route of the access from the southern bell mouth to the cable corridor, both parties acting reasonably. We would still request that the access route is along the edge of a field rather than diagonally across and would request that the Examining Authority grant powers for the access along the field edge rather than diagonally across the middle. There has been no reasonable explanation as to why the access is required diagonally across the middle and the disruption to the farming enterprise will be exacerbated. Bearing in mind that this farm will have approximately one third of its total area occupied during the construction phase all reasonable measures to mitigate the effects of the Scheme should be taken and this includes in our opinion following the edge of the field with the access route wherever possible.	The Applicants will consult with the landowner regarding the proposed access route at the time of construction in accordance with the voluntary land agreement. The Applicants acknowledge the potential impact on the holding and will work with the landowner to identify mitigation measures to ensure farming can continue where practicable through the ALO secured through the Outline Code of Construction Practice (REP6-067). The proposed wording within the voluntary agreement aims to mitigate the impact on the holding where possible at this stage within the Application.
REP6-235 235.3	On Saltcotes Road the Project have confirmed they will engage on the use of the accesses at the time of construction and will seek to share construction accesses in this location if reasonable and feasible to do so albeit there will be no commitment to do so.	The Applicants confirm this and that it will be included in the voluntary agreement.
REP6-235 235.4	We still believe there has been no reasonable explanation given as to why multiple construction accesses are required in this location especially bearing in mind that at other locations single construction accesses are adequate. We would therefore urge the Examining Authority if minded to grant permission for the Scheme to grant it only for accesses A25 and A26 deleting accesses A27 and A28 along with the construction and operational access as it affects H & J Kirkham.	The Applicants refer to their Deadline 6 hearing action point ISH4_6 (REP6-176) which outlines the rationale and justification for the access routes in this location.
REP6-235 235.5	As far as operational accesses off Saltcotes Road are concerned the Project have confirmed an alternative operational access is acceptable and this is shown coloured brown and blue on Option Plan Drawing Number 22003214_PLN_OP_12356.2_C but they have indicated that they will provide an undertaking not to exercise rights over those plots within the residential title at X provided the Project has a binding Option Agreement in place with the Kirkham family. We would urge the Planning Inspectorate to amend the operational access to provide this alternative access and remove the operational access from the residential title at X. We also note that there is no undertaking with respect to the construction access as it crosses the residential title at X and we would once again urge the Examining Authority to decline to grant construction access over the residential title at X.	The Applicants confirm the rights sought within the order are required to enable the projects to be delivered. The alternative access being sought through a voluntary agreement is outside of the order limits and therefore cannot be facilitated within the order. In the event that an alternative access cannot be secured through the voluntary agreement, the rights sought over plot 08-073 for the operation and maintenance of the onshore export cable are essential. The Applicants are therefore unable to remove the rights in relation to this operational access, plot 08-073 at this stage.
REP6-235 235.6	With respect to the mitigation area there is no realistic offer in terms of Heads of Terms on the table with the landowners and there has been extremely limited discussion regarding the mitigation area. The Landowners concerns regarding the mitigation area other that financial remain principally future reinstatement and getting the land back into an agricultural condition and drainage.	The Applicants first issued heads of terms for the rights sought in November 2024 and will continue to engage on these rights in the hope to find an agreeable position, however the Applicants note that financial matters are not a subject for examination. The Applicants can confirm compensation for the land rights sought is in accordance with the compensation code. Commitment 8 (REP6-044) confirms that reinstatement of the working area to pre-existing condition will take place as far as reasonably practicable, and this is secured by the Development Consent Order Schedules 2A and 2B, Requirement 8 (REP6-013). Post-construction, the working area will be reinstated to pre-existing condition as far as reasonably practicable in line with the DEFRA Construction Code of Practice for the Sustainable Use of Soils on Construction Sites (PB13298), Institute of Quarrying (IQ) Good Practice Guide for Handling Soils in Mineral Workings (IQ, 2021) and British

Reference	IP submission	Applicants' response
		Society of Soil Science (BSSS) Working with Soil Guidance Note on Benefitting from Soil Management in Development and Construction (BSSS, 2022). Through the Outline Soil Management Plan (REP6-091). The Applicants will create an aftercare plan for the land, in conjunction with the landowner, three months prior to the commencement of the aftercare period for areas of the works. The aftercare plan will be subject to agreement with the landowner to include discussions with the ALO to ensure the land can be bought back to its pre works condition as soon as practicable following completion of the works.
REP6-235 235.7	The Landowners remain concerned regarding the lack of clarity with respect to drainage which is a vital and essential element of any consideration of Easements in this area and whilst the Project have carried out drainage investigations some months ago there has been a distinct lack of information forthcoming subsequently and we would urge the Examining Authority to delay the grant of any rights they consider granting until the Projects have produced and agreed reasonable drainage plans with Landowners.	The Applicants have included wording within the Outline Construction Method Statement (REP6-146) which confirms that a suitably qualified drainage consultant will be employed during the detailed design process who will liaise with landowners or occupiers through the agricultural liaison officer. The Applicants have already engaged a drainage consultant who has begun undertaking initial drainage survey works to better understand the existing systems in place, this will aid the detailed design stage to create a suitable drainage system.
REP6-235 235.8	The plans prepared by the Projects for the Scheme have been promoted on the basis that they are the worst case scenario and in the case of Messrs Kirkham this includes an extensive and widened Easement and working area adjacent to the crossing with the Network Rail railway line. As has been pointed out to the Project the Kirkham family own a caravan site including static caravans and tourers immediately to the south of the proposed route and their only area of expansion whilst not likely to impinge on the Easement area may require landscaping or similar to be placed further north which may impinge on the Easement area. This can be mitigated if the Project can prepare and produce more detailed drawings of the route of the cables moving them as far to the north within their cable routes indicated to accommodate as much area as possible being available for landscaping. Without this it may well be a case that any area of development in future is restricted due to the landscaping having to move into what would otherwise have been the development area and there is no provision available to adequately compensate the Landowners for such future losses. We would therefore urge the Examining Authority to require more detail from the Project and to clarify and move the line of the Easement as far to the north within the red line area as possible and preferably to move the southern boundary of the red line area further north.	The level of detail included within the Application aligns with the requirements and is inclusive of the necessary plans. Detailed design will be developed when a decision on the Application has been made, as is the case with projects of this nature. The Applicants will continue to engage with Messrs Kirkham and their appointed agent to ensure there is minimum disruption and the necessary mitigation works are discussed on a holding by holding basis, the process for these discussions is set out in the landowner engagement flowchart (REP4-111). The Applicants are engaged in continued discussions and negotiations with landowners, including compensation provisions to address potential impacts, where these cannot be avoided.

References

Biggar Economics (2020) East Anglia ONE North and East Anglia TWO Offshore Windfarms: Applicants' Responses to Examining Authority's Written Questions, Appendix 13 Tourism Impact Review (Document Reference: ExA.WQ-1.A13.D1.V1). Available at: https://nsip-documents.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/published-documents/EN010077-002667-ExAWQ1A13D1V1EA1NEA2Applicants%E2%84%A2ResponsestoWQ1Appendix13TourismImpactReview_378285_1.pdf [Accessed 25 October 2025]

Glasson, J., Durning, B. & Welch, K. (2021) The impacts of offshore wind farms on local tourism and recreation: a research study. Oxford Brookes University, Impact Assessment Unit. Commissioned by Vattenfall. Available at: https://www.vattenfall.co.uk/contentassets/c66251dd969a437c878b5fec736c32aa/tourism-impact-of-offshore-wind-farms---final-report----jg-300921.pdf [Accessed 25 October 2025]

Lancashire County Council (2000) Landscape Character Assessment. Available at: https://new.fylde.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Landscape-Strategy-for-Lancashire-Landscape-Character-Assessment.pdf [Accessed: 29 October 2025].

Landscape Institute (2013) Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. Third Edition. Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment.

Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (2024) National Planning Policy Framework. December 2024. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67aafe8f3b41f783cca46251/NPPF_December_2024.pdf [Accessed: 29 October 2025].

A.1 Appendix A – The Applicants' Detailed Response to Fylde Borough Council's Comment on the Local Tourism Assessment (REP6-160)

Fylde Borough Council has raised concerns regarding the validity of the evidence of Glasson et al, 2021 and Biggar Economics, 2020 and its interpretation through the SoCG process. Fylde Borough Council's position in respect of FBC.SE.2 within the Statement of Common Ground (document reference: S_D1_6.3/F03) stated the following:

FBC considers that the updated Tourism Assessment cannot be relied upon as a central premise is flawed. Specifically, FBC considers that the referenced Glasson paper (not properly referenced in the references list but assumed to be either the 2021 or 2022 paper published by the same team on the same topic) grossly oversimplifies and misrepresents the findings in the paper: the paper generally finds that applicants do not carry out appropriate assessments, with some of the same criticisms interested parties have made with regards to scope and depth of assessment. The BiGGAR reference (again, not properly detailed in the references list) is not reputable – it was prepared by a private consultancy, not peer reviewed or provided any other relevant assurance and prepared on behalf of an applicant for an OWF. The assessment relies heavily upon these sources in seeking to justify that there would be no significant impacts on tourism and economy more generally, resulting from the proposed development."

Fylde Borough Council is correct the references had not been included in the bibliography – the correct references are set out below.

- *Glasson, J., Durning, B. & Welch, K. (2021) The impacts of offshore wind farms on local tourism and recreation: a research study. Oxford Brookes University, Impact Assessment Unit. Commissioned by Vattenfall. Available at: https://www.vattenfall.co.uk/contentassets/c66251dd969a437c878b5fec736c32aa/tourism-impact-of-offshore-wind-farms---final-report----jg-300921.pdf [Accessed 25 Oct. 2025]*
- *Biggar Economics (2020) East Anglia ONE North and East Anglia TWO Offshore Windfarms: Applicants' Responses to Examining Authority's Written Questions, Appendix 13 Tourism Impact Review (Document Reference: ExA.WQ-1.A13.D1.V1). Available at: https://nsip-documents.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/published-documents/EN010077-002667-ExAWQ1A13D1V1EA1NEA2Applicants%E2%84%A2ResponsestoWQ1Appendix13TourismImpactReview_378285_1.pdf [Accessed 25 Oct. 2025]*

The claim of gross oversimplification and misrepresentation of the research findings is rejected by the Applicants.

The Applicants are not aware of the evidence to substantiate the claim that "the paper generally finds that applicants do not carry out

appropriate assessments" and this has not been provided by Fylde Borough Council.

For the avoidance of ambiguity, the Applicants have presented a direct quotation of the research conclusions on 'balance of impacts' for the benefit of the Examining Authority (as per section 5.1.1 of Glasson et al, 2021):

- *Comparative findings from research literature on UK onshore wind farms indicate little or no evidence to demonstrate that any windfarm development has resulted in any adverse impact on tourism; indeed, in some cases the impacts may be positive. Whilst impacts vary from stakeholder to stakeholder, findings from the literature also indicate that the overall impact of offshore wind farms on tourism appear relatively benign, and in some cases positive. The literature on the impact on tourism and recreation of distance of OWFs from the coast is mixed; however, with relative consistency, researchers find that stakeholder concerns about visual impacts of offshore wind farms decrease as distances of the wind farm from shore are increased. As OWFs become larger and more distant, the perception by visitors, negative and positive, may decline.*
- *In some cases, OWFs may be a tourism attractant by virtue of their modern, innovative and novelty factors, and have a positive impact on tourism.*
- *The market for an area to stand out in the competitive tourism market. However, with more of such developments, the novelty may wear off.*
- *In some cases, OWFs may be a tourism attractant by virtue of their modern, innovative and novelty factors, and have a positive impact on tourism. There are very few examples of actual hard evidence of the impacts of OWFs on tourism and recreation (e.g. quantitative evidence on changes in tourism in an area with a coastal OWF, measured for example by changes in number of visitors, and tourism employment, relative to local/regional trends), but see for example Biggar (2020) for a very useful study. Tourism is an important impact topic in almost all of the UK ESs reviewed. It is usually included with socio-economic factors with visual impact at the forefront. The UK ESs largely predict no impact or minor/negligible impact concerning both tourism and recreation, although there are a few examples of predicted positive impacts. Where there is coverage of tourism and recreation in EU States' ESs, findings are similar to those in the UK; that is on balance largely benign and of low significance, although there is somewhat more coverage of potential tourism and recreation opportunities.*
- *Overall, from the admittedly limited set of agency and local business and residents' survey responses there is little evidence of negative impacts of OWFs on local tourism and recreation activities. Indeed, there are considerably more comments on positive impacts, all set in the wider context of the importance of OWF developments in the transition towards renewable energy.*

- *The Aberdeen case study provides an interesting example of either neutral or positive responses, with very few negative comments. The positive comments cover several themes: visually attractive OWF; positive symbol of/local pride in renewable energy initiative; local/school educational links and potential; plus harbour/boat tours. There was one mention of the Aberdeen project community benefits fund! The review of Aberdeen Facebook postings over quite a long period reinforced the Aberdeen survey responses.*

The Applicants remain confident in its summarisation of relevant aspects of the above research conclusions as presented in 5.1.1.6-5.1.1.8 of the Local Tourism Assessment, and of its interpretation of the research supporting a conclusion of no significant effects on local tourism as being evidence-based.

The research conclusions make multiple references to beneficial impacts on tourism. This is notable for two reasons. Firstly, it provides a counterpoint to Fylde Borough Council's position of assuming significant adverse effects on tourism. Secondly, the authors supporting the Applicants in preparation of the Local Tourism Assessment have opted not to draw on the positive aspects of the research to maintain a neutral position.

The research conclusions reference that visual impacts are 'at the forefront' of almost all of the UK Ess reviewed. This was reflected in the approach taken within Volume 2, Chapter 4: Socio-economics (document reference F4.2). The Applicants further developed the approach to assessing potential tourism impacts within the Local Tourism Assessment to include consideration of Traffic and transport, Land use and recreation, Historic environment, Onshore ecology and nature conservation, and Noise and vibration matters to underpin the assessment. This approach goes beyond the 'standard' approach identified within the research conclusions of Glasson et al (2021).

The research conclusions directly cite Biggar Economics (2020) as a "a very useful study" to consider on the "quantitative evidence on changes in tourism in an area with a coastal OWF, measured for example by changes in number of visitors, and tourism employment, relative to local/regional trends".

Fylde Borough Council's claim that this evidence is not reputable is rejected by the Applicants.

Biggar Economics is a leading independent economic consultancy providing economic analysis and advice for central and local government, economic development and other government agencies, universities, colleges, social economy organisations and private sector firms across Europe. They have prepared socio-economics inputs to many major offshore wind applications in the UK during the past number of years – including the Morecambe Generation Assets DCO application.

Furthermore, this study is promoted by Glasson et al (2021) as *"a very useful study"* in the under-researched area of *"quantitative evidence on changes in tourism in an area with a coastal OWF, measured for*

example by changes in number of visitors, and tourism employment, relative to local/regional trends".

Overall, the Applicants remain confident in the methodology and findings of the Local Tourism Assessment (document reference S_D6_8) in concluding the Transmission Assets will have no significant effects on local tourism. This is supported by the industry evidence which is the subject of this comment.

Fylde Borough Council has repeatedly claimed the Transmission Assets will have significant adverse effects on local tourism. However, their position is contrary to the available industry evidence, and is not supported by alternative evidence. This is despite the Examining Authority having requested Fylde Borough Council to "Provide evidence of where projects of this kind have had an impact on the tourism economy" via Hearing Action Point 53 under Agenda Item 6(i) of the Issue Specific Hearing 1, which has not been provided.