Planning Inspectorate
Arolygiaeth Gynllunio

Transboundary screening undertaken by the Planning Inspectorate (the Inspectorate) on behalf of the Secretary of State (SoS) for the purposes of regulation 32 of The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (The 2017 EIA Regulations)	
Project name:	Peak Cluster CCS Pipeline
Address/Location:	Pipeline from Derbyshire, Staffordshire through Cheshire and out on the Wirral
Planning Inspectorate Ref:	EN0710001
Date(s) screening undertaken:	First screening – 30/03/26 following the applicant's request for a scoping opinion.

FIRST TRANSBOUNDARY SCREENING	
Document(s) used for transboundary Screening:	Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Report Volume 1 and Volume 2 ('the Scoping Report') January 2026
Screening Criteria:	**The Inspectorate's Comments:**
Characteristics of the Development	The proposed development relates to the construction of carbon capture facilities and an underground pipeline which will transport CO_2 from cement and lime industries in Derbyshire and Staffordshire to be stored permanently under the seabed in Morecambe Bay. The DCO applied for does not include works beyond Mean Low Water Springs (MLWS). The proposed development comprises: • Approximately 195km buried CO^2 pipeline • Breedon capture facility at Hope Cement works • Tarmac capture facility at Tunstead Cement works • Buxton Lime capture facility within Tarmac Tunstead site • Holcim capture facility at Cauldron Cement works • Above Ground Installations (AGI) • Block Valve Stations (BVS) • Coastal AGI (which will be the starting point for CO2 transportation to offshore storage) • Coastal AGI to Mean Low Water Springs pipeline(s)

	• Construction compounds • Temporary and permanent access • Environmental mitigation. The proposed development may include associated development. This has not been finalised at this stage, but may include: • visitor centre • office, welfare and security facilities • parking areas • waste processing and management areas The DCO application does not include marine works beyond MLWS. Works in the intertidal area are not yet fully known, but are likely to include: • the installation of the pipeline via trenchless techniques (for example horizontal directional drilling) • the installation of the pipeline via trenching • the installation of a cofferdam • the potential installation of near shore block valve, which could be on the seabed • dredging • activities near flood defences. The proposed development will require several Above Ground Installations (AGIs) and Block Valve Stations (BVS). At scoping stage, the precise number of AGIs and BVS required was not yet known. The footprint of each AGI is not yet known but generally range from between 5,000m^2 to 15,000m^2. The approximate footprint of a BVS is approximately 1,500m^2 to 2,500m^2. The Coastal AGI area would be 300m x 180m and the Coastal AGI could be accommodated in this area along with the substation, 50m high and 1m wide (worst case) venting stack, parking and maintenance routes. For the trenchless construction, an onshore entry point will be on land at 3m - 5m elevation, approximately 50-100m from the Wallasey Embankment. **Construction duration of the capture facilities** Construction work for the capture facilities is anticipated to commence in 2029. Breedon Capture Facility would be constructed over a period of approximately four years. The Tarmac Capture Facility and Buxton Lime Capture Facility are anticipated to take approximately 28 months to complete. The Holcim Capture Facility is anticipated to take approximately 48 months to complete.

	Construction of the coastal AGI would take approximately 16 to 18 months. All four capture facilities are anticipated to have a design life of 25 years, with a decision taken towards the end of that period regarding the potential for extending the operating life of the capture facilities. With suitable monitoring and maintenance, the pipeline is anticipated to have a design life greater than 25 years. **Construction duration of the pipeline** The onshore underground pipeline is anticipated to take three years to construct. Coastal AGI to landfall zone is anticipated to take up to 9 months to construct. The pipeline(s) from landfall zone construction compound to MLWS is anticipated to take between 9-12 months. **Decommissioning** The scoping report states that the proposed development would be decommissioned at the end of its operational life. The above ground installations would be removed. The underground pipeline would be left in-situ.
Location of Development (including existing use) and Geographical area	The proposed development spans the following counties: • Staffordshire • Derbyshire • Cheshire • Merseyside The proposed development lies within the jurisdictions of the following authorities: • Peak District National Park Authority • High Peak Borough Council • Staffordshire Moorlands District Council • Staffordshire County Council • Derbyshire Dales District Council • Derbyshire County Council • Cheshire East Council • Cheshire West and Chester Council and: • Wirral Council. The four capture facilities would be located within existing cement/lime works within Staffordshire and Derbyshire, whilst the pipeline would run from the capture facilities, through Cheshire and Merseyside, to a location (options as shown on Plate 3-6) on the Wirral peninsula.

	The pipeline would be located in areas predominately used for agricultural purposes. It would also be routed under roads and water networks which would include rivers, streams and canals. The scoping report explains that two areas of search for the location of the Coastal AGI are being undertaken (as shown on Plate 3-6 of the scoping report). The length of the pipeline from the landfall to MLWS is approximately 2km. The scoping report provides a transboundary screening assessment in Appendix C. This identifies transboundary aspects which the applicant considers are of relevance to the proposed development from construction, operation and decommissioning of the proposed development. Table C-1 of the Scoping Report Appendix C identifies one European Economic Area (EEA) member state which the applicant considers may have transboundary interactions with the proposed development. This EEA State is the Republic of Ireland which is located approximately 195km to the west of the scoping boundary.
Environmental Importance	Table C-1 of the Scoping Report Appendix C Designated Sites sets out the key environmental designations considered as part of the assessment on likely significant transboundary effects. The following UK European sites are identified as either those which intersect, or are within 15km of the proposed development: • Dee Estuary and Bala Lake Special Area of Conservation (SAC); • Dee Estuary SAC, Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar site; • Mersey Estuary SPA and Ramsar site; • Midland Meres and Mosses Phase 1 Ramsar site; • Midland Meres and Mosses Phase 2 Ramsar site; • Mersey Narrows and North Wirral Foreshore SPA and Ramsar site; • Liverpool Bay SPA; • Oak Mere SAC; • Peak District Dales SAC; • Peak District Moors (South Pennine Moors Phase 1) SPA; • Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA and Ramsar site; • Rostherne Mere Ramsar site; • Sefton Coast SAC; • South Pennine Moors SAC; and • West Midlands Mosses SAC. Based on the information provided in the applicant's Scoping Report, the Inspectorate does not anticipate transboundary impacts associated with the onshore development, given the nature of effects and the relative distances been onshore works to

	the Republic of Ireland. Onshore impacts are therefore not considered further. **Marine mammals (Scoping Report Chapter 12)** The following species are identified in the Scoping Report as those which occur commonly or are regular visitors in the Celtic Seas Ecosystem: • minke whale (*Balaenoptera acutorostrata*) • fin whale (*Balaenoptera physalus*) • harbour porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena*) • bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*) • common dolphin (*Delphinus delphis*) • white-beaked dolphin (*Lagenorhynchus albirostris*); • Atlantic white-sided dolphin (*Lagenorhynchus acutus*); • Risso's dolphin (*Grampus griseus*) • long- finned pilot whale (*Globicephala melas*) • killer whale (*Orcinus orca*) • northern bottlenose whale (*Hyperoodon ampullatus*) • Sowerby's beaked whale (*Mesoplodon bidens*); • Cuvier's beaked whale (*Ziphius cavirostris*) • sperm whale (*Physeter macrocephalus*). **Marine and Intertidal Ornithology (Scoping Report Chapter 12)** The proposed development includes land used by both breeding/passage and overwintering bird species. Table 6-7 of the Scoping Report presents information regarding European sites including those sites noted for overwintering and breeding birds are the Mersey Narrows and North Wirral Foreshore SPA, Liverpool Bay SPA, the Dee Estuary SPA and the Mersey Estuary SPA. The Scoping Report also provides information on the receiving offshore environment in relation to: • Marine archaeology • Physical processes • Marine transport and navigation.
Potential impacts and Carrier	The Scoping Report states that the main pathway for effect would be in relation to construction activities required in the intertidal area. Construction activities may result in the following impacts to marine ecology: **Benthic habitats and species (Scoping Report Chapter 12)** • Temporary loss and physical disturbance from the use of vessels • Changes in water quality due to accidental spills

	• Direct changes to benthic habitats as a result of the potential block valve piling, capital dredging and dredge disposal. • Indirect changes to benthic habitats and species as a result of changes to hydrodynamic and sedimentary processes during piling, capital dredging and dredge disposal • Changes in water and sediment quality during piling, capital dredging and dredge disposal • Underwater noise and vibration disturbance • Introduction of non-native species through use of marine plant and introduction of new infrastructure. **Fish and shellfish (Scoping Report Chapter 12)** • Direct loss or changes to fish populations and habitat as a result of capital dredging and dredge disposal • Changes in water and sediment quality during capital dredging and dredge disposal • Underwater noise and vibration disturbance during construction. **Marine mammals (Scoping Report Chapter 12)** • Underwater noise and vibration disturbance during construction. • Direct loss or changes in marine mammal foraging habitat • Collision risk during construction • Water quality impacts during capital dredging and dredge disposal **Passage and wintering birds (Scoping Report Chapter 12)** • Effects from marine ecology changes in existing lighting conditions during construction. **Physical process (Scoping Report Chapter 12)** • Increased suspended sediment concentrations (SSC) and potential sedimentation as a result of the extent of disturbance plume during construction • Increased SSC and potential sedimentation as a result of the deposit of capital dredge material at a license offshore disposal site (if required) • Changes in seabed bathymetry and composition as a result of deposition of dredged/disposal material (if required) within the area of the respective plumes. **Marine transport and navigation (Scoping Report Chapter 12)** • Collision due to displacement of shipping and/or increase in vessel density during construction

	• Collision of passing vessels with works craft, as passing vessels (commercial, recreational or fishing) are manoeuvring around or in close proximity to the works there is potential for collision with craft associated with the proposed development • Collision during navigation – vessel collision (fishing, recreational, commercial) with works craft • Payload related incidents. No construction activities for the proposed development will extend beyond MLWS. The scoping report states that any impacts will be temporary and localised and therefore no transboundary impacts are anticipated.
Extent	The effect of potential transboundary impacts has not been fully evaluated in the Scoping Report at this stage. However, the Scoping Report states that based on the information collated during the scoping exercise, no significant effects have been identified which could affect an EEA state. This position will be clarified and reported in the ES.
Magnitude	The magnitude of potential transboundary impacts has not been fully evaluated in the Scoping Report at this stage. However, the Scoping Report states that based on the information collated during the scoping exercise, no significant effects have been identified which could affect an EEA state. This position will be clarified and reported in the ES.
Probability	The probability of potential transboundary impacts has not been fully evaluated in the Scoping Report at this stage. However, the Scoping Report states that based on the information collated during the scoping exercise, no significant effects have been identified which could affect an EEA state. This position will be clarified and reported in the ES.
Duration	The duration of potential transboundary impacts has not been fully evaluated in the Scoping Report at this stage. However, the Scoping Report states that based on the information collated during the scoping exercise, no significant effects have been identified which could affect an EEA state. This position will be clarified and reported in the ES.
Frequency	The frequency of potential transboundary impacts has not been fully evaluated in the Scoping Report at this stage. However, the Scoping Report states that based on the information collated during the scoping exercise, no significant effects have been identified which could affect an EEA state.

	This position will be clarified and reported in the ES.
Reversibility	The reversibility of potential transboundary impacts has not been fully evaluated in the Scoping Report at this stage. However, the Scoping Report states that based on the information collated during the scoping exercise, no significant effects have been identified which could affect an EEA state. This position will be clarified and reported in the ES.
Cumulative impacts	Chapter 19 of the Scoping Report outlines the cumulative impacts assessment (CIA) which will be undertaken. The overall approach to the CIA is set out in section 19.2 of the Scoping Report. The applicant has identified other proposed developments for consideration in the CIA through engagement with local planning authorities and the Planning Inspectorate's website. A long list of other projects with potential for inter-project impacts are set out in table I-1 of Appendix I of the Scoping Report. The applicant's CIA has not yet been finalised, and the applicant has not identified any likely significant cumulative effects at this stage. However, the Scoping Report states that significant transboundary effects are unlikely due to the distance (195km) between the proposed development and the nearest EEA state (Republic of Ireland).

Transboundary screening undertaken by the Inspectorate on behalf of the SoS

Under regulation 32 of The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (The 2017 EIA Regulations) and on the basis of the current information available from the applicant, the Inspectorate is of the view that the proposed development **is not likely** to have a significant effect on the environment in an EEA State.

In reaching this view the Inspectorate has applied the precautionary approach (as explained in its Advice Page Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects: Advice on Transboundary Impacts and Process) and taken into account the information currently supplied by the applicant.

Action:

No further action required at this stage.

Date: 30/03/2026

Note: The SoS' duty under regulation 32 of The 2017 EIA Regulations continues throughout the application process.

Note:

The Inspectorate's screening of transboundary issues is based on the relevant considerations specified in the annex to its Advice Page, Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects: Advice on Transboundary Impacts and Process, available at:

'Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects: Advice on Transboundary Impacts and Process'.