

North Lincolnshire Council answers to the Examining Authority's first set of written questions for the VPI Immingham OCGT Project

Question 1.5.1 – Cumulative effects

Table 17.3 of Chapter 17 of the ES [APP-046] provides a list of other developments identified in stage 2 of the cumulative effects assessment.

Please confirm whether you are aware of any other projects or plans that should be included in the cumulative effects assessment.

Please confirm that NLC and NELC are satisfied that the list of projects set out in Table 17.3 of Chapter 17 of the ES [APP-046] includes all of the developments that need to be taken into account in the assessment of cumulative effects.

Answer

NLC is satisfied that the list of projects set out in Table 17.3 of Chapter 17 of the ES [APP-046] includes all of the developments that need to be taken into account in the assessment of cumulative effects.

Question 1.7.1 – Written Scheme of Investigation

Please comment on the approach of the Applicant of submitting a written scheme of investigation, as set out in Requirement 13 of the dDCO [APP-005].

Answer

NLC recommended the submission of a written scheme of investigation for the archaeological works on the main site during the pre-application consultations with the HER. As such, we welcome the approach of the applicant to agreeing to prepare the outline document for submission with the DCO application.

Where it is possible for the final WSI to be agreed in advance of the DCO determination, may avoid the necessity for pre-commencement Requirements, such that these simply require the agreed WSI to be implemented accordingly. Where this is not possible and further details to the WSI are required post-determination, the pre-commencement Requirement is appropriate and necessary.

The LPA did not see the Framework WSI prior to submission and has yet to discuss our comments on the document with the applicant. With regard to the DCO

Requirement 13, it is noted that the current version of the WSI deals only with the Main site and does not provide detailed mitigation measures to ensure the continued preservation in situ of the archaeological remains present within the Construction Laydown site adjacent to Rosper Road. The WSI would need to include these details in order to discharge the requirement.

As the WSI deals with the non-designated heritage assets affected by the proposed development, it is unclear to NLC why Historic England would be consulted on the WSI (clause (1)), unless they have specifically requested this consultation.

Question 1.7.2 – Assessment methodology

Please comment on the assessment methodology applied by the Applicant in assessing the cultural heritage of the area (as set out in ES Chapter 13 [APP-042]).

Answer

It is accepted that this methodology is the standard methodology for Cultural Heritage EIA process, enabling heritage assets to be rapidly categorised by matrix for this purpose.

In the opinion of the LPA it does little to assess the significance of the individual assets as the sum of the four heritage values (Evidential, Historical, Aesthetic and Communal) set out in Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the sustainable management of the historic environment, Historic England, 2008 <https://www.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/conservation-principles-sustainable-management-historic-environment/>. Nor to assess the impact of development on the heritage significance of assets.

Question 1.8.1 – Representative viewpoints

Chapter 10 of the ES (Para 10.4.2 and Table 10.1) [APP-039] indicates that consultation has been undertaken to agree the location of representative viewpoints.

Please confirm that the viewpoints are appropriate and provide reasonably representative views of the proposed development. Please provide views on whether you consider the ExA would benefit from visiting other viewpoints within the surrounding area and if so please identify any proposed locations.

Answer

NLC confirm that the viewpoints are appropriate and provide reasonably representative views of the proposed development.

The only addition that NLC feel should be considered is would make is the proposed England Coast Path. If the Able Marine Energy Park project goes ahead, the Coast Path (a National Trail) is likely to “roll back” to Rosper Road. Rosper Road would therefore provide key viewpoints for users of the National Trail.

Question 1.12.1 – South Humber Gateway Strategy

Please comment on whether the council considers contributions towards the South Humber Gateway strategy will be required (Note para 1.2.4 of [RR-022]).

Answer

In surveys dating from 2007, 2007/08, 2010/11 and more recent surveys carried out by Able UK, land east of Rosper Road has been identified as “functionally linked” to the Humber Estuary SPA and Ramsar site. This land has supported significant numbers of waterbirds: primarily curlew. Development of land in this area would lead to displacement or disturbance of SPA/Ramsar waterbirds, generating a consequent requirement to provide mitigation habitat through the South Humber Gateway strategy.

Land west of Rosper Road is more enclosed and does not provide feeding, roosting or loafing habitat for the waterbirds that tend to require larger open spaces. Paragraphs 9.9.7-9.9.13 of the Ecology chapter of the submitted Environmental Statement provide a high degree of evidence that the proposed development will not result in any displacement or disturbance of birds from the Rosper Road fields. Therefore, NLC are of the opinion that there will not be a requirement for contributions towards the South Humber Gateway strategy.