

GBEP Appendix B – Summary Aquatic Life - Applicant Response to Roy Clegg Submission
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Written Representation on Aquatic Life

Questions REP-089	Applicants Response	Response from Roy Clegg
<p>Summary Aquatic Life</p> <p>1. It is noted that the Cottam Solar Project states “that in the absence of information relating to the potential for impacts, the Proposed Development on fish species, the Inspectorate does not agree to scope this matter out. The ES should include a description of the sensitivity of relevant watercourses and any seasonal constraints on such crossings, assessing likely significant effects on riverine species where they are likely to occur”.</p> <p>2. The rivers and oceans with their inhabitants are extremely important for the survival of us humans. The oceans regulate the climate of the planet and produce most of the oxygen. Millions of people depend on a healthy marine ecosystem for their livelihoods.</p> <p>3. What happens when, through our ill-considered and selfish intervention, the rivers and seas can no longer maintain their vital functions for the entire planet?</p> <p>4. We are facing an ecological emergency with 15% of all UK wildlife under threat from extinction and our rivers are a critical factor in this.</p> <p>5. The primary concern for aquatic species is from AC-ELF exposures from underwater cabling shown in WR1 and other technologies, not RF which is of more concern for ground based and aerial species.</p> <p>6. It is important that fish and other significant aquatic life species both rare and protected, or those on the endangered list are recognised and their existence continues and thrives.</p> <p>7. Is the Developer, ExA and the Secretary of State satisfied that there is no risk to any aquatic species from the effect of EMF and its features because of the Project?</p>	<p>1. The Applicant has provided information on the approach to watercourse crossings in a comprehensive screening exercise that was undertaken for determining where open span bridges or culverts were required. This is contained within Appendix A of the signed Statement of Common Ground with the Environment Agency which was submitted at Deadline 1 [REP-014/4.3E]. The Environment Agency have agreed with this approach.</p> <p>2. No response required, but the Applicant would highlight that the Scheme will not impact the marine environment.</p> <p>3. A comprehensive aquatic desk study has been completed (see Appendix 8-E Aquatic ecology report [APP-129/3.3]), along with targeted aquatic surveys, which has informed the ecological appraisal and impact assessment. As stated in the Framework CEMP [APP-224/7.3], the Scheme design has avoided most watercourses and the construction of the Grid Connection Corridor will utilise non-intrusive methods (including offsets from the banks of the watercourses to protect riparian habitats) for the majority of watercourses, particularly those where the habitat quality is suitable for riparian mammals, or where evidence of these species has been recorded. Set backs of a minimum of 10m from the centreline of the watercourse is considered sufficient to mitigate for potential hazards such as chemical and soils spills into watercourses and avoid potential direct impacts to watercourses and species such as Otter and Water Vole.</p> <p>4. No response required.</p> <p>5. As set out above the 400kV cable will be buried beneath the bed of the River Trent and other watercourses as set out within Appendix A of the signed Statement of Common Ground with the Environment Agency which was submitted at Deadline 1 [REP-014/4.3E]. The design of the cable and buried depth adequately prevent any noticeable changes in EMF, including AC-ELF, at locations where sensitive aquatic species may occur, e.g. Salmon. In addition to this, the area of buried cable is incredibly small, when considering the migratory nature of many of the fish species mentioned, with individuals quickly transiting through the small area of buried cable.</p> <p>6. A comprehensive aquatic desk study has been completed (see Appendix 8-E Aquatic ecology report [APP-129/3.3]), along with targeted aquatic surveys, which has informed the ecological appraisal and impact assessment.</p> <p>7. Based on the responses provided above the Applicant is satisfied that there is no potential for significant adverse effects on the aquatic life identified in Chapter 8 of the ES [APP-017/3.1].</p>	<p>1. The WR on EMF have been extensively researched in order to make a considered conclusion and decision on the effects on Aquatic Life especially at watercourse crossings, including a list of endangered and protected species.</p> <p>2. No further response.</p> <p>3. No further response.</p> <p>4. The WR’s show those species at risk and should be protected by regulations.</p> <p>5. The AC-ELF exposures of EMF from underwater cabling is more concerned and concerning when associated with water as opposed to ground based Radio Frequency emissions from G4, G5 mobile transmissions. The buried depth of the cable will have little or no impact on EMF unless the cabling is buried to about 10 metres. The Applicant has provided no information to support their claim that the design and burial of the cable will impact of the transmitted EMF. Moreover, the EMF transmission across the River Trent will be about 10 metres in width, with fish species capable of transiting through a small area.</p> <p>6. It is not clear what the comprehensive aquatic desk study has revealed or informed the ecological appraisal and impact appraisal.</p> <p>7. The Applicant has not provided any meaningful information to suggest that there will be no significant adverse effects on the aquatic life.</p>