

Date: 02 August 2024
Our ref: 482696
Your ref: EN010133



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Dear John Wheadon

NSIP Reference: EN010133 – Cottam Solar Project

Consultation: Secretary of State's Request for Information – 19th July 2024

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

Please find Natural England's responses to the Secretary of State's Request for Information at **Annex A** below.

For any further advice on this consultation please contact the case officer [REDACTED] naturalengland.org.uk and copy to consultations@naturalengland.org.uk.

Yours sincerely

Robbie Clarey
Senior Sustainable Development Officer – NSIPs & High-Risk Casework

Annex A

Question Reference	Question	Natural England response
3	<p>Natural England is invited to comment on whether it is satisfied with the methodology and conclusions of the Applicant's 'Risk Assessment of EMF Impacts on Fish' under the Appendix to the Written Summary of the Applicant's Oral 2 Submissions and Responses at Issue Specific Hearing 3 and Responses to Action Points [REP3-034].</p>	<p>Natural England have reviewed the 'Risk Assessment of EMF Impacts to Fish' provided by the applicant. It is clear that evidence surrounding the impacts of EMF from buried cables upon migratory species such as Lamprey is limited, although the referenced research is noted.</p> <p>Overall, based on the information provided within the assessment, the proposed approach to ensure the cable is a minimum of 5m below the riverbed appears to be precautionary. Natural England consider the likelihood of a significant effect upon migratory Lamprey as a result of EMF to be low.</p> <p>Natural England would like to note, however, that whilst the 5m burial depth is considered precautionary, and is significantly greater than National Grid's reference to a typical burial depth of 1m, the rationale behind the use of a 5m burial depth is unclear, aside from the monitored data from 5m from the centreline of the: '<i>National Grid 400kV 0.9m buried cable</i>' (2.3.2), and calculated data from the '<i>Gate Burton Energy Park 400kV cable at 800A</i>'. Natural England would welcome further clarity regarding the use of a 5m burial depth to ensure a negligible impact on fish.</p>
5	<p>The Applicant is requested to revise the oOEMP to provide for results of the surveys to also be relayed to Natural England on a regular basis for the purposes of informing best practice and assessments of EMF impacts on fish in the future. Natural England are invited to confirm if they are content with this request</p>	<p>Natural England are content with this request & would welcome receipt of all monitoring data to inform best practice and assessments of EMF impacts on fish in the future.</p> <p>In addition, Natural England would welcome the opportunity to input upon the specification for the electromagnetic field monitoring strategy. The current wording of the oOEMP Table 3.3 states that '<i>The programme [of EMF monitoring] must be approved by the Environment Agency</i>'. Natural England</p>

		would welcome amendment here to also include requirement for consultation with Natural England.
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