

Dedham Vale AONB and Stour Valley Partnership Post Hearing Submission

Landscape and views:

The setting of the Dedham Vale AONB, and the case for additional undergrounding in section F of the proposed route in relation to effects on the AONB and the Stour Valley.

The AONB Partnership considers that additional undergrounding in section F should be taken forward if there are sufficient policy drivers or evidence of need.

Consideration of the statutory purpose of the AONB.

The AONB Partnership considers that the statutory purpose of the AONB will be significantly negatively impacted during construction. Negative impacts to part of the AONB should be seen as impacts to the AONB as a whole given the AONB is a single entity. The Partnership draws the Examining Authorities attention to para 18 of Appeal Ref: APP/L3815/W/21/3289451, 112 Main Road, Hermitage, Southbourne PO10 8AY.

That says:

The appellant stresses that the site area represents 0.4% of the AONB. It is open to question whether such a percentage can really be considered 'negligible' in the context of a protected landscape. Moreover, given that the AONB includes large tracts of water, it is unclear how much of the dry land area of the AONB this figure actually represents. It is therefore of limited value both as a measure in itself, and as an accurate indicator of the magnitude of effects.

Special qualities of the Dedham Vale AONB.

The AONB Partnership considers that the special qualities of the AONB will be significantly negatively impacted during construction. Impacts will include significant negative impacts on landscape quality, scenic quality, relative tranquillity from construction activity. It acknowledges that this will be of a temporary nature but consider the impact will still be felt and should be compensated for.

Furthermore, it considers surface vegetation is likely to be impacted during the operation phase by the development due to impacts on soil structure and drainage patterns and the inability to plant trees above the underground lines.

It is concerned that the needs of the Stour navigation (Sudbury to Cattawade) are not being fully considered during the construction phase and the installation of river crossings.

Location of the Dedham Vale east cable sealing end compound.

The AONB Partnership have no further comment to make on this element beyond its earlier submissions during consultation and at Issue Specific Hearing 4