



Bramford – Twinstead:

Deadline 4 Submission:

Section 1 - Response to Applicant's
comments on BDC/ECC Local Impact
Report & Other Documents

Section 2 - Post Issue Specific Hearings
Notes and Actions

Braintree District Council (20041141) &
Essex County Council (20041299)

PINS REFERENCE: EN020002

SECTION 1 - Response to Applicant's comments on BDC/ECC Local Impact Report & Other Documents

1 Purpose Of Submission

1.1 Introduction & Format

- 1.1.1 The purpose of Section 1 is to respond directly to the Applicant responses to BDC and ECC's Local Impact Report (REP3-050) as necessary.
- 1.1.2 This section here forth will be in table format and tabulated with comments from the applicant and responses by BDC/ECC.
- 1.1.3 This response is jointly prepared by BDC and ECC and here forth will be referred to as 'The Council's'. Any differences of opinion between The Councils will be explicitly labelled as such.

2 **Principle of Development**

Reference / Para Number in LIR (REP1-039)	Matter	Applicant Comment Summary (REP3-050)	BDC/ECC Response
6.4.1	Need for Development	Welcome support for project	The Councils have no further comments to add at this time.
6.4.2	Environmental Cost	Set out that the project is well mitigated and does not come forward at any environmental cost	The Councils note and welcome the mitigation measures put forward by the applicant in order to try and mitigate the impacts of the development. Many of the mitigation measures are discussed in other topic headings and will not be repeated here.
6.4.3	Climate Emergency	Project would help meet their climate change strategy	The Councils have no further comments to add at this time.
6.4.4	Existing Woodland and hedging	Welcomes support for protection and provision of landscaping and biodiversity measures	The Councils have no further comments to add at this time.

6.4.5	Essex Climate Action Commission	Project would help tackle Climate Crisis	The Councils have no further comments to add at this time.
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3 Landscape and Visual

Reference / Para Number in LIR (REP1-039)	Matter	Applicant Comment Summary (REP3-050)	BDC/ECC Response
7.4.2	Viewpoint H07/G18	Location of viewpoints previously agreed and further distance view not required.	Refer to comments to AP11 from ISH4 in Submission 2 of this document. The Council's also have a new landscape officer working on the project who was not involved in earlier discussions about viewpoints. This was due to the previous landscape officer leaving the post at Essex Place Services.
7.4.3	Landscape and visual assessment – viewpoint from PROW network east of A131	Location of viewpoints previously agreed for GSP.	Refer to comments in Section 2 of this report, ISH4, Item 5, Additional Viewpoints – A131.
7.6.3-7.6.8	Removal of 132kV line	Not within the Applicants scope to remove the line as owned by UKPN.	The Councils remain of the view that there would be a significant landscape benefit of the removal of the additional section 132kV overhead line, which UKPN essentially confirm in their letter to

			Braintree (Appendix 1 of the LIR) would be redundant following completion of the project.
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4 **Biodiversity**

4.1 Summary

- 4.1.1 The Councils have reviewed the submissions of the Applicant and do not wish to offer any further comments on the majority of items listed, our position on these points is already set out in our Local Impact Report (REP1-039) and other documents REP2-009, REP3-061 as appropriate.
- 4.1.2 In terms of 8.7.5, The Councils position is well known that the submitted control documents e.g. CEMP and LEMP are not currently detailed enough, and further comments on this, as requested at the hearings, will be provided at deadline 5.

Green Infrastructure

Reference / Para Number in LIR (REP1-039)	Matter	Applicant Comment Summary (REP3-050)	BDC/ECC Response
9.2.1 9.2.5	Green Infrastructure	<p>Green infrastructure is a generic and all-encompassing term for many of the aspects already covered within the application for development consent.</p> <p>The applicant considers that the project aligns with both documents – Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy (2020) and Essex Green Infrastructure Standards 2022.</p>	<p>Agree that by definition of Green Infrastructure (GI) is all encompassing and welcome that the applicant recognises that elements of GI run through core areas of the development from Biodiversity to traffic and transport. Environmental mitigation created in support of NSIPs can be referred to as "green infrastructure." In this regard, NSIPs can be judged not only on the negative effects they may have on existing green infrastructure, but also on the value of new green infrastructure that they provide, particularly where they contribute to biodiversity enhancements, active travel links, recreational facilities, and improved connectivity.</p> <p>The Essex GI Team is grateful that the Essex GI Strategy and Essex GI Standards have been reviewed, and that the development can demonstrate alignment with the strategy and standards principles through the design and core documents, such as the ES, Planning Statement, Environment Gain Report, and LEMP. As well as ensuring the development is also compliant with green Infrastructure policies in EN-1, draft EN-1 and related policies on biodiversity, landscape and visual impacts in EN-5 and draft EN-5. The Essex GI Strategy intention is to embed GI requirements within new development and for GI to not be seen in silo but become an integral part of the day-to-day considerations in key sectors and services to ensure that future planning, design, management and maintenance is coherent,</p>

			<p>structured and focused. A crucial element of delivering a high-quality place is GI, because of the multiple benefits it provides. The planning system is one of the most important means of delivering GI. It can ensure that development respects, enhances and expands the existing GI network. Through the right design, right green infrastructure, and right location of green infrastructure it can deliver more than one function and contribute to more than one priority, providing cost efficiency in the long term to deliver better outcomes. Hence, why we encourage GI as an overarching theme, where GI should be considered and embedded within core themes to ensure it is effectively designed and integral to the whole development from the outset.</p> <p>No further action.</p>
9.4.1 - 9.4.2	Biodiversity net gain (BNG)	<p>BNG is currently not a requirement on NSIPs, however applicant has committed to deliver at least 10% BNG on its projects. Applicant also has duty to be economic and efficient and so will not be seeking to deliver 20% BNG.</p>	<p>Agree that net gain is not currently a requirement on NSIP. However, NSIPs will be required to comply with BNG requirements from 2025. ECC GI Teams welcomes the Applicants ambition to commit to the delivery of at least 10%. The recommendation to achieve a higher percentage was based on the opportunities from further iterations of the designs, ongoing discussion with key partners may reduce areas of assumed vegetation loss and identify additional opportunities to deliver BNG. Along with re- running of the metric as mentioned in the ES. ECC GI Team supports the application of the mitigation hierarchy, the opportunities from the Applicant working with its main works contractor to seek to further reduce effects at the outset and therefore achieve the most biodiversity gains with the land available.</p>
9.5.1 - 9.5.2	Biodiversity metrics	<p>Defra 3.1 metric was the current version available at</p>	

		<p>the point of application and will continue to be used for consistency and the applicant will re-run this metric based on the final detailed design and submit the output to Councils. It is not proposed that the report will be updated at this time using the newer 4.0 metric.</p>	<p>No further action required. Guidance on the requirement to use the latest Biodiversity metric has since been updated since the ECC GI Team's comment and the Planning Advisory Service has stated that there is no requirement for developments to recalculate their BNG using the most recent metric. The most recent version of the Biodiversity Metric will, however, only be expected to be used by new planning applications beginning in November 2023. Any development that is in the planning stages before this date and wishes to recalculate using the most recent metric may do so at their discretion. The ECC GI Team welcomes that the Applicant will re-run the metric (using the same version metric 3.1 for consistency) based on the final detailed design and will submit the output to the Councils.</p>
9.5.3 - 9.5.5	Environmental Gain Report	<p>The applicant is not intending to update the Environmental Gain Report once the final design is produced. As net gain is not mandatory on NSIPs, the project does not fall under requirements of Environmental Act 2021.</p>	<p>Granted Environmental Net Gain is not mandatory and ECC GI Team supports the provision of an Environmental Gain Report. However, for future reference NSIPs will be required to comply with BNG requirements from 2025. The NSIPs approach will be kept largely the same as the 'normal development' approach in that the applicant will have to clearly demonstrate that the BNG 10% gain objective has been met; and the provision of Biodiversity Gain Plan.</p>
9.6.1 - 9.6.2	Early Planting	<p>Vegetation affected during construction will be reinstated at the end when works have been complete. It would not be appropriate</p>	<p>Due to seasonal planting and the potential impact of the construction programme the ECC GI Team acknowledges that committing to specific timeframes for the implementation of each aspect of GI and phased delivery could be difficult, due to the nature of the development (for instance, this approach may be more suitable for</p>

		to plant new vegetation as part of early works as this is likely to end up damaged.	residential developments), This was more so to ensure that, when opportunities for phased implementation arise, substantive GI is secured as early as possible in the initial phases of delivery to enable early establishment. Recognise, however, that in this case it is crucial to plant when the planting will thrive the most to prevent poor growth and potential plant failure.
9.6.3	CEMP	The CEMP does not need to state that the LEMP and REAC would be adhered to, as these are secured in their own right through Requirement 4 of the dDCO. The management plans incorporate all measures relied on in ES.	The ECC GI Team is satisfied with the Applicants response and welcomes that the Management Plans include all of the measures relied on in the ES and that this has been made clearer in the combined REAC submitted at Deadline 3 (document 7.5.2 (B)).
9.7.1	LEMP	The LEMP (document 7.8(B)) contains all the planting required to make the project acceptable, including the embedded and best practice measures (including planting embedded into the design of the project and	No further comment. ECC GI Team welcomes clarification regarding the level of details within the LEMP and that it contains and align with the measures within the Environment Net Gain Plan. In addition, appreciate the explanation that the Applicant has separated BNG into the separate Environmental Gain Report [APP-176] to provide clarity on defining what is an enhancement.

		reinstatement planting) and additional mitigation as well as biodiversity compensation planting and landscape softening (EN-5).	
9.7.2	Landscape Maintenance	Aftercare monitoring would be undertaken by the main works contractor. At the end of aftercare period, the planting will be handed back to relevant landowner to manage and maintain. Applicant will be responsible for maintaining the embedded planting around the GSP substation for the life of the assets.	ECC GI Team welcomes clarification on who will monitor the aftercare and longer-term management and maintenance of landscape planting and how this relates to the different after care periods of 5 years for those on private land and for certain sites acquired by the applicant will be managed and maintained on a permanent basis. No further comment.
9.7.3	Landscape contract duration	Although BNG is not currently mandatory on NSIP, the Applicant has committed to delivering at least 10% biodiversity net gain on the project. Further details can be found in the Environmental Gain Report	The ECC GI Team notes that the statutory requirement for a 5-year aftercare period has been met, and that the planting will be managed by the relevant landowner after that time. The distinction between landscaping/planting maintenance of private landowners and those owned by the applicant was not clear from the LEMP but welcomes confirmation that set out in the REAC (document 7.5.2 (B)) that the Applicant will maintain on a permanent basis certain site along the project route where the freehold has been, or is proposed to be acquired by the Applicant, for the lifetime of the transmission asset. In

			<p>additional the committed to maintaining the environmental enhancement areas for a period of up to 30 years is set out in the Environmental Gain Report.</p> <p>There is no intention to duplicate work, as previously stated, Green Infrastructure is all-encompassing, so it is important to recognise the relationship, draw parallels, and be clear on the various elements that each plan will deliver and maintain to ensure coordination of efforts and to ensure no elements are overlooked or at risk of not being delivered.</p>
9.7.4 - 9.7.6	Maintenance of GI assets	Main Work Contractor would be responsible during contractual defects period. Applicant would be responsible for maintaining surface water drainage systems associated with permanent features. Funding for maintenance of Applicants assets will be funded through Applicants operational budget.	The ECC GI Team appreciates confirmation of the Main Works Contractor, who will be responsible for GI assets during the contractual defects period, and that the Applicant will be responsible for surface water drainage system maintenance and planting. The funding for project components or features such as drainage or planting on Applicant owned or leased land would be funded through the Applicant's Operational budget. In that these details will be included in the LEMP.
9.8.1 to 9.8.2	Norwich to Tilbury Dedham Vale	The Norwich to Tilbury project and effects of the project on the Dedham Vale	The ECC GI Team is satisfied that this development has taken into account the Norwich and Tilbury Project and the alignment of mitigation measures in collaboration with Suffolk County Council. ECC

	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)	AONB have both been considered in the ES.	welcomes and supports the Council's comments "that they remain interested as a stakeholder in the Dedham Vale AONB and Stour Valley partnership".
9.9.1 to 9.9.3	Climate Focus Area	Goal of CFA is to become more climate resilient. Green Infrastructure is a generic and all encompassing term for many aspects already covered within DCO application.	The ECC GI Team welcomes the Applicants' recognition of the Essex Climate Action Commission's Climate Focus Area and their demonstration of how elements of the development can contribute to the CFA targets. Particularly in terms of biodiversity, agriculture, and soils (sustainable farming).
9.10.1	Provision of PRow	The project is not affecting any PRow after construction and there will be short term closures and diversions during construction. Applicant support retention of existing PRow but has not identified need to provide any new PRow as part of the project.	The ECC GI Team notes and appreciates the Applicants' support for retaining existing PRow and that only short-term closures and diversion would be required during construction. That there are no plans to provide any new PRow, therefore no further comment.

6 **Climate Change**

6.1 Summary

- 6.1.1 The Council's consider that the response to climate change is robust. It is noted that their own internal standards are to be set however some reliance will be needed on behalf of any appointed contractor to carry through the same and monitor the same to ensure the same carbon standards are met.

7 **Historic Environment**

7.1 **Below Ground Heritage**

- 7.1.1 In response to comments 11.4.3 to 11.4.4, to clarify, no evaluation has been requested in the areas of overhead lines or pylons for the Essex side. The trial trenching within the area of underground cabling did not commence until Aug/Sept 2023 after the application was submitted and so the results/impacts in these areas have not yet been provided or assessed. The applicant proposes to update the OWSI with the results of these “at an appropriate deadline”, this was expected at the Issue Specific Hearing 4 however was not provided. There are a number of issues with the current OWSI which will need to be addressed to make it acceptable. Discussions with the Applicants Archaeological Advisor on the OWSI are recommended to avoid delays in the DCO process.
- 7.1.2 In response to comments 11.4.5, the Applicant proposes “a programme of geoarchaeological assessment that is proportionate to the project impact and the potential significance of the deposits, with details to be determined within the Detailed Written Scheme of Investigation (DWSI)”. As above further details on the scope of geoarchaeological investigation should be included in the OWSI, including fieldwork, potential dating methods and sampling procedures, which will inform the detailed WSI (DWSI). Advice should be sought from the Historic England Science Advisor for the Eastern Region.
- 7.1.3 In response to 11.5.5 to 11.5.7, to date all archaeological trial trenching fieldwork has been largely targeted on geophysical anomalies and Aerial Photographic features with some investigation in areas where no archaeological remains are recorded. In Essex it is recommended that archaeological evaluation should aim to cover 5% of the development area to enable a

statistically representative sample of the area to be investigated. It is unclear if this coverage has been met by the current or previous investigations and if not, then further archaeological evaluation will be required in those areas (post-consent) and prior to the determination of mitigation across the scheme. Details of a further programme of archaeological evaluation will need to be included within the OWSI and will include areas where the percentage coverage of archaeological trial trenches has not reached that expected by the Historic Environment Advisor. In addition, evaluation may also be required in areas proposed for planting, haul roads and temporary compounds etc if there is considered to be an impact on archaeological remains. These areas will need to be agreed with the Historic Environment Advisor before the acceptance of the OWSI. The Applicant states that “Where important archaeological remains are present and at risk of removal or damage, then strip, map and sample will be recommended as mitigation in the updated OWSI.” It is unclear as to why this method has been chosen as appropriate mitigation before the fieldwork is complete and why open area excavation of areas is not considered the most appropriate methodology for important archaeological remains. As above the OWSI will need further information and amending before it could be considered acceptable.

7.2 Above Ground Heritage

- 7.2.1 It has always been agreed that there will be no substantial harm to the significance of any heritage assets, as there will be no physical effect on any assets. However, there could be less than substantial harm to the setting of any Listed Buildings identified near to the route (see Section 2, ISH4, Item 4 for list) – whilst this wouldn’t fall in to the realms of substantial in any instance, this harm could be lessened or mitigated by pylon placement and height, as well as exact Cable Sealing End

compound locations which is currently not finalised due to the provisions of the Limits of Deviation and appointment of mains works contractor.

7.2.2 The Councils have no other substantive comments to make on this section at this time.

8 **Flood Risk and Water Quality**

8.1 Summary

8.1.1 The Councils have no further comments to make in regard to this particular section.

Reference / Para Number in LIR (REP1-039)	Matter	Applicant Comment Summary (REP3-050)	BDC/ECC Response
13.4.1	PWS	<p>The criterion is based on a pragmatic view of the potential for significant impacts, and are the criterion presented in the Scoping Report [APP-156]. Paragraphs 10.3.19 to 10.3.21 of the CEMP (document 7.5 (B)) note that the criterion is proposed for any PWS that are identified within the Order Limits following further landowner discussions. These are the same criterion that have been used for the assessments undertaken on already identified PWS as presented in ES Appendix 10.2: Groundwater</p>	<p>The criteria used in the Scoping Report [APP-156] and ES Appendix 10.2 [APP-131] appear to relate specifically to dewatering and discharge. The point raised in the LIR is about general protection from construction activities associated with trenchless methods, rather than only dewatering and discharge.</p> <p>As the criteria are 'pragmatic' rather than quantified / justified, it is important that the hydrogeological risk assessment fully considers the risk to PWS on a case-by-case basis (e.g., bentonite loss risks with consideration of the local geology etc.). It is understood that this will be covered by the post-consent hydrogeological risk assessments, which will be subject to approval by the Environment Agency. Please see comments in relation to this matter against item reference 13.7.1.</p>

		Assessment and Baseline [APP-131].	
13.4.2	PWS at Ansell's Farm	<p>The reference to the PWS at Caldecott is different to the PWS at Ansell's Farm. The PWS at Ansell's Farm is located at the western end of the proposed trenchless crossing (South of Ansell's Grove). Section 3.4 of ES Appendix 10.2: Groundwater Assessment and Baseline [APP-131] has identified that dewatering is not anticipated at the western end of this proposed trenchless crossing and, therefore, impacts on the PWS at Ansell's Farm are not anticipated.</p>	<p>The Applicant's reply relates to dewatering but does not cover potential chemical risks to the PWS.</p> <p>It is not clear from the reply whether there is / could be hydraulic continuity between the strata intersected by the trenchless crossing profile and the PWS well, or that the potential chemical risks from directional drilling activities that could occur with such circumstances, have been specifically assessed. This is particularly of note given the close proximity of the PWS to the Order Limits (around 60m) in the area of the trenchless crossing.</p> <p>It is understood that this will be covered by the post-consent hydrogeological risk assessments, which will be subject to approval by the Environment Agency. Please see comments in relation to this matter against item reference 13.7.1.</p>
13.4.2	Sites with potential for contamination	<p>The site referred to has an ID BT325 and the coordinates should be 587964, 237139. This has been added to the Errata List [REP2-066] which was</p>	<p>The Applicant's reply clarifies the location of this site, and it is agreed that, as it is outside the Study Area, no further consideration of it is needed.</p>

		<p>submitted at Deadline 2. This site was described as a potentially contaminated site in information received from BDC, which provided no further detail other than 'unknown infill'. However, since the first review of the site, which is very small, the Order Limits have evolved, and the site now sits outside of both the Order Limits and the study area and therefore does not require any further assessment.</p>	
<p>13.5.1 & 13.5.2</p>	<p>Data sources for contaminated land</p>	<p>Section 3.2 of ES Appendix 10.1: Geology Baseline and Preliminary Risk Assessment [APP-130] describes the information sources. These include the National Library of Scotland for historical Ordnance Survey mapping typically between the late 1800s and the 1970s. Google Earth historical aerial imagery has been reviewed, with dates</p>	<p>As stated in the Local Impact Report [REP01-39], it would have been helpful if a list of the mapping editions and dates that have been reviewed could have been provided.</p> <p>Based on the Applicant's reply, it appears possible that there is a gap in the baseline data between around the 1970s and 2000. This is because the only data set that covers this time period that the Applicant has referred to is Google Earth historical imagery with dates 'typically between the mid-1940s through to the present day' and 'historical aerial photographs (Britain from Above) for various dates'. Whilst Google Earth imagery does run from the 1940s to present, for some parts of the Order Limits with Braintree DC, this is</p>

		<p>typically between the mid 1940's through to present day and supplemented by historical aerial photographs (Britain from Above) for various dates (which differ for different areas/places). This data is further supplemented by information requested and obtained from the Local Authority, the Environment Agency and the Defra MAGIC map.</p>	<p>actually a single greyscale image from the 1940s, a single extremely low-resolution image from the 1980s, and then detailed satellite imagery only from around 2000 onwards. Likewise, it is not clear from the Applicant's response to what extent the Britain from Above photographs actually provide useful data (as dates etc. of the images are not provided).</p> <p>This appears to be a limitation in the baseline data, particularly given that high resolution mapping from the 1970s to 2000 is commercially available and does not appear to have been used. We would welcome the Applicant's further comments on this to confirm that this limitation does not affect the adequacy of the assessment (e.g., considering that the development is relatively low risk in this respect, being infrastructure development across largely agricultural land).</p>
13.6.1 & 13.6.2	Unexpected, contaminated ground	The Applicant can confirm that paragraph 10.3.12 of the CEMP (document 7.5 (B)) submitted at Deadline 3 has been amended to clarify this wording	The amended wording addressed this point.
13.7.1	Hydrogeological risk assessment	The Applicant has updated GH07 in the CoCP (document 7.5.1 (B)) submitted at Deadline 3 to say 'The hydrogeological risk assessment will be submitted to the	The amended wording addresses this point.

		<p>Environment Agency for approval prior to construction. The Environment Agency will have up to 21 working days to respond on the hydrogeological risk assessment and their comments will be considered as part of finalising the risk assessment. This can be supported by a pre-submission draft to reduce the risk of any delays.'</p>	
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10 **Agriculture and Soils**

Reference / Para Number in LIR (REP1-039)	Matter	Applicant Comment Summary (REP3-050)	BDC/ECC Response
14.3.2	Amount of agricultural land on the project	Applicant clarified amount of agricultural land is 644Ha.	The Councils have nothing further to add at this time.
14.3.3 to 13.3.5	Further evidence of soil surveys	The applicant confirms that further surveys were carried out for the haul route and that the soil quality is 'good' - therefore 3a, Best and Most Versatile Land (BMV).	The confirmation that the haul route land is BMV only furthers the Council's concerns about the haul route as set out in paragraphs 14.4.5 - 14.4.10 of the Council's Local Impact Report (REP1-039).
14.4.1 to 14.4.3	Impacts on land use and soils at the GSP substation	No significant effects from loss of agricultural land from GSP.	The Councils have nothing further to add at this time.
14.4.4 to 14.4.10	Construction effects on agricultural	Compensation to landowners is outside of the planning process. Various	The matters of the haul route alignment were given some discussion as part of the compulsory purchase hearing. While BDC/ECC were not present at that meeting, from watching the

	<p>land due to the temporary access route off the A131</p>	<p>discussions and options were explored regarding the temporary access route, and this is a deadline 3 submission (REP3-053)</p> <p>AIL's likely to be bigger than farm vehicles.</p>	<p>webcast, the local farmers put forward their concerns and other options that the applicant should have looked at in their optioneering process.</p> <p>It is understood that Swept path Analysis will be submitted on the haul route (and other options put forward by the farmers?) to demonstrate that it works. BDC/ECC would be interested in seeing these submissions.</p> <p>A number of points were also discussed to do with drainage and soil handling.</p> <p>REP3-053, the optioneering assessment of the haul route sets out the reasons why a hybrid approach would not be suitable which is noted (Paragraphs 5.4.1- 5.4.15). It is acknowledged that the local road network is constrained in this location, but the hybrid option could still work, but ultimately the justification from the applicant is that option B, the haul route, prevents a larger number of issues that the hybrid option (Option C) still has.</p> <p>There is however less justification provided for the precise alignment of the haul route as proposed, comparatively to other potential suggested options by the landowners which would have less impact on their farming activities.</p> <p>BDC only, remain concerned about the alignment of the haul route and the impact on the farmers businesses more generally, but we defer to them for specific impacts.</p>
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<p>14.4.11-14.4.14</p>	<p>Operation phase impacts</p>	<p>2.8km of line removed in Essex – no new sections of OHL proposed.</p>	<p>The Councils have nothing further to add at this time.</p>
<p>14.5.1-14.5.2</p>	<p>Measures to protect soil</p>	<p>Await further feedback on the good practice measures set out in the CoCP for protecting soil.</p>	<p>The Councils are not experts in soil handling so cannot comment exactly on the good practice measures put forward; the intention was to highlight this as a particularly important point to the ExA, especially as the land has now been classified as BMV. Any works which reduce the quality of the soil to not be BMV would likely have significant implications for the farmers businesses. The Council's defer to good practice measures to store, hold, and replace the soils and overburden in a way they can be beneficially re-used where they are extracted and would ask the ExA to take this into account.</p>

11 **Traffic and Transport**

Reference / Para Number in LIR (REP1-039)	Matter	Applicant Comment Summary (REP3-050)	BDC/ECC Response
15.4.6	Topic Meetings	Details on the traffic assessment method are set out with a commitment to further discussions.	The Council welcomes continued discussions; however, is of the opinion that there are sufficient risks within the assessment methodology, as outlined in both Essex County Council's Local Impact Report [REP1-039] and Suffolk County Council's Local Impact Report [REP1-044], that require minimising in order to ensure that the assessed impacts are not exceeded. The Council has not yet been provided with the link-by-link traffic flows but welcome this commitment from the Applicant.
15.5.1	Traffic Impact	The Applicant identified the elements of the traffic assessment they considered to be robust and a worst case.	The Council welcomes the commitment towards discussions on this point and recognises that the assessment is based on a preliminary assessment of impacts. The Council's concern relates to ensuring the impacts assessed are not materially exceeded during construction and relevant controls, monitoring, reporting and enforcement would be a reasonable mechanism for ensuring compliance.
15.5.2	Traffic Impact	The Applicant identified the elements of the traffic assessment they considered to be robust and a worst case.	The Council welcomes the inclusion of the construction routes within the CTMP as a critical control for the construction of the development. The figures assessed within the Transport Assessment [APP-061] during those hours reflect shift patterns and significant car share proportions (enabled by a minibus), which do not form commitments within the management plans.

			<p>As set out in our response to TT1.13.15 of the Examiner's questions [REP3-061] at Deadline 3, the Council have concerns regarding the assumptions within the Transport Assessment and are looking to minimise the risks associated with these assumptions through relevant controls. These risks relate to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total staff numbers. • Peak construction vehicle numbers • Staff shifts patterns and as a result the assessment hour • The use of the staff mini-bus (crew bus) • The assessed proportions of car sharers <p>There are no mechanisms in place that guarantee these HGV numbers, shift patterns or the travel proportions by minibus, which could result in substantially increased impacts on the highway network during the peak hour. This brings significant risk to the conclusions of the assessment.</p>
15.5.3 – 15.5.4	Traffic Impact	Notes the responses to 15.5.1 and 15.5.2.	No further information has currently been submitted, so the Council maintains its position that details of the relative use of accesses is currently unclear. Greater understanding of this use would give confidence in understanding the relative level of impact at different sites.
15.5.5	Traffic Impact	Applicant identifies the reasons for not including the project in its assessment.	Noted. No further comments.

15.5.6	Temporary Haul Road	Applicant notes ECC's position on the Temporary Haul Route.	No further comment.
15.5.6 – 15.5.7	Temporary Haul Road	The Applicant identifies the approval process for the A131 temporary access and that details of the route are provided.	The Council are seeking assurances that the access is deliverable, particularly that visibility can be achieved to reflect road speeds. It would be beneficial if details on the parameters used for the 'worst case' design that was applied could be provided. ECC need assurances that an access is deliverable within the DCO red line to required standards with a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit and a Designer's Response.
15.5.8	Site Accesses	The Applicant provides details on the design and layout plans, and that the generic access form is based on a worst case. The Applicant outlines the approval process.	The Council are seeking assurances that the access is deliverable, particularly that visibility can be achieved to reflect road speeds. It would be beneficial if details on the parameters used for the 'worst case' design that was applied could be provided. ECC need assurances that an access is deliverable within the DCO red line to required standards with a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit and a Designer's Response.
15.6.1	Statement of Common Ground	The Applicant identifies that they are looking to enter into a Framework Highways agreement.	The Applicant has been engaging with ECC and SCC on the Heads of Terms for the agreement, which is welcomed, and we will continue to engage on this issue.

15.7.1	Traffic Impact	The Applicant explains the reasons for routeing on Mill Road and Bures Road	Further information is sought on vehicle numbers, which the Applicant has indicated will be provided.
15.8.1	Highway Repair	The Applicant provides details of the highway repair process, as set out within the CTMP.	Section 5.2 of Document 7.6 (B): Construction Traffic Management Plan [REP3-030] includes details on the survey (photographic and descriptive) to be undertaken of the local road network and accesses. Further discussion is needed on a process that ensures that any deterioration of the highway is dealt with quickly.
15.8.2	Site Accesses	The Applicant sets out the approach for wheel washing.	Paragraph 5.5.7 of Document 7.6 (B): Construction Traffic Management Plan [REP3-030] refers to wheel washing will <i>“be provided at each main compound access point on to the highway where a need has been identified through the design process”</i> . This would imply that numerous accesses are unlikely to include wheel washing. Facilities should be provided at all sites where a risk due to surface construction or operation is identified.
15.8.3	Traffic Impact	The Applicant sets out details on where construction routes can be identified.	The Council will undertake a review of the construction routes as indicated at Appendix A of the Construction Traffic Management Plan [REP3-030].
15.8.4	Site Accesses	The Applicant identifies the submission of Technical Note on Temporary Access Route.	Whilst a review of options of the temporary haul route is set out [REP3-053] within the note, evidence has not been submitted that the proposed access arrangements and ghost island can be accommodated within the existing road layout. The Council is

			concerned about deliverability of the access as per our response to 15.5.6, 15.5.7 and 15.5.8 above.
15.9.1	AILs	The Applicant identifies inclusion of construction routes and the details of the AILs.	The Council welcomes this further clarification and will undertake a high-level review of routes for any specific comments on constraints. The Council notes that AILs are subject to their own specific approval process.
15.10.1	PRoW	The Applicant notes ECC's comments on the PRoW management set out within the CTMP.	No comments.
15.10.2	Planting near PRoW	The Applicant sets out restrictions on planting will be included in the Public Rights of way Management Plan	Paragraph 5.1.7 of the Document 8.5.8: Public Right of Way Management Plan [REP3-056] defines minimum widths. No further comments.
15.10.3 - 15.10.4	Legal widths of PRoW	The Applicant sets out that the definitions and widths of PRoW are set out in the Public Rights of way Management Plan.	Paragraph 1.4.2 and 1.4.3 of the Document 8.5.8: Public Right of Way Management Plan [REP3-056] includes definitions of PROW and Paragraph 5.1.7 includes minimum widths No further comments.
15.10.5	PRoW	The Applicant sets out the contact arrangement details are set out in the Public	Paras 3.3.2 and 3.3.3 refer to contact arrangements. Paragraph 5.1.4 of the Document 8.5.8: Public Right of Way Management Plan [REP3-056] sets out that <i>"Any required temporary diversions will be clearly marked at both ends with signage explaining the diversion, the</i>

		Rights of way Management Plan.	<i>duration of the diversion and a contact number for any concerns". No further comments.</i>
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12 **Air Quality and Emissions**

12.1 Summary

12.1.1 The Councils have no further comments to add for this section.

13 Noise and Vibration

13.1 Summary

- 13.1.1 The main concern, in terms of noise and vibration are the proposed working hours which extend to 12hrs on weekdays, and 9hrs on weekends and Bank Holidays. These proposed working hours extend beyond the typical working hours which are usually accepted owing to impacts on neighbouring amenity.
- 13.1.2 The Applicant has identified that reducing the working hours would lead to significant project delays, which could jeopardise the stability of the UK power network. NG have accepted that construction works would not be undertaken in all locations and all of the time, furthermore, it is likely that any one receptor would only be exposed to noise on every other weekend.
- 13.1.3 However, the approval which NG have request, would allow them to undertake construction works for an extended period of weekdays and weekends, and for a number of years, without any control.
- 13.1.4 Working hours is discussed in other sections of this document including the dDCO in Section 1 and post hearing comments in ISH2, item 5 in Section 2.
- 13.1.5 The Councils will try to work with the Applicant to resolve these issues for example by suggesting some working time limits for any one receptor. This could take the form of a number of weeks working time for a singular receptor.

Reference / Para Number in LIR (REP1-039)	Matter	Applicant Comment Summary (REP3-050)	BDC/ECC Response
18.5.4 to 18.5.5	Employability and skills strategy	Likely that 10% of workforce (35 jobs) to be sourced from local labour market therefore the applicant does not consider it proportionate nor necessary to prepare a Skills and Employment Plan or Strategy.	Whilst we accept that most of those employed on the project will need to have certain expertise and will therefore come from the applicant's existing workforce, they have stated that it is expected that 10% of the workforce would come from the local area and they state that this is likely to be apprentices, security workers and delivery drivers. Although this anticipated 10% will probably only result in 35 workers in total and this is a small number, they are still local jobs and given that they themselves suggest this number will include apprentices, I cannot understand why they would not include an employment and skills plan. Especially given that they state in both sections 18.4.1-18.4.5 and 18.4.6-18.4.7 'the Applicant requests contractors tendering for the construction of the project to identify how they propose to provide job opportunities for local people. The Applicant also promotes the use of local supply and small/medium enterprises through main works contracts by embedded target within its framework contracts. The Applicant will continue to work with Councils and business leaders to

			identify opportunities to invest in employment networks, including looking for opportunities to work with local businesses.'
18.6.1	Opportunities and legacy	It has been determined that there are no likely significant effects on socio economics associated with the project, however the Applicant is committed to continuing discussions with the Councils and other key stakeholders regarding their aspirations in respect of community benefits.	ECC and others too think that employment and skills should be separate from community benefits, it may not be appropriate or possible in this case, given the joint letter sent on community benefits with Suffolk, to push the employment and skills strategy and instead we will try to secure these benefits within community benefits.

15 **Minerals and Waste**

Reference / Para Number in LIR (REP1-039)	Matter	Applicant Comment Summary (REP3-050)	BDC/ECC Response
19.5.1	Minerals Policy	The Applicant has added these points to the Errata list [REP2-066] and can confirm this would not change the conclusions presented in either the MRA [APP-132] or ES Chapter 10: Geology and Hydrogeology [APP-078].	This is noted and agreed that the conclusions as set out in APP-132 and APP-078 do not change as a result.

Reference / Para Number in LIR (REP1-039)	Matter	Applicant Comment Summary (REP3-050)	BDC/ECC Response
21.2.3	Art 2 Interpretation – page 71	The Applicant sets out a number of reasons why the activities excluded from pre-commencement operations (I.e. can happen before development technically commenced) are needed.	<p>BDC/ECC consider that pre-commencement operations (including set up works associated with construction compounds, temporary accesses, erection of any temporary means of access, erection of any temporary means of enclosure or temporary demarcation fencing marking out site boundaries) have potential to have significant effects and should trigger ‘commencement’</p> <p>NG cite the emerging Yorkshire Green DCO, A417 Missing Link DCO 2022, A428 Black Cat to Caxton DCO 2022 and A1 Birtley to Coal House Improvement Scheme DCO as justification/ precedent for inclusion of the proposed definition of pre-commencement operations.</p> <p>The Councils have previously requested an assessment of each of the pre-commencement operations to support NG’s position that such works are de minimis [REP 3-061]. This has not been addressed in this document APP-035 at least.</p> <p><u>DCO Advice note 13 states at para 2.14 that if a draft DCO includes wording derived from other made DCOs, this should be explained in the Explanatory Memorandum. The Explanatory Memorandum should explain why that particular wording is relevant to the proposed</u></p>

			<p><i>draft DCO, for example detailing what is factually similar for both the relevant consented NSIP and the Proposed Development (See Advice Note 15 for further advice).</i></p> <p><i>The explanatory memorandum [APP-035] states at para 3.6.16 that whilst noting the Planning Inspectorate's comments in Advice Note 15 regarding the use of the term "commence" within draft Orders, the ability to undertake these "pre-commencement operations" ahead of main construction is of importance in the context of the anticipated construction programme for the project. The Environmental Statement does not indicate that the excluded works and operations would be likely to have significant environmental effects. For this reason, National Grid considers that the exclusion of these works and operations from the definition is appropriate.</i></p> <p>The other DCOs which NG refer to in REP-3-050 are not mentioned in the explanatory memorandum and there is no explanation provided as to why the circumstances are factually similar. Indeed, there are arguably other more factually similar DCOs (Brechfa) for example where pre commencement operations are not included.</p> <p>The Applicant refers to the urgent need for the scheme and the tight construction schedule as justification for inclusion of the wide range of pre-commencement operations. The majority of the proposed wording has been accepted by The Councils but there remain severe concerns about some of the pre-commencement operations especially where the detail is unlikely to be firmed up until after appointment of the main works contractor, and their potential for significant impact on neighbouring amenity.</p>
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<p>21.2.4</p>	<p>Article 2 (Interpretation)</p>	<p>The Applicant contends that the mechanisms of enforcing any breaches of the control documents are sufficient as currently proposed.</p>	<p>There are controls set out in the CEMP (incorporating the CoCP), CTMP and the MWWP which include a non-compliance procedure managed by the EnvCoW who monitors for compliance and stops work if appropriate with provision to inform various bodies (including the LHA to the extent there has been any breach affecting the highway network). There is also a complaints procedure. The LEMP has different obligations for in house monitoring by NG personnel.</p> <p>Requirement 4 also requires authorised development including pre-commencement operations to be carried out as per the CEMP/LEMP/MWMP etc.</p> <p>Planning Act 2008 s161 – makes it a criminal offence to carry out works in breach of approved DCO.</p> <p>Whilst there is a control mechanism, it is effectively reliant on NG itself identifying and referring any breach; the ultimate sanction for breach of the DCO is judicial process.</p> <p>The Councils defer back to our comments in the Local Impact Report.</p>

<p>21.2.5</p>	<p>Article 2 (Interpretation) - BDC/ECC Request to be able to assess materially new/different environmental effects</p>	<p>See comments across -></p>	<p>The position for BDC/ECC has been stated previously. NG do not believe the detailed design of the project will give rise to materially new/different environmental impacts. To the extent there are such changes, NG state they will be covered by the change process provisions. The LEMP (para 10.5.6) the MWMP (para 7.4.6) the CTMP (para 7.6.6) and the CEMP (para 5.5.6) all provide that where there is a proposed change... National Grid will provide details to the relevant planning authority together with evidence of relevant stakeholder engagement, whereupon the relevant planning authority will, acting reasonably, endeavour to respond within 28 days to either confirm its consent to the change ... or provide its reasons why the change is not accepted.</p> <p>This relies on NG identifying and bringing forward change proposals where there are materially new/different environmental effects but does not catch those changes where there may be a difference of opinion between NG/(ECC/BDC) as to whether there are any materially new/different environmental effects. Oral representations were made on this point at ISH2, and further detail set out below in Section 2 of this document in the post hearing submissions.</p>
<p>21.2.6</p>	<p>Article 2 - whether maintenance operations give rise to materially</p>	<p>The Applicant does not consider it appropriate nor practicable for the Councils to act as sole arbiters in determining whether or not the carrying out of any or all</p>	<p>The Applicant disagrees as they will need to be able to maintain this asset however, they need to in accordance with statutory obligations. This is understandable and largely follows precedent elsewhere - the remedy for breach on this issue would be judicial process. No further comment anticipated at this time.</p>

	new/different environmental effects	of the operations listed within the definition of “maintain” is likely to give rise to any materially new or materially different environmental effects.	
21.2.7	Article 2 - ‘operational use’	Seeking further clarification from the Councils as to the nature and extent of the further consideration which is mentioned in Paragraph 21.2.7.	Operational use is the trigger for compensation for loss/damage through installation of protective measures (Art 20(8)); Req 5 (implementation of drainage plan); and Req 9 (approval of reinstatement planting plan). It is anticipated that no further comment is required.
21.3.1 - 21.3.2	Articles 3 and 4 (Principal Powers)	The Applicant does not consider it appropriate to introduce a mandatory obligation of this nature.	<p>NG does not accept this request; there is a need for the scheme, but agreeing to deliver and maintain/ remove if not required could put NG in breach of its other (statutory) obligations – this is not unreasonable nor unprecedented.</p> <p>Requirement 12 provides for a decommissioning scheme to be submitted to LPA for approval six months before de-commissioning if appropriate. No further comment anticipated.</p>
21.3.3	Article 5 (Limits of Deviation)	LOD required for operational reasons. The application of the current LoD in a worst case scenario will not, on the whole, give rise to new	The Councils have made their position clear in earlier submissions related to LOD. See comments in Section 2 related to heritage in ISH4 below for more detail of the affected heritage assets in Essex.

		<p>or different significant adverse effects.</p> <p>Construction compounds will be located in flood zone 1 unless no other options – then appropriate measures will be explored.</p>	
21.3.4 & 21.3.5	Article 11 - Street Works + permit Schemes	N/A	ECC continues to reserve its position on this subject to further discussion with the applicant.
21.3.6 & 21.3.10	Article 14 – power to alter layout of streets	See response across ->	NG have clarified that to the extent works outside Order Limits are required, planning permission would be required for any development. No further comment required.
21.3.7	Article 15 – temporary stopping up of streets	See response across ->	ECC/BDC has previously expressed reservations about the proposals. NG has confirmed that it may not always be possible to provide a temporary diversion on a like for like basis – taking into account NG’s duties to act economically and efficiently; there may be closures for up to 12 weeks, although access to premises must be maintained. No response to the BDC/ECC suggestion that the LHA should be able to intervene where a temporary closure is left in place for an unreasonable/unnecessary length of time. Further discussions on this point would be welcome.

<p>21.3.8</p>	<p>Article 16 Access to works</p>	<p>The Applicant does not consider that the suggested alternative of 56 days is conducive to the timely delivery of a project for which there is a critical national need (to which see the Need Case).</p>	<p>Request for further time to agree access to works consents not agreed as not conducive to the need case. See however comment at 21.6.1 below – a ten week consent period for approvals under DCO requirements was recently agreed in the Longfield Solar Farm DCO.</p>
<p>21.3.9</p>	<p>Article 17 – construction, alteration and maintenance of streets</p>	<p>The Applicant agrees that a notification mechanism relating to completion of works undertaken pursuant to Article 17 would be helpful. The Applicant anticipates that this is a matter which would be readily capable of being addressed in the framework highways agreement (or similar) which the Applicant proposes to enter into with ECC and SCC (each in its capacity as local highways authority) in order to regulate how street works and other highways powers</p>	<p>ECC will consider this in relation to the framework highways agreement negotiations.</p>

		would be exercised during construction of the project.	
21.3.11	Article 47 – Traffic Regulation Order	As is noted in the Explanatory Memorandum, there is precedent for this approach in the National Grid (Hinkley Point C Connection Project) Order 2016 (see Article 40).	The need for additional resources to support enforcement has not been explicitly addressed and needs to be brought into the framework highway agreement discussions.
21.3.12	Article 48 – felling or lopping	Definition of near not required; have to meet specific purposes to fell/lop trees outside of order limits which in itself is sufficient protection.	ECC/BDC suggest the addition of <i>'to enable minimum standard electrical safety clearances to be maintained'</i> to Art 47 to clarify scope of the article.
21.3.13	Article 50 – river stour	EA statutory body and will apply for licences etc.	No further comment anticipated.
21.3.14	Article 57 – amendments to Certified Documents	See comments across ->	<p>To the extent there are such changes then there is a change process in each management document.</p> <p>Sched 4 para 4 does contain an appeal process which applies to any consent, agreement of approval required under the DCO</p> <p>NG has also committed to updating the electronic library with revisions, however wording to that effect does not yet appear in dDCO Art 57.</p>

21.4.1	Schedule 1 – associated development	See comments across ->	Associated development is limited to works which are necessary or expedient for the purposes of the scheme; NG does not accept that determination of what associated development gives rise to materially different/ new environmental impacts in this context should lie with LPA. The LPAs remedy ultimately lies with the Court if development is undertaken in breach of the DCO. No further comments are anticipated.
21.4.2	Schedule 1 work 12 – temporary site compounds	See comments across->	<p>The Councils requested more detail about where these features would go at the September hearing. NG has since commented on the action points from ISH1 that [REP 1-034]: and committed to provide locations of the temporary compounds in the CEMP.</p> <p>The Council's welcome this addition and will comment at deadline 5 on the locations of the temporary construction compounds.</p>
21.5.1	Schedule 3 requirements	3.1 has been agreed by Natural England.	No further comments to add if Natural England are satisfied with Metric 3.1.
21.5.2	Requirement 2 (1) time limits	Rationale set out in various documents for drafting.	No further comment – it could be useful to have a definition of 'begin' for clarity.
21.5.3	Requirement 3	It is accepted by the Applicant that a staging plan is something that should be provided, but it is not appropriate for the authorities concerned to	The Council's position on this point remains as set out in the Local Impact Report [REP1-039] Paragraph 21.5.3.

		approve the stages because the Applicant should be able to define the way in which the project is ultimately constructed	
21.5.4	Schedule 3 requirement 4 - drainage	See comments across ->	NG state that ECC will be consulted on this as the relevant planning authority for flood purposes. No further comment required.
21.5.5-6	Schedule 3 requirement 7 – construction hours / working hours	See comments across ->	<p>Covered in hearing 8 Nov 2023 – NG want to be able to work efficiently and not be constrained by shorter hours. They have produced analysis to show that if they were to reduce construction hours then there would be no/reduced ability to meet the fixed outage deadlines.</p> <p>The Council’s position remains as stated in previous submissions.</p> <p>NG to produce further analysis as set out in Inquiry AP2 Applicant-Submit a note that sets out the baseline construction schedule with the critical path analysis shown. Consider the relationship of this to the baseline scenario and scenario 1 (Justification for Construction Working Hours [REP3-045] table 2.1), and to Requirement 3 in the dDCO. Provide explanation how different milestone dates for scenarios 1 and 2 have been interpreted in table 2.1 including impact on time limit (Requirement 3).</p> <p>Subject to this, the Councils to consider making further representations to limit construction activity within x distance of protected receptors/ restrict construction traffic using haul routes and</p>

			or other alternatives. Further discussions will be ongoing with the Applicant.
21.5.7	Schedule 3 requirement 10	See comments across ->	ECC/BDC have requested ten – fifteen-year aftercare period; NG propose five; NG has referred to some 30-year aftercare periods - Environmental enhancement areas shown on Fig 1 APP-176 – 3 in ECC/BDC area these are quite limited. Position remains as stated by The Councils in LIR i.e. ten – fifteen-year aftercare period appropriate to ensure planting becomes established, although a 30 year period in locations around the substation locations is welcomed. This is also discussed further in Section 2, ISH 4 – item 3 point 2 below.
21.5.9	Schedule 3 requirement 13	See comments across ->	NG consider that land within the Order limits is capable of delivering at least 10% BNG. No offsite BNG is proposed. If offsite BNG is proposed, then a S106 would be required to tie this in.
21.6.1-2	Schedule 4	See comments across ->	The Councils have previously set out requests for longer consent time; NG is not minded to give 56 days for time on consent and seek justification from BDC/ECC as to why 56 days is appropriate. The Council's position remains as stated that there will be insufficient time to process the volume of consents required in the time allowed – especially where consultation with others required. The Councils are happy to progress negotiations on the PPA but remain of the opinion that 28 days will be inadequate without additional provisions in place, such as a pre-application discussion via PPA etc.

			It should be noted that Longfield Solar Panel Farm NSIP provided a ten-week approval period for consents, which is less than the Councils are asking for at this time.
21.6.3	Schedule 4 – requirement fees	See comments across ->	The Councils agree to discuss resourcing/ fee increase under PPA.
21.6.4	Schedule 4 consultation requirements.	Propose that with shadow submissions, that the 3 days will not be needed as sufficient information will have already been provided.	The Council position remains as set out previously that three business days is too short a time where further information is required. The Councils can pursue this further under PPA discussions.
21.6.5	Schedule 4 discharge of requirements	Applicant disagree with this approach.	The Councils propose that where there is a requirement to consult on any consent application NG serves relevant consultee at the same time as a time saving measure – in order to support discharging authorities in being able to meet the range of different consents they will be asked to assess and process during construction period. More time should be allowed for approval process especially if NG cannot help with this. If NG cannot agree to this this supports the Councils request that more than 28 days should be allowed for consent applications generally to enable overstretched local authority staff to process the relevant consents – see above.

17 **Community Benefits**

17.1 Summary

17.1.1 The Council's note the commitment by the Applicant to continue discussions around Community Benefits. The Councils similarly remain committed to this approach.

SECTION 2 - Post Issue Specific Hearings Notes and Actions

18 Purpose Of Submission

18.1 Introduction & Format

- 18.1.1 The purpose of Section is to provide a written note of hearing evidence as necessary (including any actions/queries not able to be answered at the hearings).
- 18.1.2 This section here forth will be in table format and tabulated with comments from the applicant and responses by BDC/ECC. It will use the meeting agendas for ISH2,3 and 4 as a template for response.
- 18.1.3 This response is jointly prepared by BDC and ECC and here forth will be referred to as 'The Council's'. Any differences of opinion between The Councils will be explicitly labelled as such.
- 18.1.4 The responses below also includes comments on other deadline 3 submissions including on the Public Rights of Way Management Plan (PROWMP) [REP3-056] and Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) [REP3-030].

Issue Specific Hearing 2 - The draft Development Consent Order and related matters

Item / Topic Area	Matter	Post Hearing Submission / Response to Any Action Point
Item 3	Review of changes to dDCO so far	The Council's have reviewed the changes made by the applicant at deadline 2 [REP2 009] and 3 [REP3-007) to the dDCO. Overall, while The Councils have no objection to the amendments put forward, the changes are minimal and do not address the concerns that BDC/ECC have as set out in our LIR [REP1-039], Deadline 2 and ExA Question 1 responses [REP3-061].
Item 4	Materially new or different effects, article 57 and appeal mechanism	<p>Paragraph 21.2.5 & 21.2.6 of the LIR [REP1-039] & Paragraph 4.10.3 of the Deadline 2 response [REP2-009] extensively covered these paragraphs.</p> <p>The Councils consider that as designs yet to be finalised until appointment of mains works contractor, there needs some mechanism as to whether there would be any materially/new effects from those assessed in the ES. The DCO if Consented should lead this process and not the main contractor.</p> <p>It is the Council's understanding that the Applicant has confirmed that if any changes to the Management Plans are required to cope with detailed design changes which give rise to materially new/different environmental impacts, this should be put to the LPA for approval in accordance with the change mechanisms in each of these documents. The LPA is given 28 days to refuse/approve. If a change is not approved then the appeal mechanism under Schedule 4 will be used to determine such an application. Subject to anything SCC/NG may have to add, this is helpful .</p> <p>However this only applies to requests for changes to the control docs brought forward by the Applicant; it only applies where the Applicant identifies that there are changes which give rise to materially new/different environmental impacts with effect; other changes may not be brought to the attention of the LPA to start with. There is concern that works which the LPA consider give</p>

		<p>rise to materially new/different environmental impacts which were not considered before confirmation of the DCO will be able to proceed without further assessment, bringing The Council's back to the position where it wants to be consulted on any proposed post DCO changes on a case by case basis.</p> <p>The definitions 'Maintain' and 'Associated development' include operations provided they do not give rise to materially new/different environmental effects; NG see no role for consultation with LPAs in this regard, and yet the impacts of such work could be significant.</p> <p>Materially new or different effects is not something that can be considered without seeing the evidence and assessing on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>The need for an appeal mechanism, yes as above see end para-Article 57/Schedule 17 – see 21.3.14 of LIR [REP1-039].</p>
<p>Item 5</p>	<p>The need for, and wording of new requirements put forward</p>	<p>Para 21.5.10 of LIR [REP1-039] – sets out consideration to a number of potential requirements</p> <p>Appendix 3 of Deadline 3 response [PD-005) (right at bottom) – sets out suggested wording for some requirements</p> <p>Need for the additional requirements</p> <p>The list of requirements in the dDCO seemed low for a NSIP project of this size, and certainly other similar NSIP projects. Looking through some of the other NSIP decisions which had an element of electricity transmission (Hinkley Point C and Brechfa), there were some requirements which may be of relevance to this project also for the ExA's consideration. These are included these in Paragraph 21.5.10 of the BDC/ECC Local Impact Report.</p>

It may well be that some of these requirements are not necessary for the project, and/or covered by other documents. BDC/ECC were simply trying to assist the ExA by identifying these potential requirements.

In terms of those potential additional requirements which are more pertinent to the scheme that are set out in Appendix 3, of response [REP3-061], the need/justification is below:

Potential New Requirement – control of artificial light

The route of the project is rural, therefore any artificial light needs to be adequately controlled and managed.

The Planning Statement sets out that the only permanent lighting will be on the Grid Supply Point (GSP) at Butlers Wood. There are not however any details that the Council's could see included within the submission documents of said lighting for the GSP. Details of lighting should be provided when its available, most sensibly through a Requirement, unless it is set out before that.

The planning statement sets out that the Cable Sealing End Compounds will have no permanent light – however without a mains works contractor on board, can this be guaranteed? The Council's consider that a requirement should be in place if permanent lighting is required at any CSE compound, that details are provided?

In terms of during construction, the lighting is to be controlled via good practice measures in the CEMP. The Construction compounds in particular are going to be heavily lit, especially if the hours of work are accepted, there will be a lot of 'in darkness' working. Should there be any extra controls for these lights beyond good practice measures? How do we know they will be provided in accordance with best practice without seeing any details once a contractor is appointed? Perhaps for the main construction compound which will be there for a significant period of time, where the Councils could approve some fixed lighting positions and specifications? These are questions for the ExA to consider in deciding whether an additional requirement is required.

In terms of the requirement wording in retrospect, it needs to be more precise to specific areas / equipment on the project, but the wording is generally taken from BDC's standard lighting condition.

Potential New Requirement HGV Traffic -

This potential requirement was not really to do with highway safety per se – it was taken from the Hinkley Point C NSIP, where the ExA sought to add an additional layer of control to restrict HGV vehicular movements. Perhaps if the extended working hours are taken forward, this condition could help reduce the impacts of those residents on the highway network by limiting construction traffic movements serving construction sites to core hours – see the post hearing notes on construction hours below.

Complaint handling

Residential amenity – complaints – In retrospect the Council's consider this is covered in the CEMP so is probably not required as a separate Requirement. That said, will residents know to look in the CEMP if there are any issues? Should the document be extracted and made available to residents along the route? The Councils believe that it should be a standalone document for easy access / understanding for residents should there be any complaints.

Within the CEMP Appendix A CoCP (REP3-026) under "*good practice measures*" at GG25 it states that the proposals will be the subject of community consultation, that numbers will be available to report incidents and that a log of the same and actions will be recorded. The reporting of any incidents and the methodology of doing so needs to be displayed on site, be clear and be inclusive. The results of this should be provided to the Council's at not less than 3 month intervals.

External Appearance of Structures

This requirement should be considered as the plans submitted with the DCO are not finalised; the works are set out in the dDCO but they could look very different depending on final

		<p>compound designs and colours. This Requirement would assist in securing those details once a contractor is appointed. For example, the colour of the security fencing will be important as well as the mitigation to soften the impacts of the Cable Sealing End Compounds. It is acknowledged that the compounds themselves will be large, formulaic and industrial in nature.</p> <p>Other Requirements</p> <p>An additional requirement should be also in relation to providing further evidence on the control documents e.g. CEMP, LEMP (as we both set out in our LIR's) [REP1-039] – BDC/ECC. It is acknowledged that further work is being prepared in this regard and will be submitted at deadline 5.</p>
<p>Item 6</p>	<p>Construction hours</p>	<p>The Council's remain concerned about the proposed working hours and the impact on residents – set out in our Local Impact Report [REP1-039], Paragraphs 17.4.5 – 17.4.9. + See 4.6 of Deadline 2 [REP2-009] response + REP3-061 – [deadline 3] Question CM1.5.12</p> <p>Probably at no fault of the current project team, but the Project was placed on pause in 2013. Now it has recommenced, the applicant team in a rush to complete it, at the expense of the amenity of residents which should both be avoided and is a material planning consequence of the scheme.</p> <p>The Councils are willing to try and work with the applicant to get more sensible working hours, or come up with other ways as Suffolk suggest to mitigate the impact on residents. A meeting is in the process of being set up to discuss this further.</p> <p>We will endeavour to report back to the ExA on progress during the next batch of hearings in December.</p>

Item 7	Mechanism for Highway authority recovery of costs	As discussed at Hearing 2 the LHA and the applicants are discussion highway impacts as a dedicated series of topic specific meetings. The Councils will report back to the ExA at a future deadline as to any agreement reached on the recovery of costs.
Item 8	Any other Matters	Article 53 – The Council’s will respond in writing at Deadline 5.

20 **Issue Specific Hearing 3 - Transport and rights of way**

Item / Topic Area	Matter	Post Hearing Submission / Response to Any Action Point
3	Transport Assessment and methodology used to assess traffic impacts	<p>The Council have concerns with the assessment of the traffic impact, as set out in our LIR [REP1-039]. As an example, the Applicant's shift patterns as set out in Paragraph 6.2.9 in the Transport Assessment [APP-061], mean they have distributed workers traffic travelling between 0600 and 0900 in the AM peak period. In their assessment, the majority of traffic is set out as travelling in the 0700 to 0800 period, with only 12.5% of workers travelling during the assessed hour of 0800 to 0900; added to this is the assessed proportion of staff that will be transported by a minibus (identified as a crew bus during the ISH by the Applicant), which is 70%, again as set out at Paragraph 6.2.9 of the Transport Assessment [APP-061]. Mainly as a result of these two assumptions the peak figure of 528 staff is assessed as 32 peak hour vehicle movements, which is a reason why a traffic impact has not been identified.</p> <p>As a result there are two concerns here; the first relates to what happens on the road network if the development does not exhibit the combination of vehicle movements that reflect the indicated shift patterns and the proportion of staff travelling by mini bus (crew bus); and the second is to ascertain as to whether the development impact should have been assessed for the hour where</p>

		<p>the impacts are greatest (indicated as appropriate within the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment Guidelines <i>Environmental Assessment of Traffic and Movement</i>); which is probably 0700 to 0800 in the AM, with a similar issue in the PM.</p> <p>These issues link to ITEM 4 of the agenda, in particular the CTMP [REP3-030], and what we see as an absence of commitments to achieve these travel patterns.</p> <p>Following the ISH, as requested by the examining authority the Councils have provided the Applicant with a prioritised list of our concerns with the assessment method, which we will continue to engage with them on.</p>
3	Transport Assessment and methodology used to assess traffic impacts	The only information linking the TA and ES to the construction programme is set out in ES Appendix 4.2: Construction Schedule [APP-091]. However, the details there are reasonably limited and as a result it is not possible to provide a meaningful review. The Applicant has indicated they will provide further information to the highway authorities on this matter, which should help to address some of our concerns.
4	Construction traffic and construction route strategy:	At Deadline 3 the Applicant submitted an updated CTMP [REP3-030], which included the routes for HGV traffic. We will undertake a review of the submitted Appendix and should we have any issues with those routes we will respond appropriately.
4	Construction traffic and construction route strategy:	Aside from construction routeing, there appears to be little control or management on construction traffic or construction worker movements within the CTMP [REP3-030]. As an example, a commitment to achieve the assessed staff car share/minibus proportions has not been identified and their target is to only achieve a proportion of 1.3 staff per vehicle (paragraph 6.3.5). As set out in the Councils' response to ITEM 3, given the risks within the assessment methodology, it is considered reasonable to embed a control, monitoring, reporting and

		enforcement process to identify any material unassessed impacts that occur, and management measures that can be brought in to remedy those impacts.
7	Public rights of way, and assessment of construction and traffic impacts on walkers, cyclists and horse riders	<p>With regards to the assessment of impacts to users of the public highway, as a starting point the approach for assessing severance, amenity and intimidation is considered to be reasonable at a high level. However, there is concerns set out in our LIR [REP1– 039] and the Councils’ response to ITEM 3 regarding the assessment of vehicles relating to the shift patterns and car share; the absence of an assessment of the hour of greatest impact, which is indicated as appropriate within the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment Guidelines <i>Environmental Assessment of Traffic and Movement</i>; and the assessment of link sensitivity, all of which can significantly affect impact.</p> <p>The Applicant has indicated that they will provide a plan showing link sensitivity to the Councils for ease of review, which we would welcome.</p>

20.1 Comments on Deadline 3 Submission – Public Rights of Way Management Plan (PROWMP) [REP3-056]

20.1.1 The following form the Councils’ comments on the Public Rights of Way Management Plan [REP3-056] submitted at Deadline 3 by the Applicant

20.2 3.3 Community Engagement and Public Information

20.2.1 Limited details have been provided on engagement with the community and wider users and the proposed method of engagement. Paragraph 3.3.1 requires expansion beyond residents. Engagement would additionally be required with relevant user groups for the status of the route and the wider community.

20.3 4.3 Routes with Public Access Affected by the Project

20.3.1 Paragraph 4.3.1 requires additional details on the phasing of works to establish the sequencing of closures. Further details are required to enable the Highway Authorities to assess impact on the network and connecting routes. It is currently unclear if adjacent routes will be closed during the same period. An indicative guide would provide further clarity.

20.4 5.2 PRow Management Signage

20.4.1 At paragraph 5.2.1 advance notices / signage would be required to be displayed on site prior to closures. The recommended period of advance notices is a minimum of one week.

20.4.2 It should be made clear at paragraph 5.2.3 that alongside the notice a map of the closure route and any applicable diversion must be displayed on site to assist users.

20.4.3 The Council agrees with the wording proposed for the site notices set out at Paragraph 5.2.5.

20.5 5.3 Active Management Plan for 'Shared Routes'

20.5.1 It should be made clear at Paragraph 5.3.2 that any appropriate separation between users and construction traffic must not impact on the definitive width of the route.

20.5.2 For paragraph 5.3.3 further expansion is required on the meaning of active measures. Does this include gating of the haul road or use of banksman?

20.6 5.4 Reinstatement of PRow

20.6.1 Details of the Pre commencement condition survey details (as set out at paragraph 5.4.1) should be shared with the relevant Highways Authority prior to commencement of works on site.

20.7 6.5 Change Process

20.7.1 For paragraph 6.5.5, it is important that any proposed changes to the PRowMWP would also be required to be agreed with the relevant Highway Authority.

20.8 Appendix A - Routes with Public Access Affected by the Project

20.8.1 Additional details are required for sequencing on closures as covered in comments on paragraph 4.3.1

20.8.2 Clarification is sought on the definition of '*as required*'. Any gating of the public right of way should be avoided to keep the route barrier free for the least restrictive option. Any crossing should be managed through gating of access way or consideration should be given to use of banksman as a managed crossing.

21 Specific Comments on the deadline 3 submission: Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) [REP3-030]

21.1.1 The Council notes the stronger wording regarding those measures and processes that are within the CTMP.

- 21.1.2 At paragraph 3.3.2, the Council notes that the emergency number will be displayed on the Public Right of Way diversions, and this is welcomed.
- 21.1.3 The inclusion of construction routes at Appendix A of the CTMP is welcomed by the Council in combination with the text at paragraph 5.3.4 confirming the use of the construction routes. However, further clarification is needed over paragraph 7.2.5 on the details that the construction vehicle numbers that are being checked against, along with relevant reporting and enforcement procedures.
- 21.1.4 Table 4-1 refers to Requirement 4 of the draft DCO and requires that the authorised development be carried out in line with this CTMP, with no requirement for submission of a further iteration for discharge. This is not considered to be acceptable.
- 21.1.5 Table 4-1 states that as *“a Main Works Contractor has not yet been identified, the timing and numbers are subject to change. Therefore, it is not appropriate to include these details within the CTMP at this time”*. Clarity between this statement and paragraph 7.2.5 is sought. An initial cap on HGV movements that is equivalent to the project peaks assessed in the TA should be incorporated. If a contractor wanted to amend these caps; they could do so through amendments to the CTMP, approved by the relevant highway authority, and by evidencing that there would be no additional impacts. Without controls being included at this point of the process, it is unlikely that they will ever form part of the CTMP.
- 21.1.6 Table 4-1 sets out that *Requirement 4 of the draft DCO (document 3.1 (C)) specifies that changes to the CTMP would be agreed with the relevant highway authority*. The Council welcomes this change.
- 21.1.7 Further clarity is sought on paragraph 5.4.4 and whether this is a commitment to transport staff by minibus/crew bus, if so the proportion of staff to be transported needs to be set out as a commitment within the CTMP, so that that project achieves the assessed car share proportions.

21.1.8 There should be a stronger commitment at Paragraph 6.2.4 of the CTMP that car sharing or the use of a minibus/crew bus will be used for travelling around the site rather than it being *assumed*.

21.1.9 As set out in our response to Question TT 1.13.21 of the Examiner's questions [REP3-061] at Deadline 3, the Council outlined a number of areas of particular concern relating to the CTMP; these being:

- Surveying of the condition of the highway network for remediation. **Partially resolved. Further information is needed.**
- That the local highway authorities should be the party responsible for discharging the CTMP and agreeing any changes to the CTMP. **This appears to be resolved.**
- Absence of monitoring of construction and workforce traffic. It is understood that Good Practice Measure TT02 will ensure GPS monitoring of construction routes and there is an indication that construction traffic will be recorded at paragraph 7.2.4. Further information is sought on what traffic is to be monitored and how vehicle numbers will be reported to the highway authorities. **Not considered to be resolved.**
- Absence of commitment to achieve staff modal share through commitment to minibus and car sharing. **Not resolved**; there continues to be no commitment to achieve the staff mode share.
- Absence of commitments to survey staff movements. The CTMP includes commitment towards surveying of staff movements in the form of a travel survey. **This appears to be partially resolved, but further commitment to monitoring of total staff vehicle movements.**
- Absence of reporting on CTMP monitoring and non-compliance to highway authorities. **Not resolved**: there is no commitment to report the findings of the monitoring to the highway authorities; nor any meaningful process for remedial actions if the CTMP fails to achieve its targets.
- Approval of construction traffic routes. **Resolved** through inclusion of Construction Routes at Appendix A.

22 Issue Specific Hearing 4 - Various environmental matters, including biodiversity, the historic environment, landscape and views, and the water environment.

22.1 Comments

22.1.1 The Council's only have comments on specific items in this list, therefore not all item points will be referred to.

Item / Topic Area	Matter	Post Hearing Submission / Response to Any Action Point
Item 3 - Biodiversity	Point 2 – clarification of proposals for ecological matters including BNG	<p>At the hearing, the Applicant confirmed that there would be different types of planting across the development; reinstatement planting, embedded measures (mitigation for visual), woodland planting / softening. A re-instatement plan was also submitted at REP3-036.</p> <p>The Council's main concerns around the ecological placement, mitigation, enhancement of planting is around the period of aftercare sought. These concerns are set out in 21.5.7 of LIR [REP1-039]. Also discussed in DC1.6.71 and EC1.3.5 + EC1.3.6 of Deadline 3 response [REP3-061].</p> <p>With Essex both having a dry climate, and the complications for planting on newly bunded structures that this emphasises the request for aftercare to be extended to a period 10-15 years to enable the growth of vegetation to be properly managed.</p> <p>Furthermore, although establishment of trees can in theory be achieved in 5 years, it will take 30 years minimum to achieve condition for functioning woodland. There is a significant concern on the planting and landscaping proposals - particularly natural regeneration of woodland – and these areas require detailed discussion with the applicant outside of the Hearing.</p>

		<p>In relation to CEMP APP-178 plus its appendices REAC APP-179 and CoCP APP-180 (all April 2023) , it is noted from the ISH discussion that there will be an updated CoCP to include the Environment Agency requirements in the CEMP.</p>
<p>Item 4 – Historic Environment</p>	<p>Point 2 – Limits of Deviation</p>	<p><i>AP-5- Elaborate on the heritage assets that you express alarm about in your Deadline 3 submission [REP3-061]. Which receptors in your own area do you consider fall into the sensitive category, such that you believe they should be subject to restrictions on the implementation of Limits of Deviation?</i></p> <p>In response to Action point 5 from the Hearing, a list of assets which will be affected:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gentry’s Farm, 1169822– part of a cluster of listed buildings (Also barn at Gentry’s: 1123269, cart lodge: 1337883 and cottage: 1337894) which are close to the order limits and the GSP substation. The order limits seem to include an area across the surrounding fields to the south, which would appear to be an access route, although not specified as such in the General Arrangement Plan (document APP-018, sheet 23). Were this to be used as an access point, the loss of hedgerow and changes to wider setting in terms of increased traffic, cutting through the fields will have a harmful impact on the setting of these listed buildings. Whilst not marked as any potential access corridor at this stage, as the section of fields potentially be incorporated in later stages? These buildings have not been assessed as they are out of the 250m scoping remit, however the flat landscape and connection to the landscape suggest an assessment would be beneficial, particularly if the limits of deviation could allow for an increase in the height and change of position of the existing pylons. Visibility of the substation in Butler’s Woods unlikely, but again no assessment of such is included in the documents. - Nether House Farm, list entry 1123031. This house is close to the sealing end compound, which will be a noticeable part of the farm’s wider, southern setting. From this

there will be an increase in traffic, changes to landscape, noise and visual impact. This can be considered less than substantial harm to its setting, particularly as this is a farmhouse which has links with the surrounding landscape. Concluded in the applicant's documents that the impact will be 'Negligible adverse'.

- Netherby Cottage – will the limits of deviation affect the impact/setting? Eg if there is a higher pylon, including modification of the existing line proposed. The applicant's report concludes there will be 'No change/neutral', but its unclear if this based on no change or increased height, movement etc as per my general question above.

- Moorcote, list entry number 114804 and Ansells, list entry number 114803. There will be the removal of pylons but a new underground corridor to the north. Lots of disturbance during the construction phase. No assessment of these buildings has been included in the impact assessment.

- Abbot's Farm, list entry number 1122866. This is close to the new Stour Valley West Cable Sealing End Compound. The proposed realignment of the existing route will be slightly further away from the LB, however there are 3 new pylons in the compound. The change to the existing pylon is going to be beneficial in terms of the view, however the limits of deviation could change this. The applicant's statement concludes that the changes will be 'Small beneficial/Minor Beneficial', but it would be useful if the pylon relocation was set out beforehand, particularly as the visual relationship between the existing pylon and listed building is so visually intrusive.

- All Saints Church, list entry number 1168870 and Wickham Hall, list entry number 1338001. No change proposed but the nearby (very close) pylons are within the DCO. Upgrading or enlarging them would have an impact – would the limits of deviation allow this? Cable sealing and platform tower modification is proposed close by and this could change the setting of the LBs if they are moved/manipulated compared to existing.

Overall, there are a number of heritage assets which could be affected by the development in Braintree District. While there is no overhead line proposed, it is

		understood that other equipment like the Cable Sealing End Compound will have some limits of deviation which could have higher impacts on these heritage assets.
Item 4 – heritage		The Councils acknowledge Applicants intention to add an additional item to the REAC which would include archaeological matters, it was something the Inspector brought up however no details on the wording was provided by the Applicant and, as mentioned in the Comments, no further details were provided on the updates to the OWSI.
Item 5 - Landscape	Point 1 – The Examining Authorities unaccompanied site visit	The Councils are very grateful for the clarifications provided by the ExA regarding the unaccompanied site visits. We have no further questions or queries.
Item 5 - Landscape	Point 6 – additional viewpoints and assessments And Point 7 – Sufficiency of Visual mitigation for the cable sealing end compounds	<p><u>In relation to Action point 11:</u> <i>(AP11 commentary in red and answer in black)</i></p> <p>AP11 Braintree District Council Please review the Applicant's response [REP3-050] to your earlier comments about the general suitability and representativeness of viewpoint H07 and visual mitigation and provide an update on your position.</p> <p>Acknowledge VPS H-09 and H-10 are included to represent views from PRoW closer to the GSP substation. A photomontage from H-09 would still be useful to demonstrate effectiveness or not of proposed mitigation at the substation. If Year 15 demonstrated residual negative effects, then some landscape compensation, softening or enhancements could be offered between the PRoW and the substation development.</p>

Similarly, explain if your position in relation to a proposed additional viewpoint at OS grid reference TL849371 (the sharp bend in the green lane) remains the same. The Council's are unsure where this reference point is – please could further clarification be provided and we can respond by the next deadline.

Elaborate on your submission [REP2-009] suggesting a need for an additional viewpoint to show the haul road from the A131 to the Stour Valley west cable sealing end compound (location, whether your suggestion relates only to the provision of baseline photography or also a visualisation, and – if the latter – what form you suggest the visualisation would take). Paragraph 3.2.1 of The Council's Deadline 2 Response [REP2-009] considered that there should be an additional location point for the Accompanied Site visit. Now the ASI has occurred without view of the haul route, The Councils offer no further comment.

Additional Viewpoints and Assessments

In terms of general comments on additional viewpoints mentioned in the ISH4 meeting agenda, The Councils have the following comments on Whether additional viewpoints and assessment are required at the following locations:

From the PRow network east of the A131

Our comments on this matter are set out in LV1.9.19, Deadline 3 response [Rep3-061]. We included Appendix 1 of our deadline 3 response which showed proposed assessment locations at the junction of Twinstead 21, Twinstead 1 and Great Henny 18. We consider that A photomontage is needed to demonstrate the effectiveness or not of proposed mitigation.

If a photomontage has already been completed then please could the applicant provide a copy for us to review.

From the PRow network on the edge of Wickham St Paul (GSP)

		<p>The Councils are requesting a photomontage from the bridleway immediately west of the GSP substation c 200m away in order to demonstrate the effectiveness or not of proposed mitigation. The LEMP includes some mitigation but it is only scrub. Predicted growth rates imply that even the woodland planting proposed is likely not sufficient to fully screen the installation. The assessments at year 15 are overly optimistic in the in the reductions of adverse effects. Landscape and visual compensation needed for effects that cannot be mitigated.</p> <p><u>Sufficiency of visual mitigation for the cable sealing end compounds</u></p> <p>Key infrastructure such as the Cable End Sealing Compounds should have comprehensive landscape design and mitigation plans and cross-sections as part of the submission, and not be included solely as part of the landscape management document. – This is explored more generally in paragraph 7.6.1 of LIR [REP1-039].</p> <p><u>Specifically for Stour Valley West compound</u></p> <p>There are two small areas of proposed woodland to the north and southwest of the compound, some linear belts of landscape softening and large areas of proposed areas of net gain. Details of the landscape softening, and net gain are not included in the LEMP. If these land parcels do contain woodland planting, it is likely then the landscape and visual effects can be contained. However, VP G.07 Photomontage from southwest of the compound indicates that at Year 15 very little screening will have been achieved. Extensive additional mitigation planting is needed if the Year 15 image is correct.</p>
<p>AOB</p>		<p>It is noted from the hearing that UKPN have not been asked by the ExA to comment directly on the project related to the removal of the additional section of 132kV line between the GSP substation and the Twinstead Tee. While this is disappointing to hear,</p>

		<p>The Councils would urge the ExA to give this point due consideration despite it being out of the order limits, owing to the fact that this project (Bramford to Twinstead) would make the section of line redundant. See Paragraphs 7.6.3-7.6.8 of the Councils LIR (REP1-039) for the detail around this.</p>
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