

Response of the Dedham Vale National Landscape and Stour Valley Partnership to the Examining Authorities further written questions (ExQ2) issued on 22 Dec 2023 for response by Deadline 7 (17 Jan 2024) in relation to Application by National Grid Electricity Transmission Plc for the Bramford to Twinstead Reinforcement



9. Landscape and views, including trees and hedgerows			
National Landscape and landscape assessment			
Reference:	Question to:	Question:	Dedham Vale National Landscape and Stour Valley Partnership Response
LV2.9.1	The Applicant Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils Suffolk County Council Essex County Council Braintree District Council Dedham Vale National Landscape and Stour Valley Partnership	<p>The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 (sections 245 (5) and (6)(a)) will amend the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 in respect of the ‘general duty’ imposed on public bodies dealing with functions in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).</p> <p>In addition, on 22 November 2023 (and as part of a national change), the Dedham Vale AONB was renamed the Dedham Vale National Landscape.</p> <p>Do you consider these changes to have any effect on the Proposed Development and the impact assessments that have been submitted? If so, describe them, and, if not, explain why not.</p>	<p>On 26th December 2023, a new duty came into force in English Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (now branded as National Landscapes). This duty says that all ‘relevant authorities’ (generally, those with a public function), ‘must seek to further the purposes’ of the designated landscape; for National Landscapes, this purpose is conserving and enhancing natural beauty. This duty features in Section 245 of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023, which gained Royal Assent on 26 October 2023 – and it overrides and strengthens the previous duty to ‘have regard’ to the purposes. This new duty has great potential in delivering the UK Government’s Environmental Improvement Plan (EIP23).</p> <p>English Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) were branded as National Landscapes on 22 November 2023. Legally these areas remain Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and as such Government and other policy continues to refer to Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, but they are now known as National Landscapes in common usage.</p> <p>The Dedham Vale National Landscape and Stour Valley Partnership considers the above to be a significant change and that the applicant should review and adapt its</p>

			<p>treatment of the Dedham Vale National Landscape to comply with the new duty. It notes Natural England's interim advice on the strengthened duty that states:</p> <p>Natural England advises that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the duty to 'seek to further' is an active duty, not a passive one. Any relevant authority must take all reasonable steps to explore how the statutory purposes of the protected landscape (A National Park, the Broads, or an AONB) can be furthered;• The new duty underlines the importance of avoiding harm to the statutory purposes of protected landscapes but also to seek to further the conservation and enhancement of a protected landscape. That goes beyond mitigation and like for like measures and replacement. A relevant authority must be able to demonstrate with reasoned evidence what measures can be taken to further the statutory purpose;• The proposed measures to further the statutory purposes of a protected landscape, should explore what is possible in addition to avoiding and mitigating the effects of the development, and should be appropriate, proportionate to the type and scale of the development and its implications for the area and effectively secured. Natural England's view is that the proposed measures should align with and help to deliver the aims and objectives of the designated landscape's statutory management plan. The relevant protected landscape team/body should be consulted.
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DC2.6.6	Suffolk County Council Essex County Council	In respect of Article 15, Temporary stopping up of streets and public rights of way, are you satisfied that the information in Schedule 7, together with the Access, Rights of Way and Public Rights of Navigation Plans [APP-012] would provide you with sufficient information in your role as street authority?	<p>The Dedham Vale National Landscape and Stour Valley Partnership considers that the Environment Agency is the Navigation Authority for the river Stour and as such should be asked if it has sufficient information to comment on the temporary stopping up of the Stour Navigation.</p> <p>Furthermore, it is the Dedham Vale National Landscape and Stour Valley Partnership view that if the navigation is to be stopped up then a temporary portage should be put in place to ensure river users can continue their journey.</p>
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For and on behalf of the Dedham Vale National Landscape and Stour Valley Partnership

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