

Bramford to Twinstead Reinforcement

Volume 8: Examination Submissions

Document 8.9.4: Applicant's Comments on Other Submissions Received at Deadline 6

Final Issue A
January 2024

Planning Inspectorate Reference: EN020002

The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010) Regulation 8(1)(k)



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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Document

1.1.1 This document provides National Grid Electricity Transmission plc's (the Applicant's) comments on the other submissions from Interested Parties received at Deadline 6 (20 December 2023) in response to an application for development consent for the Bramford to Twinstead Reinforcement (the project).

1.2 Project Overview

1.2.1 An application for development consent was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate on 27 April 2023 to reinforce the transmission network between Bramford Substation in Suffolk, and Twinstead Tee in Essex. The project would be achieved by the construction and operation of a new electricity transmission line over a distance of approximately 29km comprising of an overhead line, underground cables and a grid supply point (GSP) substation. It also includes the removal of 25km of the existing distribution network, 2km of the existing transmission network and various ancillary works.

1.2.2 The application for development consent was accepted for Examination on the 23 May 2023.

1.2.3 A full description of the project can be found in Environmental Statement (ES) Chapter 4: Project Description [APP-072].

1.3 Structure of the Document

1.3.1 While all Interested Parties' responses received at Deadline 6 have been reviewed and considered in detail, the purpose of this document, in the first instance, is not to provide a direct comment on each individual Interested Party response. Instead, where appropriate, the document identifies the key issues raised by the Interested Parties on a 'thematic' basis and provides a thematic comment to those issues. Residual matters which are not covered in the Thematic section at Chapter 2 are commented on in Chapters 3 to 8.

1.3.2 The submissions received from other Interested Parties at Deadline 6, and which have been commented on are:

- Chapter 3: Suffolk County Council (SCC) covering the following:
 - Evidence relating to the Landscape and Ecological Management Plan [REP6-054]
 - Preliminary Ideas for Additional Strategic Planting in Suffolk [REP6-055]

- Post-Hearing Submission for the Fifth Issue Specific Hearing (ISH5) on the draft Development Consent Order and Related Matters [**REP6-056**]
 - Post-Hearing Submission for the Sixth Issue Specific Hearing (ISH6) into Access, Transport, and Public Rights of Way [**REP6-057**]
 - Comments on other submissions received at Deadline 5 [**REP6-058**]
 - Response to the Applicant's Comments on any other submissions received at Deadline 4 [**REP6-059**]
 - Chapter 4: Babergh District Council and Mid Suffolk District Council (BMSDC) Deadline 6 Submission [**REP6-050**]
 - Chapter 5: Essex County Council (ECC) and Braintree District Council (BDC) Deadline 6 Submission [**REP6-051**]
 - Chapter 6: Dedham Vale National Landscape and Stour Valley Partnership Deadline 6 Submission [**REP6-052**]
 - Chapter 7: Parish Councils of Assington, Bures St Mary, Leavenheath, Little Cornard, Polstead and Stoke by Nayland Deadline 6 Submission covering the following:
 - Comments on Other Submissions Received at Deadline 5 [**REP6-060**]
 - Deadline 6 Submission [**REP6-061**]
 - Chapter 8: Francis Prosser Deadline 6 Submission [**REP6-062**]
- 1.3.3 On 11 January 2024 and following Deadline 6, the ExA at their discretion accepted an additional submission from the East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust [**AS-011**]. Whilst not reported in this document due to the late submission, the Applicant has progressed discussions with the East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust following receipt of this representation. An update will be provided at Deadline 8.
- 1.3.4 The Applicant has commented on paragraph numbers used in the individual submissions, grouping paragraphs where relevant. The submissions provided by other Interested Parties have largely been included verbatim. However, where necessary, the Applicant has paraphrased those submissions and has made other stylistic/ grammatical changes to the text. It is not considered that these changes are material to the comments provided. In the first instance, the Applicant would direct the reader to the original submission.
- 1.3.5 Generally, the Applicant has not commented on matters which an Interested Party has said it is not concerned about, has no further comments to make, where it has deferred to another Interested Party on a specific matter or where it states they will make further comments in due course.

2. Thematic Issues

2.1 Section Overview

2.1.1 This Chapter identifies the key issues raised by the Interested Parties on a thematic basis which include:

- Compensation for Landscape and Visual Effect
- Sufficiency of Visual Mitigation
- Management Plans
- Construction Hours and Noise Sensitive Receptors
- Temporary Construction Compounds
- Socio-Economics and Community Benefits
- Traffic and Transport
 - Transport Assessment and Traffic and Transport Methodology – Assumptions Used
 - Transport Assessment and Traffic and Transport Methodology – Hours of Assessment
 - Proposed Construction Routes
 - Access Points, Bellmouths and Temporary Access Routes
 - Road Safety and Road Safety Audits
 - Public Rights of Way Management Plan
 - Abnormal Indivisible Loads
- Draft Development Consent Order (DCO)

2.2 Compensation for Landscape and Visual Effects

2.2.1 This section responds to submissions made at Deadline 6 in relation to the comments received on compensation for landscape and visual effects. Suffolk County Council maintains its position that all adverse landscape and visual impacts should be considered

in the context of the mitigation hierarchy; to see to what extent it is possible to avoid them, reduce them, mitigate them, or compensate for them, in that order. Similar comments are made by BMSDC. The Applicant has responded to this matter in Table 2.1 (ref 5.8, pages 47 to 49) of the Applicant's Comments on Other Submissions Received at Deadline 4 [REP5-025].

- 2.2.2 Suffolk County Council also maintains that an accumulation of non-significant effects can lead to an overall significance, which SCC considers is the case for some elements of the project, for example around Bramford and Burstall. The Applicant has undertaken an intra-project cumulative effects assessment, as presented in ES Chapter 15: Cumulative Effects Assessment [APP-083] and as supported by ES Appendix 15.2: Intra-project Cumulative Effects Matrix [APP-144], which considers the in-combination effects of the project where a receptor or group of receptors are potentially affected by more than one source of direct environmental impact resulting from the same development. Paragraph 15.10.1 of ES Chapter 15: Cumulative Effects Assessment [APP-083] concludes that there are no likely significant intra-project cumulative effects during construction or operation of the project. The ES has been produced in line with all applicable legislation and guidance, which specifies how individual effects should be considered cumulatively, and the Applicant is confident that the assessment of effects is robust.

2.3 Sufficiency of Visual Mitigation

- 2.3.1 This section responds to submissions made at Deadline 6 in relation to the comments received on the sufficiency of visual mitigation i.e. planting. Suffolk County Council maintains its earlier comments made in respect to this issue. Additionally, SCC in its Deadline 6 submissions submits two further documents titled Preliminary Ideas for Strategic Planting in Suffolk [REP6-055] and Additional Evidence relating to the Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) [REP6-054] (see response to section 2.4 below in respect to the latter).
- 2.3.2 The Preliminary Ideas for Additional Strategic Planting in Suffolk [REP6-055] lists SCC's high-level preliminary ideas for potential additional mitigative or compensatory planting across the wider project area in Suffolk. The Applicant notes, that unlike the Applicant's Landscape and Visual Assessment, that these locations '*have not been verified through field work*'. The Applicant stands by its assessment presented in ES Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual [APP-074], which has been undertaken by suitably qualified landscape architects who are experienced in assessing and mitigating the effects of electrical infrastructure and informed by site surveys. The assessment is based on robust methodology set out in Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3. Therefore, the Applicant does not consider there to be a need to include further planting to mitigate or compensate for the effects of the project at the viewpoints suggested. The Applicant maintains the view that the Bramford to Twinstead Reinforcement is a well mitigated project (both in terms of rationalisation of existing infrastructure, undergrounding of the proposed infrastructure in the most sensitive landscapes, by the use of trenchless construction practises at key landscape features and planting) and will result in some long-term landscape and visual benefits.
- 2.3.3 Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils notes that they still have concerns and comments in respect to the Dedham Vale East cable sealing end (CSE) compound and Stour Valley East CSE compound. The Applicant responded to specific points on these in the Applicant's Comments on Other Submissions Received at Deadline 5 [REP6-045] in Section 2.4 and Table 7.1 respectively.

The Applicant updated Requirement 9 of the draft DCO [REP6-003] at Deadline 6 to confirm that the reinstatement planting plan submitted to the relevant planning authority must include a landscape plan for each CSE compound, which will show the proposed hard and soft landscaping and proposed finishes for hard landscape features in response to the Councils on this matter.

2.4 Management Plans

- 2.4.1 This section responds to submissions made at Deadline 6 in relation to the comments received on the Management Plans from the Councils. Suffolk County Council has provided additional evidence relating to the LEMP at document [REP6-054], submitted at Deadline 6, and the ECC and BDC submission [REP6-051] contains detailed comments on the Outline Written Scheme of Investigation (OWSI) in Section 7.14. These have been responded to in the updated Applicant's Response to Interested Party Comments on Management Plans (**document 8.8.6 (B)**) and are therefore not duplicated in this document.
- 2.4.2 The Applicant notes that SCC in their Comments on other submissions received at Deadline 5 [REP6-058] note that the OWSI has not been approved and that SCC and Essex Place Services are working on joint comments which will be provided to the Applicant prior to Deadline 7. The Applicant has received further comments from SCC and Essex Place Services on the OWSI and has responded to these in the Applicant's Response to Interested Party Comments on Management Plans (**document 8.8.6 (B)**).
- 2.4.3 The Applicant has also received comments on the Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) in the submission from BDC and ECC Comments on other submissions received at Deadline 4 [REP5-031]; SCC Response to Action Points from CAH1, ISH2, ISH 3 and ISH 4, received at Deadline 5 [REP5-034]; SCC Comments on any other submissions received at Deadline 4 [REP5-033], Essex Police Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) (**document 8.8.8.2**); SCC Post-Hearing Submission for Third Issue Specific Hearing (ISH3) into Transport and Rights of Way [REP4-021]; and the ECC and BDC Deadline 4 Submission - Response to Applicant's comments on BDC/ECC Local Impact Report & Other Documents [REP4-049]. Responses to all comments on the CTMP in these documents are provided in the Applicant's Response to Interested Party Comments on Management Plans (**document 8.8.6 (B)**) and are not duplicated here.

2.5 Construction Hours and Noise Sensitive Receptors

- 2.5.1 This section responds to submissions made at Deadline 6 in relation to Requirement 7 (Construction Hours) in the draft DCO [REP6-003], including the baseline construction schedule and critical path analysis.
- 2.5.2 In its Post-Hearing Submission for the Fifth Issue Specific Hearing (ISH5) on the draft DCO and Related Matters [REP6-056], SCC made the following points:
- Suffolk County Council remains unpersuaded that the Applicant needs the flexibility to work on successive weekends (including successive Sundays) when its construction schedule can be achieved, on the Applicant's own documents, by working on alternate weekends.

- Suffolk County Council questions why the proposed reasonable worst case scenario modelling of the construction operations, as assessed in the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), cannot provide a reasonable ceiling on the proposed operations, for example in relation to maximum lorry movements.
- Suffolk County Council has not seen any information to show that the Applicant could not complete its programme without heavy good vehicles (HGVs) making deliveries on Saturday afternoons, Sundays, and Bank Holidays. SCC considers that with appropriate logistics advance planning there is no reason why deliveries to the various works sites cannot take place on Mondays to Fridays (and potentially Saturday mornings). At the very least, there should be no deliveries by lorries to site on Saturday afternoons, Sundays and on Bank Holidays. SCC would therefore suggest that Requirement 7 of the draft DCO is amended to reflect this.

2.5.3 Similar points were raised by BDC and ECC in their Deadline 6 submission [**REP6-051**]. In particular, the Essex Councils state that:

- The construction programme, with the extensive working hours, is far beyond what would ordinarily be accepted by the Councils as reasonable working hours, which would exclude working after 1pm on Saturday and no working on Sunday and Bank Holidays, to provide respite for residents.
- Whilst welcoming the fact that the Applicant has committed in principle to only working alternative weekends, as well as a new restriction to avoid percussive piling on Sundays and Bank Holidays, the Councils contend that there needs to be a stronger embedded measure to ensure that alternative weekend working is adhered to in most circumstances. This is particularly important given that the development would be built out by a contractor and not the Applicant themselves. The Essex Councils consider it is not correct that a contractor leads discussions on this but complies with the controls as are stipulated within the DCO, should consent be granted.
- Heavy goods vehicle deliveries should be restricted on Saturday afternoon, Sundays and Bank Holidays and in this context ask for further modelling to determine whether this additional restriction can come in, without prejudicing the delivery of the project and meeting the outage windows. The Essex Councils note that if the HGV restrictions can be imposed, and further restrictions placed near to those properties which would be most affected by the development (as discussed in Section 2.6 below), then in combination with alternative weekend working (if appropriately secured) and the existing restriction on percussive piling on Sundays and Bank Holidays, the Essex Councils would likely re-consider their current objection to the working hours proposed.

2.5.4 The Applicant has commented on the request to limit HGV movements and restrict HGV deliveries on weekends and bank holidays in Table 2.2 (ref 3.1a, ref 6 and ref 12a) of the Applicant's Comments on Other Submissions Received at Deadline 4 [**REP5-025**] and has no further comments to make on this matter.

2.5.5 The Applicant has commented on the issues raised with regards to working hours in Table 3.1 (ref 2.7b) of the Applicant's Comments on Other Submissions Received at Deadline 4 [**REP5-025**] and Table 5.1 (ref CM1.5.12) of the Applicant's Comments on Other Submissions Received at Deadline 5 [**REP6-045**]. The Applicant disagrees that further restrictions on working hours

would be necessary or proportionate and does not propose to incorporate a change to Requirement 7 of the draft DCO to reflect the Councils' requests. For clarity, whilst project programmes are often built to minimise weekend working and/ or incorporate alternate weekend working, the Applicant has not agreed to restrict working to alternate weekends. The Applicant has not agreed to this restriction because it is not considered necessary; the demands of the programme may require working successive weekends; and when working on a long linear project, working successive weekends could mean work one weekend could be distant from the work site the previous week.

- 2.5.6 In addition, a Technical Note on Noise Sensitive Receptors [**REP6-047**] was provided at Deadline 6 to evidence properties which may experience noise using a lower noise threshold. The Applicant awaits feedback from the Councils on the proposed list of noise sensitive receptors. The Essex Councils (ECC and BDC) have indicated that further concessions would be required as properties near the Order Limits are not the only ones affected; they assert that users of the countryside (walkers, horse riders, cyclists etc (WCHs), as well as those near the temporary access routes, would also be impacted by the development from movements of HGV's and Abnormal Indivisible Loads (AILs).

2.6 Temporary Construction Compounds

- 2.6.1 This section responds to submissions made at Deadline 6 in relation to the comments received in respect to temporary construction compounds. The Essex Councils and SCC state that they consider there is still a lack of clarity around the siting of the temporary construction compounds and thereby a lack of sufficient control on the compounds at this time. SCC considers that the siting of temporary construction compounds should be fixed so that their implications can be properly considered.
- 2.6.2 The locations of the temporary construction compounds are shown on the General Arrangement Plans [**APP-018**]. The Applicant also added the temporary construction compounds in Table 4.1 of the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) at Deadline 3 [**REP6-023**]. The table details the size and location (via Grid Reference) for each compound. The CEMP is secured via Requirement 4 of the draft DCO [**REP6-003**]. As such, the Applicant considers the location of the temporary construction compounds are sufficiently secured as part of the DCO. Suffolk County Council also commented that '*Neither the CTMP [**REP3-031**] nor the LEMP [**REP3-035**] refer to construction compounds.*' However, the Applicant's view is that is not necessary as the Management Plans work as a suite of documents that are to be read alongside each other. It is not necessary to duplicate commitments in the different Management Plans.
- 2.6.3 The Essex Councils Deadline 6 submission also comments that, '*The Councils will reserve judgement on the locations of the temporary construction compounds until such time as a map has been provided by the Applicant, detailing those properties they consider to be most affected by the development.*' It is unclear what the Council's mean by the suggestion of a map detailing those properties they consider to be most affected by the development and further clarification is welcomed on this point. Receptors of construction effects are defined within the Environmental Statement. In addition, a Technical Note on Noise Sensitive Receptors [**REP6-047**] was provided at Deadline 6 to evidence properties which may experience noise using a lower noise threshold. The Applicant awaits feedback from the Councils on the proposed list of noise sensitive receptors.

2.7 Socio-Economics and Community Benefits

- 2.7.1 This section responds to submissions made at Deadline 6 in relation to the comments received in respect to socio-economics and community benefits. In its Response to the Applicant's Comments on any other submissions received at Deadline 4 [REP6-059], SCC disputes the statement from the Applicant that the majority of employment activities would require trained specialists who are qualified to work on high voltage electricity lines. Suffolk County Council reiterates that it cannot fully determine the sufficiency of the approach to determining socio economic effects ahead of receiving a detailed workforce profile, which it considers is needed to determine or quantify the employment and skills impact on the locality. The Applicant has responded to this matter in section 2.6 of Applicant's Comments on Other Submissions Received at Deadline 5 [REP6-045] and has no further comments on this matter.
- 2.7.2 In its Post-Hearing Submission for the Sixth Issue Specific Hearing (ISH6) into Access, Transport, and Public Rights of Way [REP6-057], SCC notes that it considers that an Employment, Skills and Education Strategy would benefit the project, especially where there is an understanding of the wider synergies that could be achieved as a result of the significant co-location of national infrastructure in the East of England. Further, SCC would emphasise that socio-economics are a planning consideration, relevant to the planning balance and thus sit within the DCO process. As such, SCC considers that socio-economics matters are capable of mitigation and compensation in line with the mitigation hierarchy and should not diminish the value of community benefits to the local host communities.
- 2.7.3 The Applicant has commented on this matter in Table 2.1 (ref 1a and 1b) of the Applicant's Comments on Other Submissions Received at Deadline 4 [REP5-025] and has no further comments on the matter. Also see the Applicant's position as set out in detail in its responses to Table 0.5 -0.7 (inclusive) of the Applicant's Responses to Second Written Questions (**document 8.9.3 (A)**).
- 2.7.4 Whilst SCC recognise that community benefits are outside of the DCO process, the Council considers that these should be provided in recognition of the vital role that the local communities play in hosting the national infrastructure in line with the Community Benefits for Electricity Transmission Network Infrastructure, Government Response (Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, 2023). Suffolk County Council suggests that the Applicant should seek to agree community benefits for this project prior to the close of the examination, or prior to determination at least, to provide the local community with certainty. suggests that this would enable the Applicant to engage with the community to understand their priorities, the key opportunity to maximise benefits in the localities, and begin provision of wider community benefits by, or prior to, commencement. The Applicant is also continuing to discuss community benefits with the Councils and agrees that these should sit outside of the DCO process.

2.8 Traffic and Transport

- 2.8.1 This section responds to submissions made at Deadline 6 in relation to the comments received in respect to traffic and transport matters. It covers the following sub-headings:

- Transport Assessment and Traffic and Transport Methodology – Assumptions Used
- Transport Assessment and Traffic and Transport Methodology – Hours of Assessment
- Proposed Construction Routes
- Access Points, Bellmouths and Temporary Access Routes
- Road Safety and Road Safety Audits
- Public Rights of Way Management Plan
- Abnormal Indivisible Loads

Transport Assessment and Traffic and Transport Methodology - Assumptions Used

2.8.2 In its Deadline 6 submission [**REP6-051**] the Essex Councils (ECC and BDC) state that there are key assumptions within the assessment of traffic that significantly affect the impacts, and that without agreement on those assumptions it is difficult to comment on the impacts of the development. These assumptions are summarised below:

- Number of HGVs.
- Timing of HGVs.
- Number of staff.
- Modal split of staff.
- Shift patterns of staff.
- Absence of assessment of the hour of greatest change.
- General absence of commitment to reporting or enforcement .

2.8.3 The Essex Councils state that they are '*outcomes focussed and due to the limited evidence that links construction works to vehicle movements are looking to achieve a pragmatic management process to look to minimise an exceedance of the assessed impacts on the highway network.*'

2.8.4 The Applicant notes in response that the assumptions made in the Transport Assessment (TA) [**APP-061**] on the number and timing of HGVs; and construction staff numbers, shift patterns, and modal split; are reasonable worst-case assumptions based on National Grid's standard practices for construction of transmission lines and the knowledge of an experienced contractor in

electrical infrastructure delivery. The Applicant is confident that the assessment is robust and impacts on the local road network have been limited through use of temporary access routes.

- 2.8.5 The Applicant also notes that its position on the CTMP reporting and enforcement is set out in its Deadline 6 document, Applicant's Response to Interested Party Comments on Management Plans [REP6-046], which explains the updates made to the CTMP to address comments at the same deadline. The Applicant has no further comments to make on the matter of CTMP reporting and enforcement.
- 2.8.6 The Essex Councils also noted in [REP6-051] that vehicle category TB2 in the traffic survey data has been included in the calculation of baseline HGVs. The Councils indicated that category TB2 is identified as a two-axle truck or bus and in many cases may not be what is commonly considered to be an HGV. The Councils queried its inclusion as potentially inflating the baseline level of HGV movements and impacting on any conclusions relating to HGVs in the ES.
- 2.8.7 The Applicant notes in response that for some vehicle types it is not possible to directly convert traffic survey vehicle categories into the light goods vehicle (LGV) and HGV categories used in the TA [APP-061] and ES. Most of the traffic survey data used in the TA [APP-061] and ES for this project was collected using industry-standard tube-based Automatic Traffic Counters (ATCs), which only record the axle-spacing of counted vehicles. In contrast, vehicle weight is a significant factor in the categorisation of LGVs and HGVs. Consequently, some assumptions must be made when converting tube-based ATC data for the purpose of assessment.
- 2.8.8 The Applicant is satisfied that reasonable assumptions have been made for this purpose as set out in TA Traffic Survey Data (**document 8.9.6 (A)**). The Applicant also notes that the conversion of a single ATC category is unlikely to have a material impact on the outcome of the assessment.

Transport Assessment and Traffic and Transport Methodology - Hours of Assessment

- 2.8.9 Suffolk County Council indicated in its Post-Hearing Submission for the Sixth Issue Specific Hearing (ISH6) into Access, Transport, and Public Rights of Way [REP6-057] a concern that the addition of construction vehicles, particularly during workers shift changes, would displace network peaks to 0700-0800 and 1800-1900 at some locations. Essex County Council indicated in its Deadline 6 Submission [REP6-051] that the assessment of network peak hours in the TA [APP-061] is not appropriate because an adjacent hour may be similarly busy (or even busier) on certain parts of a transport network and the development's traffic impacts do not occur in the hour that has been assessed (due to shift patterns).
- 2.8.10 The Applicant notes its Response to the December Hearing Action Points [REP6-041] (reference AP2 in Table 4.1) regarding the matter of peak hours in the TA [APP-061]. The Applicant also notes the following:
- The impact of staff travel is likely to be less than forecast in the TA [APP-061] because:

- The TA [APP-061] assumed 528 staff on-site on a peak day due to contingency added to the forecast – this increased the peak forecast of 350 on-site staff per day (in August 2025) by over 50% for the purpose of assessment.
 - To develop a conservative assessment, staff arrival and departure time assumptions used in the TA (set out in section 6.2) are likely to over-estimate the number of staff travelling at or close to network peak times – core working hours for the project are 0700 to 1900, which means that most staff are likely to travel before 0700 in the morning and after 1900 in the evening, well outside network peak hours.
 - Modelling has been undertaken at five junctions where the greatest project traffic impacts are expected – this assessment is reported in the Applicant’s Deadline 6 submission, TA Summary of Junction Modelling Analysis [REP6-048], which considers an earlier morning peak hour of 0730-0830 with an elevated construction staff vehicle forecast. The conclusion was that the project would not have any substantial impact on the road network in these locations during this earlier morning peak hour.
- 2.8.11 SCC indicated in its Post-Hearing Submission for the Sixth Issue Specific Hearing (ISH6) Access, Transport, and Public Rights of Way [REP6-057] that it is still not satisfied that the Applicant’s assumption regarding shift patterns will be realised, and that workers and visitors will not travel in network peak hours.
- 2.8.12 The Applicant has responded to these points in Table 2.1 (reference 3.1a) of the Applicant’s Comments on Other Submissions Received at Deadline 4 [REP5-025] and has no further comments to make on the matter.
- 2.8.13 Essex County Council indicated that no assessment of the hour of greatest change has been undertaken, which is considered by ECC to be important for this project because the traffic impacts of the development are particularly felt during the arrival and departure periods for staff vehicles, where there may be a proportionally large increase in vehicle movements on some relatively quiet rural settings.
- 2.8.14 The Applicant has also commented on this issue in its Response to the December Hearing Action Points [REP6-041] (see reference AP4 in Table 4.1) and has no further comments to make on the matter.

Proposed Construction Routes

- 2.8.15 In their Deadline 6 Submission [REP6-051], the Essex Councils (ECC and BDC) indicated that they welcome the inclusion of construction routes in the CTMP [REP6-025] but remain concerned about the absence of controls on the number of vehicles using these routes. In particular they would like to see controls introduced in some locations described as particularly narrow with rural characteristics in the CTMP. The Applicant has responded to this point in Table 3.1 in the Applicant’s Response to Interested Party Comments on Management Plans (**document 8.8.6 (B)**) so it is not replicated here. The temporary access route off the A131 is being designed to relieve pressure on the local roads in Essex and will mean that vehicle numbers on the local roads in that area are low.

Access Points, Bellmouths and Temporary Access Routes

- 2.8.16 This section responds to submissions made at Deadline 6 in relation to the comments received in respect to access points, bellmouths and temporary access routes. The ECC and SCC Deadline 6 submissions ([**REP6-051** and **REP6-057** respectively) detail that they remain to be convinced that a generic bellmouth design in isolation is sufficient to determine the feasibility of an access design and to identify all impacts; site specific conditions such as existing road width, vegetation, buildings, highway boundaries and vertical profiles can all have significant impacts on the design and deliverability.
- 2.8.17 Essex County Council considers that evidence has not been submitted that the proposed access arrangements for the Access Point off the A131, including appropriate visibility, or demonstrating that the ghost island can be accommodated within the existing road layout including provision of a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit (RSA). ECC are also of the view that information is required providing details for the temporary access route road crossing points.
- 2.8.18 Essex County Council commented that they welcome the submission of traffic numbers for access points at Deadline 4 in Transport Assessment Construction Vehicle Profile Data [**REP4-006**]. Subsequent to this, the Council provided an indication of those accesses of most concern by email to the Applicant on 7 December 2023.
- 2.8.19 In respect to Rose Cottage, SCC comment that, '*the plan does not show the vegetation, so SCC are not able to comment at this stage*'.
- 2.8.20 It is noted that SCC is also concerned that the burden of checking whether safe, appropriate access can be provided appears to be passed to them as the Local Highway Authority (LHA). Suffolk County Council is further concerned that the Applicant has not undertaken sufficient rigorous review of this data to show that the proposed locations are appropriate and would not create significant impacts such as removal of vegetation. Suffolk County Council also considers that Requirement 11 of the Draft DCO does not provide sufficient comfort to the authority as it is likely that if problems arise, pressure will be applied to accept a substandard access layout.
- 2.8.21 The Applicant shared a sketch showing access point AB-AP5 adjacent to Rose Cottage directly with LHAs on 6 December 2023 and submitted this sketch into Examination at Deadline 6 (Appendix 1 of **document 8.8.3**). Since Deadline 6, the Applicant has also completed a topographical survey at AB-AP5 and has provided an update with further detail to the 1:100 sketch provided to SCC taking the exact location of vegetation and the existing junction layout into account. The Applicant's position remains that access point AB-AP4 to the north has been allowed for within the DCO application, to design a safe access with limited vegetation management and this work is being brought forward to offer reassurance to the LHA and Affected Person. The Applicant is also carrying out an arboricultural survey and speed survey to further corroborate the appropriateness of the design for the vehicle speeds and that the design would not affect the trees (the topographic survey provides evidence showing that the tree trunks would not be affected, so the arboricultural survey is to confirm that there would be no other significant effects through, for example, excessive pruning). Once these final surveys are completed all information will be shared with the LHAs and submitted into the Examination.

- 2.8.22 The Applicant has committed to undertaking preliminary design work on those access points identified as being of concern to the LHAs. A Technical Note of accesses within Suffolk has been shared in draft with SCC and is provided as part of the Deadline 7 submission (Temporary and Permanent Access Technical Note Suffolk County Council (**document 8.9.5 (A)**), with a Technical Note of accesses within Essex due to follow for Deadline 8.
- 2.8.23 For A131 access H-AP20 (Table 2 Ref 15.5.6), the Applicant has submitted ghost island design information including swept path assessment for both the proposed temporary access route and for the suggested alternatives. Documents include:
- Technical Note on Temporary Access Route off the A131 (**document 8.5.5**)
 - Temporary Access Route off the A131 Concept Design and Swept Path Assessment (**document 8.7.4**)
 - Swept Path Assessment for Alternative Temporary Access Routes off the A131 (**document 8.8.10**)
- 2.8.24 The amendment to the draft DCO [**REP6-003**] to include provision of RSA of all works to the satisfaction of the LHA through new Requirement 11 (4) also provides assurance that the design will meet the appropriate standards to be safely operable. The Applicant considers that the information submitted on the A131 access provides sufficient evidence to demonstrate that the junction design for this can be safely accommodated within the public highway and within the Order limits.
- 2.8.25 The Applicant considers that the amount of information provided in relation to access point design is sufficient to determine the application for development consent. The final detailed designs, accompanied by the results or RSA, will be submitted to the LHAs pursuant to Requirement 11 of the DCO **REP6-003**].
- 2.8.26 The LHA is the authority with the responsibility for the discharge of Requirement 11 and has the authority to take a decision on whether the access designs are safe and appropriate. The project delivery is urgent and it is in the Applicant's interests for requirements to be determined as quickly as possible, which is likely to involve working with the LHAs to design accesses appropriate for their use and context. The Applicant notes the wider concern expressed by the LHA regarding the potential for a substandard layout to be pursued if constraints prevent a compliant solution. However, the LHA would have the authority to request an alternative layout if the solution was not considered appropriate and in this context the concern does not seem well founded.
- 2.8.27 Additional design work has been undertaken by the Applicant at a range of access points identified by the LHAs as those of greatest concern, in each case identifying constraints, design speed based on measured traffic survey data and evaluation of site-specific geometry. In the minority of cases where limited vegetation management such as trimming of hedges or localised lifting of tree crowns may not be sufficient, and/or where such work might fall outside Order Limits, then a managed access and egress can be provided. Subject to site specific criteria, this might involve banksman guidance to works vehicle drivers at the more lightly trafficked locations and where speeds are moderate or low. Alternatively, temporary traffic management such as portable traffic signals may be appropriate. For each access, the proposed arrangement including proposed controls will be submitted for approval of the LHA. Further information is provided in the Temporary and Permanent Access Technical Note Suffolk County Council (**document 8.9.5 (A)**).

Road Safety and Road Safety Audits

- 2.8.28 This section responds to submissions made at Deadline 6 in relation to the comments received in respect to road safety and RSA. The Applicant has demonstrated its commitment to providing RSA through the inclusion of Requirement 11 (4) in the draft DCO [REP6-003].
- 2.8.29 The ECC [REP6-051] and SCC [REP6-057] Deadline 6 submissions have reiterated that their position is that an RSA is required for accesses unless agreed with the LHA, for example for temporary accesses only used for landscaping, environmental surveys and mitigation would have low traffic volumes and hence an RSA would be disproportional.
- 2.8.30 Suffolk County Council [REP6-059], comment that they welcome the change to Requirement 11 to include RSAs, although opine that this appears to stop short of undertaking RSAs at this stage of the process to identify any significant safety matters that could frustrate the delivery of an access. However, SCC would agree that the scope of RSAs should be proportional and not necessary for sparsely used locations provided that no specific safety issues have been identified that can benefit from review.
- 2.8.31 The Applicant noted the request for a Stage 1 RSA at Deadline 5 but maintains that the addition to Requirement 11 (4) provides reassurance that these Audits will be undertaken in the detailed design stage. The minor nature of the five permanent access works, and temporary nature and low traffic generation of the overwhelming majority of works make this approach reasonable. The Applicant notes the need for RSA timing to reflect the seasonal variance in vegetation and, in turn, on visibility at access points. It should also be noted that, in common with the approach on this project, on the Applicant's previous DCOs, RSAs were only undertaken at the detailed design phase prior to construction as opposed to supporting the DCO application or examination.
- 2.8.32 The Applicant has confirmed at ISH6, as detailed in Applicant's Written Summaries of Oral Submissions to Issue Specific Hearing 6 [REP6-043], that it agreed *'to undertake high level analysis of collision data on the routes identified by Suffolk County Council, with the Council due to confirm the list of locations at Deadline 6. The Applicant recognised there are injury clusters at these locations and will, once full STAT19 road traffic collision data has been received, analyse the extent to which traffic related to the scheme may or may not impact upon collisions at these locations.'*
- 2.8.33 In addition, SCC has expressed its opinion to the Applicant that focussing on clusters of collisions at junctions may not represent the full picture in terms of road safety. For example, the minor roads at the staggered crossroad on the A134 at Nayland are more than 50m apart thus considered as two clusters yet operates as a single junction. Suffolk County Council considers that route analysis with recorded crashes benchmarked against similar roads would provide a better assessment of the issue.
- 2.8.34 The Applicant will include route-based approach in its high-level analysis of collision data once received, both to identify potential more-dispersed collision rates above typical rates, and to establish the extent to which traffic associated with the works might affect such patterns.

Public Rights of Way Management Plan

- 2.8.35 Suffolk County Council in their Deadline 6 response [REP6-057] draw attention to Table 4 (Comments on 8.5.8 Public Rights of Way Management Plan (PRoWMP) of Suffolk County Council's Comments on Any Other Submissions Received at Deadline 3 [REP4-046] which summarises the perceived gaps within the PRoWMP, as outlined below:
- Community Engagement and Public Information;
 - Routes with Public Access Affected by the Project;
 - Public Rights of Way (PRoW) Management Signage;
 - Active Management Plan for 'Shared Routes';
 - Reinstatement of PRoW; and,
 - Change Process.
- 2.8.36 The Applicant responded to these points in the Applicant's Comments on Other Submissions Received at Deadline 4 [REP5-025]. In addition, at Deadline 6, the Applicant provided a Technical Note [REP6-049] detailing further the phasing of PRoW closures. The Essex Councils state they welcome the provision of the sequencing plans and will provide comments to the Applicant.
- 2.8.37 Suffolk County Council, in their Deadline 6 submission [REP6-059] further requests that, *'in respect to community engagement, the relevant Parish and County Councillor are included alongside the following user groups, depending on the status of the route:*
- *Footpath – Ramblers Association, Open Spaces Society;*
 - *Bridleway – as above, British Horse Society, Cycling and Touring Club and Sustrans;*
 - *Restricted byway – as above, Carriage Driving Association; and*
 - *Byway Open to All Traffic – as above, Trail Riders Federation, Green Lane Association (GLASS), relevant county Land Rover user group. In addition, for any routes that sit within the Dedham Vale National Landscape and Stour Valley Project Area, the overarching National Landscape team should also be notified'.*
- 2.8.38 The Applicant notes the groups suggested by the Council and will include details in a revised PRoWMP at Deadline 8.

Abnormal Indivisible Loads

- 2.8.39 Suffolk County Council's Deadline 6 submission [REP6-057] made a number of comments related to AILs on Page 6 of 66 of that document and these are summarised below:

- The AIL route through Sudbury requires further discussion with regard to outbound routing through the town and potential alternative routes. Outbound movements would have to go the wrong way up a short section of one-way street or follow a difficult route through the centre of Sudbury. There may be an alternative route for these movements.
- SCC would further ask that the Applicant confirm that no AIL route is necessary to Bramford substation for example for cable drums, cranes or low loaders, presumably on the same route as the haul road subject to loads being less than the restrictions on the B1113 Bridges.
- The reports (Wynn's Reports provided by the Applicant) note new road alignments at the A1214/A1071 junction but not the revised junction layout at the A14/A137 Wherstead Interchange or the signalised pedestrian crossing on the A137 Wherstead Road, Ipswich as well as the A1214 and A12/A1071 junction.
- Agreement is needed for a process to organise removal and reinstatement of street furniture, and to recover costs for the above and any damage to the public highway. Suffolk County Council considers this can be included in a highway agreement.
- In SCC's opinion, the Applicant needs to demonstrate that AILs can access the location required to deliver this project and hence needs to:
 - Include sufficient information to show that the routes are feasible and that they can be accommodated within their existing highway boundary or order limits;
 - Identify works required to the highway network to allow for the AIL movements (i.e. street furniture, utilities); and
 - Demonstrate that there are no restrictions on highway structures that either prevent use by the anticipated loads or require temporary measures to allow access. This would be a risk based approach with a process to identify the structures, undertake inspections and reviews where identified, and potentially provide improvements where capacities fall below those required.
- The reports provided by the Applicant go some way to reassuring SCC that the above have been considered although the authority still considers that the highway agreement in preparation should include details of the process for engaging with the LHA to facilitating AIL movements and completing a review to ensure that there are no weak structures that would complicate such moves.

2.8.40 The Applicant's response is that:

- The routing for AILs through Sudbury in Figure 2 of the CTMP [REP6-025] was amended at Deadline 6 to alter the outbound route in response to SCC's comments.
- An AIL route is necessary to Bramford substation for this project as shown in Figure 2 in the CTMP [REP6-025].
- On new road alignments, the Applicant agrees with SCC that road alignments are fluid and change over time, which is why AIL assessments are required prior to deliveries and need to be undertaken a short period before the movements take place. The

Wynn’s reports demonstrate the overall viability of the proposed AIL routes sufficiently for the DCO application, but further assessments will be undertaken prior to deliveries. These further assessments will capture any road changes since the previous reports.

- Street furniture removal may be required – as described in the Reports on Abnormal Indivisible Load Access for Cable Drums, Transformers and Shunt Reactors [REP6-038] and this would be determined in the detailed design stage and covered through the Road Vehicles (Authorisation of Special Types) (General) Order 2003 process.
- The Applicant welcomes the LHA’s observation that the reports have provided reassurance and considers that the highway agreement is the appropriate mechanism to record the process for engaging with the LHA during the detailed design stage regarding AIL movements. A revised draft of the Heads of Terms for the highway agreement was shared with LHAs on 16 January to respond to comments received on the previous draft and it is hoped that this can be finalised shortly.
- The Applicant considers that the submitted reports demonstrate that sufficient evaluation has already been undertaken at this preliminary design stage to establish that AIL routes are feasible .

2.9 Draft DCO

2.9.1 This section responds to thematic matters raised in relation to the draft DCO in the following submissions made at Deadline 6:

- ECC and BDC Deadline 6 Submission [REP6-051];
- SCC’s Post-Hearing Submission for the Fifth Issue Specific Hearing (ISH5) on the draft Development Consent Order and Related Matters [REP6-056]; and
- SCC’s Comments on other submissions received at Deadline 5 [REP6-058].

2.9.2 Matters are addressed sequentially, reflecting the structure and content of the draft DCO.

Table 2.1 – Applicant’s Comments on Deadline 6 Submissions relating to the draft DCO

Provision	Matter	Point Raised	Applicant’s Comments
Article 2(1): “Pre-commencement operations”	Exclusion of certain operations from the definition of “pre-commencement operations”	The Essex Councils acknowledge the stalemate which exists in respect of the continued inclusion of the following operations in the definition of “pre-commencement operations” in Article 2(1) of the draft DCO [REP6-003]:	The Applicant agrees with the Essex Councils’ characterisation of the parties’ respective positions on this matter. In terms of both the environmental assessment undertaken in respect of the “pre-commencement operations” and the use of recent precedent to justify the approach taken, the Applicant’s position remains as set out on pages 104 and 105 of the

Provision	Matter	Point Raised	Applicant's Comments
		<p><i>"...construction compounds, temporary accesses, erection of any temporary means of enclosure or temporary demarcation fencing marking out site boundaries..."</i></p> <p>The Essex Councils remain of the view that these operations could give rise to potentially significant environmental impacts and note that there is limited precedent to support the inclusion of temporary accesses in this context.</p> <p>The Essex Councils do, however, acknowledge that the amended Requirement 11 in the draft DCO clarifies that these temporary accesses will still need approval of the LHA even if they do not trigger the commencement of development.</p>	<p>Applicant's Comments on Other Submissions Received at Deadline 4 [REP5-025].</p> <p>In terms of the Applicant's approach to "pre-commencement operations" more broadly, including the strategic importance of ensuring that such operations can be undertaken ahead of the main construction works for the project, the Applicant refers specifically to Paragraphs 3.6.15 and 3.6.16 of the Explanatory Memorandum [REP6-005] and also to its detailed responses at pages 71-73 (inclusive) of the Applicant's Comments on Essex County and Braintree District Councils' Local Impact Report [REP3-050].</p>
<p>Article 46: Defence to proceedings in respect of statutory nuisance</p>	<p>Reliance on the CEMP as a defence to statutory nuisance proceedings</p>	<p>The Essex Councils endorse submissions made by the Suffolk Councils at Deadline 5 that reliance on the control and mitigation measures set out in the CEMP in respect of certain forms of statutory nuisance should not constitute a defence to proceedings brought under section 82 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and indicate that there is a lack of precedent for the Applicant's current approach.</p> <p>The Essex Councils also suggest that Articles 46(1)(a)(iii) and (iv) should be amended so that it would be for the undertaker to demonstrate to the reasonable satisfaction of the 'relevant local planning authority' that any statutory nuisance was a consequence of the construction or maintenance of the authorised development <i>or</i> a consequence of complying with a requirement of the Order and therefore could not reasonably be avoided.</p> <p>It is suggested that these amendments, which reflect wording at Article 12(1)(b) of The Sizewell C (Nuclear Generating Station) Order 2022 would add useful clarity as to which party was to determine whether noise nuisance in this context could be reasonably avoided.</p>	<p>The Applicant's position remains as set out in Paragraph 2.7 of the Applicant's Comments on Other Submissions Received at Deadline 5 [REP6-045].</p> <p>The Applicant would, in particular, emphasise the extent of recent precedent for the current approach to drafting in respect of Article 46, noting that the Essex Councils refer in Paragraph 6.3.4 of [REP6-051] only to DCOs where National Highways is the promoter.</p> <p>As to the Essex Councils' suggested amendment to Articles 46(1)(a)(iii) and (iv), and notwithstanding the limited precedent found in The Sizewell C (Nuclear Generating Station) Order 2022, the Applicant does not consider that the amendments specified are necessary.</p> <p>Indeed, given that the defence relates to proceedings to be heard in the Magistrates' Court, it would be inappropriate for the 'relevant local planning authority' to determine whether or not statutory noise nuisance was a consequence of either the construction or maintenance of the authorised development or compliance with an Order requirement, particularly where the technical content underlying any such determination extended beyond the expertise of that authority.</p>

Provision	Matter	Point Raised	Applicant's Comments
Article 53 (Safeguarding)	Implications for the Councils of Article 53	<p>The Essex Councils acknowledge the Applicant's rationale in requesting a safeguarding provision, namely to protect its transmission assets.</p> <p>However, the proposed obligation for relevant planning authorities to "address" matters raised by the Applicant could be problematic and fetter the ability of the planning authority to determine a proposal in accordance with its usual statutory responsibilities. If, the ExA is minded to approve Article 53 in some form, it might be reasonable to limit the representations which have to be addressed under Article 53 to those concerning, for example, the safeguarding, maintenance and safe operation of National Grid equipment and personnel.</p> <p>The Essex Councils' also expect that Article 53 should not apply to land within the Order limits which is only required temporarily, once it is no longer required by the Applicant, and that any financial costs associated with administering Article 53 would be suitably covered by the Applicant.</p> <p>Suffolk County Council restates its previous concerns in respect of Article 53 as set out in its post-hearing submission for ISH2 [REP4-043].</p>	<p>The Applicant's position remains as set out in detail in its responses to DC1.6.58 to DC1.6.62 (inclusive) of the Applicant's Responses to First Written Questions [REP3-052].</p> <p>Whilst the Applicant acknowledges the rationale underpinning the Essex Councils' further submission as to the potential limitations to be imposed in relation to Article 53(5) of the draft DCO [REP6-003] (i.e. the requirement for the relevant planning authority to ensure that the matters raised in the undertaker's representations are 'addressed'), such amendments would, in the Applicant's opinion, be practically unnecessary.</p> <p>The Applicant is required to comply with the terms of its electricity transmission licence in the delivery of its statutory duties. In its role as transmission owner, the Applicant's obligations include maintaining the national electricity transmission system safely, reliably, economically and efficiently, in accordance with its statutory duty under Section 9 of the Electricity Act 1989 to maintain 'an efficient, co-ordinated and economical' system of electricity transmission.</p> <p>Therefore, any representations submitted pursuant to Article 53(4) would <i>de facto</i> reflect the practical application of those duties and obligations. The Applicant would not comment on matters unrelated to the delivery and/or functioning of this critical national infrastructure project.</p>
Schedule 3, Requirement 7 (Construction hours)	Application of Requirement 7 to "pre-commencement operations"	<p>Having reflected on submissions made during ISH5, the Essex Councils agree with the Applicant that the position in respect of "pre-commencement operations" does not need to be made more explicit within Requirement 7 and/or Article 2(1).</p> <p>Suffolk County Council welcomes the Applicant's confirmation that it intends Requirement 7 to regulate all "pre-commencement operations". It would clearly be in everyone's interests (particularly for, say, residents interested in the application who have not been following all of the issues raised during the Examination) for the position to be clear and so a "for the avoidance of doubt" provision could be drafted to cover the point.</p>	<p>The Applicant's primary position remains as set out in Table 3.1, Item iii of the Applicant's Written Summary of Oral Submissions to Issue Specific Hearing 5 [REP6-042].</p> <p>However, and taking account of Suffolk County Council's submissions, the Applicant would be pleased to include additional clarification, on a 'for the avoidance of doubt' basis, in the Explanatory Memorandum [REP6-005].</p>

Provision	Matter	Point Raised	Applicant's Comments
Schedule 3, Requirement 7 (Construction hours)	Defining 'severe weather conditions' for the purposes of Requirement 7(3)(g)	<p>Suffolk County Council considers it would be helpful if "severe weather conditions" was defined and would propose the inclusion of the following sub-paragraph after existing Requirement 7(4) –</p> <p><i>"In this Requirement, "severe weather conditions" means any weather which prevents work from taking place during the core working hours referred to in sub-paragraph (1) by reason of physical incapacity (whether for reasons of visibility, ground conditions, power availability, site access or otherwise) or being contrary to safe working practices".</i></p> <p>Suffolk County Council further considers it would be helpful if the undertaker notified the relevant planning authority to explain when and why works could not be done at the appropriate time. SCC would propose the inclusion of the following sub-paragraph after existing Requirement 7(3) –</p> <p><i>"Where any work has been delayed or held up by severe weather conditions which disrupted or interrupted normal construction activities in accordance with sub-paragraph (3)(g) the undertaker must, as soon as practicable, notify the local planning authority of the disruption or interruption and explain why that work could not be completed within the core working hours referred to in sub-paragraph (1)".</i></p> <p>(Note that the Councils' comments related to a further restriction on HGV movements are responded to above at Section 2.5 (Construction Hours)).</p>	<p>The Applicant's primary position remains as set out in Table 3.1, Item iii (Schedule 3, Requirement 7 of the draft DCO) of the Applicant's Written Summary of Oral Submissions to Issue Specific Hearing 5 [REP6-042], namely that the inclusion of a definition of "severe weather conditions" within the draft DCO [REP6-003] would be wholly inappropriate in the context of statutory drafting and also unnecessary taking account of the particular circumstances of the project.</p> <p>However, the Applicant proposes to provide additional clarification within the Explanatory Memorandum submitted at Deadline 8.</p> <p>The Applicant respectfully disagrees with SCC as to the necessity of the further suggested amendment after existing Requirement 7(3).</p> <p>Notwithstanding the absence of precedent for such an approach, the Applicant considers that an obligation of this nature would place a disproportionate and wholly unnecessary additional administrative burden on all parties (noting in this context the previous submissions made by SCC in particular as to the number of documentary submissions and requests for approval which the host authorities are already set to receive on both this and other nationally significant infrastructure projects).</p>
Schedule 3, Requirements	The need for further Requirements	<p>As to the need for further requirements, the Essex Councils reiterate that they were attempting to assist the ExA in identifying where additional requirements may be necessary when compared against other Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects e.g. (Hinkley Point C and Brechfa) which have an element of electricity transmission.</p> <p>Suffolk County Council note that, subject to drafting points, it is content in principle with the proposed new</p>	<p>The Applicant's position remains as set out at page 85 of the Applicant's Comments on Essex County and Braintree District Councils' Local Impact Report [REP3-050].</p> <p>Having had regard to established DCO precedent (including previous Orders which the Applicant has successfully promoted and delivered), Section 120 of the Planning Act 2008, and Paragraphs 15.1 and 15.2 of Planning Inspectorate Advice Note 15 (Drafting Development Consent Orders), and noting that the Management Plans address and secure many of the matters which might otherwise have been the subject of further requirements, the Applicant does not consider that</p>

Provision	Matter	Point Raised	Applicant's Comments
		requirements as included at Appendix 3 to ECC and BDC Deadline 3 Response – ExA Questions 1 [REP3-061].	further requirements are justified, necessary or indeed relevant to either the development proposed or the underlying planning policy position.
Schedule 3, Requirements	New Requirement: Control of Light	<p>The Essex Councils raise the following points:</p> <p>GSP Substation: lighting details should be included at this stage, or by Requirement, especially owing to the fact that it would be a permanent lighting solution. The Councils would need to be satisfied that such lighting would not have a detrimental impact on dark landscape and nature conservation. Indeed, a Condition was placed on the Town and Country Planning Act consent (Ref: 22/01147/FUL) requiring lighting detail, as well as any lighting proposed to be installed during construction. The Councils consider that the same information could be submitted to satisfy a requirement to do with lighting on the GSP.</p> <p>CSE Compounds: providing further lighting details would assist in reducing any impacts, both on ecology and amenity, especially for the main works compound, which will be established across a number of years.</p> <p>Construction Compounds: providing further lighting details would assist in reducing any impacts, both on ecology and amenity, especially for the main works compound, which will be established across a number of years</p>	The Applicant's position remains as set out in Item 5 at page 114 of the Applicant's Comments on Other Submissions Received at Deadline 4 [REP5-025].
Schedule 3, Requirements	New Requirement: Complaint handling	The Essex Councils consider that the project website might not be able to be accessed by all, or indeed be clear where to look for information to complain. The Councils consider that there should be consideration of a bespoke letter sent to residents, to set out the complaint's procedure for the avoidance of any doubt or confusion.	The Applicant's position remains as set out in Item 5 at page 115 of the Applicant's Comments on Other Submissions Received at Deadline 4 [REP5-025].
Schedule 3, Requirements	New Requirement: External Appearance of CSE Compounds	The Essex Councils make two specific requests in relation to a requirement related to the external appearance of CSE Compounds:	The Applicant's position remains as set out in Item 5 at page 116-7 of the Applicant's Comments on Other Submissions Received at Deadline 4 [REP5-025].

Provision	Matter	Point Raised	Applicant's Comments
		<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. As details of the final external appearance / design of these structures are yet to be finalised, there may be an issue with enforcing the draft DCO if the compounds etc are built differently to as indicatively shown at this stage. The Essex Councils consider it is unusual to apply what are essentially Rochdale envelope principles when no final information is required to be submitted.2. The Applicant should submit a colour pallet for each permanent building/structure, to take into account the rural location of the site. In addition, the Applicant should commit to not using reflective materials and also to ensure that perimeter fencing is coloured appropriately so it sits in with the rural landscape. The Essex Councils note that this is an approach that has been taken at another DCO electricity transmission project in Essex.	

3. Applicant’s Specific Comments on the Submission from Suffolk County Council

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 Table 3.1 summarises the Applicant’s comments to submissions provided by SCC at Deadline 6 [REP6-056] and [REP6-059], which are not covered in the Thematic section above.
- 3.1.2 The Applicant has no comments on the Cover Letter [REP6-053] and responses concerning SCC’s Comments on other submissions received at Deadline 5 [REP6-058] and Post-Hearing Submission for the Sixth Issue Specific Hearing (ISH6) into Access, Transport, and Public Rights of Way [REP6-057] are contained in Thematic Sections (Section 2) of this document and/or the other comments did not require a response from the Applicant. The Applicant has also commented on SCC’s Preliminary Ideas for Strategic Planting in Suffolk [REP6-055] at section 2.3 of this document and SCC’s additional evidence relating to the LEMP [REP6-054] at section 2.4 of this document.
- 3.1.3 The Applicant has also not commented on matters that SCC has said it is not concerned about, is in agreement with, has no comment on or where it has deferred to another Interested Party on a specific matter, therefore the numbering in Table 3.1 is not consecutive. In some cases, where the point raised is lengthy, the Applicant has summarised the key points to keep the document concise.

3.2 Table of Comments

Table 3.1 – Applicant’s Comments on the SCC Deadline 6 Submission

Ref	Matter	Point Raised	Applicant’s Comments
Post-Hearing Submission for the Fifth Issue Specific Hearing (ISH5) on the draft Development Consent Order and Related Matters [REP6-056]			
4.2	Construction traffic and construction route strategy	Construction traffic and construction route strategy: Explanation and discussion (methodologies, measures and specificity) of the Applicant’s updated CTMP [REP3-030].	The Applicant has commented on worker travel patterns in Table 5.2 [ref TT 1.13.15 and TT1.13.21] of the Applicant’s Comments on Other Submissions Received at Deadline 5 [REP6-045].

Ref	Matter	Point Raised	Applicant's Comments
5.3	Proposed temporary traffic restrictions	Proposed temporary traffic restrictions: Permits	The Applicant notes the information and has previously addressed this subject including in: Applicant's Comments on Other Submissions Received at Deadline 4 [REP5-025] and has no further comment to make.
6.1	Temporary and permanent measures to access	Temporary and permanent measures that are sought for access to the Proposed Development (i) Data and information shared and (ii) state-of-play of discussions between the Applicant and LHAs since Issue Specific Hearing 3 (9 November 2023) in relation to temporary and permanent measures to access the proposed development.	Data and information shared and state of play on these aspects were summarised in the Applicant's evidence at ISH6 and recorded in Applicant's Written Summaries of Oral Submissions to Issue Specific Hearing 6 [REP6-043].
8.1b	Port Management Plans	Traffic Reconsidering its position, SCC would accept that such a plan is unnecessary for this scheme.	Noted by the Applicant.
8.1c	Decommissioning Traffic Management Plans	SCC considers that this would be scoped as part of the discharge of Requirement 12.	Noted by the Applicant.
10	Actions arising multiple	– Review of Actions Arising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10.1 AP2: Agreement regarding peak hour: see section 2.8.10 of this document. • 10.2 AP4: EIA/ Transport Assessment and IEMA guidelines: action for SCC; to be delivered at Deadline 7 • 10.3 AP6: Positions regarding Transport Assessment [APP-061] being final rather than outline, see table 4.1 of this document. • 10.4 AP7: LHA to supply maintenance Policy documents: completed, noted as received. • 10.5 AP8: LHA to submit updated Annex F of Local Impact Report: supplied as Appendix 1 of LHA submission document [REP6-057]. • 10.6 AP11 LHA to provide further information regarding structures on AIL routes: to be submitted at Deadline 7.

Ref	Matter	Point Raised	Applicant's Comments
Response to the Applicant's Comments on any other submissions received at Deadline 4 [REP6-059]			
A. Comments on Responses to ExA's First Written Questions [REP4-033]			
<i>All responses contained in Thematic Sections (Section 2) of this document. Certain submissions did not require a written response from the Applicant.</i>			
B. Post-Hearing Submission for Third Issue Specific Hearing (ISH3) into Transport and Rights of Way [REP4-021]			
3.1.m	Approach to impacts from pre-commencement operations	The Applicant states the term temporary pre-accesses within the definition of pre-commencement works includes those for construction of the project i.e., all temporary access. SCC would seek clarification from the Applicant that the vehicle movements associated with construction of these temporary accesses is included within the data presented in [REP4-006] 8.6.6 Transport Assessment Construction Vehicle Profile Data and whether commencement is at month 20.	The vehicle movements associated with the construction of the temporary accesses is included in the data presented in [REP4-006] Transport Assessment Construction Vehicle Profile Data. This data commences at month 20 to reflect the Alternative Scenario presented in Environmental Statement Appendix 4.2: Construction Schedule [APP-091].
4.1	'Extraordinary Traffic'	SCC maintains position that it is preferable to agree process for reclaiming costs due to extraordinary damage to the highway in a highway agreement than have to take a claim to a magistrate's court.	The Applicant addressed this matter in point 4.2 of ISH 6, recorded in [REP6-043], noting that s.59 of the Highways Act 1980 already provides a statutory mechanism to enable cost recovery where damage to the highway is caused due to use of the highway by extraordinary traffic, and hence the Applicant submitted that it would not be necessary to seek to create a mechanism which duplicated matters set out in that Act. The Applicant submitted that such matters would, if they arose, be capable of being resolved through other means and without the need for recourse to s.59 of the Highways Act 1980.
4.4	Any other matters arising from the response to the ExA's First Written Questions	Regarding ExQ1 question TT1.13.23, SCC questions whether the monitoring and reporting of emission controls in the CoCP [REP3-026] would be reported to the Local Planning Authority.	See response to ref: Table 2 15.5.1 and 21.1.5 below regarding monitoring, compliance and reporting of EURO Standards.
5.3	Reliance on a temporary speed limit to slow vehicles	SCC notes that the Applicant has stated that 'designs have not placed reliance on large speed reductions from temporary speed limits alone'.	The traffic flow and speed data collected to prepare the TA show how, in many cases, existing speeds are already well below the posted speed limit. All of these data files were shared by The Applicant directly to LHAs on 7 December 2023, and a summary is included in Transport Assessment Traffic Survey Data (document 8.9.6) submitted at Deadline 7.

Ref	Matter	Point Raised	Applicant's Comments
			Additional design detail has been prepared for access points noted by LHAs as being of higher concern. A Technical Note of accesses within Suffolk has been shared in draft with SCC and is provided as part of the Deadline 7 submission (Temporary and Permanent Access Technical Note Suffolk County Council (document 8.9.5 (A)), with a Technical Note of accesses within Essex due to follow for Deadline 8
C. Post-Hearing Submission for the Fourth Issue Specific Hearing (ISH4) on Various Environmental Matters, including Biodiversity, the Historic Environment, Landscape [REP4-039]			
<i>All responses contained in Thematic Sections (Section 2) of this document. Certain submissions did not require a written response from the Applicant.</i>			
D. Responses to Comments on the Local Impact Report [REP4-008]			
6a	Route alignment, micro-siting and LoD	Noting the Applicant's Technical note [REP5-028], SCC considers that such an approach is necessary for Benton End and Overbury Hall. There may be other locations that this Council is not aware of, as BMSDC and Historic England are taking the lead in this matter.	The Applicant considers that the assessment presented in the Technical Note on Cultural Associations [REP5-028] demonstrates why micro-siting is unnecessary at this and other locations and has no further comment to make on the matter.
6f	Hedgerows	SCC considers that the summary of hedgerow and tree line losses in Table 7.9 in ES Chapter 7: Biodiversity [APP-075] is not sufficient. The Defra metric has the specific purpose to quantify habitat units. This does not replace accurate quantification of vegetation losses (numbers of trees and lengths of hedgerows) which SCC considers to be essential information for the purposes of clarity and transparency.	The Applicant is reinstating almost all hedgerows and trees in situ. Any hedgerows and trees that cannot be replanted in situ are being replaced as close as practicable to the original location. The impact on hedgerows and trees is assessed in ES Chapter 7: Biodiversity [REP6-009] and the reinstatement proposals are shown in LEMP Appendix B: Vegetation Reinstatement Plan (document 7.8.2 (C)). The reinstatement planting is accompanied with reinforcement planting of existing hedgerows to compensate the timescales required to re-establish planting to a value equivalent to that lost. The Defra Metric is considered to be a suitable tool for quantifying loss and gains on the project.
12a	SCC proposed control measures	Whilst happy to discuss details, SCC still maintains that controls are required to ensure that the construction traffic remains within the parameters assessed. Without any control nothing prevents the Applicant exceeding these limits and potentially leading to unforeseen impacts. The Applicant has reassured SCC that the worst case has been assumed with	The Applicant notes here that the Transport Assessment [APP-061] and ES assess a reasonable worst case i.e., a likely scenario incorporating significant contingency in line with relevant TA [APP-061] and ES guidance. This scenario does not account for the potential impact of improbable events (for example, extreme weather or flooding) on the delivery of the project, which may require the contractor to adapt its delivery plans in response. This underpins the referenced need for flexibility and the Applicant's opposition to introducing controls as proposed by SCC. These controls are also considered

Ref	Matter	Point Raised	Applicant's Comments
		appropriate factors of safety and SCC has accepted this. Consequently, SCC cannot see why the Applicant has to argue that additional 'flexibility' of construction traffic is required.	unnecessary and disproportionate given the low level of traffic generated and the fact that this traffic is spread over a long, linear project.

4. Applicant’s Specific Comments on the Submission from Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 Table 4.1 summarises the Applicant’s comments to submissions provided by BMSDC at Deadline 6 [REP6-050], which are not covered in the Thematic section above. The Applicant has also not commented on matters that BMSDC has noted no concerns, is in agreement with, has no comment on or where it has deferred to another Interested Party on a specific matter.

4.2 Table of Comments

Table 4.1 – Applicant’s Comments on the BMSDC Deadline 6 Submission

Ref	Matter	Point Raised	Applicant’s Comments
Babergh District Council and Mid Suffolk District Council Deadline 6 Submission [REP6-050]			
N/A	Environmental Health	As the compounds may be in situ for lengthy periods and have fixed plant, equipment and associated vehicles in use we would recommend that an assessment is undertaken for each compound under the provisions of British Standard 4142 assessment (or any subsequent revisions) by an independent professional qualified in acoustics. The assessment shall consider the likely noise impact associated with such activities and recommends appropriate mitigation as required. The assessment shall consider the cumulative impact of other active compounds in the locality. The assessment shall be provided to the Local Planning Authority no less than 28 days in writing for approval in consultation with Environmental Protection.	<p>The scope of BS 4142:2014+A1:2019 ‘Methods for rating and assessing industrial and commercial sound’ (British Standards Institution (2019)) (BS 4142) is described in Section 1 of the standard. The scope states that the standard describes methods for rating and assessment sound of an industrial and/or commercial nature and is not intended to be applied to the rating and assessment of sound from construction activities. As such, BS 4142 is not a suitable assessment methodology for assessing noise from construction compounds.</p> <p>An initial assessment of construction noise has been conducted in accordance with BS 5228-1:2009+A1:2014 Code of practice for noise and vibration control on construction and open sites – Part 1: Noise (British Standards Institution (2014b)) (BS 5228-1) which is the appropriate standard for such sources. The assessment is described in ES Chapter 14 Noise and Vibration [APP-082] and ES Appendix 14.1 Construction Noise and Vibration Data [APP-136].</p> <p>Best practicable means would also apply to the project which would further reduce noise from construction compounds, as per the measures detailed in the Chapter 14 of the CEMP [REP6-021]. Section 14.4 of the CEMP also details the need for Section 61 consents to be submitted to the local planning authority for construction activities that are likely to result in a significant effect at a sensitive receptor or likely to be undertaken outside of the Core Working Hours (within the parameters of DCO Requirement 7 of the draft DCO [REP6-003].</p>

5. Applicant’s Specific Comments on the Submission from Essex County Council and Braintree District Council

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 Table 5.1 summarises the Applicant’s comments to submissions provided by ECC and BDC at Deadline 6 [REP6-051], which are not covered in the Thematic section above. The Applicant has not commented on matters that ECC/BDC has said it is not concerned about, is in agreement with, has no comment on or where it has deferred to another Interested Party on a specific matter, therefore the numbering in Table 5.1 is not consecutive. In some cases, where the point raised is lengthy, the Applicant has summarised the key points to keep the document concise. In some cases, the same matter is covered in different locations in the response. In such cases the Applicant has grouped these in Table 5.1 to aid the response given. This means the numbering is not consecutive in places.

5.2 Table of Comments

Table 5.1 – Applicant’s Comments on the ECC/BDC Deadline 6 Submission

Ref	Matter	Point Raised	Applicant’s Comments
Essex County Council and Braintree District Council Deadline 6 Submission [REP6-051]			
7.5	Art 15 temporary stopping up of streets	ECC has suggested that where temporary closures are left in place for an unreasonable length of time this should be raised with the community liaison function s6.4 PRowMP. The Councils will continue to discuss this with the Applicant at relevant Highways and Transportation Thematic Meetings.	The Applicant agrees that the Thematic Meetings are the most appropriate way to address this matter. It is not expected that temporary closures would be lengthy and therefore this is considered to be a scenario that is unlikely to occur.
7.7	Lopping of trees/felling	The Councils seek reassurance that all likely ecological impacts have been assessed for any works to additional trees that are ‘near’ to the Order Limits, as surveys in the order limits have shown to have high bat roost potential. The Councils understand that surveys have only been completed within the Order Limits (apart from for some visibility splays), hence the	Environmental Statement Appendix 7.7 Bat Survey Report [APP-117] details how trees within 50m of the Order Limits were surveyed for their potential to support roosting bats. Paragraph 2.4.4 sets out the subsequent aerial inspection or emergence re-entry surveys undertaken on trees within the Order Limits and within 50m of the Order Limits. A draft Bat Licence has been completed and Natural England has provided a Letter of No

Ref	Matter	Point Raised	Applicant's Comments
		<p>details for any trees 'near' the Order Limits have not been submitted.</p> <p>During construction, if works should be required to any of those which are situated outside the Order Limits and have not been surveyed, then an appropriate ecological assessment should be carried out prior to any works being undertaken to that tree. In any case, any trees which are removed should be suitably replaced.</p>	<p>Impediment which can be found in ES Appendix 7.7 Annex A: Bat Draft Licence [APP-118].</p> <p>Should works be required on any additional trees that have not undergone bat survey (whether within or outside of the Order Limits), then the Applicant would undertake preconstruction surveys as part of the final bat licence that would be submitted to Natural England for approval, which would also include any required mitigation measures needed to offset the effect.</p>
7.19.1	Aftercare duration	<p>If the Applicant is confirming to maintain planting for the lifetime operation of CSE compounds and the GSP, The Councils have no further comments to make.</p> <p>For the remainder of the planting, and given that Essex is a dry county, The Councils consider that the minimum term for other trees outside of these areas, and outside of Biodiversity Net Gain, should be for a minimum of 10 years aftercare, not 5 years as currently proposed. Clarification is also required should any failed planting be required to be replaced, whether the new aftercare period will extend to another full term (e.g. 5 years) or whether it would still only cover the original 5-year period (if that is agreed) so it would have less time? The Councils consider that it should be the former, i.e. that any replacement should be given the full term to establish.</p>	<p>The Applicant has confirmed its commitment to maintaining planting at the CSE compounds for the lifetime of the asset, as stated in embedded measures EM-D01, EM-F01, EM-G03 and EM-G06 in the Register of Environmental Commitments (REAC) [REP6-023].</p> <p>The Applicant maintains that five years aftercare is sufficient for the remaining areas, particularly in Essex, which consist mainly of hedgerow reinstatement or natural regeneration. Five years is a standard landscape contract that is used on many large infrastructure projects, including recent projects promoted by the Applicant such as Richborough Connection (see Requirement 9 (3) of the final DCO made by the Secretary of State).</p>
7.19.2	Bat survey - surveys	<p>The Applicant confirmed that all trees have within the Order Limits have been surveyed. Table 3.6 confirms the numbers of trees found with bat roost potential (H/M/L) and High and Medium trees have been climbed where safe to do so to check for evidence of bats. Natural England required emergence surveys of seven trees which were considered unsafe to climb. The Councils would like to know if these surveys found any additional bat roosts and if any relate to works accesses where impacts could be avoided with traffic controls.</p>	<p>No further bat surveys have been undertaken to those reported in ES Appendix 7.7 Bat Survey Report [APP-177]. If the seven trees with bat roosting potential not surveyed would still be impacted once the detailed design is developed, these would be surveyed using emergence and re-entry techniques. If required, those trees with bat roosts would be incorporated into the final bat licence submitted to Natural England for approval. None of the seven trees noted relate to works accesses.</p>
7.19.3	Bat survey – mitigation hierarchy	<p>The Councils seek reassurance that the mitigation hierarchy has been rigorously applied to avoid impacts before needing to consider mitigation and compensation. As the Bat Survey Report [APP-117] notes in section 4.1.2, the study area contains a high frequency and wide distribution of trees with bat roosting features. Whilst the LAs accept that the bat</p>	<p>The Applicant can confirm that the mitigation hierarchy has been applied as part of the option routing and refinement of the Proposed Alignment, as shown on the General Arrangement Plans [APP-018]. This has included avoiding trees where practicable, in particular ones that were identified as having bat roost potential. ES Appendix 7.7 Annex A: Bat Draft Licence [APP-117] details the</p>

Ref	Matter	Point Raised	Applicant's Comments
		<p>surveys of trees were undertaken in line with 3rd Ed Good Practice Guidelines (Collins 2016), the newly published 4th Ed (Collins ed, 2023) Table 6.3 states that where only potential roost features suitable for individual bats (PRF-I) , these do not need further surveys, however where these trees/features are removed, this roost resource will be lost, so it is now reasonable for appropriate compensation to be provided in advance and works undertaken under a precautionary working method statement for bats. The Councils seek reassurance that this compensation will be secured by Requirement 10.</p>	<p>trees that are assumed to be lost based on the Proposed Alignment and the proposed mitigation. This includes good practice measure B06 in the CoCP [REP3-026], which states that <i>'Alternative roost structures (bat boxes) will be provided on retained trees within the Order Limits or areas outside of the Order Limits agreed with landowners. Two artificial bat boxes will be deployed on retained trees to every one tree with high or moderate bat roosting potential felled. Where high potential roosting features are present, the project will soft fell these. The limbs will be attached to retained trees where practicable'</i>.</p> <p>This measure was informed by aerial inspections which confirmed presence/likely absence of roosting bats. The mitigation advice in Table 6.3 of the latest bat survey guidelines assumes no such survey has been undertaken and is therefore additionally precautionary. The bat survey data collected for the project negates the need for such an approach while appropriately compensating for the loss of bat roosting features.</p> <p>The draft Bat Licence [APP-117] was written based on the version 3 of the bat survey guidelines, which was the version available at the point of the draft licence being submitted to Natural England for the Letter of No Impediment. Should the project receive development consent, then the Applicant would need to submit a final bat licence to Natural England for approval of any required mitigation and this would be informed by the latest published guidance.</p>
Table 15.5.1	2 Transport Assessment assumption	<p>For workforce traffic, the target is to achieve an average minimum occupancy of 1.3 personnel per vehicle. This is significantly reduced from the figure that was assessed in the Transport Assessment [APP-061] of $(70\% \times 4 + 30\% \times 1) = 3.1$ persons per vehicle.</p> <p>Monitoring is limited to a baseline survey within three months and an update to the targets to reflect this survey. The only target is that relating to 1.3 persons per vehicle. The survey would identify mode of transport to the site and level of car sharing and percentage of staff who have completed the survey. This would give an indication of total vehicle numbers.</p> <p>The Council maintain its position that stronger wording is needed that results in the car share proportions that were</p>	<p>The Applicant has responded to this matter in Deadline 6 submission, Applicant's Response to Interested Party Comments on Management Plans [REP6-046] (see reference TT1.13.21 in Table 3.1) and has no further comments.</p>

Ref	Matter	Point Raised	Applicant's Comments
		assessed being the target in the CTMP [REP3-030] that would be monitored against, with reasonable measures brought in if the targets was not being achieved.	
Table 15.5.1 and 21.1.5	2 CTMP – HGV movements	The CTMP should include a commitment to monitoring and reporting compliance to EURO standards.	The CTMP [REP6-025] section 5.3.15 states that vehicles will conform to Euro emission standards, and Table 7.1 and section 7.2.5 states that monitoring and reporting will include compliance with CTMP including vehicle standards.
Table 15.5.1	2 CTMP – car sharing	There is no commitment to new measures or funding increased car sharing by providing minibuses etc in the event of failure to achieve a target.	The Applicant has commented on the point raised in Table 5.2 [ref TT 1.13.15 and TT1.13.21] of the Applicant's Comments on Other Submissions Received at Deadline 5 [REP6-045].
Table 15.5.1	2 Traffic impact	<p>Key commitments would be to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target the workforce car share as assessed in the Transport Assessment • Survey staff arrival and departure times. • Survey of HGV numbers and EURO compliance. • Commit to reporting the findings of the survey to the Councils. • Commit to additional measures being implemented if the car share proportions are not achieved, such as a staff minibus. • Commit to a review of impacts if the shift patterns are not similar to those assessed. <p>The Council would welcome a specific session on discussing this wording within the CTMP.</p>	<p>See response to ref Table 15.5.1 and 21.1.5 above regarding monitoring and compliance of Euro Standards.</p> <p>The Applicant has commented on the points raised in Table 5.2 [ref TT 1.13.15 and TT1.13.21] of the Applicant's Comments on Other Submissions Received at Deadline 5 [REP6-045].</p> <p>The CTMP [REP6-025] was updated at Deadline 6.</p>
Table 15.5.1	2 Traffic commitments	Further commitments would be to caps on construction vehicle movements; which could take into consideration the need for flexibility in the project, especially if this evidenced that a short term impact would not be material. However, we note that this position is very unlikely to be agreed by the Applicant; however, as indicated in the Council's response to 15.4.6, there are routes that a very rural in nature and any	The Applicant has commented on this point in Table 2.2 (ref 3.1a and ref 12a) of the Applicant's Comments on Other Submissions Received at Deadline 4 [REP5-025].

Ref	Matter	Point Raised	Applicant's Comments
		significant increase in vehicle movements would have potential negative impacts on delay and road safety where limits would be particularly pertinent.	
Table 15.8.1	2 Highway Repair	ECC support SCC's position that remediation for damage to the highway could be more appropriately addressed through a side agreement.	See response above to Ref 4.1 of Suffolk County Council's Post-Hearing Submission for Third Issue Specific Hearing (ISH3) into Transport and Rights of Way [REP4-021].
Table 15.8.2	2 Wheel washing	A process needs to be determined to identify when wheel washing facilities are required.	The Applicant has commented on this point in Table 2.2 (ref 6.3) and Table 4.2 (ref 15.8.2) of the Applicant's Comments on Other Submissions Received at Deadline 4 [REP5-025].
Table 2 7	PRoW assessment of construction and traffic impacts on WCH	<p>The Council does not agree that an assessment of daily peak flows is reasonable, when the large proportion of vehicle impact is during a short specific time frame; this spreads out the comparison of the impact of development traffic against a greater baseline traffic.</p> <p>In principle, applying fixed thresholds should only be done at a high level; however, the Council note the application of 60% for large impacts for robustness.</p>	The Applicant has commented on these points in its Response to the December Hearing Action Points [REP6-041] (see reference AP4 in Table 4.1) and has no further comments to make on the matter.
Table 2 7	Sensitivity of links	PRoW Generally, the sensitivities are considered to be reasonable; however, the Council would have considered the Station Hill, Lamarsh Hill and some of Colne Road would be a 'Medium' sensitivity. However, assuming the impacts on these routes are negligible (which is separately linked to numerous comments on the assessment method), then it is recognised the change in sensitivity would not impact conclusions. The Council would also consider that Church Road Twinstead – Eastern Segment might be considered to be High sensitivity due the number of properties fronting the road; however, it is noted the Applicant has proposed a management strategy for this location to mitigate the identified impact.	The Applicant notes the observations and has no further comment to make.
8	Accompanied site visit images	The Councils welcome this document which shows all locations which were visited as part of the Accompanied Site Visit. The Councils also welcome the indicative equipment shown on the images for reference, although it is noted that	The images provided use augmented reality software (TrueView Visuals) to superimpose the models of the indicative design onto photos using the metadata of the image to identify field of view and the GPS location of the photo location. The images provided use the 3D models of the indicative design, which were also used for the production of the photomontages, and accurately show the

Ref	Matter	Point Raised	Applicant's Comments
		the height of the new equipment shown appears to be underrepresented.	heights of the new equipment, although with the caveats explained in paragraph 1.1.3 of the introduction [REP5-015]. It is acknowledged they do not account for any Limits of Deviation and were submitted purely as a record of images that were viewed on the site visit on the 7 November 2023 by the relevant parties.

6. Applicant's Comments on the Submission Dedham Vale National Landscape and Stour Valley Partnership

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 Table 6.1 summarises the Applicant's comments to submissions provided by Dedham Vale National Landscape (formerly called Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) and Stour Valley Partnership (DVNLSVP) at Deadline 6 [REP6-052], which are not covered in the Thematic section above.

6.2 Table of Comments

Table 6.1 – Applicant's Comments on the Dedham Vale National Landscape and Stour Valley Partnership Deadline 6 Submission

Ref	Matter	Point Raised	Applicant's Comments
Dedham Vale National Landscape (new brand for AONB) and Stour Valley Partnership Post Issue Specific Hearing 6 Submission [REP6-052]			
Item 6	Consideration of the Stour Valley Path and measure to reduce impacts to the route	<p>The DVNLSVP considers that the Applicant should give additional weight and consideration to the rights of way issues where those rights of way form part of the Stour Valley Path. The Stour Valley Path is a 63 mile regional route that runs through the Dedham Vale National Landscape and Stour Valley project area.</p> <p>The DVNLSVP considers that additional measures to minimise impacts of closures and/or diversions. National promotion of closures should be considered as this route is a significant draw for locals and visitors and forms an important part of the visitor draw and consequently the local visitor economy.</p>	<p>The Stour Valley Path crosses the Order Limits in two locations; one location is to the south and east of Moat Lane (FP 7 93) in a proposed underground cable section, the second location is to the north of Moat Lane (FP 5 93) where the 132kV overhead line would be removed. These are shown on Sheet 21 and 27 of the Access, Rights of Way and Public Rights of Navigation Plans [APP-012].</p> <p>Appendix A of the PRowMP [REP3-056] notes that FP 7 93 would be closed and temporarily diverted for four weeks, with the proposed diversion route shown on Sheet 27 of the Access, Rights of Way and Public Rights of Navigation Plans [APP-012]. FP 5 93 would be closed for one day during the lowering of the 132kV conductors for safety reasons. The PRowMP [REP3-056] notes how the impacts to the routes would be signed prior to and during construction of the relevant sections.</p> <p>The Applicant considers that the measures outlined in the PRowMP [REP3-056] are already sufficient to mitigate the short-term temporary impacts on the Stour Valley Path.</p>

Ref	Matter	Point Raised	Applicant's Comments
Item 6	Results of surveys for the Stour Valley Path	REP3-056 para 4.4.1 records 'relatively low use' of the footpath but the DVNLSVP have not seen a definition of what that might mean or what it is relative to. The DVNLSVP considers that any use of the Stour Valley Path is significant in enjoying the nationally designated landscape and associated Stour Valley project area.	The 2013 PRow surveys recorded three walkers using the Stour Valley Path on each of the surveyed dates (June and August 2013). The 2021 surveys on FP 7 93 had nine walkers on the weekday survey and 16 on the weekend survey date (on average less than two per hour of survey). The Applicant considers these numbers to demonstrate 'relatively low use' of the PRow sections affected by the project.
Item 9	Stour navigation	River The DVNLSVP would wish to see the closure of the Stour Navigation due to the construction of a bailey bridge for use as part of the temporary haul road used for the construction of the Bramford to Twinstead reinforcement avoided or minimised. It considers that the Applicant should include a temporary portage during closures, which is likely to require navigation users to be accompanied on the portage route for safety reasons. If navigation is closed for the duration of the works then the applicant should consider timings of the closures, avoiding the Sudbury to Sea event and weekends and bank holidays when the navigation is likely to be most used. Furthermore, as a matter of good will the Applicant should consider making a payment to be used to enhance the navigation.	As noted in paragraph 1.5.2 of the CTMP [REP6-025] there will be short term disruption to navigation (for typically unpowered craft) along up to 400m of the River Stour for safety reasons during lowering of the 132kV conductors and during installation and removal of the temporary bridge. These would be up to one week for each activity. Outside of this, there are not anticipated to be effects on navigation. Paragraph 1.5.3 2 of the CTMP [REP6-025] states that notices would be placed up and downstream of the Order Limits at least four weeks in advance (or as otherwise agreed with the navigation authority) to notify river users of the works. National Grid will aim to avoid large events on the River Stour. In addition, National Grid will also notify the Environment Agency at least one month prior to activities with details regarding the nature of the works, duration and positioning of equipment and structures within the river channel, such as safety boats and buoys. During the conductor lowering and bridge works, measures will be put in place (such as a boat will be moored in the river) to prevent and warn users from accessing the working area, measures will be as agreed with the Environment Agency as the navigation authority. As the effect on navigation is very short term (less than a week for each activity), a portage route through the construction site is considered unnecessary and not in proportion to the scale of the effect. It would also be unsafe for users to use a portage route given the nature of the activities along the river bank that by their very nature dictate the requirement for the navigation closure. As the works are very short term and would have no long term or permanent impact on navigation, the Applicant does not consider there to be need to make a payment to enhance navigation.

7. Applicant's Comments on the Submission from the Parish Councils of Assington, Bures St Mary, Leavenheath, Little Cornard, Polstead and Stoke by Nayland

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 Table 7.1 summarises the Applicant's comments to submissions provided by the Parish Councils of Assington, Bures St Mary, Leavenheath, Little Cornard, Polstead and Stoke by Nayland at Deadline 6 [REP6-060 and REP6-061]. In some cases, where the point raised is lengthy, the Applicant has summarised the key points to keep the document concise. In some cases, the same matter is covered in different locations in the response. In such cases the Applicant has grouped these in Table 7.1 to aid the response given. This means the numbering is not consecutive in places.

7.2 Table of Comments

Table 7.1 – Applicant's Comments on the Parish Councils of Assington, Bures St Mary, Leavenheath, Little Cornard, Polstead and Stoke by Nayland's Deadline 6 Submission

Ref	Matter	Point Raised	Applicant's Comments
Additional Supporting Information and Responses to Deadline 5 Submissions [REP6-060]			
1-6	Location of Dedham Vale East CSE compound	The parish councils provide previous and additional argument in support of siting the Dedham Vale East CSE compound in a position within Layham Quarry immediately adjacent to its western boundary.	The Applicant has responded to this matter in section 2.4 'Layham Quarry Alternative Location' in Applicant's Comments on Other Submissions Received at Deadline 5 [REP6-045] and at page 46 of the Applicants Comments on Written Representations [REP3-048]. The Applicant has provided details in respect to the options appraisal undertaken for this alternative location and, therefore, has no further comments to make in this respect.
7	Undergrounding through Section F	The parish councils request further consideration and details regarding undergrounding in Section F including policy considerations in relation to designated landscapes and details of the cost benefit assessment.	The Applicant has responded to this matter in section 3.2 of Applicant's Comments on Babergh District Council Additional Local Impact Report [REP3-051]. The Applicant has provided details in respect of the request for additional undergrounding, and therefore has no further comments to make in this respect.

Ref	Matter	Point Raised	Applicant's Comments
8	Location of Dedham Vale East CSE compound	The parish councils request further consideration of the use of the existing road access and track to reach the proposed Stour Valley East CSE compound.	<p>The Applicant responded to this matter in lines 2.1- 2.6 of Table 6.1 in the Applicant's Comments on Other Submissions Received at Deadline 4 [REP5-025].</p> <p>As a Main Works Contractor is yet to be appointed and as the detailed designs still need to be completed, the Applicant considers the commitment made in the REAC [REP6-023] and Requirement 9 of the draft DCO [REP6-003], to be the appropriate way of managing this. Requirement 9 requires the Applicant to submit a landscape plan for each CSE compound to the relevant planning authority, which will show landscape planting and proposed finishes for hard landscape features.</p>
<p>Further written comments on Applicant's Proposals following review of Bramford to Twinstead (EN020002) Submissions Deadline [REP6-061]</p>			
1	Location of Dedham Vale East CSE compound	The parish councils provide additional argument in support of siting the Dedham Vale East CSE compound in a position within Layham Quarry immediately adjacent to its western boundary.	The Applicant has responded to this matter in section 2.4 'Layham Quarry Alternative Location' in Applicant's Comments on Other Submissions Received at Deadline 5 [REP6-045] and at page 46 of the Applicants Comments on Written Representations [REP3-048]. The Applicant has provided details in respect to the options appraisal undertaken for this alternative location and therefore has no further comments to make in this respect.
3.23.2 2	Undergrounding through Section F	<p>We note that the Applicant has elected not to address the matters raised in our various submissions, in particular on the subjects of</p> <p>(i) the impacts of new much larger 400kV towers through Section F on the setting of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), or</p> <p>(ii) any reasons why the decision made by the Applicant to underground a similar length of the proposed Norwich to Tilbury line through Great Horkeley close to but outside the southern boundary of the AONB is not equally applicable here.</p>	<p>In terms of (i), the Applicant responded to this point at Deadline 3 in Table 2.5 Reference 5 in the Applicant's response to the Written Representation submitted by the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and Stour Valley Partnership at Deadline 2 [REP3-048].</p> <p>In the response to (ii), the landscape effects of the project on the AONB take into account many factors including views to and from the AONB, existing vegetation that may screen the project and the quality of the landscape character. The assessment takes into account these local factors present and also the potential impacts of the project itself, which for the Bramford to Twinstead Reinforcement is a replacement overhead line (all be it with taller pylons) at this location. Therefore, the Applicant does not consider decisions made on the Norwich to Tilbury line to be an applicable comparison.</p>
3	Access road to Stour Valley East CSE compound	From what we understand, the Applicant has not addressed in any detail the proposed alternative access arrangements promoted either in our most recent submissions or to consider the submission from Mr Shelley [REP5-040] regarding the impacts on an	<p>The Applicant responded to this matter in lines 2.1- 2.6 of Table 6.1 in the Applicant's Comments on Other Submissions Received at Deadline 4 [REP5-025].</p> <p>As a Main Works Contractor is yet to be appointed and as the detailed designs still need to be completed, the Applicant considers the commitment made in the</p>

Ref	Matter	Point Raised	Applicant's Comments
		important local business. The question of permanent access is one that we believe should be addressed and finalised now with weight given to local feedback, and not left to cosmetic treatment to be provided at some future point via REAC.	REAC [REP6-023] and Requirement 9 of the draft DCO [REP6-003], to be the appropriate way of managing this. Requirement 9 requires the Applicant to submit a landscape plan for each CSE compound to the relevant planning authority, which will show landscape planting and proposed finishes for hard landscape features.
4	Location of Dedham Vale East CSE compound	The parish councils provide additional argument in support of siting the Dedham Vale East CSE compound in a position within Layham Quarry immediately adjacent to its western boundary.	The Applicant has responded to this matter in section 2.4 'Layham Quarry Alternative Location' in Applicant's Comments on Other Submissions Received at Deadline 5 [REP6-045] and at page 46 of the Applicants Comments on Written Representations [REP3-048]. The Applicant has provided details in respect of the options appraisal undertaken for this alternative location and, therefore, has no further comments to make in this respect.

8. Applicant’s Comments on the Submission from Francis Prosser

8.1 Introduction

8.1.1 Table 7.1 summarises the Applicant’s comments to submissions provided Francis Prosser [REP6-062].

8.2 Table of Comments

Table 8.1 – Applicant’s Comments on the Francis Prosser Deadline 6 Submission

Ref	Matter	Point Raised	Applicant’s Comments
Page 1	Offshore cables	<p><i>‘I refer to the recent announcement of the Government’s support of a study into the viability of using offshore cables in respect of the proposed Norwich to Tilbury line, something which campaigners, including respective MPs and Councils have been urging for some time.</i></p> <p><i>This is essentially new/ recent information that I believe has a bearing on the proceedings: The Bramford to Twinstead line is of similar major importance. And the same campaigners and MPs (including Ministers) and councils were also proponents of offshore routes during the consultation processes for this line. The various environmental bodies would also consider support for them. With the government recognising the need for a re-think of similar proposals surely this means that the Bramford to Twinstead line proposals should now be included in the studies. There is also a chance to stop perpetuating the short term, piecemeal and reactive approach to development of our transmission network, which will unnecessarily devastate parts of the country as clearly outlined in very many consultations and examination submissions. Further there could well be something that comes to light from these new studies that would have a bearing on the Bramford to Twinstead line specifically. How would it be if the alternatives we have all been urging for some time were shown to be even more worthwhile, just months after this planning</i></p>	<p>The need for the project is summarised in Planning Statement Chapter 3 [REP6-011] and set out in detail in the Need Case (April 2023) [APP-161]. The Strategic Options Report [APP-162] considered the feasibility of alternative connections such as sub-sea cables. Further details on the environmental effects of the different options can be found in ES Chapter 3: Alternatives Considered [APP-071].</p> <p>The Applicant does not consider that the announcement referred to will have an impact on the need for or options and technology proposed for the project.</p> <p>The reinforcement is required to remedy a specific bottleneck in the existing onshore transmission network between Bramford and Twinstead Tee. Given the fixed geographical location of this, an offshore route could not rectify the bottleneck on this part of the onshore network without significant additional cost or additional onshore infrastructure.</p> <p>It is also worth mentioning that the proposed revised Overarching National Policy Statement for energy (EN-1) (November 2023) notes that ‘substantial reinforcement in East Anglia to handle increased power flows from offshore wind generation’ is needed.</p>

Ref	Matter	Point Raised	Applicant's Comments
		<p><i>process had finished? So, should the Planning Inspectorate consider postponing this process in order to combine with the new studies and encourage a more 'joined-up' approach to these projects? If it did then this would also allow National Grid to consider how best to minimise the harm these projects will do to people and the environment in the very long-term. Given its commitment in other areas to environmental offset / mitigation, this could also provide an opportunity to include a similar full updated review of undergrounding, something we know is outdated in the current plans and rationale.'</i></p>	

References

Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (2023) Benefits for Electricity Transmission Network Infrastructure, Government Response.

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