

From: [Nick Miller](#)
To: [BramfordtoTwinstead](#); [Stephens, Jake](#)
Subject: Re: Examining Authority's Further Written Questions (ExQ2)
Date: 10 January 2024 09:06:09
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
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I write in response to your question, "EC2.3.6 Following your helpful submission of wildlife records into the Examination, the Applicant [REP4-029] has confirmed that it was aware of the sensitive habitats that you highlight in the Stour Valley and that these were a key consideration when it committed to undertake a trenchless crossing to the south of Ansell's Grove, which would not disturb the land surface or habitats in that area. This is secured as embedded measure EM-G08 in the REAC [REP4-018]. With this mitigation in mind, are you now content with the Applicant's assessment in this respect?"

I'm not content with the applicant's assessment, and I maintain that the trenchless method is not a suitable mitigation of the effects on the Local Wildlife Site and the surrounding habitat and biodiversity of the Alphamstone section.

It's incomprehensible to me that National Grid say the trenchless method is suitable mitigation.

I would again urge that a southern route past Alphamstone should be evaluated, I believe it would avoid endless trouble, and I question why, in Alphamstone area, National Grid have chosen to cross exceptional habitat, instead of the arable land of a southern route.

My objections to National Grid's proposal continue to be that:

- I reject their claim, that the high dormouse population is no more than would be expected in the countryside generally, and point out that they understate the survey numbers they were informed of;
- They have never given any indication of having considered an alternative route across arable land eg the route to the south, which appears preferable and hardly longer. National Grid appear not to have recognised how exceptionally biodiverse the landscape is here, despite its character being obvious at first site;
- Because of heat from cables the trenchless method as I understand it, requires relatively frequent re-laying of cables, and because the ground is not a good conductor of heat, requires 18 cables spread over a wider corridor (100 metres) than trenched burial; also the cables need to go deeper under trees etc. There are setts there of a mammal I'm not allowed to name. The job will presumably require large machines, which would create quite a mess - within the c.100m swathe, and probably a big excavation where the drill enters the ground, also where the drill exits (all x 18 boreholes of course). I would question whether the noise of tunnelling, and movements of big machinery, are adverse to wildlife.

Local naturalists and wildlife organisations informed National Grid of the various points, ranging from actual dormouse numbers to a proposed southern route, etc, during their consultation period, so that I can't accept the applicant's claim to have made wildlife conservation "a key consideration". Such information was given for instance by Nigel Morgan and John Dumont; and I give this excerpt from Suffolk Wildlife Trust's submission to National Grid's consultation, in January 2022:

"In conclusion, although we understand the visual landscape benefits of using underground cabling throughout the AONB, Suffolk Wildlife Trust would be opposed to any avoidable increase in the length of underground cabling due to the potential for short and long-term impacts to ecology

along the cable corridor. The negative impacts of underground cables on the natural heritage of the AONB and impacts to hazel dormouse, which are the Dedham Vale AONB flagship species for nature recovery, should be fully considered against any potential for positive visual landscape impacts. More focus should be placed on the fundamental role that biodiversity plays in the natural heritage, relative wilderness, relative tranquillity and therefore natural beauty of the AONB. It should also be taken into consideration that the mitigation, compensation and enhancement required for underground cabling will be considerably greater than that required for overhead lines, as well as making the National Grid commitment to 10% Biodiversity Net Gain more difficult to achieve.”

Thankyou
Nick Miller

On Fri, 22 Dec 2023 at 09:21, BramfordtoTwinstead
<BramfordtoTwinstead@planninginspectorate.gov.uk> wrote:

Dear Sir/ Madam,

Please find the Examining Authority's Further Written Questions (ExQ2) attached.

In addition to the Applicant, host local authorities and any Affected Persons and Statutory Undertakers generally, the Examining Authority has included questions for your attention.

Responses are due by **Deadline 7** in the Examination Timetable, which is **Wednesday 17 January 2024 at 11.59pm**.

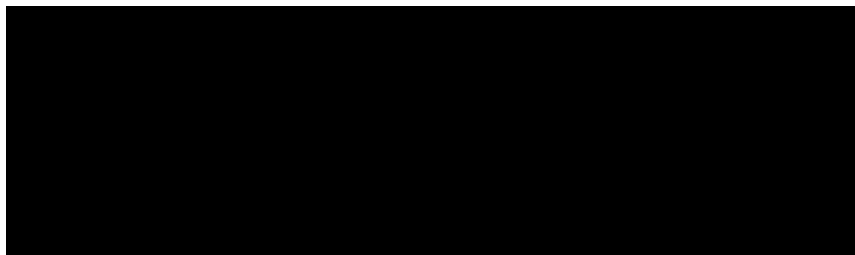
Kind regards,

Jake



**Jake Stephens | Case Manager – National Infrastructure
(Energy)**

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