



THE PLANNING ACT 2008

THE INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING (EXAMINATION PROCEDURE)
RULES 2010

KEUPER GAS STORAGE PROJECT APPLICATION

Application by Keuper Gas Storage Limited for
Underground Gas Storage Facility – Keuper Gas Storage at Holford
Brinefield – Cheshire

Planning Inspectorate Reference: **EN030002**

**SUMMARY OF WRITTEN REPRESENTATIONS
OF NATURAL ENGLAND**

Dated 21 April 2016

SUMMARY OF WRITTEN REPRESENTATIONS

1 WITH REGARDS TO IMPACTS

1.1 Statutory Sites (European and International)

1.1.1. It is Natural England's view, based on the shadow Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) revised - Ref 5.4 – February 2016, that there will be no likely significant effect (LSE) on any of the European and International designated sites alone or in combination with any other projects or plans. Our agreement of no LSE alone or in combination on the identified designations is based on the points detailed in the full Written Representations (WR's).

2 Statutory Sites (European and International)

2.1.1. Natural England can advise that the ES provides sufficient evidence to show that the scheme will not damage or destroy the notified features of the nationally protected sites, by virtue of the mitigation measures proposed within the ES (Document reference 6.1 November 2015 - Chapter 26) and the commitment that these will be implemented through the CEMP.

3 Protected Landscapes

3.1.1. No nationally protected landscapes are affected by the project.

4 Best and Most Versatile Soils (BMV)

4.1.1. Natural England welcome the use of the Defra Code of Practice for the management of soils, however it will be important to understand the extent of loss of BMV, so that an informed decision can be made in line with government policy. We believe that there is some outstanding information which needs to be resolved to assist the Inspector with their decision. Please refer to the Inspector's First Questions in relation to this subject (Annex C of the Full WR's).

5 Protected Species

5.1.1. On the 8 March 2016, Natural England was in a position to issue a Letter Of No Impediment (LONI) for Great-crested newt. If the DCO is successful, the applicant will need to submit a full licence application as per the criteria set out in the LONI. Also see Annex C of the Full WR's).

5.1.2. On the 3 March 2016, Natural England was in a position to issue a Letter Of No Impediment (LONI) for badgers. If the DCO is successful, the applicant will need to submit a full licence application as per the criteria set out in the LONI. Also see Annex C of the full WR's.

5.1.3. At the time of preparing these WR's we understand that no bat roosts will be lost as a result of the development, hence a licence will not be required. It is acknowledged however that pre-construction surveys will be undertaken (paragraph 8.12.13) which will inform the need for a licence for these species if circumstances change as the development progresses.

6 Over-wintering birds

- 6.1.1. The applicant has stated that all construction works around the Runcorn Outfall will be undertaken outside the wintering bird season. Whilst there is no specific mention of timings for the wintering bird season in the ES, we would expect the construction works at the Runcorn Outfall to be outside September and Mid May (Autumn Passage, winter, and Spring Passage). For the purposes of completeness and clarity, this must be clearly stated in the relevant sections of the ES and included in the CEMP once this is developed further.
- 6.1.2. We do not consider there to be any specific issues with over wintering birds in relation to the main development area.

7 Mitigation and Compensation measures – CEMP and associated documents

- 7.1.1. Natural England note that the CEMP has yet to be fully completed and as such it is not possible to comment further on this document other than to reiterate our RR comments in that we welcome the inclusion of the mitigation measures as detailed in Chapter 26 of the EA and that these will be captured in the developing CEMP.

8 Wording in the DCO

- 8.1.1. Currently the draft DCO does not deal specifically with European Protected Species. In other DCO's, European Protected Species have their own requirement and Natural England would feel more comfortable with this approach. A separate European Protected Species requirement would ensure that activities that may require a protected species license do not take place until Natural England has been consulted and a scheme of protection and mitigation measures has been submitted to and approved by Natural England. Please see full WR's for more information.

Natural England
21 April 2016