

A1 in Northumberland: Morpeth to Ellingham

Scheme Number: TR010059

7.30 Applicant's Responses to ExA's Fourth Written Questions

Rule 8(1)(b)

Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010

Planning Act 2008

June 2021

Infrastructure Planning

Planning Act 2008

**The Infrastructure Planning
(Examination Procedure) Rules
2010**

**The A1 in Northumberland: Morpeth to
Ellingham**

Development Consent Order 20[xx]

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1 APPLICANT'S RESPONSES TO EXA'S FOURTH WRITTEN QUESTIONS

1.1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1.1. This document relates to an application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) made on 7 July 2020 by Highways England (the 'Applicant') to the Secretary of State for Transport via the Planning Inspectorate (the 'Inspectorate') under section 37 of the Planning Act 2008 (the '2008 Act'). If made, the DCO would grant consent for the A1 in Northumberland: Morpeth to Ellingham (the 'Scheme').
- 1.1.2. The Scheme comprises two sections known as Part A: Morpeth to Felton (Part A) and Part B: Alnwick to Ellingham (Part B), a detailed description of which can be found in Chapter 2: The Scheme, Volume 1 of the Environmental Statement (ES) [APP-037].
- 1.1.3. The purpose of this document is to set out the Applicant's responses to the Examining Authority's (ExA's) Fourth (Further) Written Questions [PD-018].

Table 1-1 – Biodiversity

Ref. No.	Question to:	Question	Applicant's Response
BIO.4.1	Applicant	<p>The Environment Agency (EA) [REP5-044] [REP7-021] and Natural England (NE) [REP5a- 004] both state that the proposed changes to the application would result in the loss of natural riverbank habitat and therefore there is a need for compensatory habitat to be provided to offset the damage/ loss to the River Coquet and Coquet Valley Woodlands Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).</p> <p>The EA also states that the mitigation measures outlined in the Deadline 4 Environmental Statement Addenda [REP4-061] [REP4-063] [REP4-064] only partially lessen the impact and cannot be viewed as an appropriate alternative to a naturally functioning system.</p> <p>The Applicant is asked to explain how it has considered suitable compensation elsewhere within the River Coquet system to offset the impacts on the riverine habitat for which the SSSI is designated?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. As detailed, most recently, in the Applicant's Response to Deadline 7 Submissions [REP8-024] (see response 57 in Table 1-2), the Applicant acknowledges that as a Habitat of Principal Importance (HPI) and habitat of the River Coquet and Coquet Valley Woodlands SSSI, compensation should be provided for the loss of riverbank to the extent appropriate having regard to the impacts of the Scheme. 2. The Applicant has explored opportunities for compensation for the loss of riverbank habitat and the permanent alteration to the morphology of the reach through discussion with landowners. In accordance with the mitigation hierarchy, the Applicant has explored opportunities, initially, close to the site of impact. However, due to the nature of the River Coquet, which is in very good condition with relatively few anthropogenic modifications (as identified by Natural England [REP5a-004]), there were no opportunities to provide compensation identified in close proximity to the site of impact. 3. As such, the Applicant has explored opportunities further afield. This included potential restoration options that could be deployed in the wider catchment, as provided by Natural England during a meeting on 16 December 2020. The Applicant completed a desk-based assessment using aerial imagery to identify potential locations for restoration options, with the process also supported by advice from Natural England. During a meeting on 05 February 2021 between the Applicant, Natural England and Northumberland County Council, Natural England raised that the banks along the River Coquet west of Rothbury (near a golf course) have very few trees and that there may be an opportunity for intervention. Following the meeting, Northumberland County Council recommended the Applicant engage with Hepple Estates and the Forestry Commission at Harbottle/Holystone, further up the catchment, who are actively involved in rewilding and habitat improvement works. The desk-based assessment did not identify any additional viable locations. 4. The Applicant conducted a site visit on 20 April 2021 near Holystone and Hepple, located upstream of the Scheme, and met with Forestry England and Hepple Estates, a private landowner. During the site visit, a walkover of the River Coquet around Rothbury (including the golf course) was also undertaken. The site visit was attended by the Applicant's ecologist and geomorphologist. Due to the nature of the River Coquet and its good condition, no opportunities to provide meaningful compensation to offset the loss of riverbank habitat were identified. 5. Following the site visit, the desk-based assessment was repeated, and the search area widened, but no viable locations were identified. 6. During a meeting on 07 May 2021, the Applicant agreed with the Environment Agency that it is not practical for the Applicant to provide compensation on the River Coquet. Accordingly, on 23 April 2021, the Environment Agency provided options to fund delivery of off-site compensation by the Environment Agency. During a meeting with Natural England on 06 May 2021, the Applicant confirmed that the Environment Agency and Natural England had engaged regarding the proposed options. Natural England also acknowledged during the meeting the efforts that the Applicant has taken to identify potential compensation measures and the difficulties of securing physical measures that the Applicant could implement. As such, Natural

Ref. No.	Question to:	Question	Applicant's Response
			<p>England confirmed they would support the option of a financial contribution as compensation for the loss of riverbank habitat (see Table 2-1 Record of Engagement of the Statement of Common Ground with Natural England [REP8-017]).</p> <p>7. The Applicant remains in discussions with the Environment Agency and Natural England, including negotiations to secure a financial contribution, with regard to this matter and will provide a further update at Deadline 9.</p>
BIO.4.2	Applicant	<p>In its Relevant Representation (RR) submitted at Deadline 7a the Woodland Trust requested that the Applicant explores all potential options that would ensure the safety of the existing and new bridges while avoiding loss of ancient woodland.</p> <p>In responding to the RR submitted by the Woodland Trust, the Applicant is asked to demonstrate what other options were considered to avoid the loss of additional ancient woodland.</p>	<p>1. A full response to the Woodland Trust's Deadline 7a submissions has been provided in Table 2.3 of the Consultation Statement for the Statutory Consultation (document reference 7.31). The options considered for the northern pier bridge foundation are set out at item 1, and reflect the options presented in Options Appraisal of River Coquet Bridge Foundation Stabilisation and Scour Protection System [REP7-005].</p>
BIO.4.3	Applicant	<p>In its RR submitted at Deadline 7a NE reiterated its comments on the proposed changes to the application made at Deadline 5a [REP5a-004].</p> <p>In responding to the RR submitted by NE, the Applicant is asked to address the effect of the loss of the loss of natural bankside habitats and the impact of the proposed works on sediment supply from the surrounding slopes.</p>	<p>A full response to NE's Deadline 7a submissions has been provided in Table 2.3 of the Consultation Statement for the Change Request (document reference 7.31). The loss of natural bankside habitats is dealt with at item 2, while sediment supply is addressed at item 3.</p>
HABITATS REGULATIONS ASSESSMENT (HRA) REPORT			
BIO.4.4	NE	<p>The Revised HRA [REP4-056] applies the Conservation Objectives from the Northumbria Coast SPA to the Northumbria Coast Ramsar (Table 2-2, p.37).</p> <p>Does NE agree that these objectives are appropriate?</p>	
BIO.4.5	Applicant	<p>The Applicant is requested to identify any factors that might affect the certainty of the implementation of the mitigation measures listed in paragraphs 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 of the revised HRA [REP4-056]?</p>	<p>1. For clarity, paragraph 4.2.1 of the Updated HRA for the Change Request [REP4-056 and 057] presents measures developed for the wider Scheme that would also be applicable to the works associated with the Change Request. These are secured through the Outline CEMP [REP8-011 and 012].</p> <p>2. Paragraph 4.2.2 of the Updated HRA for the Change Request [REP4-056 and 057] presents additional measures developed specifically in response to the Change Request, as extracted from Appendix E: Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments of Environmental Statement Addendum: Stabilisation Works for Change Request [REP4-063] and/or Appendix D: Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments of ES Addendum: Southern Access Works for Change Request [REP4-064]. Since the submission of the Updated HRA for the Change Request [REP4-056 and 057], the measures presented in paragraph 4.2.2 have been incorporated into the Outline CEMP [REP8-011 and 012]. The references allocated to these measures in the Outline CEMP [REP8-011 and 012] are as follows:</p>

Ref. No.	Question to:	Question	Applicant’s Response																		
			<table><tr><th>Measure listed in HRA</th><th>Reference in Outline CEMP</th></tr><tr><td>4.2.2(a)</td><td>SAW-B7</td></tr><tr><td>4.2.2(b)</td><td>SAW-B7</td></tr><tr><td>4.2.2(c)</td><td>S-B14 (amendment)</td></tr><tr><td>4.2.2(d)</td><td>SW-B5 and SAW-B5</td></tr><tr><td>4.2.2(e)</td><td>SW-W5</td></tr><tr><td>4.2.2(f)</td><td>SW-W6 and SAW-W5</td></tr><tr><td>4.2.2(g)</td><td>SW-W6 and SAW-W5</td></tr><tr><td>4.2.2(h)</td><td>SAW-B7 and SAW-W5</td></tr></table> <p>3. The Applicant has considered the location of the works associated with the Change Request, within the valley of the River Coquet, when identifying and developing the mitigation measures listed in paragraphs 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 of the Updated HRA for the Change Request [REP4-056 and 057]. Whilst not considered significant risks, the constraints in this location, with regard to the certainty of the implementation of the mitigation measures, relate to the steepness of the slopes and the potential for high intensity rainfall.</p> <p>4. The Applicant has discussed these constraints and the proposed mitigation with Natural England, following their review of the Updated HRA for the Change Request [REP4-056 and 057]. Below is a summary of engagement with relevance to factors that may affect the certainty of the implementation of mitigation measures.</p> <p>5. Within an email dated 07 May 2021, Natural England stated in response to paragraph 4.2.1(f) that “it would be appropriate to consider increasing the minimum distance (i.e. 10m) from the watercourse for the location of any concrete mixing and washing areas. Ideally, these areas would be located as far as possible from the watercourse to further minimise the risk.” The Applicant confirmed that the 10m limit is a “no closer than” and would only be used where there is an unavoidable specific need (for example, the south side of the River Coquet if necessary). However, the Applicant confirmed that these activities would be sited as far as possible away from the watercourses. Following engagement with Natural England, measure S-B14 of the Outline CEMP [REP8-011 and 012] was updated at Deadline 8 to include “Concrete mixing or washing areas would be located as far as possible from watercourses and no closer than 10m from the watercourse, unless there is an unavoidable specific need (such as on the south side of the River Coquet).”</p>	Measure listed in HRA	Reference in Outline CEMP	4.2.2(a)	SAW-B7	4.2.2(b)	SAW-B7	4.2.2(c)	S-B14 (amendment)	4.2.2(d)	SW-B5 and SAW-B5	4.2.2(e)	SW-W5	4.2.2(f)	SW-W6 and SAW-W5	4.2.2(g)	SW-W6 and SAW-W5	4.2.2(h)	SAW-B7 and SAW-W5
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Ref. No.	Question to:	Question	Applicant's Response
			<p>6. In relation to paragraph 4.2.1(k), Natural England raised that the “installation of cut off ditches may not be feasible at this location due to the nature of the works in a constraints site on sloping ground immediately adjacent to the water course, so the measures set out in 4.2.1 (q) will need to be sufficiently robust to cope with persistent heavy rainfall events.” Further, in relation to paragraph 4.2.1(q), Natural England stated that the “the implementation of a robust sediment control strategy across the valley sides on both sides of the river is crucial to minimising the risk of sediment loss to the river over the 16 month work period of the proposed bridge build. The systems put in place will need to be constantly monitored to ensure their continued effectiveness and need to be designed to have sufficient capacity to operate effectively during periods of heavy rainfall at times when the site is not active (e.g. at night, weekends and holiday). The systems also need to be easily adaptable to cope the unforeseen changes to overland flow pathways and sediment loads. Regular maintenance and/or replacement sediment barriers/traps will be required to ensure that the systems put in place remain fit for purpose throughout the lifetime of the construction works.” The Applicant acknowledged Natural England’s comments and the factors of consideration raised, and confirmed that it is the intention of the delivery contractor to refine their plans further at detailed design in consultation with Natural England and the Environment Agency, based on the measures detailed within paragraphs 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 of the Updated Habitat Regulations Assessment Report for Change Request [REP4-056 and 057], which are secured by the Outline CEMP [REP8-011 and 012] (as detailed above in this response).</p> <p>7. In relation to paragraph 4.2.2(h) and the proposed surface water drainage system (secured by measures SAW-B7 and SAW-W5 of the Outline CEMP [REP8-011 and 012]), Natural England stated that “<i>a containment screen or some other method of preventing materials from falling from the underside of the bridge into the [River Coquet] will be necessary.</i>” The Applicant confirmed that the bridge would have a solid floor and the sides would be partially hoarded, with a regular cleaning, inspection and maintenance regime implemented to prevent material getting into the river. The Applicant confirmed that it is not possible to place anything under the bridge to act as a screen due to the demand this would put on maintenance access, forcing people to have to enter the watercourse, the risk of catching debris or becoming entangled with debris in times of flood. The Applicant also confirmed that the surface water drainage system (as referenced in paragraph 4.2.2 (h)) shall be developed at detailed design in consultation with the Environment Agency and Natural England. The detail presented above regarding the design of the bridge in relation to the requirement for a containment screen shall be secured by an amendment to the wording of measures SAW-B7 and SAW-W5 of the Outline CEMP [REP8-011 and 012], to be submitted at Deadline 9.</p> <p>8. In emails dated 22 May 2021 and 25 May 2021, Natural England confirmed that they were content with the statements of clarification/response provided by the Applicant. Natural England also confirmed agreement with the proposed amendments to the Outline CEMP. This engagement is captured in Table 2-1</p>

Ref. No.	Question to:	Question	Applicant's Response
			<p>Record of Engagement of the Statement of Common Ground, as issued at Deadline 8a.</p> <p>9. For the remaining measures detailed in paragraphs 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 of the Updated Habitat Regulations Assessment Report for Change Request [REP4-056 and 057], there are no additional known factors that might affect the certainty of implementation.</p>
BIO.4.6	NE	Does NE agree with the conclusions of the revised HRA [REP4-056]?	<p>1. Natural England confirmed, within an email to the Applicant on 07 May 2021, agreement with the conclusions of the Updated HRA Report for Change Request [REP4-056 and 057] <i>"i.e. that the mitigation strategy proposed in the Appropriate Assessment (stage 2) of the Updated HRA is considered to be sufficient to ensure that the proposals set out in the Change Request will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the European sites listed in the Updated HRA Report."</i></p> <p>2. This is evidenced in Table 2-1 Record of Engagement of the Statement of Common Ground with Natural England issued at Deadline 8 [REP8-017].</p>

Table 1-2 – Combined and Cumulative Effect

Ref. No.	Question to:	Question	Applicant's Response
CC.4.1	Applicant	<p>NE [REP5a-004] states that, when the cumulative impact of the works on both northern and southern banks of the River Coquet are assessed over the lifetime of the scheme, the permanent loss of the natural bed and bank features, the decoupling of the channel from the sediment supplied by the gorge slopes and the cessation of the natural evolution of the channel over even a limited area of the SSSI, should be viewed as a significant impact on this nationally important river system.</p> <p>The Applicant is asked to comment on how it has assessed the combined and cumulative impacts of the proposed change on the River Coquet and if it views such impacts as significant.</p>	<p>1. Section 14.4 of Environmental Statement Addendum: Stabilisation Works for Change Request [REP4-063] and Section 12.4 of Environmental Statement Addendum: Southern Access Works for Change Request [REP4-064] set out the assessment methodology followed for the assessment of cumulative effects (including cross topic combined effects) arising from the change request. This notes that the methodology described in Section 16.4, Chapter 16: Assessment of Cumulative Effects of the ES [APP-062] remains unchanged and valid for the Stabilisation Works and Southern Access Works.</p> <p>2. It is understood that NE is referring to combined effects as assessed in the ES as opposed to cumulative effects, which would refer to effects of the Scheme along with other projects and schemes.</p> <p>3. The combined effects assessment for the Stabilisation Works and Southern Access Works has considered both within topic and cross topic combined effects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within Topic – Impacts that arise from the Stabilisation Works and Southern Access Works acting on the same common sensitive receptor within an individual environmental topic. For example, there may be effects on visual amenity due to the construction of the Stabilisation Works and Southern Access Works when considered together. • Cross Topic – these occur due to impacts from different environmental topics associated with the Stabilisation Works and Southern Access Works that combine to cause multiple effects on a single common sensitive receptor. For example, there may be multiple effects on the River Coquet from the loss of riverbank

			<p>habitat and changes in the watercourse itself (i.e. sediment regime, channel morphology and natural fluvial processes).</p> <p>4. As set out in paragraph 1.2.7 of Environmental Statement Addendum: Southern Access Works for Change Request [REP4-064], the within topic combined effects of both the Stabilisation Works and Southern Access Works on a single receptor have inherently been captured in the technical assessments of the Environmental Statement Addendum: Southern Access Works for Change Request [REP4-064]. The assessment presented in Paragraphs 8.10.25 to 8.10.48 of Environmental Statement Addendum: Southern Access Works for Change Request [REP4-064] therefore considers the combined effects of both the Stabilisation Works together with the Southern Access Works on the River Coquet when describing the impacts of loss of natural bed and bank features, decoupling of the channel from the sediment supplied by the gorge slopes and cessation of the natural evolution of the channel. A within topic combined effect of Slight Adverse is reported as the result of these impacts.</p> <p>5. The potential cross topic combined effects associated with the Stabilisation Works and Southern Access Works have been considered for the topics in the technical chapters of Environmental Statement Addendum: Stabilisation Works for Change Request [REP4-063] and Environmental Statement Addendum: Southern Access Works for Change Request [REP4-064]. The same methodology as set out in Section 16.4, Chapter 16: Assessment of Cumulative Effects of the ES [APP-062] was used for the Stabilisation Works and Southern Access Works cross topic combined effects assessment.</p> <p>6. Within Environmental Statement Addendum: Stabilisation Works for Change Request [REP4-063] (Section 14.8) and Environmental Statement Addendum: Southern Access Works for Change Request [REP4-064] (Section 12.8), a significant cross topic combined residual effect (Moderate Adverse) during construction has been reported, as a result of both the biodiversity and road drainage, and the water environment effects on the River Coquet.</p> <p>7. Although it is understood that NE is referring to combined effects, as set out in paragraph 14.1.2 of Environmental Statement Addendum: Stabilisation Works for Change Request [REP4-063] and paragraph 12.1.2 of Environmental Statement Addendum: Southern Access Works for Change Request [REP4-064] it is anticipated that due to the distance between the Southern Access Works and the Stabilisation Works and developments that have the potential to impact on the River Coquet, there would be no cumulative impacts above those reported in Chapter 16: Assessment of Cumulative Effects of the ES [APP-063].</p>
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Table 1-3 – Geology and Soils

Ref. No.	Question to:	Question	Applicant's Response
GS.4.1	Applicant	NE [REP5a-004] has highlighted concerns regarding the effects of the proposed changes to the application on the geomorphology of the River Coquet. Furthermore, NE agrees with the EA [REP6-053] [REP7-021] in relation to the	1. The Applicant provided the full results of the fluvial geomorphology assessment as previously submitted at Deadline 7 of the Examination as set out below.

Ref. No.	Question to:	Question	Applicant's Response
		<p>Change Request Addenda in relation to the geomorphological impacts of the proposal. The NE and EA believe that the proposed bank stabilisation works, and the scour protection works will constitute a break in the connectivity between the terrestrial and riverine habitat, with long-term implications for local sediment supply in this area. This, in the view of NE and the EA does not constitute a minor adverse impact.</p> <p>Can the Applicant confirm why it considers that the permanent loss of natural riverbank would constitute a minor adverse impact?</p>	<p>2. As reported in Paragraph 8.4.5 of the River Coquet Fluvial Geomorphology Assessment [REP7-003], the Scheme in Operation scenario has indicated the extent of anticipated changes are as reported in 6.38 Environmental Statement Addendum: Stabilisation Works for Change Request [REP4-063] and 6.40 Environmental Statement Addendum: Southern Access Works for Change Request [REP4-064]. Notable changes are confined to the margins of the channel within the extent of the work and immediately downstream. The magnitude impact on the sediment regime and natural fluvial processes are assessed to be negligible, with any long-term effects very minor and localised to the area of permanent works. The magnitude of impact on channel morphology is considered minor adverse, as although some bank and near bank features would be lost within the footprint of works, the impacts are small and localised to the channel margins and limited to the extent of the scour protection. Therefore, the Applicant considers the risk to have been adequately assessed.</p> <p>3. Refer to written question GS.4.2 for further responses regarding long-term implications on sediment supply.</p>
GS.4.2	Applicant	<p>NE [REP5a-004] states that proposed changes to the application will impact on how the channel evolves over an area larger than the actual footprint of the proposed work, leading to a longer-term deterioration of the channel, its flora and fauna.</p> <p>Can the Applicant explain how the long-term consequences on the channel have been assessed?</p>	<p>1. In addition to the River Coquet Fluvial Geomorphology Assessment [REP7-003], the Applicant has submitted further information to the Examination at Deadline 8 which describes the valley-side channel connectivity (7.28.1 Appendix A River Coquet Fluvial Geomorphology Assessment Valley Side Channel Connectivity [REP8-025]). The proposed works are required to stabilise the north bank, and prevent future erosion of the toe of the slopes on the north and south banks to safeguard the stability of the bridge. The Applicant's analysis has concluded that this will not result in a deterioration of the river for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contributions of sediment to the system are the location of the proposed works is low. The instability which has occurred at the proposed works location on the north bank has done so under differing climatic conditions. Other parts of the gorge currently contribute a substantially greater amount of sediment to the system, and are expected to continue to do in future. Notwithstanding the Stabilisation Works, the gorge valley sides in other locations will still be able to behave naturally, including failures and contribution of sediment to the system. Any failure of the upper slopes on the north and south banks in the vicinity of the proposed works are likely to have substantial lag times before they contribute sediment to the river. The transfer to the river of sediment by more energetic rockfalls on the south bank area unlikely to be interrupted by the proposed bank protection works due to the steepness of the slope and lack of obstruction presented by the proposed bank protection. <p>2. The Applicant has considered the long-term consequences of the proposed works on the channel by undertaking detailed 2D hydraulic modelling taking consideration of the baseline conditions and comparing with the Scheme during construction and operation phases. The fluvial geomorphological assessment considers the assessment of change with respect to a number of output</p>

Ref. No.	Question to:	Question	Applicant's Response
			parameters from the hydraulic modelling, including depth, velocity, stream power and shear stress. These outputs have allowed assessment of the likely long-term consequences on the channel and banks as a result of the proposed works as presented in the River Coquet Fluvial Geomorphology Assessment [REP7-003], which verify the findings of assessments undertaken as reported in Environmental Statement Addendum: Stabilisation Works for Change Request [REP4-063] and Environmental Statement Addendum: Southern Access Works for Change Request [REP4-064].

Table 1-4 – Landscape and Visual

Ref. No.	Question to:	Question	Applicant's Response
LV.4.1	Applicant	<p>[REP4-062] Earthworks Amendments - Non-Technical Summary - Rev 1 states that twenty-two receptors would experience beneficial visual impacts once the Earthworks Amendments are constructed, as a result of the proposed soil bunds, the slackening of slopes and raised levels of the junction 'bowls'. In addition, one residential receptor would experience beneficial visual impacts as a result of the proposed increase in height of a proposed bund, which would provide additional screening of the Scheme.</p> <p>Can the Applicant provide further reasoning and explanation on how such visual impacts were assessed in relation to the twenty-three identified receptors and why such impacts have been assessed as a benefit?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. As detailed at paragraph 5.4.1 of the Environmental Statement Addendum: Earthworks Amendments for Change Request [REP4-061], the assessment methodology used mirrors that for the Environmental Statement, as described in Section 7.5, Chapter 7: Landscape and Visual Part A of the ES [APP-044] and Section 7.5, Chapter 7: Landscape and Visual Part B of the ES [APP-045].2. In particular, visual effects were assessed through a desk-based assessment of the Earthworks Amendments. Google Street View was used in conjunction with Figure 1: Landscape Mitigation Masterplan Part A and Figure 2: Landscape Mitigation Masterplan Part B in Appendix B: Figures of Environmental Statement Addendum: Earthworks Amendments for Change Request [REP4-061] to assess visual effects for those visual receptors affected by the Earthworks Amendments.3. For the purposes of clarity, the Applicant confirms that rather than an absolute benefit, twenty-two visual receptors would experience a slight improvement in effects experienced in comparison with the Scheme as assessed in Chapter 7: Landscape and Visual Part A [APP-044] and Chapter 7: Landscape and Visual Part B [APP-045] of the ES as a result of the further slackening of permanent earthwork slopes and the additional visual screening provided by new permanent bunds. As set out in paragraphs 2.2.4 and 5.8.3 as well as Tables 5-2, 5-3 and 5-4 of [REP4-061], the slackening of the permanent earthworks slopes would improve integration with the adjacent landform and may also result in improved establishment of proposed woodland planting. Details of the change in view for Part A residential receptors, Part A Public Rights of Ways, Part A commercial and community receptors and Part B visual receptors as a result of the Earthworks Amendments are set out in Tables 5-2, 5-3, 5-4 and 5-5, respectively, of the Environmental Statement Addendum: Earthworks Amendments for Change Request [REP4-061].4. In addition, residential receptors at R87 (Hebron Hill (The Cottage)) would experience a slight improvement in visual effects during the operation of the

Ref. No.	Question to:	Question	Applicant's Response
			<p>Scheme (Part A) in comparison with the Scheme as assessed in Chapter 7: Landscape and Visual Part A [APP-044] of the ES as a result of the proposed increase in height of proposed Bund 3 due to the additional visual screening of the Scheme that the heightened bund would provide. The visual screening function would improve further following the establishment of proposed woodland planting as shown on Landscape Mitigation Masterplan Part A for Change Request [REP4-060] as required within the Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan [REP8-011 and 012].</p> <p>5. However, as confirmed at paragraphs 5.10.8 and 5.10.12 of the Environmental Statement Addendum: Earthworks Amendments for Change Request [REP4-061], these slight improvements to the visual changes resulting from the changes would not be sufficient to reduce the overall magnitude of change, or significance of effect, experienced at any of these receptor locations as assessed in Chapter 7: Landscape and Visual Part A [APP-044] and Chapter 7: Landscape and Visual Part B [APP-045] of the ES.</p> <p>6. For the purposes of clarity, it is proposed that any necessary clarifications to the Environmental Statement Addendum: Earthworks Amendments for Change Request [REP4-061 i to reflect that rather than an absolute benefit, the proposed Earthworks Amendments would result in a slight improvement in visual effects in comparison with the Scheme as assessed in the ES is performed at the next Deadline.</p>
		Can the Applicant also confirm whether the effects of the above mentioned earthworks have been assessed in relation to landscape?	<p>1. The effects of the proposed earthworks amendments were only assessed in relation to visual receptors. Effects on landscape receptors were scoped out and therefore not considered as part of Environmental Statement Addendum: Earthworks Amendments for Change Request [REP4-061]. The justification for this is set out at Paragraph 2.1.6 of Appendix C (Summary of Proposed Changes to Application) of Environmental Statement Addendum: Earthworks Amendments for Change Request [REP4-061]. This states “<i>The changes to the temporary and permanent earthworks would not change the assessment of significant effects on landscape character as presented in Chapter 7: Landscape and Visual Part A [APP-088] and Chapter 7: Landscape and Visual Part B [APP-089]. This is because the nature and form of the earthworks would support integration of the Scheme into the local landscape character.</i>”</p>
Part A			
LV.4.2	Applicant	<p>[REP4-062] Earthworks Amendments - Non-Technical Summary - Rev 1 states that proposals for Part A of the Scheme would be achieved by a series of measures, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The increase in height of soil bunds already proposed in the original ES would maximise use of soil bunds for disposal of excess site material.	<p>1. The proposed soil bunds for Part A would have a maximum gradient of 1:4, and would not exceed 4 m in height, as set out in Paragraph 2.4.6 of the Environmental Statement Addendum: Earthworks Amendments for Change Request [REP4-061].</p> <p>2. The proposed maximum height of the slopes adjacent to proposed structures for Part A would be 7.4m above the road level of an adjacent access track and 4m above the adjoining proposed ground level (earthwork opportunities unique ID M2F-</p>

Ref. No.	Question to:	Question	Applicant's Response
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maximising of fill within slackened (gentler) slopes for re-use of site material, as proposed in the original ES. Laying down additional material increasing some localised ground levels. Raising levels of junction "bowls" (level or rounded rather than dished). <p>Can the Applicant confirm the proposed maximum height of the proposed soil bunds, slopes and bowls and how the impacts have been assessed in terms of visual effects and effects on the landscape?</p>	<p>CH122-SB-SEB-1 (Appendix A of Environmental Statement Addendum: Earthworks Amendments for Change Request [REP4-061]) as shown in Earthworks Opportunities Section M2F-CH122-SB-SEB-1 in Appendix A - Cross-sections for Earthworks Amendments (document reference 7.30.1) to this document.</p> <p>3. The proposed maximum height of the proposed junction bowls for Part A would be 3.5m above the road level of the adjacent A1 northbound carriageway and 3m above the adjoining proposed ground level (earthwork opportunities unique ID M2F-CH216-NB-SBF-1 (Appendix A of Environmental Statement Addendum: Earthworks Amendments for Change Request [REP4-061]) as shown in Earthworks Opportunities Section M2F-CH216-NB-SBF-1 in Appendix A - Cross-sections for Earthworks Amendments (document reference 7.30.1) to this document.</p> <p>4. As detailed at paragraph 5.4.1 of the Environmental Statement Addendum: Earthworks Amendments for Change Request [REP4-061], the assessment methodology used mirrors that for the Environmental Statement, as described in Section 7.5, Chapter 7: Landscape and Visual Part A of the ES [APP-044]. In particular, visual effects were assessed through a desk-based assessment of the proposed amendment to temporary and permanent earthworks. Google Street View was used in conjunction with Figure 1: Landscape Mitigation Masterplan Part A in Appendix B: Figures of Environmental Statement Addendum: Earthworks Amendments for Change Request [REP4-061] to assess visual effects for those visual receptors affected by the Earthworks Amendments. Details of the change in view for Part A residential receptors, Part A Public Rights of Ways, Part A commercial and community receptors as a result of the Earthworks Amendments are set out in Tables 5-2, 5-3 and 5-4, respectively, of the Environmental Statement Addendum: Earthworks Amendments for Change Request [REP4-061].</p> <p>5. Effects on landscape receptors were scoped out and therefore not considered as part of Environmental Statement Addendum: Earthworks Amendments for Change Request [REP4-061]. The justification for this is set out at Paragraph 2.1.6 of Appendix C (Summary of Proposed Changes to Application) of Environmental Statement Addendum: Earthworks Amendments for Change Request [REP4-061]. This states "<i>The changes to the temporary and permanent earthworks would not change the assessment of significant effects on landscape character as presented in Chapter 7: Landscape and Visual Part A [APP-088] and Chapter 7: Landscape and Visual Part B [APP-089]. This is because the nature and form of the earthworks would support integration of the Scheme into the local landscape character.</i>"</p>
Part B			
LV.4.3	Applicant	[REP4-062] Earthworks Amendments - Non-Technical Summary - Rev 1 states that there would be a proposed reduction of imported materials of approximately 132,000 m ³ (of which approximately 88,000 m ³ is from Part A of the Scheme) compared to the original ES, which is anticipated to lead to approximately 110,000 m ³ to be used onsite rather than being disposed offsite. These proposals for Part B of the Scheme would be achieved by the following:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The proposed soil bunds for Part B would have a maximum gradient of 1:4, and would not exceed 4 m in height, as set out in Paragraph 2.4.6 of the Environmental Statement Addendum: Earthworks Amendments for Change Request [REP4-061]. The proposed maximum height of the proposed slopes adjacent to proposed structures for Part B would be 0m above the road level of the adjacent A1 northbound carriageway and 7.3m above the adjoining proposed ground level

Ref. No.	Question to:	Question	Applicant's Response
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creation of new soil bunds to maximise re-use of excess site material.• Maximising of slopes for re-use of excess site material.• Laying down additional material increasing some localised ground levels.• Raising levels of junction “bowls” (level or rounded rather than dished).• Creating new, temporary soil storage areas.• Utilising borrow pits to exchange and win additional material suitable for construction. <p>Can the Applicant confirm the proposed maximum height of the proposed soil bunds, slopes and bowls and how the impacts have been assessed in terms of visual effects and effects on the landscape?</p>	<p>(earthwork opportunities unique ID A2E-CH554-NB-NBD-4 (Appendix A of Environmental Statement Addendum: Earthworks Amendments for Change Request [REP4-061]) as shown in Earthworks Opportunities Section A2E-CH554-NB-NBD-4 - Side Road A in Appendix A - Cross-sections for Earthworks Amendments (document reference 7.30.1)) to this document.</p> <p>3. The proposed maximum height of the proposed junction bowls for Part B would be 7.3m above the road level of an adjacent access road and 3.4m above the adjoining proposed ground level (earthwork opportunities unique ID A2E-CH589-NB-SBF-1 (Appendix A of Environmental Statement Addendum: Earthworks Amendments for Change Request [REP4-061]) as shown in Earthworks Opportunities Section A2E-CH589-NB-SBF-1 in Appendix A - Cross-sections for Earthworks Amendments (document reference 7.30.1) to this document.</p> <p>4. As detailed at paragraph 5.4.1 of the Environmental Statement Addendum: Earthworks Amendments for Change Request [REP4-061], the assessment methodology used mirrors that for the Environmental Statement, as described in Section 7.5, Chapter 7: Landscape and Visual Part B of the ES [APP-045]. In particular, visual effects were assessed through a desk-based assessment of the proposed amendment to temporary and permanent earthworks. Google Street View was used in conjunction with Figure 2: Landscape Mitigation Masterplan Part B in Appendix B: Figures of Environmental Statement Addendum: Earthworks Amendments for Change Request [REP4-061] to assess visual effects for those visual receptors affected by the Earthworks Amendments. Details of the change in view for Part B visual receptors as a result of the Earthworks Amendments are set out in Table 5-5 of the Environmental Statement Addendum: Earthworks Amendments for Change Request [REP4-061].</p> <p>5. Effects on landscape receptors were scoped out and therefore not considered as part of Environmental Statement Addendum: Earthworks Amendments for Change Request [REP4-061]. The justification for this is set out at Paragraph 2.1.6 of Appendix C (Summary of Proposed Changes to Application) of Environmental Statement Addendum: Earthworks Amendments for Change Request [REP4-061]. This states “<i>The changes to the temporary and permanent earthworks would not change the assessment of significant effects on landscape character as presented in Chapter 7: Landscape and Visual Part A [APP-088] and Chapter 7: Landscape and Visual Part B [APP-089]. This is because the nature and form of the earthworks would support integration of the Scheme into the local landscape character.</i>”</p>

Table 1-5 – Water Environment

Ref. No.	Question to:	Question	Applicant's Response
WE.4.1	EA	<p>The EA [REP5-044] requested that the Flood Risk Assessment should be updated to include the risk implications of the proposed temporary bridge across the River Coquet. The applicant has submitted a Flood Risk Assessment Addendum - River Coquet - Rev 1 [REP7-015] which seeks to address this point in light of the proposed changes and recent geotechnical investigations.</p> <p>Could the EA confirm if it is satisfied with the information submitted and if there are any remaining concerns regarding the effects of the proposed changes on flooding?</p>	<p>1. The Applicant confirms that an updated Flood Risk Assessment was submitted at Deadline 7 [REP7-015].</p>
WE.4.2	EA NE	<p>The EA [REP5-044] and NE [REP5a-004] have expressed concerns regarding the effect of the change request for stabilisation work and southern access works on to the River Coquet, particularly in relation to its geomorphology. Consequently, the EA has requested that the River Coquet Geomorphology Modelling Assessment be updated. The Applicant has submitted the River Coquet Fluvial Geomorphology Assessment [REP07-003] in order to address these concerns.</p> <p>Can the EA and NE please confirm if they are satisfied with the information submitted and if there are any remaining concerns in relation to the effects of the change request for stabilisation work and southern access works on the River Coquet?</p>	<p>1. In addition to the River Coquet Fluvial Geomorphology Assessment [REP7-003] the Applicant has submitted further information to describe the valley-side channel connectivity at Deadline 8 in the form of 7.28.1 Appendix A River Coquet Fluvial Geomorphology Assessment Valley Side Channel Connectivity [REP8-025]. This sets out the Applicant's analysis and conclusion that the proposed works will not result in a deterioration of the river. This document sets out that contributions of sediment to the river in the location of the proposed works is low, other parts of the gorge contribute significantly more amounts of sediment and would be expected to continue to do in the future. Notwithstanding the proposed works, the gorge valley sides in other locations would still be able to behave naturally, including failures, and contribute sediment to the river.</p>
WE.4.3	EA	<p>The EA [REP5-044] has stated that a plan identifying the borrow pits which require dewatering and daily quantity and duration/ restoration proposals has been asked to be submitted as part of the DCO submission. In addition, it has also stated that a dewatering assessment should consider impacts to unknown licensed and private water supplies and groundwater dependent designation such as peat bogs. Subsequently, the Applicant has submitted a Borrow Pit Dewatering Assessment [REP7-004] in order to address the EA's concerns.</p> <p>Can the EA confirm if it is satisfied with the information submitted and if there are any remaining concerns regarding the borrow pit dewatering assessment and its impacts?</p>	<p>1. A Borrow Pit Dewatering Plan was submitted at Deadline 5 [REP5-040] and a Borrow Pit Dewatering Assessment at Deadline 7 [REP7-004]. It is noted that the EA in their submissions on the Dewatering Assessment have requested that the CEMP include reference to groundwater monitoring. Groundwater level monitoring requirements for baseline information at the borrow pit locations have been provided in in Table 5-1 of the Dewatering Assessment. These are secured by Commitment EA-W1 of Table 3-4 of the Outline CEMP [REP8-011 and 012].</p>
WE.4.4	EA	<p>The EA [REP5-044] asked for confirmation of the type of lining to be utilised in Borrow Pit 4, as it is proposed to be used as a detention basin. The EA also raised concerns regarding the methodology used in order to backfill Borrow Pits 1 and 2 and also requested further information regarding the proposed long-term use of Borrow Pits 3 and 4. the Applicant, in [REP6-040], has addressed this matter.</p> <p>Can the EA confirm it is satisfied that its concerns have been addressed?</p>	<p>1. No response required.</p>
WE.4.5	Applicant	<p>The EA [REP5-044] and NE [REP5a-004] have both raised concerns regarding the proposed scour protection (rock armouring) associated with the change request for Stabilisation Works and Southern Access Works. The proposed scour</p>	<p>1. The Applicant acknowledges that as a HPI and habitat of a SSSI, compensation should be provided for the loss of riverbank habitat to the extent appropriate having regard to the impacts of the Scheme. The Applicant has explored</p>

Ref. No.	Question to:	Question	Applicant's Response
		<p>protection would lead to the permanent loss of bankside habitat from with the SSSI.</p> <p>How does the Applicant propose to address the adverse effects of the rock armouring, particularly in relation to the loss of the riparian zone?</p>	<p>opportunities for compensation for the loss of riverbank habitat through discussion with landowners. However, the Applicant has agreed with the EA and NE that it is not practical for the Applicant to provide compensatory habitat on the River Coquet. Accordingly, the Applicant is in discussions with the Environment Agency to fund delivery of off-site mitigation by the Environment Agency.</p>

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