

Secretary of State
Department for Transport
Great Minister House
33 Horseferry Road
London
SW1P 4DR

Mr and Mrs Cathcart

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Your ref: PINS ref TR010060

Our ref: Interested Party number 20033024

Letter served via email

Dear Sir

TR010060 A12 Chelmsford to A120 Widening Scheme – Gas Pipeline Diversion

Comments on the Applicant's response dated 9 November 2023 to item 2 of the Secretary of State's consultation letter dated 27 October 2023 regarding works to be carried out within the area subject to Tree Preservation Order (TPO) 07/22

The northern part of our land, known as [REDACTED] forms the core and the major part of the area protected by TPO 07/22, as it does also of the Blue Mills Local Wildlife Site. Our interest in this matter is our wish to continue to safeguard our Nature Reserve's nationally important environmental assets for the future, in particular its veteran, transitional veteran, category A and B trees, and its category A woodland.

We wish to state our support for the proposed construction method detailed in the Applicant's response, namely tunnelling, and tunnelling at a depth sufficient to clear tree roots - a method, importantly, which the Applicant states he anticipates will avoid the removal of any trees within TPO 07/22.

We note, however, that the Applicant reserves the right to remove vegetation 'if the need arises'. Given that Cadent has already carried out a satisfactory on-site feasibility study with its technical design officer, environmental officer and tunnelling specialist (on 22nd March 2023, as detailed in our REP5-048 of 10 May 2023) and is currently drawing up the profile plans for the tunnel under this area, under what circumstances does the Applicant anticipate the need arising to remove vegetation?

Given the presumed unlikely advent of such a circumstance, we question whether it is reasonable for the Applicant to be allowed to obtain powers under Compulsory Purchase which would permit a

highly damaging and irreversible deviation from the environmental safeguarding objectives agreed during the consultation process. We request that construction access be restricted to *below ground only*, solely for the purposes of tunnelling, similar to the adjoining section of pipeline as it passes under the River Blackwater.

We also ask the Applicant to clarify what procedures will be in place to prevent any access of heavy construction machinery to the area, as this would damage the soil structure and disturb the wildlife, notably the otter and nesting red kites.

Finally, we wish to ask the Applicant whether, and if so, on what anticipated date, the route and construction drawings for the pipeline through the TPO area are to be published on the consultation website, as this information has not been made available to the landowners at any time.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Cathcart MA(Cantab)
Anne Cathcart-Taylor BA(Hons), FCA

1 December 2023