The Great Grid Upgrade

Eastern Green Link 5 (EGL 5)

Preliminary Environmental Information Report

Volume 2
Part 2
Appendix 10.C Scoping Opinion Response Summary

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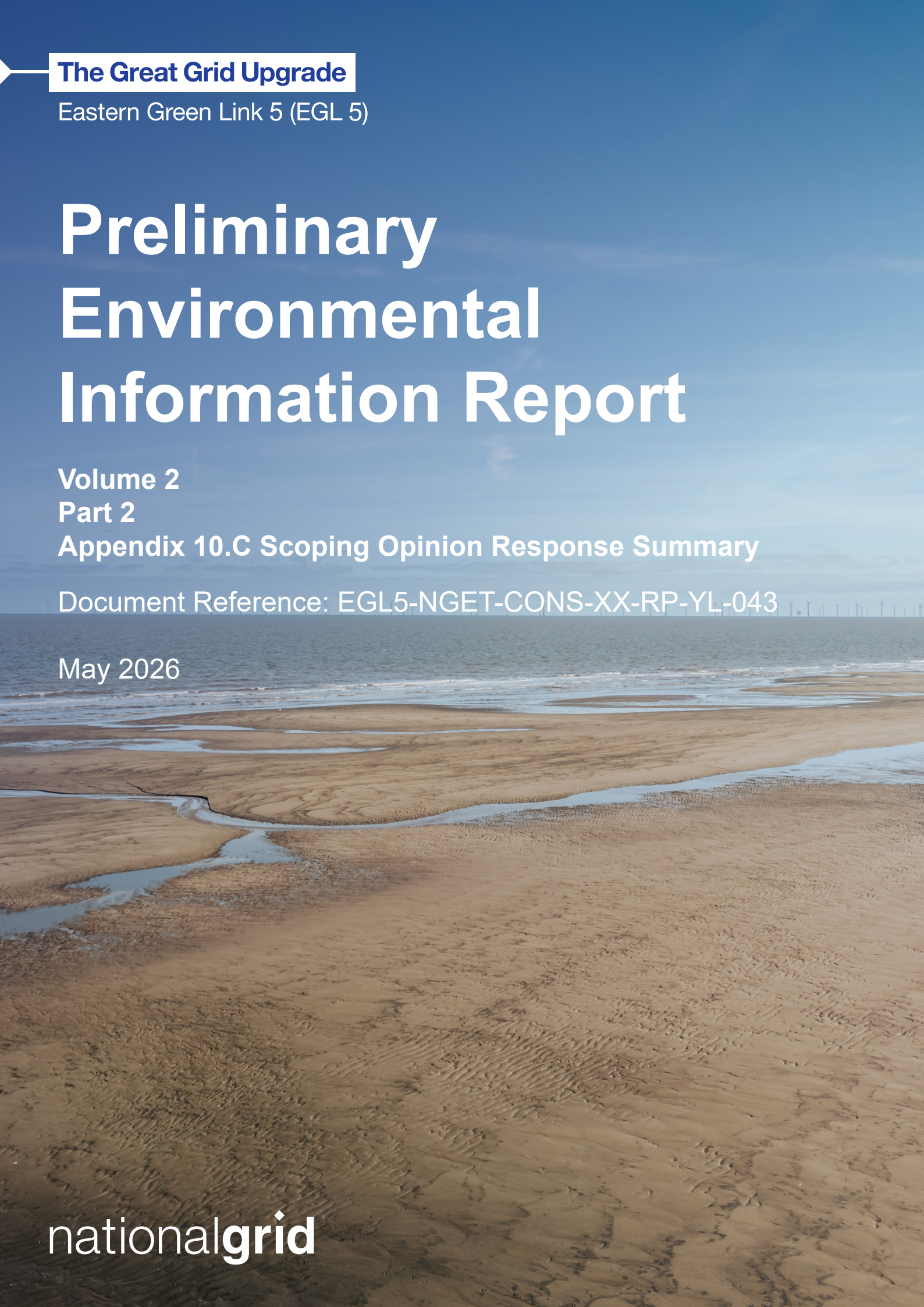

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10.C Scoping Opinion Response Summary

10.C.1 Introduction

10.C.1.1 This Appendix accompanies **Volume 1, Part 4, Chapter 10: Geology and Hydrogeology** and summarises the EIA scoping opinion responses discussed in this Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR).

Table 10.C-1 Summary of EIA scoping opinion responses for geology and hydrogeology

Consultee	Consideration	How this has been addressed in the PEIR
Planning Inspectorate	Impacts from Land Instability / Geohazards (ID No. 3.5.1) • Any potential geohazards and land instability are proposed to be managed through design in line with relevant standards and informed by ground investigations. The Inspectorate agrees that this matter can be scoped out of further assessment on this basis.	No further actions as it is scoped out of the assessment.
Planning Inspectorate	Impacts from contaminants from construction plant use and refuelling and handling of construction materials and wastes (ID No. 3.5.2) • The EGL 5 Scoping Report (Ref 10.1) identifies controls set out in paragraph 10.5.2 that are proposed to manage the storage and handling of construction materials and excavations including an emergency spill response plan and implementation of site drainage. • On the basis that these measures would be implemented, and that pollution during other activities are proposed to be scoped in, the Inspectorate is in agreement that this matter can be scoped out of the ES. • The ES should describe the mitigation measures relied upon to avoid significant effects and explain how delivery of these measures would be secured.	Mitigation measures are outlined within Section 10.5 and 10.9 to avoid significant effects from contamination during construction works.
Planning Inspectorate	Impacts from disturbance of unforeseen contamination during earthwork operations, excavations and soil stripping (ID No.3.5.3) • The EGL 5 Scoping Report (Ref 10.1) proposes a watching brief in section 10.5 to observe for unforeseen contamination and minimise risk and ensure any suspected contamination would be handled and stored appropriately. The Inspectorate agrees that this matter can be scoped out of further assessment on this basis.	Mitigation measures are outlined within Section 10.5 and 10.9 to avoid significant effects from contamination during construction works.

Consultee	Consideration	How this has been addressed in the PEIR
	• The ES should describe the mitigation measures relied upon to avoid significant effects and explain how delivery of these measures would be secured.	
Planning Inspectorate	Impacts from storage of construction materials and wastes leading to the generation of potentially contaminated runoff (ID No. 3.5.4) • The EGL 5 Scoping Report (Ref 10.1) identifies controls set out in paragraph 10.5.2 that are proposed to manage the storage and handling of construction materials and excavations including an emergency spill response plan and implementation of site drainage. • On the basis that these measures would be implemented, and that pollution during other activities are proposed to be scoped in, the Inspectorate is in agreement that this matter can be scoped out of further assessment. • The ES should describe the mitigation measures relied upon to avoid significant effects and explain how delivery of these measures would be secured.	Mitigation measures are outlined within Section 10.5 and 10.9 to avoid significant effects from contamination during construction works.
Planning Inspectorate	Impacts from build-up of radon gas (ID No. 3.5.5) • The Inspectorate agrees that as no structures are proposed within the western part of section 5 which is identified as a 1-3% risk in Table 10-5, this matter may be scoped out of further assessment.	No further actions are required as this aspect is scoped out of the assessment.
Planning Inspectorate	Accidental spills / pollution at the converter station (ID No. 3.5.6) • The Inspectorate agrees that on the basis the study area for temporary works would be returned to the original land use, and where permanent infrastructure is present, these would not require significant fuel or oil storage, this matter can be scoped out of further assessment.	No further actions are required as this aspect is scoped out of the assessment.

Consultee	Consideration	How this has been addressed in the PEIR
Planning Inspectorate	Runoff from impermeable surfaces (ID No. 3.5.7) • The EGL 5 Scoping Report (Ref 10.1) details that a drainage strategy would be in place which would incorporate attenuation, and where required treatment prior to discharge. However, there is no indication of how runoff would be managed. • In the absence of information such as evidence demonstrating clear agreement with relevant statutory bodies, the Inspectorate is not in a position to agree to scope these matters from the assessment. • Accordingly, the ES should include an assessment of these matters or the information referred to demonstrating agreement with the relevant consultation bodies and the absence of a LSE (likely significant effect).	See Volume 1, Part 2, Chapter 9: Water Environment for discussion on drainage.
Planning Inspectorate	Impacts from aggressive ground conditions being present causing the degradation of subsurface structures (ID No. 3.5.8): • The EGL 5 Scoping Report (Ref 10.1) proposes that appropriate chemical testing of soils will inform the correct concrete classification. This would allow the applicant to mitigate against any potential risks. • The Inspectorate agrees that on this basis, this matter can be scoped out of further assessment. • However, the ES should describe the mitigation measures relied upon to avoid significant effects and explain how delivery of these measures would be secured.	Although this matter is scoped out of this assessment mitigation measures are outlined within report Section 10.5 and 10.9 to avoid significant effects from contamination during construction works.
Planning Inspectorate	Groundwater Quality (ID No. 3.5.9) • The EGL 5 Scoping Report (Ref 10.1) does not appear to make specific reference to the effects of any changes to groundwater	The thermal effects from the cables on groundwater resources will be addressed within the ES. Consultation on the matter will be undertaken to seek agreement on approach with the Environment Agency as the Regulator.

Consultee	Consideration	How this has been addressed in the PEIR
	physical or chemical properties as a result of thermal effects from the cables during operation. • The Inspectorate considers that this should be scoped into the assessment of groundwater quality.	
Planning Inspectorate	Impacts from Bentonite Breakout (ID No. 3.5.10) • Scoping Report Table 10-10 does not include potential impacts from bentonite breakout. • The ES should assess potential likely significant effects on groundwater receptors from potential bentonite breakout.	The Planning Inspectorate's comment is noted and addressed within the PEIR. The potential impacts from drilling fluid breakout will also be addressed in the ES. See also Volume 1, Part 2, Chapter 9: Water Environment for discussion of watercourse trenchless crossings.
Planning Inspectorate.	Source Protection Zones (SPZs) (ID No. 3.5.11) • SPZs are not included in the list of potential sensitive hydrogeological receptors in paragraph 10.6.5 or in Table 10-10 of the EGL 5 Scoping Report (Ref 10.1). • For clarity, the ES should assess potential significant effects to source protection zones where they are likely to occur.	This has been addressed in the PEIR and will be carried forward into the ES. The PEIR hydrogeology baseline section discusses that a SPZ relates to the protection area(s) of one or more specific abstraction locations (which are assessed as part of the EIA).
Planning Inspectorate.	Receptor Sensitivity Omissions (ID No. 3.5.12) • Table 10-11 of the EGL 5 Scoping Report (Ref 10.1) explains how receptor sensitivity has been applied to identified receptors in line with guidance. • Figure 10-4 of the EGL 5 Scoping Report (Ref 10.1) identifies both SPZ2 and SPZ3 as located within the red line boundary however, it is not explained how receptor sensitivity would be applied to these receptors in Table 10-11 of the EGL 5 Scoping Report (Ref 10.1). • The ES should explain how receptor sensitivity is determined for SPZ2 and SPZ3 in line with relevant guidance.	The receptor sensitivity and its application is addressed within the PEIR and will be carried forward into ES.

Consultee	Consideration	How this has been addressed in the PEIR
Environment Agency.	Low Risk Chemical Usage • There is the potential use of some chemicals onsite which do not meet the categorisation of low risk. • Confirm all chemicals are categorised as posing “little or no risk” or give details of strict controls which will be used for any that fall outside of this description.	Mitigation measures are outlined within Section 10.5 and 10.9 to avoid significant effects from contamination during construction works. These measures are presented within the Construction Code of Practice (CoCP).
Environment Agency.	Decommissioning of Cables and Converter Stations • Potential short-term effects to hydrogeology are stated but not fully detailed or considered and no mitigation proposed. Potentially unacceptable risks to Hydrogeology from cables left in situ. • Provide outline procedures for decommissioning, based on current designs and guidance. This should include risks to groundwater and land, based on both cables being left in situ indefinitely, and cables being removed.	The Planning Inspectorate’s comment is noted. Short term effects to hydrogeology during decommissioning has been addressed in this PEIR. Consultation on the matter will be undertaken to seek agreement on approach with the Environment Agency as the Regulator.
Environment Agency.	Heat Emissions from Cables • Potential impacts to controlled waters and other receptors due to heat emissions from onshore buried cables. • Undertake a heat assessment for onshore cables, such as that outlined in Section 4.4.52 of the EGL 5 Scoping Report (Ref 10.1) for offshore works. We request that this should be Scoped in to this chapter.	Heat emissions from cables are to be assessed within the ES. Future work for thermal impacts in relation to groundwater is discussed in the PEIR. Consultation on the approach will be undertaken with the Environment Agency.
Environment Agency.	Groundwater as a receptor for drilling fluid breakout • Risks to groundwater may not be appropriately considered. • Ensure groundwater, aquifers, abstractions and Source Protection Zones are all considered in the drilling fluid breakout plan.	The Planning Inspectorate’s comment is noted and risks to groundwater as a result of drilling fluid breakout are discussed within the PEIR and will be assessed in the ES.

Consultee	Consideration	How this has been addressed in the PEIR
		A Drilling Fluid Management Plan will be developed, as part of the CEMP, to outline prevention, monitoring and contingency measures, and will be implemented during the construction phase.
Environment Agency.	SPZ's as a Receptor • Specific risks to source protection zones may not be adequately considered. • Ensure source protection zones are always considered as a hydrogeological receptor in their own right, in addition to those listed.	The Planning Inspectorate's comment is noted and risks to source protection zones have been discussed within the PEIR and will be assessed in the ES.
Environment Agency.	Defining Sensitivity of Receptors • Some receptors are only partially defined. Sensitive receptors might be overlooked if sensitivity is not defined. • Ensure all receptors, and all subdivisions thereof, are included in any future classification tables, and any risk assessments completed using these. • SPZ2 and SPZ3 are not included in sensitivity ranking. As these are in catchments which ultimately could reach a potable abstraction, we suggest that the description for "High" might be most appropriate. • Agricultural land use (including for food) is not given a Geology sensitivity. A large part of the study area is agricultural, so this should be considered. • We note that water used for agriculture is Medium Hydrogeological sensitivity. • We disagree with inclusion of "WFD Poor chemical status" in the definition of a Low sensitivity Hydrogeological receptor.	Agricultural land use and its production is not considered to be a geological receptor (and therefore no sensitivity has been assigned on that basis), agricultural land is covered within Volume 1, Part 1, Chapter 11: Agriculture and Soils. Hydrogeological sensitivity rankings are shown within the PEIR.

Consultee	Consideration	How this has been addressed in the PEIR
	• A WFD groundwater body with Poor status is not necessarily less sensitive than one with a Good status. This should not be used to justify a lower significance of impact. Furthermore, this does not preclude the fact the whole study area is underlain by Principal aquifer, which is defined as High sensitivity.	
Environment Agency.	Chalk Streams • The applicant has not specifically considered Chalk streams in this report. Potential unacceptable risks to Chalk streams if these are not considered, noted to be present west of Alford. • Ensure Chalk streams are included in further assessments. Request that this is scoped in.	Chalk streams are scoped in and are included within the EIA. Chalk Streams are discussed within the PEIR and will be assessed within the ES.
Environment Agency.	Superficial Geology Mapping • The superficial geology map does not match our records, the map identified in main report, BGS GeoIndex, or the descriptions in Table 10-6. • Update the figure in future reports to match descriptions and other available data or provide a reference and justification for the data presented.	Higher resolution BGS mapping data has been obtained for the PEIR and is included which presents all identified units across the English Onshore Scheme. All units identified by the BGS are reported on within this PEIR chapter within its respective route section.
Environment Agency.	Bedrock Geology Mapping • The bedrock geology does not show band of Carstone Formation (Sandstone) in the west of the site. Presence of sandstone may require specific hydrogeological and engineering considerations. • Ensure the full geological setting is included in future illustrations.	Higher resolution BGS mapping data has been obtained for the PEIR and is included which presents all identified units across the English Onshore Scheme (including the Carstone Formation). All units identified by the BGS are reported on within this PEIR chapter within its respective route section.

Consultee	Consideration	How this has been addressed in the PEIR
Environment Agency.	Groundwater Features Mapping • This figure does not appear to show all licenced groundwater abstractions we have in our records. • Potential risk to private and public potable abstraction boreholes if their locations are not identified and appropriate mitigation put in place. • We recommend the applicant requests this information and updates the figure accordingly for all subsequent reports and assessments.	An updated dataset highlighting known groundwater abstraction locations has been used for groundwater feature mapping within the PEIR. This includes the data set provided from the Groundsure Report (issued 24th October 2025) and private water supply details provided by the local authority. Therefore, locations of potential risks to private and potable abstraction boreholes will be assessed with the updated data set. Further data request to the Environment Agency for licensed abstraction will be made prior to the ES.
Environment Agency.	Table 10-6- Geology Descriptions • The Hunstanton Formation (Chalk) is present in this area but has not been included in the table. • It would be beneficial in subsequent reports to include a review of historical borehole records, to provide indicative thicknesses of superficial soils across the study area.	Following refinement of the cable route, the Hunstanton Formation no longer falls within the proposed cable route and therefore will not be considered further. A review of historical borehole records across the route has been conducted and the indicative thickness of these formations have been provided within this PEIR (Section 10.4. Overall Baseline).
Environment Agency.	Groundwater within the Chalk • Groundwater in the Chalk aquifer can be artesian or sub-artesian depending on the time of the year. • For this reason, future excavation of the overlying deposits or HDD crossing needs to be carefully considered. • We would welcome consultation on any hydrogeological risk assessment (HyRA) that is completed in relation to this.	A review of the historical artesian wells in the study area has taken place within the PEIR. The possibility of artesian conditions will be further assessed within the ES. Consultation about the hydrogeological risk assessment will be made with the Environment Agency.

Consultee	Consideration	How this has been addressed in the PEIR
Environment Agency.	Table 10-10- Scoping Summary • We generally agree with the matters scoped in and out, in consideration of groundwater and land contamination matters, albeit taking consideration of our other comments herein. • This agreement is subject to us approving all necessary construction-related controls in the CEMP and the discovery strategy for previously unidentified contamination. Further consultation is expected, albeit this can be outside the PEIR and ES. • The applicant states that operational runoff from impermeable surfaces "would be sustainably attenuated (and if required treated) prior to discharge to the receiving water environment". We will need to see a detailed drainage strategy with a procedure for managing runoff, especially for any releases to ground and groundwater. Conditions for attenuation and treatment, and the mechanism for this being actioned, should be included. • We agree with proposal for a geo-environmental desk study and subsequent ground investigation (Section 10.7.2-10.7.5) to assess potential contamination aspects. As part of this, we recommend the applicant contacts the local authority to ascertain if there are any contaminated land records.	Information (including contaminated land reports) have been requested from the local authority and the Environment Agency. A Groundsure report has been utilised for the authoring of this PEIR. The information is included (where relevant) within Section 10.4. Operational runoff matters are discussed in Volume 1, Part 2, Chapter 9: Water Environment.
Environment Agency.	Provision of Water Supplies / Sources • Consumptive uses of water are described in the EGL 5 Scoping Report (Ref 10.1), however the sources of supply have not been evaluated in order to meet these demands, predominantly during the construction phase of the project. • The EGL 5 Scoping Report (Ref 10.1) identifies receptors in its evaluation of potential water resources and groundwater impacts which relate to water use. It does not however, include the effect of	Consumptive uses of water for construction phase wheel washes and supply for trenchless methods are discussed in Volume 1, Part 2, Chapter 9: Water Environment. The potential for groundwater dewatering of open cut trenches and during construction of trenchless crossings is outlined and assessed in the PEIR.

Consultee	Consideration	How this has been addressed in the PEIR
	water company limitations, water availability in the catchment or appraise sources of supply for restrictions or opportunities on the project itself. • Groundwater abstraction from Chalk is closed in this catchment and superficial aquifers follow the same availability status as surface water. Surface water availability status is good in this area but subject to drainage board advice in what is a level dependent environment. This may pose restrictions which prevent access to water in prolonged dry weather and drought, or even at most peak summer months. • Suggested course of action is an options appraisal of alternative sources of supply is conducted as part of the pre application stage of planning and could be incorporated into the Water Environment chapter.	
East Lindsey District Council (ELDC).	Contaminated Land Risk Assessment • Where construction activities are proposed at locations identified being of moderate or high contamination potential, we would expect that suitable and sufficient site-specific risk assessment was undertaken to ensure a safe development, following the principles of investigation as set out in the Environment Agency guidance 'Land contamination risk management (LCRM)'. • Proposals for risk assessment, investigation, and remediation (or not) should be agreed in advance with the Environmental Protection Team at ELDC.	This is to be established at the ES stage, once further information such as ground investigation data is available to be assessed. The scope of these ground investigations will be agreed with East Lindsey District Council, and the subsequent reporting be included within the ES.

Consultee	Consideration	How this has been addressed in the PEIR
Alford Town Council.	Scoping request 10.1 • Assess impacts on hedgerows, habitats, springs, Chalk streams, borehole water supplies and soils.	Chalk streams and abstraction boreholes form part of the assessment in the PEIR.
Alford Town Council.	Scoping request 10.2 – flood risk & drainage • Provide site-specific FRA and surface-water design.	Flood risk matters are discussed in Volume 1, Part 2, Chapter 9.
Alford Town Council.	Scoping request 10.3 • Assess climate change and sea level rise impacts, ensuring infrastructure resilience to 2050+.	The future baseline has been discussed in the PEIR. Further assessment will take place as part of the ES.
Alford Town Council.	Scoping request 10.4 – Groundwater, Topography and Construction Feasibility (Alford and surrounding areas, especially Alford Road.) • When residential development was constructed on Alford Road, Bilsby, there were well-documented issues relating to topography and the water table, which complicated construction and required additional mitigation. This demonstrates the sensitivity of local ground conditions and the potential for adverse impacts if major infrastructure is introduced without adequate investigation. • The ES must therefore: Undertake a site-specific hydrogeological assessment of the Bilsby / Alford area, including water table depth, seasonal variability, and interaction with surface drainage systems. Consider historic construction issues in the area as case evidence of ground instability or flood risk. Assess how heavy civil engineering works (pylon bases, trenching, substations, sealing end compounds) could interact with shallow groundwater, causing localised flooding, subsidence, or contamination. Model potential cumulative effects of climate change and sea-level rise on already high-water tables in the Alford–Bilsby corridor. Identify mitigation (e.g., raised foundations, sealed cable ducts, dewatering controls, and robust Sustainable	Within the PEIR, elevation, topography and groundwater conditions, across the different reporting sections of the study area, have been presented. Further assessment prior to the ES will be completed to assess the potential for groundwater flooding and shallow groundwater levels, including reference to temporal variation where data is available. At the time of writing specific information about the stated Alford–Bilsby corridor high-water tables has not been found and the Project would welcome further information.

Consultee	Consideration	How this has been addressed in the PEIR
	Drainage Systems in the Urban areas. Demonstrate how lessons learned from past construction challenges (such as the Bilsby Road housing development) have been factored into the engineering and environmental design of the project. • Rationale: Without clear groundwater and topography risk assessment, there is ahigh likelihood that the project could replicate or worsen historic construction problems in Alford, leading to flooding, structural instability, or environmental damage.	
Alford Town Council.	Hydrogeology & construction feasibility • Provide a site-specific hydrogeological model (water-table depth / seasonality; permeability; preferential pathways) for the Miles Cross Hill–Rigsby corridor. Assess interactions of pylon foundations, trenching, hauled routes, compounds, and any substation / sealing-end platforms with shallow groundwater (dewatering need, settlement, uplift, turbidity plumes).	A preliminary hydrogeological conceptual model has been presented in the PEIR. This will be developed further for the ES, as necessary, and will include, where available, ground investigation data, groundwater level information and additional published information.
Alford Town Council.	Risk pathways & receptors • Identify contamination pathways (fuel storage, concrete washout, bentonite / slurry, fine sediments, oils) to SPZs and potable assets; include worst-case rainfall and HGV incident scenarios. • Consider historic difficulties with high water-table / topography locally (e.g., around Bilsby Road) as case evidence of ground sensitivity.	SPZs and the associated potable groundwater assets have been discussed in the PEIR, and a preliminary assessment of risks has been made. The assessment will be expanded in the ES. At the time of writing specific information about the stated Alford–Bilsby corridor high-water tables has not been found and the Project would welcome further information.

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