



**nationalgrid**

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# **UK Onshore Scheme**

**Environmental Statement**

**Volume 4 Document ES-4-A.04**

**Appendix 4.1**

**Scoping Opinions**

**VKL-08-39-G500-009**

**August 2017**



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# Boston Borough Council Scoping Opinion



# B O S T O N

## BOROUGH COUNCIL

Municipal Buildings, West Street, Boston, Lincolnshire, PE21 8QR

31 August 2016

Tel: 01205 314345

Ms L Wells,  
Consents Officer,  
Viking Link Interconnector,  
National Grid plc,  
1-3 Strand,  
LONDON  
WC2N 5EH

Our Ref: PLE/PRE/16/0001  
E-mail: paul.edwards@boston.gov.uk

Dear Ms Wells,

### **Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011**

### **Request for Scoping Opinion under Regulation 13 in respect of The Viking Link Interconnector Project**

I write further to your letter and subsequent Scoping Report of the 1 August 2016 concerning the above.

In accordance with the Regulations I can advise you that I have consulted the following bodies:

The Applicants  
The Marine Management Organisation  
Natural England  
The Environment Agency  
Heritage Lincolnshire (this Council's archaeology advisors)  
Lincolnshire County Council (as highway authority, as strategic planning authority and as LLFA)  
The Council's Environmental Health Officer  
Anderson & Glen (this Council's heritage advisors)

I have received replies from The Environment Agency, Lincolnshire County Council as local highway and LLF authority, and from Natural England. I can confirm that these have been incorporated into this Scoping response.



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This Council's comments are set out below with particular reference to numbered paragraphs in The Scoping Report (VKL-08-06-J500-001 Revision 1.0 dated August 2016), as necessary.

Overall, in view of the notification dated 2 August 2016 in respect of the Landfall Point and Converter Station sites, my letters to you of 24 May and 11 August 2016 may not now appear fully relevant in respect of those references that are now in the Scoping Report to further environmental and engineering surveys – in respect of the Converter Station - will not be repeated here. Also, I feel that some matters may not have 'significant environmental effects' sufficient to need to be addressed in the ES, but given now the 2 August announcement, this Council can agree the Scoping EIA Table 4.2.

On the Approach to Consenting, we are in agreement based upon your mail of 16 August 2016, Paras 2.3.2, 3.1.2 and 4.7.1 refer.

Para 2.3.10. The submission will need to identify the nature and location of all temporary construction compounds, 'temporary construction facilities'.

Para 2.3.13. The fourth bullet refers to cooling fans to the transformers. This should be addressed specifically in the current activity in respect of Noise and Vibration survey and assessment.

Para 3.2.9. Agreed.

Para 3.3.12. My comments in my letter of 24 May concerning relevant development plan policies remain valid.

Para 4.2.4. Agreed.

Chapters 5, 6 and 7. I can see nothing in these chapters which refers to the need for survey, quantifying, gaining an understanding of and detailing the necessary mitigation for the likelihood of effects upon land drainage regimes particularly where there may be no records of existing drainage measures and tile drains. Although I appreciate that there will need to be liaison with individual landowners at some stage on a field by field basis, the ES should positively acknowledge this as the potential to have a significant environmental effect and detail how these matters will be identified and mitigated.

There are references throughout to open cut watercourse crossings and the Environment Agency has advised that this method would not be permitted for crossing Main Rivers under the Agency's jurisdiction.

Natural England advises that in section 5.2.6, the full range of opportunities for mitigation of groundwater contamination are detailed in relation to biological sites too.

Para 5.3.1. The Environment Agency requests that groundwater quantity should be included as a sensitive receptor. It is also noted that abstractions should include private water supplies in addition to licensed abstractions (mentioned in Chapter 6 but not Chapter 5).

Para 6.2.3. On sources of information, MAGIC map should be added to this list to ensure all possible sites are identified – <http://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx>

Para 6.2.15. The Agency advises:

*“Table 6.1 – regarding the scheme sensitivity/ value criteria, there are in excess of 20,000 residential properties in the tidal flood cell alone, and any impact magnitude criteria should account for the major alteration of a large dune system, which would be complex to restore to its baseline condition, given its mostly natural formation, and could be considered fundamentally changed. These risks will steer the appropriate mitigation of trenchless crossings, in addition to any other measures that are identified as necessary, such as bunding the drive pits etc.*

*We are pleased to note that the crossing of the sea defences is currently anticipated to be via horizontal directional drilling (HDD) (paragraph 2.3.5). We would welcome further discussions on the methodology and temporary works to facilitate the cable installation once the detail has been determined. We note the Transition Joint Pits will be buried. The reception pits required to facilitate the HDD techniques will need to be bunded to a height equivalent to the adjacent defences. There may be issues with tidal inundation during construction, (which has not been mentioned in this Scoping Report), so this should be taken into consideration.”*

Para 6.3.6. The identified potential impacts from the construction of the scheme should set out the risks associated with crossing the large tidal defences at the landfall and other potential impacts crossing large embanked watercourses.

The Environmental Impact Assessment should include information on the decommissioning elements; as to whether the ducts will remain in situ or be removed once the pipeline is no longer required. The ducting will need to be buried sufficiently deep under the sea defences so that if there is a need to install piling along this frontage in the future there will be scope to do so.

Para 6.4.3. Mitigation measures should be expanded to include groundwater risks as well as surface water.

Para 6.5.2. In terms of collecting information for a Water Framework Directive Assessment, the Environment Agency advises that:

*“We agree with the potential impacts included in paragraph 6.5.2, the assessment methodology and the provision of further information as outlined in 6.5.3. We would suggest that receptors should be identified at the baseline data collection stage and should include the water bodies affected by the underground cable corridor and the converter station – we note that this report focusses on the scope for the EIA, but it would be beneficial to collect information needed to carry out a Water Framework Directive (WFD) Assessment at the same time. The additional baseline information that would be required for the WFD Assessment includes information on WFD water body status, objectives and planned measures.”*

Chapter 7. Natural England comment that their detailed comments on Agriculture and Soils were provided in their response (to Gill Shaw) dated 12 August 2016 and these comments should be fully taken account of in the final chapter.

Chapter 8. The conservation objectives held by Natural England are a key source of information for all SSSI's -<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/6490068894089216>. Natural England does not hold data on local species distributions so the appropriate local biological and geological record centres should be consulted in addition to local groups such as the Wild Life Trust.

Para 8.6. Natural England standing advice on planning applications should be considered.

Chapter 9. This Council has nothing to say on the Intertidal Zone Chapter but the Environment Agency has commented:

***“Chapter 9 Intertidal Zone***

*The report identifies relevant receptors and potential impacts to coastal processes and intertidal ecology. We hold data on intertidal habitats and benthic communities in the area of the proposed landfall sites, which the Applicant is aware of. The proposed approach to assessment includes carrying out a Phase 1 intertidal ecology survey. If the intertidal habitats in the proposed landfall site are similar to the habitats that have been previously monitored for the Lincshore assessment, the proposed survey method would be adequate. If the initial Phase 1 survey identifies that the landfall site would impact different habitats to those previously monitored locally, a more detailed baseline survey of these habitats may be required.*

*The Applicant has proposed an appropriate method for the impact assessment of intertidal ecology.*

*Potential impacts on water quality within the intertidal zone are mentioned (elevated suspended solids, and risk of accidental pollution during construction) but water quality is not considered as a receptor within the intertidal Chapter 9. If marine water quality is to be addressed in another section of the EIA it would be helpful to include signposting to it in the intertidal chapter. The comments made above, in respect of the WFD assessment are also relevant to water quality in the intertidal area.*

*9.3 We would like to remind the Applicant that the coastal processes in the landfall areas receive an artificial sediment supply through our renourishment campaigns. We can offer no assurances to the future approach to flood risk management along the coast and it remains the Applicant's responsibility to ensure that there is sufficient coverage of their cables in the intertidal area and any localised re-profiling of the beach to the design profile occurs after the cables are laid. The future of the flood risk management approach along these important frontages will be determined by the outcomes of the Saltfleet to Gibraltar Point Strategy.*

*We remind the Applicant that the landfall locations all have the potential to impact on the delivery of our flood risk management works, Lincshore. Therefore we will require close liaison and discussions to ensure that we can coexist in this area, for the durations of our renourishment scheme.”*



Para 10.6. The Landscape Institute's Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB Management Plan 2013-2018 should be referred to. Natural England advises that NGVL liaise with the AONB partnership by contacting Stephen Jack at [aonb@lincswolds.org.uk](mailto:aonb@lincswolds.org.uk).

Para 11.2.1 fourth bullet needs amending to delete reference to East Lindsey conservation areas within the Borough of Boston.

Chapter 14. The Report omits any references to low frequency and tonal noise and there are no references as to how it will be addressed.

Natural England advises that in addition to the human impacts of noise and vibration this chapter should reference ecological impacts and reference designated sites where protected species may be notified species, particularly birds during the breeding season. As detailed earlier Natural England Standing Advice should detail suitable mitigation measures should noise levels be sufficient to potentially impact upon sensitive ecological receptors.

Para 14.2.20. It is not agreed that cumulative limits of 35 dB apply when there is zero wind speed; this will distort and omit vital information of the overall noise climate. This has already been raised directly with the RPS Group in that the Council believes that the assessment should consider operational noise impacts for each of the site locations and at a range of positive wind speeds so that the Bicker Fen Wind Farm would be included.

Para 14.2.22. It is not accepted that a grouping of six or more residential properties would raise sensitivity values from medium to high. The Council's Senior Environmental Officer considers that individual residential properties should be addressed with a High sensitivity.

Para 14.5.5. As above, it is unclear how a cumulative assessment can be carried out if one of the components is not operational.

In addition, additional relevant comments have been received from:

Lincolnshire County Council as Local Highway and Lead Local Flood Authority confirm that the Report appears to cover the matters that should be considered in a Transport Assessment. The Highway Authority would wish to see the Construction Management Traffic Plan include junction/access proposals, routing for construction traffic and swept paths for larger vehicles. I would advise, without prejudice to any future decision of the planning authority, that the need for a Construction Traffic Management Plan would likely be addressed through conditions on any approval. Overall there is an expectation that all crossing of public highways would be achieved using non-dig methods and that some of the site option locations are not accessible from the existing highway network and will need a dedicated haul road.

The full response from Natural England is dated 22 August 2016 and it appears to have been sent direct to NGVL. The response includes an Annex which provides their standard advice on the scope of the EIA for this development. If you have not received this, please let me know and I can send it to you direct.

This concludes Boston Borough Council's comments on the Scoping Request dated 1 August 2016 and this letter therefore constitutes the adopted scoping opinion of this Council in response to the request under Regulation 13 (1) of the 2011 Regulations (as amended). I trust that this is of assistance.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Edwards', with a stylized, cursive script.

Paul L Edwards  
Development Control Manager

# East Lindsey District Council Scoping Opinion

**Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment)  
Regulations 2011**

**SCOPING OPINION**

<b>Agent/Applicant's Name &amp; Address</b>	<b>Applicant's Name &amp; Address</b>
Ms. L. Wells, Viking Link, National Grid plc, 1-3 Strand, LONDON. WC2N 5EH	Viking Link, National Grid plc, 1-3 Strand, LONDON. WC2N 5EH

**Part I - Particulars of Application**

Date received	Application Number
01/08/2016	N/110/01620/16

Particulars and location of the development

PROPOSAL: Environmental Impact Assessment (E.E.C Directive 85/337/E.E.C. as amended by Council Directive 97/11/E.C) for a scoping opinion with respect to Viking Link Interconnector Project.

LOCATION: SANDILANDS, ROMAN BANK, SANDILANDS, SUTTON ON SEA, LINCOLNSHIRE.

**Part II - Particulars of decision**

East Lindsey District Council hereby gives notice that it has adopted the Scoping Opinion that an Environmental Statement submitted with an EIA application for the development described in Part I should include the information set out below.

1. I refer to your request for a scoping opinion under Regulation 13 of the above Regulations. The Council has the following scoping opinion of the information that should be included in the Environmental Statement (ES).

The Environmental Statement must contain the information specified in Part II of Schedule 4 (information for inclusion in Environmental statements) of the Regulations, together with such information in Part 1 of schedule 4 as is reasonably required to assess the effects of the proposed development. This response takes account of advice received from the Councils statutory consultees, as well as various other non-statutory consultees.

In considering the request for a scoping opinion, East Lindsey District Council has taken into account the Environmental Scoping Report submitted with the letter from National Grid Viking Link (NGVL) dated 1st August 2016 and has consulted with various bodies and organisations.

The responses received have been taken into account and inform this scoping opinion. The response from Natural England was accompanied by a

copy of their Standing Advice in relation to the scope of EIA for this Project. I understand that a copy has been forwarded direct by Natural England to NGVL. This should be duly taken into account.

The County Council have also advised that at paragraph 3.3.20 reference is made to the Minerals and Waste Local Plan – Site Location Document. Please note that it is intended that the Council's Pre-Submission draft of this document will be put out to consultation in November 2016 and submitted for examination in summer 2017.

It is firstly agreed that (as outlined at paragraph 4.2.4) the Project is EIA development.

The District Council is also broadly satisfied with the suggested scope of the ES subject to the comments below. Where no observations are made regarding specific chapters or associated content, please take this as acceptance that the District Council is satisfied with the proposed scope and approach to assessment as set out in the Scoping Request document.

This Council's comments are set out below with specific reference to numbered references in the Environmental Scoping Report as appropriate:

## **Section 5 (Geology and Hydrogeology)**

5.3.1 Natural England welcome the intent to identify sensitive receptors but for completeness advise that in section 5.2.6 the full range of 'opportunities for mitigation' of groundwater contamination are detailed in relation to biological sites too.

As a point of accuracy, Lincs Wildlife Trust advise that at 5.3.1 and 5.3.2 chalk rivers and coastal grazing marshes are not designated geological sites. Where these sites are designated, this is for their nature conservation value as Local Wildlife Sites or Sites of Nature Conservation Importance.

The Environment Agency have advised that an appropriate assessment scope and methodology in respect of hydrogeological issues and dewatering schemes prior to the works commencing is being proposed.

Paragraph 5.3.1 should include reference to groundwater resource (quantity) as well as quality. Consideration is given to groundwater quantity in section 5.32, but it should be listed as a potential receptor within 5.3.1 for clarity.

It is also to be noted that abstractions should include private water supplies as well as licensed abstractions (these are mentioned in Chapter 6, but not Chapter 5).

## **Section 6 (Water Resources and Hydrogeology)**

There are references throughout to open cut watercourse crossings and the

Environment Agency has advised that this method would not be permitted for crossing Main Rivers under the Agency's jurisdiction.

At Table 6.1, the Environment Agency advise – regarding the scheme sensitivity/value criteria, there are in excess of 20,000 residential properties in the tidal flood cell alone, and any impact magnitude criteria should account for the major alteration of a large dune system, which would be complex to restore to its baseline condition, given its mostly natural formation, and could be considered fundamentally changed. These risks will steer the appropriate mitigation of trenchless crossings, in addition to any other measures that are identified as necessary, such as bunding the drive pits etc. We are pleased to note that the crossing of the sea defences is currently anticipated to be via horizontal directional drilling (HDD) (paragraph 2.3.5). We would welcome further discussions on the methodology and temporary works to facilitate the cable installation once the detail has been determined. We note the Transition Joint Pits will be buried. The reception pits required to facilitate the HDD techniques will need to be bunded to a height equivalent to the adjacent defences. There may be issues with tidal inundation during construction, (which has not been mentioned in this Scoping Report), so this should be taken into consideration.”

Paragraph 6.3.6. The identified potential impacts from the construction of the scheme should set out the risks associated with crossing the large tidal defences at the landfall and other potential impacts crossing large embanked watercourses. The Environmental Impact Assessment should include information on the decommissioning elements; as to whether the ducts will remain in situ or be removed once the pipeline is no longer required. The ducting will need to be buried sufficiently deep under the sea defences so that if there is a need to install piling along this frontage in the future there will be scope to do so.

Paragraph 6.4.3. Mitigation measures should be expanded to include groundwater risks as well as surface water. Paragraph 6.5.2. In terms of collecting information for a Water Framework Directive Assessment, the Environment Agency advises that: “We agree with the potential impacts included in paragraph 6.5.2, the assessment methodology and the provision of further information as outlined in 6.5.3. We would suggest that receptors should be identified at the baseline data collection stage and should include the water bodies affected by the underground cable corridor and the converter station – we note that this report focuses on the scope for the EIA, but it would be beneficial to collect information needed to carry out a Water Framework Directive (WFD) Assessment at the same time. The additional baseline information that would be required for the WFD Assessment includes information on WFD water body status, objectives and planned measures.

Natural England suggest that MAGIC map (<http://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx>) is utilised and referenced accordingly in Section 6 to ensure that all possible sites with potential to be affected by water resources and hydrology are identified.

## **Section 7 (Agriculture and soils)**

The County Council have advised that the following information should be submitted to support the application and incorporated in the ES:

- Detailed agricultural land classification survey in accordance with Natural England Technical Note TIN049;
- Soil Management Plan to show how soil will be protected during construction and how land will be restored following construction;
- Land Drainage – detailed assessment of existing land drainage schemes should be provided with proposals agreed for mitigation both temporary during construction and permanent post construction both in respect of any temporary working areas, or where site has a potential impact on neighbouring land uses.

Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust has raised concerns regarding the mitigation proposed in paragraphs 7.2.22 and 7.4.2. This advises that 'mitigation is likely to include, but will not be limited to , the avoidance of development in arable land(including mixed use and silage fields), in preference of permanent pasture, where practicable and taking into account technical and other environmental considerations'.

Permanent pasture can be of significant biodiversity interest, much more so than arable land and so recommend that permanent pasture fields are subject to full botanical surveys if they are found to be species rich during Phase 1 surveys. the results of these surveys should be used to assess the sites against Local Wildlife Site criteria.

Natural England refer to previous detailed comments provided by Gill Shaw on 12 August 2016 should be fully taken into account in this Section.

## **Section 8 (Ecology)**

The County Council advise – Page 80 paragraph 8.24 welcome the ecological surveys that have taken/are taking place around the landfall and convertor station sites and cable route corridor.

At paragraph 8.2.5 The County Council and Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust welcome the additional proposed Phase 1 habitat survey and National Vegetation Classification (NVC) and hedgerow survey for the landfall and convertor station sites, cable corridor and compound areas.

It is suggested that any semi-natural habitats are surveyed against the Local Wildlife Site (LWS) criteria for Lincolnshire to better determine their nature conservation value and any sites suitable for Local Wildlife Scheme designation are avoided.

The Wildlife Trust have expressed concern in their response that paragraph

8.52 implicitly suggests that some designated sites may not be avoided. The Project should aim to avoid all designated sites through site design. Furthermore, paragraph 8.52 continues to say that 'Likely effects for habitats are anticipated to be on watercourses, field boundary features, and areas of grassland if these are semi-natural or diverse in nature although all features will be fully re-instated following construction.'

If semi-natural habitats are found to be diverse in nature and meet LWS criteria then the cable route should be designed to avoid them. If avoidance is not possible then appropriate mitigation would be required to ensure impacts are minimised and habitats suitably restored.

As a point of accuracy, it is noted that Table 8.2 refers to Site of Nature Conservation Importance criteria. In Lincolnshire, the relevant criteria are the Local Wildlife Site Guidelines for Greater Lincolnshire published by the Lincolnshire Nature partnership available from the GLNP website ([www.glnp.org.uk](http://www.glnp.org.uk)).

Natural England notes that the conservation objectives for the sites identified are a key source of information for all SSSI's and advise that these are utilized to ensure that all sites that may be impacted on are identified.

Appropriate biological and geological record centres should be consulted (<http://www.glnp.org.uk/partnership/lerc/>) in addition to local groups such as the Lincs Wildlife Trust. Furthermore consideration should be given to Natural England's on-line standing advice in relation to surveys required and mitigation.

## **Section 9 (Intertidal Zone)**

The Environment Agency advise that proposed approach to assessment includes carrying out a Phase 1 intertidal ecology survey. If the intertidal habitats in the proposed landfall site are similar to the habitats that have been previously monitored for the Lincshore assessment, the proposed survey method would be adequate. If the initial Phase 1 survey identifies that the landfall site would impact different habitats to those previously monitored locally, a more detailed databaseline survey of these habitats may be required.

The Environment Agency consider that an appropriate methodology for the impact assessment of intertidal ecology is proposed.

Potential impacts on water quality within the intertidal zone are mentioned but water quality is not considered as a receptor.

The Environment Agency advise that if marine water quality is to be addressed in another section of the EIA, it would be helpful to include signposting to it in Section 9.

Comments made previously in connection with the WFD assessment are also relevant to water quality in the intertidal area.



The Environment Agency also wish to advise that close liaison should be undertaken with them in respect of their flood risk management works, Lincshore.

## **Section 10 (Landscape and Visual Amenity)**

Natural England advises that the Landscape section references the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact assessment (<http://www.landscapeinstitute.org/PDF/Contribute/GLVIA3consultationdraftformembers.pdf>).

The Lincolnshire Wolds AONB Management Plan 2013-2018 should be referenced. Liaison with Steve Jack on [aonb@lincswolds.org.uk](mailto:aonb@lincswolds.org.uk) is recommended.

## **Section 11 (Archaeology and Cultural Heritage)**

The County Council response advises that they would expect the ES to include the results of geophysical and fieldwalking surveys of the route corridor, the results of which will inform any trenching strategy required to inform the depth, extent and significance of any archaeological deposits which may be impacted by the development.

The results of these should indicate the level of impact on underlying archaeological remains and the ES should include a robust mitigation strategy which will identify what measures are to be taken to minimise the impact of the proposal on archaeological remains.

The Scoping Report states that it is not proposed at this stage to review aerial photographs.

However, all the NMP plots are not, as stated, all on the computerised version of the Lincolnshire HER.

The plots themselves should be consulted. It is expected that air photos and Lidar data for the route is included as part of the baseline data collection for the desk based assessment.

Visual impacts on the settings of heritage assets will also require sufficient assessment in the ES.

Heritage impact assessment needs to be objective and evidence-based regarding potential impacts on the settings and significance of designated and non-designated heritage assets which would experience visual change should be evidenced using accurate visual representations.

Viewpoints, including views of, from and across heritage asset receptors as well as general indivisibility, all have historic context and need to be assessed properly to determine the contribution of the heritage asset and the potential impact upon it by development or proposed mitigation

measures.

Reference at 11.2.1 to Conservation Areas in East Lindsey at bullet point 3 is correct, but not to bullet points 4 and 5. This reference is assumed to have been made inadvertently but should refer to the relevant District Council.

### **Section 13 (Traffic and Transport)**

The Scoping Report generally covers the required scope for the Transport Assessment from pages 127-134. In addition to the details in the report the County Council requires junction layout and access layout proposals to be submitted for temporary and permanent facilities proposed in association with the development.

Routing of construction traffic is included in the scope and swept paths of construction vehicles need to be provided along these routes at critical points and for all proposed new or modified junction and access proposals.

### **Section 14 (Noise and Vibration)**

Natural England advise that in relation to human impacts of noise and vibration this section should reference ecological impacts and reference designated sites where protected species may be notified species (particularly birds during the breeding season). Reference is also made to their Standing advice.

I hope this is of some assistance to you and happy to discuss further if you require any further clarification.

### **INFORMATIVE NOTE**

For guidance on Environmental Statements generally please see Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions circular 02/99. General guidance about preparing environmental statements can be found in the HMSO publication "Preparation of Environmental Statements for Planning Projects that Require Environmental Assessment: A Good Practice Guide" (ISBN 0-11-753207-X) although it should be read in conjunction with The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011 (SI 2011 No.1824) themselves since the guidance predates these revised requirements.

Dated: 23/09/2016

Signed:



Mr. Chris Panton  
Team Leader Planning

Tel. No. 01507 601111

EAST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL, TEDDER HALL, MANBY PARK, LOUTH, Lincs, LN11 8UP.

## East Lindsey District Council – Environmental Health Scoping Opinion

# **Consultee Comments for Planning Application N/110/01620/16**

## **Application Summary**

Application Number: N/110/01620/16

Address: SANDILANDS, ROMAN BANK, SANDILANDS, SUTTON ON SEA, LINCOLNSHIRE.

Proposal: Environmental Impact Assessment (E.E.C Directive 85/337/E.E.C. as amended by Council Directive 97/11E.C) for a scoping opinion with respect to Viking Link Interconnector Project.

Case Officer: Mr. Andy Booth

## **Consultee Details**

Name: Mr ARSHAD BHAT

Address: TEDDER HALL MANBY PARK, MANBY LN11 8UP

Email: arshad.bhat@e-lindsey.gov.uk

On Behalf Of: Environmental Health

## **Comments**

Reviewed the scoping report. No long term significant environmental and pollution risk present -  
ABH

# North Kesteven District Council Scoping Opinion

**Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment)  
(England and Wales) Regulations 1999**

## Scoping Opinion

Opinion Requested by:

Name and address of agent (if any)

Liz Wells  
National Grid Plc  
1-3 Strand  
London  
WC2N 5EH

### Part I - Particulars of request

Reference number:	16/0955/EIASCO
Received Date:	01.08.2016
Proposal:	Request for scoping opinion in respect of the Viking Link Interconnector Project to connect the electricity systems of the UK and Denmark
Location:	Viking Link Interconnector Project

### Part II - Particulars of Decision

The UK onshore element of the Viking Link covers a significant area running from the proposed landfall on the Lincolnshire coastline to the proposed converter station location within the vicinity of the existing Bicker Fen substation. It is noted that both elements are proposed to be sited outside of North Kesteven District and particularly those relating to the landfall, would have no material impact upon the District. My comments are therefore reflective of the shortlisted locations, although it is noted that the cabling route may pass through the District.

The District Council is broadly satisfied with the suggested scope of the ES subject to the comments below. Where no observations are made regarding specific chapters or associated content, please take this as acceptance that the District Council is satisfied with the proposed scope and approach to assessment as set out in the Scoping Request document.

#### Section 10 Landscape and Visual Amenity

An initial study area of 3km from the converter station is proposed for the landscape and visual assessments. From an NK perspective it may be appropriate to consider extending this distance to ensure that representative views from the closest villages (Swaton, Helpringham and Little Hale) to the preferred site (CS1) are provided. However it is noted that this will largely be a matter of professional judgement and that representative viewpoint locations are to be agreed in conjunction with the relevant local authorities.

Date: 5th September 2016

District Council Offices, Kesteven Street  
Sleaford, Lincolnshire NG34 7EF

*Andrew McDonough*

Head of Development, Economic and Cultural Services

## Section 14 Noise and Vibration

The Council's Environmental Health Officer considers that the approach outlined in the report in relation to those aspects of particular interest to Environmental Health is generally considered satisfactory and should be followed in the EIA. However, in relation to the common set of criteria to be provided to evaluate 'Sensitivity, Value or Importance' in relation to the significance of potential effects, it is suggested that 'high' should, where appropriate, also apply to individual properties affected, rather than be limited to six or more properties.

### **Informative**

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) refers to the whole process by which environmental information is collected, published and taken into account in reaching a decision on a relevant planning application. Applications for planning permission for which EIA is required are referred to in the Regulations as 'EIA applications'. Regulation 3 prohibits the granting of planning permission for EIA development unless the EIA procedures have been followed.

Where EIA is required, information must be provided by the developer in an Environmental Statement (ES). This document (or series of documents) must contain the information specified by regulation 2 (1) and in Schedule 4 to the Regulations. In certain cases, regulation 10 allows developers to obtain a formal opinion from the relevant planning authority on what should be included in the Environmental Statement ('a scoping opinion').

### **Right of Appeal**

Where the relevant planning authority adopts a screening opinion that EIA is required, the developer may request a screening direction from the Secretary of State. Requests must be made in accordance with the provisions set out in the Regulations. (See Regulations 5 and 6 or, where appropriate, Regulation 7).

## South Holland District Council Scoping Opinion



**Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment)  
(England and Wales) Regulations 2011**

**Scoping Opinion**



Opinion Requested by:

Liz Wells  
National Grid Plc  
1-3 Strand  
London  
WC2N 5EH

**Part I - Particulars of request**

---

**Reference number:**

---

**Received Date:** 01.08.2016

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**Proposal:** Request for scoping opinion in respect of the Viking Link Interconnector Project to connect the electricity systems of the UK and Denmark

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**Location:** Viking Link Interconnector Project

---

**Part II - Particulars of Decision**

The UK onshore element of the Viking Link covers a significant area running from the proposed landfall on the Lincolnshire coastline to the proposed converter station location within the vicinity of the existing Bicker Fen substation with CS1 within South Holland District. It is this element of the project which would have a material impact upon South Holland.

The District Council consulted the Environment Agency, Natural England, Historic England, LCC Historic Environment, LCC Highways and Lead Local Flood Authority and SHDC Environmental Protection. Responses were received from Natural England, LCC Historic Environment, LCC Highways and Lead Local Flood Authority.

The District Council is broadly satisfied with the suggested scope of the ES subject to the comments below, which reflect the views of those consultation bodies who responded. Where no observations are made regarding specific chapters or associated content, please take this as acceptance that the District Council is satisfied with the proposed scope and approach to assessment as set out in the Scoping Request document.

Chapter 5: Geology & Hydrogeology

Page 51 (5.5.6) Natural England welcomes the intent to identify sensitive receptors in section 5.3.1. For completeness Natural England advises that in section 5.2.6 the full range of "opportunities for mitigation" of groundwater contamination are detailed in relation to biological sites too.

## Chapter 6: Water Resources & Hydrology

Page 55 Natural England suggest that MAGIC map (<http://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx>) is utilised and referenced accordingly in this chapter to ensure that all possible sites with the potential to be affected by water resources and hydrology have been identified.

## Chapter 7: Agriculture & Soils

Page 65 Natural England notes that detailed comments regarding Agriculture & soils were provided in the response to Gill Shaw on 12 August 2016. Natural England advises that these comments should be fully taken account of in the final Agriculture and soils chapter.

## Chapter 8: Ecology

Page 79 Natural England notes that the conservation objectives for the sites identified are a key source of information for all SSSIs and we would advise that these are utilised to ensure that all sites that may be impacted are identified. The conservation objectives can be found online (<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/6490068894089216>).

Page 79 Natural England notes that we do not hold data on local species distributions and advises that the appropriate local biological and geological record centres be consulted (<http://www.glnp.org.uk/partnership/lerc/>) in addition to other local groups such as the Wild Life Trust (<http://www.lincstrust.org.uk/>).

Page 87 (8.6) Natural England advises that consideration is given to its standing advice , which includes details of surveys required and mitigation and can be found online (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/protected-species-how-to-review-planning-applications> ).

## Chapter 10: Landscape & Visual Amenity

Page 107 Natural England advises that the Landscape chapter references the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (<http://www.landscapeinstitute.org/PDF/Contribute/GLVIA3consultationdraftformembers.pdf> ). Natural England advises that the Landscape chapter references the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB Management Plan 2013-2018(<http://www.lincswolds.org.uk/looking-after/lincolnshire-wolds-aonb-management-plan>). Furthermore Natural England advises that National Grid liaise with the AONB partnership by contacting Stephen Jack on [aonb@lincswolds.org.uk](mailto:aonb@lincswolds.org.uk)

## Chapter 11: Archaeology & Cultural Heritage

The Historic Environment Officer at Lincolnshire County Council commented as follows:

*"The proposals for the EIA as outlined in this scoping report fulfils the requirements of this section.*

*The information in the heritage assessment/EIA needs to provide sufficient evidence to understand the impact of the proposal on the significance of any heritage assets and their settings, sufficient to meet the requirements of paragraph 128 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).*

*The National Planning Policy Framework states that 'Where a site on which development is proposed includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation' (para 128).*

*We would expect the EIA to contain a full archaeological evaluation report which explores in the first place non-intrusive evaluation of the site, and, if this suggests that further information is required we would expect intrusive evaluation in the form of trial trenching to further inform the heritage impact statement as to presence/absence/ location, depth, survival and significance of any remains. This should inform a suitable mitigation strategy for the impact.*

*In addition to the underground remains we would expect a report on the potential impact on the historic landscape.*

*Regarding setting issues, potential impacts on the settings and significance of designated and non-designated heritage assets which would experience visual change should be evidenced using accurate visual representations. Viewpoints, including views of, from, and across heritage asset receptors as well as general intervisibility, all have historic context and need to be assessed properly to determine the contribution of the setting of the heritage asset and the potential impact upon it by development or proposed mitigation measures.*

*The NPPF states that 'Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting' (para 132), and 'The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application' (para 135).*

*The Environmental Impact Assessment should contain sufficient information to enable an informed planning decision to be made."*

#### Chapter 13: Traffic & Transport

Lincolnshire County Council as Local Highway and Lead Local Flood Authority comment that the required scope for the Transport Assessment is generally covered. In addition would require junction layout and access layout proposals to be submitted for temporary and permanent facilities proposed in association with the development. Routing of construction traffic is included in the scope and swept paths of construction vehicles need to be provided along these routes at critical points and for all proposed new or modified junction and access proposals.

#### Chapter 14: Noise & Vibration

Page 135 Natural England advises that in addition to the human impacts of noise and vibration this chapter should reference ecological impacts and reference designated sites where protected species may be notified species, particularly birds during the breeding season. As detailed earlier Natural England Standing Advice should detail suitable mitigation measures should noise levels be sufficient to potentially impact upon sensitive ecological receptors.

### **Informative**

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) refers to the whole process by which environmental information is collected, published and taken into account in reaching a decision on a relevant planning application. Applications for planning permission for which EIA is required are referred to in the Regulations as 'EIA applications'. Regulation 3 prohibits the granting of planning permission for EIA development unless the EIA procedures have been followed.

Where EIA is required, information must be provided by the developer in an Environmental Statement (ES). This document (or series of documents) must contain the information specified by regulation 2 (1) and in Schedule 4 to the Regulations. In certain cases, regulation 10 allows developers to obtain a formal opinion from the relevant planning authority on what should be included in the Environmental Statement ('a scoping opinion').

### **Right of Appeal**

Where the relevant planning authority adopts a screening opinion that EIA is required, the developer may request a screening direction from the Secretary of State. Requests must be made in accordance with the provisions set out in the Regulations. (See Regulations 5 and 6 or, where appropriate, Regulation 7).

# Lincolnshire County Council Scoping Opinion

Your ref: PRE/16/0001/ESCO  
My Ref: NAM/Viking Link  
Date: 8 September 2016

Boston Borough Council  
Municipal Buildings  
West Street  
Boston  
Lincolnshire  
PE21 8QR

*Please reply to:*  
Neil McBride  
Planning Manager  
**Planning Services**  
Unit 4, Witham Park House  
Waterside South, Lincoln LN5 7JN  
Tel: (01522) 782070  
Fax: (01522) 554829  
E-Mail: [neil.mcbride@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:neil.mcbride@lincolnshire.gov.uk)

Dear Sir/Madam

**REQUEST FOR A SCOPING OPINION UNDER REGULATION 13 OF THE TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING (EIA) REGULATION 2011 IN RESPECT OF THE VIKING LINK INTERCONNECTOR FROM THE LINCOLNSHIRE COAST TO BICKER FEN NGET AT LAND BETWEEN LANGRICK BRIDGE AND BICKER FEN**

I refer to your letter dated 16 August 2016 regarding a scoping opinion for the above project. I have also received a consultation on the above from East Lindsey District Council and South Holland District Council.

Having reviewed the Scoping Report I would make the following comments to be included in the Scoping Opinion that you issue.

At paragraph 3.3.20 reference is made to the Minerals and Waste Local Plan – Site Location Document. It is intended that the Council's Pre-Submission draft of this document will be put out to consultation in November 2016 and submitted for examination in summer 2017.

In respect of technical parts of the Scoping Report I would comment as follows:

**Agriculture & Soils** – in the County Council's response to National Grid's consultation for preferred location for the converter station and landfall site advice was given with regard to the information that should be submitted to support the application and incorporated in the Environmental Statement (ES) as follows:

- Detailed agricultural land classification survey in accordance with Natural England Technical Note TIN049 ;
- Soil Management Plan to show how soil will be protected during construction and how land will be restored following construction ;
- Land Drainage – detailed assessment of existing land drainage schemes should be provided with proposals agreed for mitigation both temporary during construction and permanent post construction both in respect of any temporary working areas, or where site has a potential impact on neighbouring land uses.

**Ecology** – Page 80 para 8.24 welcome the ecological surveys that have taken/are taking place around the landfall and convertor station sites and cable route corridor.

At para 8.2.5 welcome the additional proposed Phase 1 habitat survey and National Vegetation Classification (NVC) and hedgerow survey for the landfall and convertor station sites, cable corridor and compound areas. Suggest that any semi-natural habitats are surveyed against the Local Wildlife Site (LWS) criteria and any sites suitable for Local Wildlife Scheme designation are avoided.

**Archaeology & Cultural Heritage** – Expect the ES to include the results of geophysical and fieldwalking surveys of the route corridor, the results of which will inform any trenching strategy required to inform the depth, extent and significance of any archaeological deposits which may be impacted by the development. The results of these should indicate the level of impact on underlying archaeological remains and the ES should include a robust mitigation strategy which will identify what measures are to be taken to minimise the impact of the proposal on archaeological remains.

The Scoping Report states that it is not proposed at this stage to review aerial photographs. All the NMP plots are not, as stated, all on the computerised version of the Lincolnshire HER. The plots themselves should be consulted. It is expected that air photos and Lidar data for the route is included as part of the baseline data collection for the desk based assessment.

Visual impacts on the settings of heritage assets will also require sufficient assessment in the ES. Heritage impact assessment needs to be objective and evidence-based regarding potential impacts on the settings and significance of designated and non-designated heritage assets which would experience visual change should be evidenced using accurate visual representations. Viewpoints, including views of, from and across heritage asset receptors as well as general indivisibility, all have historic context and need to be assessed properly to determine the contribution of the heritage asset and the potential impact upon it by development or proposed mitigation measures.

**Traffic & Transport** – The Scoping Report generally covers the required scope for the Transport Assessment from pages 127-134. In addition to the details in the report the County Council requires junction layout and access layout proposals to be submitted for temporary and permanent facilities proposed in association with the development. Routing of construction traffic is included in the scope and swept paths of construction vehicles need to be provided along these routes at critical points and for all proposed new or modified junction and access proposals.

I hope this is of some assistance to you and happy to discuss further if you require any clarification.

Yours sincerely

Planning Manager

## Lincolnshire County Council – Historic Environment Scoping Opinion

Lempard, Daisy



**From:** Booth, Andrew  
**Sent:** 19 August 2016 16:53  
**To:** scanning, scanning  
**Subject:** FW: Consultation on Planning Application N/110/01620/16  
**Attachments:** Mimecast Attachment Protection Instructions; DocCons01email.pdf

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**From:** Jan Allen [mailto:Jan.Allen@lincolnshire.gov.uk]  
**Sent:** 19 August 2016 16:42  
**To:** Booth, Andrew  
**Cc:** Neil McBride  
**Subject:** FW: Consultation on Planning Application N/110/01620/16

Mimecast Attachment Protection has created safe copies of your attachments.

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**This message originated from outside your organization**

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Dear Chris,

Please find attached our comments for the scoping opinion for the above site regarding the potential impact on heritage assets. It will be included in the broader Lincolnshire County Council response but as the attached document's deadline is today I thought it best to forward it as well.

Best wishes

Jan Allen  
Historic Environment Officer  
Planning Department  
Lincolnshire County Council  
01522 554836  
[jan.allen@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:jan.allen@lincolnshire.gov.uk)

---

**From:** Jan Allen  
**Sent:** 19 August 2016 16:36  
**To:** Neil McBride  
**Subject:** RE: Consultation on Planning Application N/110/01620/16

Dear Neil,

The National Planning Policy Framework states that '*Where a site on which development is proposed includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation*' (para 128).

We would expect the EIA to include the results of geophysical and fieldwalking surveys of the route corridor, the results of which will inform any trenching strategy required to inform the depth, extent and significance of any archaeological deposits which may be impacted by the development. The results of these should indicate the level of impact on underlying archaeological remains and the EIA should include a robust mitigation strategy which will identify what measures are to be taken to minimise the impact of the proposal on archaeological remains.

The scoping report states that '*At this stage it is not proposed to review aerial photographs*' (11.2.3) All the NMP plots are not, as stated in the report, all on the computerised version of the Lincolnshire HER. The plots themselves



should be consulted. This office would expect that air photos and Lidar data for the route is included as part of the baseline data collection for the desk based assessment.

Visual impacts on the settings of heritage assets will also require sufficient assessment in the EIA. Heritage impact assessment needs to be objective and evidence-based regarding potential impacts on the settings and significance of designated and non-designated heritage assets which would experience visual change should be evidenced using accurate visual representations. Viewpoints, including views of, from, and across heritage asset receptors as well as general intervisibility, all have historic context and need to be assessed properly to determine the contribution of the setting of the heritage asset and the potential impact upon it by development or proposed mitigation measures.

The NPPF states that '*Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting*' (para 132), and '*The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application*' (para 135).

The Environmental Impact Assessment should contain sufficient information to enable an informed planning decision to be made.

Best wishes

Jan Allen  
Historic Environment Officer  
Planning Department  
Lincolnshire County Council  
01522 554836  
[jan.allen@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:jan.allen@lincolnshire.gov.uk)

---

**From:** Neil McBride  
**Sent:** 16 August 2016 14:18  
**To:** Ian Field  
**Cc:** Jan Allen; Kate Percival; Warren Peppard  
**Subject:** FW: Consultation on Planning Application N/110/01620/16

Ian,

Can we have a chat sometime how we intend to respond to this to ensure we provide a comprehensive County Council response.

Jan/Kate have you been consulted separately ?

Thanks

Neil

Neil McBride  
Planning Manager  
Lincolnshire County Council  
Unit 4 Witham Park House  
Waterside South  
Lincoln

(01522) 782070

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**From:** [development.control@e-lindsey.gov.uk](mailto:development.control@e-lindsey.gov.uk) [<mailto:development.control@e-lindsey.gov.uk>]  
**Sent:** 05 August 2016 09:41

**To:** Marc Willis  
**Subject:** Consultation on Planning Application N/110/01620/16

Application reference N/110/01620/16 has been received and is now being considered. Your observations are requested no later than 28 August 2016.

Environmental Impact Assessment (E.E.C Directive 85/337/E.E.C. as amended by Council Directive 97/11E.C) for a scoping opinion with respect to Viking Link Interconnector Project.

SANDILANDS, ROMAN BANK, SANDILANDS, SUTTON ON SEA, LINCOLNSHIRE.

Please visit our website where you can view the details of the application and then submit your comments online.

Please use the following link:- [Online Planning](#)

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\*\*\*\*\*  
\*\*\*\*\*

N/110/01620/16

Mr. Andy Booth

01507 613146

Andrew.Booth@e-lindsey.gov.uk

05 August 2016

Mr. P. Hughes,  
Principal Policy Officer (Strategic Planning)  
Planning and Conservation,  
Lincolnshire County Council,  
Witham Park House, Waterside South,  
LINCOLN,  
LN5 7JN

Dear Sir,

APPLICANT: Viking Link,  
PROPOSAL: Environmental Impact Assessment (E.E.C Directive 85/337/E.E.C.  
as amended by Council Directive 97/11E.C) for a scoping opinion  
with respect to Viking Link Interconnector Project.  
LOCATION: SANDILANDS, ROMAN BANK, SANDILANDS, SUTTON ON SEA,  
LINCOLNSHIRE.

Please find enclosed a copy of the letter and supporting documents in connection with the above requesting a scoping opinion under Section 13 of The Town and County Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011.

I am required to notify those bodies who would be consulted on any forthcoming planning application of this request so that they can give their opinion on the information that should be provided in the necessary Environmental Impact Statement.

I would be grateful if you notify me in writing within 14 days of the date of this letter of any items that you feel should be investigated and included in the Environmental Impact Statement so that I can pass this on to the applicant. Please quote the reference number in any response.

Yours faithfully



Mr. Chris Panton  
Team Leader Planning

# Environment Agency Scoping Opinion

Mr Andy Booth  
East Lindsey District Council  
Tedder Hall Manby Park  
Louth  
Lincolnshire  
LN11 8UP

**Our ref:** AN/2016/124197/01-L01  
**Your ref:** N/110/01620/16  
**Date:** 19 August 2016



Dear Mr Booth

**Environmental Impact Assessment, Scoping Opinion for Viking Link  
Interconnector Project  
Sandilands, Roman Bank, Sutton on Sea**

Thank you for consulting us on the Onshore Environmental Scoping Report for the Viking Link Interconnector.

We have considered the Scoping Report (ref: VKL-08-06-J500-001, Rev 1.0, August 2016) and set out our comments below, on topics that fall within our remit.

**Chapter 5 Geology & Hydrogeology.**

The Applicant is proposing an appropriate assessment scope and methodology in respect of hydrogeological issues and dewatering schemes prior to the works commencing. Sources of information and potential impacts appear to have been identified but we request an addition to this – section 5.3.1 should include reference to groundwater resource (quantity) as well as quality. Consideration is given to groundwater quantity in section 5.3.2, but it should be listed as a potential receptor within 5.3.1 for clarity. The Applicant should also note that abstractions must include private water supplies as well as licensed abstractions (these are specifically mentioned in Chapter 6 but not Chapter 5).

**Chapter 6 Water Resources & Hydrology**

6.2.11 - The submitted Scoping Report has identified the requirement for a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) to accompany the application. It has identified the principal areas of concern from fluvial and tidal sources to the cable route and the converter station, which are proposed in or through the flood plain.

We recommend that the Applicant continues to work closely with the Environment Agency to determine the type and level of information required within the FRA. The

FRA will need to identify the required mitigation measures to ensure the development is 'safe' over its lifetime and reflect the vulnerability classification of the project. As identified in the Scoping Report it is also important to ensure there is no negative impact on third parties during and post construction.

We note some references to open cut watercourse crossings, which may be suitable for smaller watercourses. However, this method would not be permitted for crossing Main Rivers under the Environment Agency's jurisdiction.

Table 6.1 – regarding the scheme sensitivity/value criteria, there are in excess of 20,000 residential properties in the tidal flood cell alone, and any impact magnitude criteria should account for the major alteration of a large dune system, which would be complex to restore to its baseline condition, given its mostly natural formation, and could be considered fundamentally changed. These risks will steer the appropriate mitigation of trenchless crossings, in addition to any other measures that are identified as necessary, such as bunding the drive pits etc.

We are pleased to note that the crossing of the sea defences is currently anticipated to be via horizontal directional drilling (HDD) (paragraph 2.3.5). We would welcome further discussions on the methodology and temporary works to facilitate the cable installation once the detail has been determined. We note the Transition Joint Pits will be buried. The reception pits required to facilitate the HDD techniques will need to be bunded to a height equivalent to the adjacent defences. There may be issues with tidal inundation during construction, (which has not been mentioned in this Scoping Report), so this should be taken into consideration.

6.3.6 – the identified potential impacts from the construction of the scheme should set out the risks associated with crossing the large tidal defences at the landfall and other potential impacts crossing large embanked watercourses.

We request the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) includes information on the decommissioning elements; as to whether the ducts will remain in situ or be removed once the pipeline is no longer required. We will need the ducting to be buried sufficiently deep under the sea defences so that if there is a need to install piling along this frontage in the future there will be scope to do so.

The Applicant should note that the mitigation measures proposed in section 6.4.3, specifically the pollution incident reaction plan, should also include mitigation for groundwater risks as well as surface water.

We agree with the potential impacts included in paragraph 6.5.2, the assessment methodology and the provision of further information as outlined in 6.5.3. We would suggest that receptors should be identified at the baseline data collection stage and should include the water bodies affected by the underground cable corridor and the converter station – we note that this report focusses on the scope for the EIA, but it would be beneficial to collect information needed to carry out a Water Framework Directive (WFD) Assessment at the same time. The additional baseline information that would be required for the WFD Assessment includes information on WFD water body status, objectives and planned measures.

We agree that the project should have negligible impact on the affected water bodies, provided that pollution prevention and control measures are applied at the construction stage, and that sustainable drainage is used to mitigate the permanent increase of surface run-off as discussed in 6.5.4.

## **Chapter 9 Intertidal Zone**

The report identifies relevant receptors and potential impacts to coastal processes and intertidal ecology. We hold data on intertidal habitats and benthic communities in the area of the proposed landfall sites, which the Applicant is aware of. The proposed approach to assessment includes carrying out a Phase 1 intertidal ecology survey. If the intertidal habitats in the proposed landfall site are similar to the habitats that have been previously monitored for the Lincshore assessment, the proposed survey method would be adequate. If the initial Phase 1 survey identifies that the landfall site would impact different habitats to those previously monitored locally, a more detailed baseline survey of these habitats may be required.

The Applicant has proposed an appropriate method for the impact assessment of intertidal ecology.

Potential impacts on water quality within the intertidal zone are mentioned (elevated suspended solids, and risk of accidental pollution during construction) but water quality is not considered as a receptor within the intertidal Chapter 9. If marine water quality is to be addressed in another section of the EIA it would be helpful to include signposting to it in the intertidal chapter. The comments made above, in respect of the WFD assessment are also relevant to water quality in the intertidal area.

9.3 We would like to remind the Applicant that the coastal processes in the landfall areas receive an artificial sediment supply through our renourishment campaigns. We can offer no assurances to the future approach to flood risk management along the coast and it remains the Applicant's responsibility to ensure that there is sufficient coverage of their cables in the intertidal area and any localised re-profiling of the beach to the design profile occurs after the cables are laid. The future of the flood risk management approach along these important frontages will be determined by the outcomes of the Saltfleet to Gibraltar Point Strategy.

We remind the Applicant that the landfall locations all have the potential to impact on the delivery of our flood risk management works, Lincshore. Therefore we will require close liaison and discussions to ensure that we can coexist in this area, for the durations of our renourishment scheme.

Should you require any additional information, or wish to discuss these matters further, please do not hesitate to contact me on the number below.

Yours sincerely

**Annette Hewitson**  
**Principal Planning Adviser**

Direct dial 02030 254924  
Direct e-mail [annette.hewitson@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:annette.hewitson@environment-agency.gov.uk)

## Natural England Scoping Opinion



Date: 22 August 2016  
Our ref: 192260  
Your ref: N/110/01620/16



Liz Wells  
Consents Manager  
National Grid

Customer Services  
Hornbeam House  
Crewe Business Park  
Electra Way  
Crewe  
Cheshire  
CW1 6GJ

T 0300 060 3900

**BY EMAIL ONLY**

Dear Liz,

**Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping consultation (Regulation 15 (3) (i) of the EIA Regulations 2011):** Environmental Impact Assessment for a scoping opinion with respect to Viking Link Interconnector Project

Thank you for seeking our advice on the scope of the Environmental Statement (ES) in your consultation which we received on 05 August 2016.

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

Case law<sup>1</sup> and guidance<sup>2</sup> has stressed the need for a full set of environmental information to be available for consideration prior to a decision being taken on whether or not to grant planning permission. Annex A to this letter provides Natural England's standard advice on the scope of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for this development.

More detailed comments on the content of the scoping report can be found in the below table.

Page(s)	Chapter	Comment
51	5.4.6	Natural England welcomes the intent to identify sensitive receptors in section 5.3.1. For completeness Natural England advises that in section 5.2.6 the full range of "opportunities for mitigation" of groundwater contamination are detailed in relation to biological sites too.
55	6	Natural England would suggest that MAGIC map ( <a href="http://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx">http://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx</a> ) is utilised and referenced accordingly in this chapter to ensure that all possible sites with the potential to be affected by water resources and hydrology have been identified.
65	7	Natural England notes that detailed comments regarding Agriculture & soils were provided in our response to Gill Shaw on 12 August 2016. Natural England advises that these comments should be fully taken account of in the final Agriculture and soils chapter.
79	8	Natural England notes that the conservation objectives for the sites identified are a key source of information for all SSSIs and we would advise that these are utilised to ensure that all sites that may be impacted are identified. The

<sup>1</sup> Harrison, J in *R. v. Cornwall County Council ex parte Hardy* (2001)

<sup>2</sup> *Note on Environmental Impact Assessment Directive for Local Planning Authorities* Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (April 2004) available from <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+/http://www.communities.gov.uk/planningandbuilding/planning/sustainability/environmental/environmentalimpactassessment/noteenvironmental/>

		conservation objectives can be found online ( <a href="http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/6490068894089216">http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/6490068894089216</a> ).
79	8	Natural England notes that we do not hold data on local species distributions and advises that the appropriate local biological and geological record centres be consulted ( <a href="http://www.glnp.org.uk/partnership/lerc/">http://www.glnp.org.uk/partnership/lerc/</a> ) in addition to other local groups such as the Wild Life Trust ( <a href="http://www.lincstrust.org.uk/">http://www.lincstrust.org.uk/</a> ).
87	8.6	Natural England advises that consideration is given to our standing advice , which includes details of surveys required and mitigation and can be found online ( <a href="https://www.gov.uk/guidance/protected-species-how-to-review-planning-applications">https://www.gov.uk/guidance/protected-species-how-to-review-planning-applications</a> ).
107	10	Natural England advises that the Landscape chapter references the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment ( <a href="http://www.landscapeinstitute.org/PDF/Contribute/GLVIA3consultationdraftformembers.pdf">http://www.landscapeinstitute.org/PDF/Contribute/GLVIA3consultationdraftformembers.pdf</a> ).
107	10	Natural England advises that the Landscape chapter references the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB Management Plan 2013-2018( <a href="http://www.lincswolds.org.uk/looking-after/lincolnshire-wolds-aonb-management-plan">http://www.lincswolds.org.uk/looking-after/lincolnshire-wolds-aonb-management-plan</a> ). Furthermore Natural England advises that National Grid liaise with the AONB partnership by contacting Stephen Jack on <a href="mailto:aonb@lincswolds.org.uk">aonb@lincswolds.org.uk</a>
135	14	Natural England advises that in addition to the human impacts of noise and vibration this chapter should reference ecological impacts and reference designated sites where protected species may be notified species, particularly birds during the breeding season. As detailed earlier Natural England Standing Advice should detail suitable mitigation measures should noise levels be sufficient to potentially impact upon sensitive ecological receptors.

Should the proposal be amended in a way which significantly affects its impact on the natural environment then, in accordance with Section 4 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, Natural England should be consulted again.

We would be happy to comment further should the need arise but if in the meantime you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact us. For any queries relating to the specific advice in this letter only please do not hesitate to contact me. For any new consultations, or to provide further information on this consultation please send your correspondences to [consultations@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:consultations@naturalengland.org.uk).

We really value your feedback to help us improve the service we offer. We have attached a feedback form to this letter and welcome any comments you might have about our service.

Yours sincerely



Nicola Yvonne Edwards

Marine Lead Adviser – Lincolnshire Coast, Marshes and Marine Team  
Natural England, Dragonfly House,  
2 Gilders Way, Norwich, NR3 1UB

## **Annex A – Advice related to EIA Scoping Requirements**

### **1. General Principles**

Schedule 4 of the Town & Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011, sets out the necessary information to assess impacts on the natural environment to be included in an ES, specifically:

- A description of the development – including physical characteristics and the full land use requirements of the site during construction and operational phases.
- Expected residues and emissions (water, air and soil pollution, noise, vibration, light, heat, radiation, etc.) resulting from the operation of the proposed development.
- An assessment of alternatives and clear reasoning as to why the preferred option has been chosen.
- A description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the development, including, in particular, population, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, including the architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors.
- A description of the likely significant effects of the development on the environment – this should cover direct effects but also any indirect, secondary, cumulative, short, medium and long term, permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects. Effects should relate to the existence of the development, the use of natural resources and the emissions from pollutants. This should also include a description of the forecasting methods to predict the likely effects on the environment.
- A description of the measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and where possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment.
- A non-technical summary of the information.
- An indication of any difficulties (technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered by the applicant in compiling the required information.

It will be important for any assessment to consider the potential cumulative effects of this proposal, including all supporting infrastructure, with other similar proposals and a thorough assessment of the 'in combination' effects of the proposed development with any existing developments and current applications. A full consideration of the implications of the whole scheme should be included in the ES. All supporting infrastructure should be included within the assessment.

### **2. Biodiversity and Geology**

#### **2.1 Ecological Aspects of an Environmental Statement**

Natural England advises that the potential impact of the proposal upon features of nature conservation interest and opportunities for habitat creation/enhancement should be included within this assessment in accordance with appropriate guidance on such matters. Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) have been developed by the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) and are available on their website.

EclA is the process of identifying, quantifying and evaluating the potential impacts of defined actions on ecosystems or their components. EclA may be carried out as part of the EIA process or to support other forms of environmental assessment or appraisal.

The National Planning Policy Framework sets out guidance in S.118 on how to take account of biodiversity interests in planning decisions and the framework that local authorities should provide to assist developers.

## **2.2 Internationally and Nationally Designated Sites**

The ES should thoroughly assess the potential for the proposal to affect designated sites. European sites (e.g. designated Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas) fall within the scope of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010. In addition paragraph 118 of the National Planning Policy Framework requires that potential Special Protection Areas, possible Special Areas of Conservation, listed or proposed Ramsar sites, and any site identified as being necessary to compensate for adverse impacts on classified, potential or possible SPAs, SACs and Ramsar sites be treated in the same way as classified sites.

Under Regulation 61 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 an appropriate assessment needs to be undertaken in respect of any plan or project which is (a) likely to have a significant effect on a European site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) and (b) not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site.

Should a Likely Significant Effect on a European/Internationally designated site be identified or be uncertain, the competent authority (in this case the Local Planning Authority) may need to prepare an Appropriate Assessment, in addition to consideration of impacts through the EIA process.

### **Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and sites of European or international importance (Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and Ramsar sites)**

The Viking Link Interconnector Project including the landfall sites, converter stations and cabling route would be in proximity to the following designated nature conservation sites:

#### **Sites of Special Scientific Interest**

- Sea Banks Clay Pits SSSI
  - Chapel Point to Wolla Bank SSSI
  - Saltfleet & Theddlethorpe Dunes SSSI and National Nature Reserve
  - Humber Estuary SSSI
  - Gibraltar Point SSSI and National Nature Reserve
  - Bratoft Meadows SSSI
  - Candlesby Hill SSSI
  - Willoughby Wood SSSI
  - Hoplands Wood SSSI
  - Claxby Chalk Pits SSSI
  - Skendleby Psalter Banks SSSI
  - Dalby Hill SSSI
  - Harrington Sandpit SSSI
  - Calceby Marsh SSSI
  - Swaby Valley SSSI
  - Mavis Enderby Valley SSSI
  - Hundleby Clay Pit SSSI
  - Jenkins Carr SSSI
  - Keal Carr SSSI
- Further information on the SSSI and its special interest features can be found at [www.magic.gov](http://www.magic.gov). The Environmental Statement should include a full assessment of the direct and indirect effects of the development on the features of special interest within these sites and should identify such mitigation measures as may be required in order to avoid, minimise or reduce any adverse significant effects.

#### **Natura 2000 Sites**

- The Wash & North Norfolk Coast SAC
- The Wash SPA and RAMSAR
- Gibraltar Point SPA and RAMSAR
- Humber Estuary SPA and RAMSAR

- Marine Conservation Zone – Lincs Belt
- Natura 2000 network site conservation objectives are available on our internet site <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/6490068894089216>

### **2.3 Regionally and Locally Important Sites**

The EIA will need to consider any impacts upon local wildlife and geological sites. Local Sites are identified by the local wildlife trust, geoconservation group or a local forum established for the purposes of identifying and selecting local sites. They are of county importance for wildlife or geodiversity. The Environmental Statement should therefore include an assessment of the likely impacts on the wildlife and geodiversity interests of such sites. The assessment should include proposals for mitigation of any impacts and if appropriate, compensation measures. Contact the Lincolnshire Local Wildlife Trust for further information.

### **2.4 Protected Species - Species protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010**

The ES should assess the impact of all phases of the proposal on protected species (including, for example, great crested newts, reptiles, birds, water voles, badgers and bats). Natural England does not hold comprehensive information regarding the locations of species protected by law, but advises on the procedures and legislation relevant to such species. Records of protected species should be sought from appropriate local biological record centres, nature conservation organisations, groups and individuals; and consideration should be given to the wider context of the site for example in terms of habitat linkages and protected species populations in the wider area, to assist in the impact assessment.

The conservation of species protected by law is explained in Part IV and Annex A of Government Circular 06/2005 *Biodiversity and Geological Conservation: Statutory Obligations and their Impact within the Planning System*. The area likely to be affected by the proposal should be thoroughly surveyed by competent ecologists at appropriate times of year for relevant species and the survey results, impact assessments and appropriate accompanying mitigation strategies included as part of the ES.

In order to provide this information there may be a requirement for a survey at a particular time of year. Surveys should always be carried out in optimal survey time periods and to current guidance by suitably qualified and where necessary, licensed, consultants. Natural England has adopted [standing advice](#) for protected species which includes links to guidance on survey and mitigation.

### **2.5 Habitats and Species of Principal Importance**

The ES should thoroughly assess the impact of the proposals on habitats and/or species listed as 'Habitats and Species of Principal Importance' within the England Biodiversity List, published under the requirements of S41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. Section 40 of the NERC Act 2006 places a general duty on all public authorities, including local planning authorities, to conserve and enhance biodiversity. Further information on this duty is available in the Defra publication '[Guidance for Local Authorities on Implementing the Biodiversity Duty](#)'.

Government Circular 06/2005 states that Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) species and habitats, 'are capable of being a material consideration...in the making of planning decisions'. Natural England therefore advises that survey, impact assessment and mitigation proposals for Habitats and Species of Principal Importance should be included in the ES. Consideration should also be given to those species and habitats included in the relevant Local BAP.

Natural England advises that a habitat survey (equivalent to Phase 2) is carried out on the site, in order to identify any important habitats present. In addition, ornithological, botanical and invertebrate

surveys should be carried out at appropriate times in the year, to establish whether any scarce or priority species are present. The Environmental Statement should include details of:

- Any historical data for the site affected by the proposal (eg from previous surveys);
- Additional surveys carried out as part of this proposal;
- The habitats and species present;
- The status of these habitats and species (eg whether priority species or habitat);
- The direct and indirect effects of the development upon those habitats and species;
- Full details of any mitigation or compensation that might be required.

The development should seek if possible to avoid adverse impact on sensitive areas for wildlife within the site, and if possible provide opportunities for overall wildlife gain.

The record centre for the relevant Local Authorities should be able to provide the relevant information on the location and type of priority habitat for the area under consideration.

## **2.6 Contacts for Local Records**

Natural England does not hold local information on local sites, local landscape character and local or national biodiversity priority habitats and species. We recommend that you seek further information from the appropriate bodies which may include the Lincolnshire Environmental Records Centre, the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust, and local landscape characterisation documents.

## **3. Designated Landscapes and Landscape Character**

### **Nationally Designated Landscapes**

As the cabling route is potentially within Lincolnshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), consideration should be given to the direct and indirect effects upon this designated landscape and in particular the effect upon its purpose for designation within the environmental impact assessment, as well as the content of the relevant management plan for the AONB.

### **Landscape and visual impacts**

Natural England would wish to see details of local landscape character areas mapped at a scale appropriate to the development site as well as any relevant management plans or strategies pertaining to the area. The EIA should include assessments of visual effects on the surrounding area and landscape together with any physical effects of the development, such as changes in topography. The European Landscape Convention places a duty on Local Planning Authorities to consider the impacts of landscape when exercising their functions.

The EIA should include a full assessment of the potential impacts of the development on local landscape character using landscape assessment methodologies. We encourage the use of Landscape Character Assessment (LCA), based on the good practice guidelines produced jointly by the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Assessment in 2013. LCA provides a sound basis for guiding, informing and understanding the ability of any location to accommodate change and to make positive proposals for conserving, enhancing or regenerating character, as detailed proposals are developed.

Natural England supports the publication *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment*, produced by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Assessment and Management in 2013 (3rd edition). The methodology set out is almost universally used for landscape and visual impact assessment.

In order to foster high quality development that respects, maintains, or enhances, local landscape character and distinctiveness, Natural England encourages all new development to consider the character and distinctiveness of the area, with the siting and design of the proposed development reflecting local design characteristics and, wherever possible, using local materials. The Environmental Impact Assessment process should detail the measures to be taken to ensure the

building design will be of a high standard, as well as detail of layout alternatives together with justification of the selected option in terms of landscape impact and benefit.

The assessment should also include the cumulative effect of the development with other relevant existing or proposed developments in the area. In this context Natural England advises that the cumulative impact assessment should include other proposals currently at Scoping stage. Due to the overlapping timescale of their progress through the planning system, cumulative impact of the proposed development with those proposals currently at Scoping stage would be likely to be a material consideration at the time of determination of the planning application.

The assessment should refer to the relevant [National Character Areas](#) which can be found on our website. Links for Landscape Character Assessment at a local level are also available on the same page.

### **Heritage Landscapes**

You should consider whether there is land in the area affected by the development which qualifies for conditional exemption from capital taxes on the grounds of outstanding scenic, scientific or historic interest. An up-to-date list may be obtained at [www.hmrc.gov.uk/heritage/lbsearch.htm](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/heritage/lbsearch.htm) and further information can be found on Natural England's landscape pages [here](#).

### **4. Access and Recreation**

Natural England encourages any proposal to incorporate measures to help encourage people to access the countryside for quiet enjoyment. Measures such as reinstating existing footpaths together with the creation of new footpaths and bridleways are to be encouraged. Links to other green networks and, where appropriate, urban fringe areas should also be explored to help promote the creation of wider green infrastructure. Relevant aspects of local authority green infrastructure strategies should be incorporated where appropriate.

### **Rights of Way, Access land, Coastal access and National Trails**

The EIA should consider potential impacts on access land, public open land, rights of way and coastal access routes in the vicinity of the development. Consideration should also be given to the potential impacts on the nearby England Coast Path National Trail. The National Trails website [www.nationaltrail.co.uk](http://www.nationaltrail.co.uk) provides information including contact details for the National Trail Officer. Appropriate mitigation measures should be incorporated for any adverse impacts. We also recommend reference to the relevant Right of Way Improvement Plans (ROWIP) to identify public rights of way within or adjacent to the proposed site that should be maintained or enhanced.

### **5. Soil and Agricultural Land Quality**

Impacts from the development should be considered in light of the Government's policy for the protection of the best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land as set out in paragraph 112 of the NPPF. We also recommend that soils should be considered under a more general heading of sustainable use of land and the ecosystem services they provide as a natural resource in line with paragraph 109 of the NPPF.

Soil is a finite resource that fulfils many important functions and services (ecosystem services) for society, for example as a growing medium for food, timber and other crops, as a store for carbon and water, as a reservoir of biodiversity and as a buffer against pollution. It is therefore important that the soil resources are protected and used sustainably.

The applicant should consider the following issues as part of the Environmental Statement:

1. The degree to which soils are going to be disturbed/harmed as part of this development and whether 'best and most versatile' agricultural land is involved.

This may require a detailed survey if one is not already available. For further information on the availability of existing agricultural land classification (ALC) information see [www.magic.gov.uk](http://www.magic.gov.uk).



Natural England Technical Information Note 049 - [Agricultural Land Classification: protecting the best and most versatile agricultural land](#) also contains useful background information.

2. If required, an agricultural land classification and soil survey of the land should be undertaken. This should normally be at a detailed level, e.g. one auger boring per hectare, (or more detailed for a small site) supported by pits dug in each main soil type to confirm the physical characteristics of the full depth of the soil resource, i.e. 1.2 metres.
3. The Environmental Statement should provide details of how any adverse impacts on soils can be minimised. Further guidance is contained in the [Defra Construction Code of Practice for the Sustainable Use of Soil on Development Sites](#).

## **6. Air Quality**

Air quality in the UK has improved over recent decades but air pollution remains a significant issue; for example over 97% of sensitive habitat area in England is predicted to exceed the critical loads for ecosystem protection from atmospheric nitrogen deposition ([England Biodiversity Strategy](#), Defra 2011). A priority action in the England Biodiversity Strategy is to reduce air pollution impacts on biodiversity. The planning system plays a key role in determining the location of developments which may give rise to pollution, either directly or from traffic generation, and hence planning decisions can have a significant impact on the quality of air, water and land. The assessment should take account of the risks of air pollution and how these can be managed or reduced. Further information on air pollution impacts and the sensitivity of different habitats/designated sites can be found on the Air Pollution Information System ([www.apis.ac.uk](http://www.apis.ac.uk)). Further information on air pollution modelling and assessment can be found on the Environment Agency website.

## **7. Climate Change Adaptation**

The [England Biodiversity Strategy](#) published by Defra establishes principles for the consideration of biodiversity and the effects of climate change. The ES should reflect these principles and identify how the development's effects on the natural environment will be influenced by climate change, and how ecological networks will be maintained. The NPPF requires that the planning system should contribute to the enhancement of the natural environment 'by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures' ([NPPF](#) Para 109), which should be demonstrated through the ES.

## **8. Contribution to local environmental initiatives and priorities**

The following environmental initiatives are relevant to the Viking Link project:

Lincolnshire Coastal Grazing Marshes Project

<http://www.lincsmarshes.org.uk/>

Lincolnshire Coastal Country Park

<https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/coastalcountrypark>

## **9. Cumulative and in-combination effects**

A full consideration of the implications of the whole scheme should be included in the ES. All supporting infrastructure should be included within the assessment.

The ES should include an impact assessment to identify, describe and evaluate the effects that are likely to result from the project in combination with other projects and activities that are being, have been or will be carried out. The following types of projects should be included in such an assessment, (subject to available information):

- a. existing completed projects;
- b. approved but uncompleted projects;
- c. ongoing activities;
- d. plans or projects for which an application has been made and which are under consideration by the consenting authorities; and



- e. plans and projects which are reasonably foreseeable, i.e. projects for which an application has not yet been submitted, but which are likely to progress before completion of the development and for which sufficient information is available to assess the likelihood of cumulative and in-combination effects.

### **Ancient Woodland – addition to the S41 NERC Act paragraph**

The S41 list includes six priority woodland habitats, which will often be ancient woodland, with all ancient semi-natural woodland in the South East falling into one or more of the six types.

Information about ancient woodland can be found in Natural England's standing advice [http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/Images/standing-advice-ancient-woodland\\_tcm6-32633.pdf](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/Images/standing-advice-ancient-woodland_tcm6-32633.pdf).

Ancient woodland is an irreplaceable resource of great importance for its wildlife, its history and the contribution it makes to our diverse landscapes. Local authorities have a vital role in ensuring its conservation, in particular through the planning system. The ES should have regard to the requirements under the NPPF (Para. 118)<sup>2</sup> which states:

'Planning permission should be refused for development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats, including ancient woodland and the loss of aged or veteran trees found outside ancient woodland, unless the need for, and benefits of, the development in that location clearly outweigh the loss.'

# Historic England Scoping Opinion



Historic England

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Ms Liz Wells  
National Grid  
National Consents Team - Land & Development  
1100 Century Way  
Thorpe Park  
Leeds  
LS15 8TU

Direct Dial: 01604 735460

Our ref: PA00424286

Dear Ms Wells

**Pre-application Advice – Scoping Report**

**VIKING LINK**

Thank you for consulting Historic England on the scope of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the Viking Link Onshore Scheme. We have also provided advice in relation to the scope of the EIA for the Offshore Scheme. Intertidal Archaeology is covered under both schemes.

**General Advice**

In line with the advice in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Policy Statements (NPS), we would expect the EIA documentation to contain a thorough assessment of the likely effects which development might have upon those elements which contribute to the significance of any heritage asset that may be affected across the proposed scheme. In this way it should be possible to identify (and where possible avoid, minimise or if appropriate mitigate) direct and indirect impacts on assets of local, regional and national importance.

In general terms, Historic England advises that a number of considerations will need to be taken into account when proposals of this nature are being assessed. In order for the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) and relevant Local Planning Authorities (LPA) to understand the potential impacts of the proposals on the significance of both designated and non-designated heritage assets of all types, we would recommend that you ensure that the EIA conducted takes the following issues into account (including consideration of the impact of associated infrastructure):

- The potential impact upon the landscape, especially if a site falls within an area of historic landscape;
- Direct impacts on historic/archaeological fabric (buildings, sites or areas), whether statutorily protected or not;



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- Other impacts, particularly the *setting* of listed buildings, scheduled monuments, registered parks and gardens, conservation areas etc., including long views and any specific designed views and vistas within historic designed landscapes. All grades of listed buildings should be identified. In some cases, intervisibility between historic sites may be a significant issue;
- The potential for buried archaeological remains;
- Effects on landscape amenity from public and private land;
- Cumulative impacts.

The level of information required under the EIA process will need to be proportional to the severity of the potential issues which may arise from each element and stage of the proposed scheme, and directly related to the need to assess the overall sustainability of any development proposals.

It is important that the EIA process identifies all heritage assets that may be affected on the basis of an appropriately defined study area for each element of the proposed scheme. In those cases where the assessment concludes that there will not be an impact, sufficient information must be provided to demonstrate that and verify the findings to the determining authorities' satisfaction.

The EIA must provide a clear understanding of the historic and spatial relationships between the assets affected, and the important contribution which both the immediate and wider surrounding landscape makes to their significance.

It is essential that the EIA then provides the determining authorities with a robust assessment of the specific impact of all elements of any proposed development on the significance of all the affected designated heritage assets, including on the significance they derive from their settings. Sufficient information will therefore need to be provided on the type, scale and massing of any development proposed across the EIA study area. It must also take into consideration the impact that the change in character resulting from development would have on an asset's significance.

In general we recommend that there should be a close relationship between the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and the Archaeology & Cultural Heritage Assessments. You must ensure that the EIA will provide the determining authorities with a robust assessment of the impact of development on the setting of designated heritage assets including, but not limited to visual impacts. Heritage Assets are key visual receptors and any impact upon them would need to be considered in depth with appropriate selection of viewpoints relevant to the significance of the assets in question and the likely impacts. We would recommend the inclusion of long views and any specific designed or historically relevant views and vistas within this historic landscape. We recommend that indicative wireframes/ photomontages are



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produced for key viewpoints where heritage assets are significantly affected which should include: any views towards heritage assets in which development would be visible; views from designated heritage assets; and views between contemporaneous or otherwise associated heritage assets in which both assets and any proposed development would be visible. Viewpoints should not, in our opinion, be limited to areas and routes with public access. In this case we would advise that visual impacts will not necessarily relate to direct intervisibility but rather the experience of moving through the landscape and the visual impact of the development within the setting of the designated heritage assets potentially affected.

We would also expect the EIA to consider the potential impacts on non-designated features of historic, architectural, archaeological or artistic interest, since these can also be of national importance and make an important contribution to the character and local distinctiveness of an area and its sense of place. This information is available via the local authority Historic Environment Record (see [www.heritagegateway.org.uk](http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk) for contact details) and relevant local authority staff. In this case the significance and sensitivity of any archaeological remains preserved within the development corridors and sites will need to be assessed in detail as well as the impact of the proposed development on that significance. We advise that you should be guided further by the advice of the specialist archaeological advisors at Lincolnshire County Council and Heritage Lincolnshire in relation to these matters.

**Detailed Comments on Scoping Report***Chapter 9: Intertidal Archaeological Remains*

We welcome the inclusion of intertidal archaeology under both the onshore and offshore schemes in order to ensure a unified and consistent approach. However, we are concerned that our earlier pre-application advice in relation to the potential impacts has not been addressed under the Scoping Report. We would refer you in detail to the advice set out in our letter of 20 May 2016.

That advice highlighted that there is the potential for archaeological remains along the foreshore in the region of LF1a, LF1 and LF2 with the presence of possible salterns at Huttoft adjacent to Sandilands Golf Course on the seaward site of Roman Bank and isolated findspots of Neolithic and Roman date. At Anderby Creek, isolated findspots of Palaeolithic and Roman date are noted. It is possible that more substantial archaeological remains may be encountered during the works.

It is vital that palaeoenvironmental deposits are considered a heritage asset under the assessment of the potential impacts of the landfall options on the historic environment. The three sites short listed, LF1a, LF1 and LF2, are also located within an area with a substantial prehistoric peat and submerged forest resource at Mablethorpe, Sutton on Sea, Anderby Creek and Ingoldmells (Offshore and intertidal peat deposits, England — a resource assessment and development of a database;



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Hazell 2008) and it is likely that construction activities at landfall, haulage and placement of cabling will have a significant impact on these valuable heritage assets. Whilst these assets are currently covered by Lincshore sand placement, the construction has the potential to expose peat deposits and elements of submerged forest.

In particular, the works at LF2 have potential for a substantial impact upon coastal peat exposure and elements of the submerged prehistoric forest at Anderby Creek which includes Oak, Ash, Willow and Poplar (The characterisation of two mid-Holocene submerged forests; Clapham 1999). In addition, the lack of access points in this location may mean haulage along the foreshore from Anderby Creek Sea Road increasing the potential impact on heritage assets. The longer haul road required in this location (4km) would have a greater potential impact on heritage assets. The use of existing roads and hard standings is, in our view, preferable to minimise the potential impact on archaeological assets.

We consider that a more substantial assessment supported by a borehole survey to assess the extent and depth of peat deposits in the construction, haulage and cabling zones, would help to identify the landfall site with the least impact in historic environment terms. If possible the depth of deposit should ultimately inform the depth of HDD cabling to avoid disturbing heritage assets.

We strongly advise that specific attention must be given to the historic environment and that particular assessment will be required about the known or potential historic environment features (inclusive of palaeoenvironmental character) that might be encountered at the intended depth of any trenching and HDD.

We are therefore concerned that despite the above advice and the more detailed advice provided in our letter of 20 May 2016, that the scoping report indicates that no fieldwork is planned and that only existing datasets will be utilised (9.2.4). We recommend that the Offshore and intertidal peat deposits, England — a resource assessment and development of a database (Hazell, 200) be included under the list of resources to be consulted as part of the assessment. We are similarly concerned that the sections under Assessment Methods covering Sensitivity, Value and Importance (9.2.19-21) etc. only address ecological receptors and do not address heritage assets even if only by with cross reference to other areas of assessment under the EIA. We recommend that you give due consideration to these issues and contact us if you require additional advice.

### *Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual Amenity*

We have no specific comments to offer on the scope of this proposed assessment since all heritage assets are proposed to be assessed under the Archaeology & Cultural Heritage assessment. However we do welcome the close association



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proposed between the assessments of Landscape & Visual Amenity, and Archaeology & Cultural Heritage (11.1.1).

*Chapter 11: Archaeology & Cultural Heritage*

We have already provided detailed comments on the shortlist of converter stations and route corridors and the designated heritage assets potentially affected in our letters of 20 May 2016 and 13 July 2016. We refer you to that letter to be read in conjunction with the advice here on the scope of assessment.

Historic England recommends that an approach to the significance of designated heritage assets is reflective of the assessment criteria for the designation process, can be easily understood within the language of the NPPF regarding the significance of heritage assets and the impact of proposals on that significance, and takes full account of the most recent published advice in the Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Notes (2015) which provide supporting information on good practice, particularly looking at the principles of how national policy and guidance can be put into practice. We welcome reference to the following publications in the proposed scope of the EIA:

*Historic Environment Good Practice Advice Note 2 on Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment:*

<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/gpa2-managing-significance-in-decision-taking/> and

*Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 on The Setting of Heritage Assets:*

<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/gpa3-setting-of-heritage-assets/>

We advise that the approach taken to assessment of heritage impacts should take its cue from the sensitivity of individual assets and groups of assets to the specific types of change associated with development and their capacity to absorb the effects of such change within their settings rather than focusing on the relative value of individual assets in a tabular and atomised approach to the assessment of impact on individual heritage assets as in the proposed methodology drawn from the design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) (11.2.10). In our view such an approach usually fails to properly engage with the nature of the significance of the assets and their relationships with each other, the surrounding topographic landscape, and their shared historic and archaeological landscape context. We consider that matrices provide little useful contribution to the assessment of heritage impacts and tend to confuse concepts of the significance, sensitivity and magnitude of impact whilst atomising complex relationships between features and apparent impacts. Whilst we acknowledge that this is the typical method of assessment utilised in development schemes of a similar nature, we nonetheless advocate the additional need for a



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## EAST MIDLANDS OFFICE

more narrative approach to explain clearly the particular elements of significance of individual designated heritage assets that are sensitive to the type of development proposed under the Viking Link scheme. We would refer you for additional guidance to the Historic England publication *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance: For the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment* (2008): <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/constructive-conservation/conservation-principles/>

We would recommend that the Historic Environment Record information curated by Heritage Lincolnshire is also consulted (11.2.1) since they provide archaeological advice to Boston Borough Council.

As advocated in our previous pre-application meetings we would strongly recommend the inclusion of LiDAR under the Environmental Impact Assessment (11.2.3) regardless of aerial photographic and National Mapping Programme dataset coverage.

In relation to consideration of proposed mitigation measures (11.4), we recommend that you ensure the potential for those measures to cause harm to heritage assets is also taken account of. For example, planting of trees or the creation of earthwork barriers may impact on archaeological remains, and might be intrusive in and out of character with designed or historic landscapes.

The assessment should also take account of the potential impact which associated activities such as construction and increased traffic and noise might have upon perceptions, understanding and appreciation of the heritage assets in the area. It is important that the assessment is designed to ensure that all impacts are fully understood. We would recommend that designated heritage assets are considered as sensitive receptors in noise assessments (Chapter 14) and the impact of noise on the experience of the asset within its setting is addressed under the cultural heritage assessment.

We also advise that there is need for a nuanced approach to development of an appropriate archaeological evaluation scheme for non-designated archaeological remains of all periods to support the EIA. We would also remind you that archaeological remains will also contribute to the significance designated heritage assets derive from their settings. Appropriate consideration of the impact of loss of or damage to such remains on that significance should also therefore be included within the scope of assessment. We advise you to be guided by the specialist archaeological advisors at Lincolnshire County Council and Heritage Lincolnshire as to the range of desk and field based techniques that will need to be employed to consider the full breadth of potential archaeological remains, and the methodology of assessment. You must ensure that the EIA will provide a robust evidence base to



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guide the implementation of an archaeological mitigation strategy for the entire development scheme. We advise that in our view it will be important to ensure that the geophysical surveys, trial trenching and any additional fieldwork is conducted and reported on prior to submission of your planning and MMO applications (11.2.5).

### Next Steps

Historic England urges you to address the issues set out above to ensure that the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) will provide a sound basis on which to assess the significance of any heritage assets affected and the impacts of the proposed scheme on that significance. A sound EIA report is the basis on which to identify (and where possible avoid, minimise or mitigate) direct and indirect impacts on assets of local, regional and national importance.

We would be pleased to offer additional advice in relation to the key issues addressed above, namely the methodology of the assessment of impact on designated heritage assets and the need for additional fieldwork to be scoped in to the assessment of the intertidal zone. Please contact us if you would like to discuss the points raised in more detail. We would be pleased to coordinate a teleconference with our Senior Science Advisor to assist you further in relation to the latter in particular.

We look forward to hearing further from you in due course.

Yours sincerely

Dr Helen Woodhouse  
Inspector of Ancient Monuments  
E-mail: [helen.woodhouse@HistoricEngland.org.uk](mailto:helen.woodhouse@HistoricEngland.org.uk)

cc James Gidman, Arcadis

### VIKING LINK

#### Pre-application Advice Information Provided

Viking Link UK Onshore Scheme Scoping Report VKL-08-06-J500-001 Revision 1.0



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## Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust Scoping Opinion

Mr Andy Booth  
Planning  
East Lindsey District Council

SENT BY EMAIL ONLY

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[www.lincstrust.org.uk](http://www.lincstrust.org.uk)

18 August 2016

Dear Mr Booth

APPLICATION NO: N/110/01620/16

PROPOSAL: Environmental Impact Assessment (E.E.C Directive 85/337/E.E.C. as amended by Council Directive 97/11/E.C) for a scoping opinion with respect to Viking Link Interconnector Project.

LOCATION: Sandilands, Roman Bank, Sandilands, Sutton on Sea, Lincolnshire

Thank you for consulting the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust on the scoping opinion for the proposed Viking Link Interconnector Project.

Having read the scoping report the Trust welcomes the ecological surveys that have been carried out and are proposed to be carried out on the landfall site, cable route and convertor station site. In terms of habitat surveys we welcome the proposal to carry out extended Phase 1 habitat surveys and National Vegetation Classification (NVC) surveys (paragraph 8.2.5) of the cable route. However, we would recommend that semi-natural habitats are also surveyed to a sufficient standard to enable them to be assessed against the Local Wildlife Site criteria for Lincolnshire to better determine their nature conservation value. The cable route should be designed to avoid any habitats found to meet LWS criteria. We have already made this recommendation to the project ecologists and we understand that they are amenable to assessing habitats against the LWS criteria where appropriate.

We would query the aim in paragraph 8.2.6 to complete all surveys by the end of 2016 when there are still surveys to be carried out that can only take place next spring, such as breeding bird surveys and great crested newt surveys. We note however that the need for these surveys, and that they will have to be undertaken in 2017, is recognised in paragraph 8.2.7.

We have some concerns regarding the statement made in paragraph 8.5.2 that *'Given the intensive agricultural nature of the majority of the study area, it is anticipated that the majority of designated sites and other habitat features such as woodland can be avoided.'* The project should be aiming to avoid all designated sites through site design, so it is concerning that it is implicit in this sentence that some designated sites may not be avoided. Paragraph 8.5.2 continues to say that *'Likely effects for habitats are anticipated to be on watercourses, field boundary features and areas of grassland if these are semi-natural or diverse in nature although all features will be fully reinstated following construction.'* If semi-natural habitats are found to be diverse in nature and meet LWS criteria then the cable route should be designed to avoid them. If avoidance is not possible then appropriate mitigation would be required to ensure impacts are minimised and habitats suitably restored.



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The Trust also has concerns regarding the mitigation proposed in paragraphs 7.2.22 and 7.4.2 of the Agriculture and Soils chapter which state that '*Mitigation is likely to include, but will not be limited to, the avoidance of development in arable land (including mixed use and silage fields) in preference of permanent pasture, where practicable and taking into account technical and other environmental considerations*'. Permanent pasture can be of significant biodiversity interest, much more so than arable land, and so it is concerning that this preference is being shown to develop permanent pasture over arable land. We appreciate however that there is the recognition that other environmental considerations have to be taken into account and would recommend that permanent pasture fields are subject to full botanical surveys if they are found to be species rich during Phase 1 surveys. The results of these surveys should be used to assess the sites against Local Wildlife Site criteria. The cable route should be designed to avoid any sites that are found to meet LWS criteria.

*Points of accuracy:*

Paragraphs 5.3.1 and 5.3.2: Whilst the Trust welcomes the recognition that chalk rivers and coastal grazing marshes could be impacted upon if not avoided it should be noted that these are not designated geological sites. Where these habitats are designated they are designated for their nature conservation value as Local Wildlife Sites or Sites of Nature Conservation Importance.

Table 8.2 refers to Site of Nature Conservation Importance criteria. In Lincolnshire the relevant criteria are the Local Wildlife Site Guidelines for Greater Lincolnshire published by the Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership available from the GLNP website ([www.glnp.org.uk](http://www.glnp.org.uk)).

Thank you again for consulting the Trust. If you have any queries regarding the above please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading 'Elizabeth Biott'.

Elizabeth Biott  
Conservation Office



## CONTACT US

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You can find out more information by:



calling our freephone number:  
**0800 731 0561**



Sending an email to:  
**vikinglink@communityrelations.co.uk**



Writing to our freepost address at:  
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Visiting our website at:  
**www.viking-link.com**

If you, or someone you know, would like information in Braille, audio, large print or another language, please call us on the freephone number above.