

National Grid
Cable Tunnel Replacement
Project

Environmental Statement
Volume II
Chapter 5 Consultation

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Quality information

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5 Consultation

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 This chapter of the Environmental Statement (ES) outlines the stakeholder engagement activities undertaken on the Proposed Development to date which have been carried out as part of the optioneering phase and the environmental assessment process. Consultation and stakeholder input has been integral to the design and development of the Proposed Development in the identification of existing environmental sensitivities and identification and assessment of potential environmental impacts as a result of the Proposed Development.

5.1.2 A Statement of Community Involvement Report has been submitted with the planning applications to Thurrock Council and Gravesham Borough Council, which contains further details of how the public were engaged on the proposals for the Proposed Development.

5.1.3 A Project website was launched in September 2023 and can be accessed via the link below. This website includes detailed information about the Proposed Development including an interactive map, online public information exhibitions and contact information. The website can be found at:

<https://www.nationalgrid.com/electricity-transmission/network-and-infrastructure/infrastructure-projects/grain-to-tilbury>

5.2 National Grid's commitment to engagement

5.2.1 Under Section 38 and Schedule 9 of the Electricity Act 1989¹, National Grid has a duty to have regard to the desirability of the preservation of amenity: the natural environment, cultural heritage, landscape and visual quality, as well as the effect of National Grid's works on communities.

5.2.2 In addition, National Grid's Stakeholder, Community and Amenity Policy² sets out a commitment to meet this duty. It makes the following commitments to consultation when undertaking electricity works:

"We will promote genuine and meaningful stakeholder and community engagement. We will meet and, where appropriate, exceed the statutory requirements for consultation or engagement. We will adopt the following principles to help us meet this commitment:

- we will seek to identify and understand the views and opinions of all the stakeholders and communities who may be affected by our works;*
- we will provide opportunities for engagement from the early stages of the process, where options and alternatives are being considered and there is the greatest scope to influence the design of the works;*
- we will endeavour to enable constructive debate to take place, creating open and two-way communication processes;*
- we will ensure that benefits, constraints and adverse impacts of proposed works are communicated openly for meaningful stakeholder and community comment and discussion;*
- we will be clear about any aspects of the works that cannot be altered;*
- we will utilise appropriate methods and effort in engaging stakeholders and communities, proportionate to the scale and impact of the works; and, we will provide feedback on how views expressed have been considered and the outcomes of any engagement process or activity".*

¹ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/29/contents>

² https://www.nationalgrid.com/sites/default/files/documents/National%20Grid_s%20commitments%20when%20undertaking%20works%20in%20the%20UK.pdf

5.3 Early engagement on the Proposed Development

Strategic Options Appraisal

- 5.3.1 In 2022, National Grid undertook a Strategic Options Appraisal to inform the selection of a preferred option for the upgrade of the TKRE circuits. Three options were initially identified:
- the installation of new cables within the existing tunnel;
 - the installation of new cables within the new tunnel; and
 - the installation of a new overhead line across the River Thames.
- 5.3.2 The installation of new cables within the existing tunnel was determined not to be feasible due to the health and safety risks. The installation of a new overhead line across the River Thames, given its location and scale, would have had greater permanent environmental impacts. On balance, it was considered that the installation of new cables within a new tunnel was the most viable preferable option overall.
- 5.3.3 An 'Options Appraisal Report' was produced and used to approach the following relevant stakeholders for early pre-application advice:
- Thurrock Council;
 - Gravesham Borough Council;
 - Natural England;
 - Historic England;
 - Environment Agency;
 - Marine Management Organisation (MMO);
 - Port of Tilbury;
 - Port of London Authority; and
 - Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB).
- 5.3.4 Pre-application responses and advice were received from Thurrock Council, Natural England, Historic England, Environment Agency. Refer to Volume II Chapter 2: Alternatives for a summary of these responses as well as further information on the options appraisal process.

Engagement with Environmental Statutory Consultees on Strategic Options Report

- 5.3.5 A series of further meetings were held to brief these key stakeholders as the initial siting and preliminary design of the Proposed Development progressed. These are detailed in **Table 5-1** below:

Table 5-1: Engagement with Environmental Statutory Consultees on Strategic Options Report

Date	Stakeholder	Summary of Meeting
13th October 2022	Environment Agency	<p>The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the Proposed Development and the three options outlined above with the Environment Agency. The Strategic Options Appraisal report was shared in advance of the meeting. The conclusions outlined in the report as well as constraints associated with the relevant options were discussed. The following key constraints were noted by the Environment Agency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flood zones 2 and 3 present on both sides of the river; • Flood defences present on both sides of the river, and National Grid should consider the 16m working distances during

Date	Stakeholder	Summary of Meeting
		<p>construction, where feasible, and residual risk in the preparation of any Flood Risk Assessment;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing and historic landfill sites on the north bank in east and consequent risks to water quality from mobilisation of sediment and contaminants; and Wildlife habitat including nearby European designated sites. <p>The Environment Agency advised their Thames Estuary 2100 Plan (currently undergoing revision) should be considered, especially with regards to depths of shafts and where the defences would be.</p> <p>The Environment Agency did not have a clear preference on which option should be taken forward but agreed Option 3 would be the more difficult of the three to consent and implement.</p>
25th November 2022	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)	<p>The RSPB stated that ground nesting birds will be a key consideration during construction phase along with other Schedule 1 birds such as marsh harriers and water voles. The RSPB also recommended Cliffe Pools as being suitable locations for exported spoil, stating that the RSPB are interested in using tunnel spoil from the Proposed Development to provide wildlife benefits at this location, should it be suitable.</p> <p>During the meeting, details of relevant RSPB contacts were provided to allow continued and meaningful engagement.</p>
28 November 2022	Natural England	<p>This meeting was held with the lead advisor in the West Anglia Team (covering Essex), the senior advisor for Thames Estuary and project manager for the SSSI Notification Project from Natural England to discuss the Proposed Development and run through the options presented in the Strategic Options Appraisal.</p> <p>Uncertainties surrounding the extent and location of land required for spoil storage were discussed alongside uncertainties of how the Proposed Development might interact with the Port of Tilbury Freeport proposals, it was however noted that an initial meeting had been held with Port of Tilbury to discuss this interaction.</p> <p>Natural England enquired about the noise generated from the Tunnel Boring Machine which would be required for Option 2, and also stated that the scope of impacts must consider all functionally linked land to European sites. Natural England explained that the Tilbury area is in the second stage of Natural England's 'Thames Estuary Invertebrates Essex & Kent' SSSI notification project.</p> <p>Natural England raised the presence of Goshem's Farm, an Ingrebourne Valley site which consists of ash deposits, has undergone 10 years of ecological monitoring and is particularly important for invertebrates with species of national interest. There are also notable plant, and breeding bird species and ditches of importance to aquatic wildlife.</p>
01st December 2022 (follow up meeting)	RSPB	<p>This meeting was held following the initial meeting on the 25 November 2022, attendees from the RSPB included the RSPB Area Manager for Kent & Sussex and the RSPB Rural Surveyor. The meetings' purpose was to request formal opinions on the three options presented in the Strategic Options Report.</p> <p>National Grid confirmed in the meeting that the tunnel works (driving from the north) will not be in the adjacent national/European designated sites and that the adjacent existing overhead line will require some alterations.</p> <p>The RSPB explained the importance of the Shorne coast as a designated site for breeding Redshank, and that the area would benefit from improvements to the freshwater supplies. Likewise, the RSPB explained undergrounding of OHL would be a beneficial project for local ecology and encouraged the applicant to submit</p>

Date	Stakeholder	Summary of Meeting
		<p>details on potential easements (as appropriate) as early as possible.</p> <p>The applicant also clarifies that any advice or recommendations on survey work from the RSPB would be welcomed.</p>
<p>19 December 2022</p>	<p>Port of London Authority (PLA)</p>	<p>The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the Proposed Development and the three options outlined above with the Port of Tilbury. The Strategic Options Appraisal report was shared in advance of the meeting. The following points were discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The approach to planning for the Proposed Development, including that the tunnel would fall under permitted development rights. • Requesting written feedback from the PLA on which option they would prefer. • Land ownership. • PLA explained that the process under S66 of the Port London Act and PLA licences cover both the land ownership and consenting aspects of the works. • Temporary works licences were discussed in relation to off shore ground investigation. • Tunnel depth and importance of sufficient depth so not to interfere with dredging with the PLA to send on the necessary details and other important parameters to abide by. • Methods for water discharge during operation of the tunnel and tunnel design. • PLA explained that they would strongly prefer spoil to be moved via river. • PLA queried what would happen with the existing tunnel. National Grid explained decommissioning would not form part of this project and that no decisions had been made yet. Existing oil-filled cables would definitely need to be removed though.

5.4 EIA Screening Consultation

- 5.4.1 As detailed in ES Volume II Chapter 4: Environmental Impact Assessment Methodology, a screening report was produced in June 2023 and submitted to Thurrock Council, Gravesham Borough Council and the MMO.
- 5.4.2 Thurrock Council’s screening opinion (23/00681/SCR, received 7 July 2023) confirmed that the Proposed Development is not considered to be ‘EIA Development’. Gravesham Borough Council’s screening opinion (20230668, received 3 August 2023) confirmed their opinion that the Proposed Development is ‘EIA Development’. Consequently, an EIA has been prepared to support both planning applications to Thurrock Council and Gravesham Borough Council.
- 5.4.3 The MMO determined the Proposed Development does not constitute a project under either Schedule A1 or A2 of the Marine Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2007, and so requested the screening be revoked.
- 5.4.4 A copy of the screening opinions received are provided in Volume VI Appendix 4.2.
- 5.4.5 It should also be noted that prior to the submission of the EIA Screening Report, National Grid engaged with the Environment Agency, Thurrock Council, Gravesham Borough Council and Historic England, in April and May 2023, to provide details of the design of the Proposed Development at that time and explain the approach to EIA Screening and the intention to submit a planning application.

5.5 EIA Scoping Consultation

- 5.5.1 As detailed in ES Volume II Chapter 4: Environmental Impact Assessment Methodology, a formal Scoping Report was not submitted to Thurrock Council or Gravesham Borough Council. However, consultation was held on specific elements of the scope of the ES with relevant consultees to ensure the ES submitted with the planning applications was robust and proportionate.
- 5.5.2 The details of these consultations are summarised in Table 5-2 and more detailed information is presented in the relevant technical chapter in ES Volumes III and IV.

Table 5-2: EIA Scoping Consultation Summaries

Date	Consultees	Summary of Consultation
11 th July 2023	Thurrock Council / Gravesham Borough Council	<p>An email was sent to Thurrock Council and Gravesham Borough Council on the 11 July 2023, setting out proposed visual receptors, viewpoints locations and photographic methodology that would form the basis of the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. A response was requested from Thurrock Council and Gravesham Borough Council to provide comment and or agreement.</p> <p>Thurrock Council responded on the 17/07/2023 and confirmed their agreement to the proposed viewpoint locations, however they requested a viewpoint be included from the Village of West Tilbury to the north east.</p> <p>Gravesham Borough Council did not have any comment to make.</p>
10 th August 2023	Internal Drainage Board (IDB)	<p>The IDB were contacted as the Proposed Development is located within the North Kent Marshes IDB authority area and asked for any comments or feedback.</p> <p>The IDB responded on 21 August 2023 confirming the watercourses in the vicinity which are IDB adopted watercourses and provided information on the potential for various consents, subject to the proposed works.</p>
11 th August 2023	Environment Agency	<p>A meeting was held with the Environment Agency to discuss the Proposed Development’s interaction with the flood defences in the vicinity. The Environment Agency confirmed that the Proposed</p>

Date	Consultees	Summary of Consultation
		<p>Development design looks acceptable in this regard but that the following actions would be required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring of impact on flood defences before, during and after the tunnelling; • Access to flood defences and main rivers would be required for routine maintenance and at times of flooding (e.g. for removal of obstructions contributing to the flooding); • A 2m minimum space would be required to allow the access of vehicles to undertake maintenance; and • The Proposed Development will require a Flood Risk Activity permit. <p>The drainage management strategy was also discussed at this meeting.</p>
29 th August 2023	<p>Heritage consultees including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic England; • Kent County Council's Senior Archaeological Officer providing supporting Gravesham Borough Council; and • Essex County Council's Principal Historic Environment Consultant supporting Thurrock Council. 	<p>A meeting was held with the heritage consultees to discuss the scope of the Historic Environment assessment, specifically the scope of the geoarchaeological deposit modelling and subsequent fieldwork.</p> <p>Prior to the meeting, a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for Geoarchaeological Deposit Modelling and Borehole Survey was submitted to the consultees for comment.</p> <p>In the meeting it was explained, as set out in the WSI, the work will be staged with the results of the Stage 1 deposit model informing the number and location of Stage 2 boreholes.</p> <p>During the meeting, discussion was held on the deposit model, and how robust the underlying data would be. Additionally, it was raised that further understanding of the construction methodology and hydrological model for the tunnel shaft would be important.</p> <p>It was agreed that a second meeting would be held once Stage 1 of the WSI had been executed, to review its robustness. Construction engineers would also be invited to the second meeting so to explain the construction methodology and hydrological model for the tunnel shaft.</p>
6 th September 2023	<p>Highways Authorities including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thurrock Council; and • National Highways 	<p>A meeting was held with highways representatives from Thurrock Council and National Highways to present the Proposed Development, update on progress and discuss the scope of the transport assessment within the ES's to be submitted as part of the planning applications.</p> <p>An overview of the Proposed Development was provided, summarising the project location, the need for the Proposed Development, consideration of alternatives, sensitivities in the area, project timescales/ programme and the recent decision to submit a planning application with EIA.</p> <p>The meeting was also used to discuss the Screening Opinion provided by Thurrock Council and respond to the points made to date.</p> <p>The scope of this meeting was to focus on traffic and transport relevant project information therefore relevant parameters were discussed. E.g., the Proposed Developments construction programme, construction worker numbers, construction traffic flows, use of HGV's/ abnormal loads, peak construction phase, travel patterns and proposed construction vehicle routes/ study area for example.</p> <p>It was also clarified at the meeting that during normal operation of the Proposed Development, the only traffic generated would be</p>

Date	Consultees	Summary of Consultation
		<p>associated with infrequent repair and routine maintenance works. Therefore, additional traffic movements during the operational phase are not anticipated to have a significant effect on the transport network or receptors.</p> <p>The transport deliverables were also discussed outlining the approach taken for each, this included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Statement Traffic and Transport chapter; • Outline CTMP; • Abnormal Load Assessment Report; and • The decision was made not to produce a standalone Transport Statement as the relevant detail would be captured in the other transport deliverables detailed. <p>During the call questions were raised and the following aspects were agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The study area for the traffic and transport chapter of the ES was agreed. • Agreement that the cumulative developments listed seemed reasonable and that a cumulative impacts section of the ES chapter would be included and then combined with the traffic assessment. • Agreement that a transport statement would not be required if the required information was picked up in other application documents, but it was agreed that a transport statement note signposting to the relevant information is provided with the application. • Confirmation that decommissioning would not be part of the project or planning application (so scoped of the ES or the traffic model). • Clarification that visitors are included in consideration of operational movements, although in the case of the Proposed Development the numbers at operation are unlikely to be significant. • It was agreed that another meeting prior to planning submission is not required unless a specific issue needs discussing.
<p>15th September 2023</p>	<p>Highways Authorities including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kent County Council (supporting Gravesham Borough Council) 	<p>In the same way that a meeting was set up with Thurrock Council, a meeting was held with highways representatives from Kent County Council to present the project.</p> <p>An overview of the Proposed Development was provided, summarising the project location, the need for the Proposed Development, consideration of alternatives, sensitivities in the area, project timescales/ programme and the recent decision to submit a planning application with EIA.</p> <p>The meeting was also used to discuss the Screening Opinion provided by Gravesham Borough Council and Kent County Council and respond to the points made to date.</p> <p>The scope of this meeting was to focus on traffic and transport relevant project information therefore relevant parameters were discussed. E.g. the Proposed Developments construction programme, construction worker numbers, construction traffic flows, use of HGV's/ abnormal loads, peak construction phase, travel patterns and proposed construction vehicle routes/ study area for example.</p>

Date	Consultees	Summary of Consultation
		<p>It was also clarified at the meeting that during normal operation of the Proposed Development, the only traffic generated would be associated with infrequent repair and routine maintenance works. Therefore, additional traffic movements during the operational phase are not anticipated to have a significant effect on the transport network or receptors.</p> <p>The transport deliverables were also discussed outlining the approach taken for each, this included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Statement Traffic and Transport chapter; • Outline CTMP; • Abnormal Load Assessment Report; and • The decision not to produce a standalone Transport Statement as the relevant detail would be captured in the other transport deliverables detailed. <p>During the call questions were raised and the following aspects were agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The study area for the traffic and transport chapter of the ES was agreed. • Agreement that a transport statement would not be required if the required information was picked up in other application documents, but it was agreed that a transport statement note signposting to the relevant information is provided with the application.
22 nd September 2023	Environmental Health Officer at Gravesham Borough Council	An email was sent to Gravesham Borough Council on 22/09/2023 outlining the proposed scope of the air quality and noise and vibration assessments. A response was received on 13 November 2023 with their agreement.
22 nd September 2023	Environmental Health Officer at Thurrock Council	A scoping email was sent to Thurrock Council outlining the proposed scope of the air quality and noise and vibration assessments. No response was received.
22 nd September 2023	Natural England	<p>A meeting was held with Natural England to discuss the scope and progress of the ecological assessment, the Report to inform the Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) and the approach to Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).</p> <p>HRA</p> <p>The working noise modelling results were discussed. It was confirmed that an increase of 3dB from the baseline is Natural England’s internally agreed approach, but that there is a difference between perceptible noise change and what would influence bird behaviours/cause disturbance. It was also raised that the HRA should consider other functionally linked land than just the foreshore and to consider ringed plover in the area, further inland of the foreshore.</p> <p>It was agreed that a draft of the Report to Inform the HRA would be provided to Natural England prior to the submission of the planning applications. <i>Note: This was provided to Natural England for comment on 24 October 2023, and comment was received 8 November 2023. These comments were taken into account and the Report to Inform the HRA updated prior to planning submission.</i></p> <p>Ecology Surveys</p> <p>The ecology surveys undertaken for the Proposed Development were discussed, in particular the invertebrate, bird, reptile, badger and watervole surveys and the likely mitigation where required.</p>

Date	Consultees	Summary of Consultation
		<p>Biodiversity Net Gain: A “first draft” of the BNG metric 4.0 was presented with an explanation of which elements of the work were being recorded as a loss/retained/delayed. This was to be developed to include a post-construction plan (landscape plan) and a BNG strategy to be included with the planning submission.</p>
27 th September 2023	<p>Lead Local Flood Authority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thurrock Council (Strategic Transport Officer covering flooding matters) • Kent County Council (Flood Risk Officer) 	<p>A meeting was held with the LLFAs to discuss the Proposed Development and associated Drainage Management Strategy.</p> <p>Gravesend: The drainage management strategy was discussed consisting of channel drains to pick up surface water, rain water pipes on headhouse, capturing and discharging via an outfall in to the existing drainage ditch. Using SuDS guidance, the site has been determined to be of low/medium risk of surface water pollution. The majority of the site will have free drainage stone chipping with a type 3 sub-base so water will soak away naturally. Impermeable surfacing makes up approximately 25% of the site. The site will have filtration trenches and downstream defenders. It is anticipated the site can hold water for a whole day. A biodiverse green roof is proposed on the headhouse. SuDS are unable to be incorporated due to National Grid operational requirements which are further explained in the drainage strategy submitted within this planning application.</p> <p>Tilbury: The drainage management strategy at Tilbury was explained, which has a similar design to Gravesend. There is the same operational issue of being unable to incorporate SuDS.</p>
9 th October 2023	<p>Heritage consultees including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic England • Kent County Council’s Senior Archaeological Officer providing supporting Gravesham Borough Council • Essex County Council’s Principal Historic Environment Consultant supporting Thurrock Council. 	<p>A second meeting was held to present the results of the deposit modelling to the consultees and the tunnel construction in more depth. It was agreed that the updated Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) would be included in the ES for proposed borehole investigations. It was proposed this be undertaken post planning application submission in accordance with seasonal restrictions for percussive boreholes in relation to the nearby European Designations.</p>
17 th October 2023	<p>Kent County Council Public Right of Way (PRoW) team</p>	<p>A meeting was held with Kent’s PRoW team to discuss in particular the Gravesend PRoW NG2 and National Cycle Network (NCN) Route 1.</p> <p>It was confirmed that the Gravesend PRoW NG1 (coastal path) will be unaffected during construction of the Proposed Development project. NG2 along Thames and Medway Canal Road, which formally finishes approx. 100m prior to entrance to National Grid’s land will be affected. The section of the road, after NG2 finishes, is very narrow and it was noted that the road is also used by motorcyclists and horses graze in the fields.</p>

Date	Consultees	Summary of Consultation
		<p>Peak vehicle movements and construction programme were discussed and the following diversion options for NG2 considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The construction of new passing places was considered but there is not felt to be enough space. • The only possible diversion would be 7km long which generally is undesirable for cyclists (through Highham to the train station, not Shorne). The diversion would take cyclists onto dangerous narrow roads such as Lower Chalk Road which would bring them into conflict with road traffic. However, these are risks that cyclists constantly evaluate and this may be a safer options than bringing them into close proximity with construction traffic. • A further option considered was temporary traffic lights and marshalls to manage flow of pedestrians and cyclist on the footpath. <p>It was advised that Sustrans will shortly be commissioning resurfacing project on NG2 from the barrier on Thames and Medway Canal road, east of National Grid's entrance. This part of the road is not needed for the Proposed Development; however it was agreed that Sustrans would be consulted and made aware of the Proposed Development and to gain advice on diversions. Their works will take 2-3 weeks.</p> <p>It was also recommended that the Kent County Council's cycling team be consulted for advice on diversions.</p>
<p>17th October 2023</p>	<p>Buglife</p>	<p>This meeting was held to introduce Buglife to the project. An overview of the findings of the invertebrate surveys undertaken was provided and the use of biodiverse roofs discussed, with Buglife highlighting their best practice guidance for the creation of these types of roofs.</p>
<p>18th October 2023</p>	<p>Kent County Council – Senior Archaeological Officer.</p>	<p>This meeting was held to discuss the approaches to evaluation and mitigation for the headhouse and SEC compound at Gravesend from an archaeology perspective.</p> <p>The key points discussed at this meeting were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify the proposed approach to borehole investigation - two boreholes within the tunnel shaft and one borehole in the location of the proposed new pylon. • Confirmation that the results of the boreholes would inform the requirements for further investigation/mitigation followed by update of the WSI. • Confirmed that there is a clearer understanding of the elements that may survive within the Milton rifle range as earthworks or buried remains. • In terms of surviving earthworks, these would be recorded prior to construction, and we discussed the potential for LiDAR either existing Environment Agency data or drone-based field survey to achieve this. • Discussed the potential for separating evaluation/recording of shallower remains associated with the Milton range from that of any deeply buried deposits/remains associated with the Mesolithic/Neolithic peat horizons. • Discussed that targeted shallower trenches could be used to evaluate those remains of the rifle range that may be impacted. • Clarified that evaluation of the archaeological potential of the deeper deposits needs to be considered in light of the current engineering/construction methods and dewatering solutions e.g. coffer dams or working within the shaft structure itself.

Date	Consultees	Summary of Consultation
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussed that it is also worth considering any existing solutions where this might have previously been achieved e.g. Holland or France. Discussed the timing of the archaeological investigations and the proposed planning submission at the end of November. Agreed that as long as the ES/planning application clearly set out the proposed approach and outline programme for the fieldwork, it would be reasonable to progress this post-submission/by condition. <p>The updated WSI for Geoarchaeological Deposit Modelling and Borehole Survey incorporating comments from KCC was re-circulated to Kent County Council following the call.</p>
31 st October 2023	Sustrans / Kent County Council's Sustainable Transport Officer	This meeting was held to discuss the Proposed Development's interaction with National Cycle Network (NCN) Route 1 during the construction phase at Gravesend. Various options for the management of / temporary diversion of NCN Route 1 were discussed. After the meeting, the options discussed were formally recorded and shared back with the meeting attendees for comment.

5.5.3 It should be noted that Kent Wildlife Trust, Essex Wildlife Trust and the county ecologists at Kent and Essex were contacted, but no response was received. National Highway's Lower Thames Crossing projects team and Statera's Thurrock Power Flexible generation project team have also been consulted on the Proposed Development.

5.5.4 Technical specialists have continued to consult with the relevant statutory consultees, regulatory bodies and specialist advisors throughout the production of the ES as part of the baseline data gathering and assessment process. This engagement process has supported in the progression of the ES, ensuring that available baseline data has been used and the assessment method, evaluation and mitigation is robust. Again, these consultations are summarised in the corresponding technical chapters contained within this ES.

5.6 Public Consultation

5.6.1 National Grid held a four-week public consultation which included in person and online events that ran from the 27 September 2023 to the 29 October 2023. The purpose of the consultation is to inform members of the public, the local community, and other interested stakeholders on the details of the Proposed Development and also allows an opportunity for people to provide feedback relating to the Proposed Development so that useful insights can be integrated into the evolving design in advance of planning submission.

5.6.2 Residents within the immediate vicinity of the Proposed Development received a newsletter with more information on the public consultation.

Information Events

5.6.3 Public information events took place at Tilbury (Tilbury Community Association) on 13 October 2023 at 3pm -7pm and in Gravesend (Clarendon Royal Community) on 11 October 2023 3pm-7pm. These events served primarily to provide information on the Proposed Development to members of the public in the local community. The feedback provided during the public information event has been documented and considered by the project team and is detailed in the Statement of Community Involvement.

Webinars

- 5.6.4 The public consultation was also hosted on a project website where residents and members of the public could register to attend to get more information. This allowed those that could not attend the events in person to receive information relevant to the Proposed Development.
- 5.6.5 Two webinars were held, one which focussed on the Proposed Development in Tilbury north of the River Thames and one focussed on Gravesend south of the River Thames.
- 5.6.6 The Gravesend webinar was held on Wednesday 18 October 2023 7pm-8pm and the Tilbury webinar was held on Thursday 19 October 2023 7pm-8pm.

Feedback

- 5.6.7 In addition to the in-person events held and the online webinars, members of the public could provide feedback through a variety of means. An online feedback form was available to complete via the National Grid project webpage, an email address and telephone number were also made available on the project webpage and for those who preferred to respond to the consultation via post there was the opportunity to receive a printed copy of the feedback form and a freepost envelope by calling the project telephone information line.
- 5.6.8 A summary of all feedback received and further relevant engagement with the wider public including Counsellors is summarised in the Statement of Community Involvement accompanying this planning application.

5.7 Further Engagement on the Proposed Development for the EIA

- 5.7.1 Topic specific consultation is summarised in each technical chapter of the ES where relevant.

5.8 Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Meaning
BNG	Biodiversity Net Gain
CTMP	Construction Traffic Management Plan
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
ES	Environmental Statement
HGV	Heavy Goods Vehicle
HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessment
IDB	Internal Drainage Board
KCC	Kent County Council
LLFA	Lead Local Flood Authority
MMO	Marine Management Organisation
NCN	National Cycle Network
OHL	Overhead Line
PLA	Port of London Authority
PRoW	Public Right of Way
RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
SEC	Sealing End Compound
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
SuDS	Sustainable urban Drainage Systems
TKRE	Tilbury to Grain and Tilbury to Kingsnorth
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation

