

Agenda Item 15
Report NPA22/18

Report to	South Downs National Park Authority
Date	03 07 18
By	Countryside and Policy Manager (Wealden Heaths)
Title of Report Note	Update on ESSO Preferred Route Announcement

Recommendation: The Authority is recommended to:

- 1. Note the Preferred Route Announcement for the ESSO replacement pipeline through the SDNP.**
- 2. Agree that officers continue to work with ESSO to support the development of a fully mitigated and compensated scheme prior to Esso's public consultation exercise in Autumn 2018.**

1. Introduction

- 1.1 ESSO informed the SDNPA in December 2017 that they were planning to replace 90km of the existing underground multi-fuel pipeline which feeds Heathrow and Gatwick airports with petrol, diesel and aviation fuel from Fawley Refinery near Southampton. The existing pipeline route passes through the SDNP between Lower Upham and Alton, then between Binsted and Alice Holt. It was constructed in the 1960's and is coming to the end of its lifespan.
- 1.2 Members considered the proposals at Policy and Resources Committee in March 2018 and having taken account of the evidence provided into the impacts on the Special Qualities of the SDNP subsequently agreed its response at the NPA in April 2018.
- 1.3 The project will include both the construction of the proposed pipeline and also the subsequent process of decommissioning the existing pipeline.
- 1.4 ESSO have subsequently set out their preferred route, shown as option G in **Appendix I**, which does not correlate to the SDNPA's preferred route discussed in 3 below.

2. Policy Context.

- 2.1 This proposal impacts and could contribute to the following policies of the PMP.
- 2.2 Policies 1, 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 19, 24, 26, 28, 30, 31, 34, 37, 38 and 47.

3. Issues for consideration

- 3.1 The SDNPA's response commented on the options as follows;
 - 3.1.1 *ESSO have included alternative route options (D and F) north of West Tisted in the consultation which avoid the SDNP altogether. The SDNPA considers these options to be preferable due to the potential for impacts on the Registered parkscape at Chawton House (GII*) (Ropley to Chawton section) and also the Ancient woodland at Alice Holt (Binsted to Spreakly section). In addition both are significant tourism destinations within the SDNP where the pipeline construction impacts would be highly disruptive to the enjoyment of the SDNP in these locations for high numbers of visitors.*
 - 3.1.2 *The sections at Chawton and Alice Holt through the SDNP were not part of the former East Hampshire Downs AONB (see Landscape Report map para 7.2) therefore decision making*

about the route alignment for the existing pipeline would not have considered impacts on designated landscapes at that time. The subsequent inclusion of these areas within the SDNP changes the planning context for these proposals, and given the impacts identified above are considered to be unacceptable by SDNPA.

3.1.3 Therefore, the SDNPA concludes that were any scheme to be given approval then the SDNPA recommends that option G, entering the SDNP to the west of Bishops Waltham from the south running northwards to West Tisted followed by either route D or F to take the pipeline out of the SDNP would be the least damaging option to the SDNPA. North from Alton options J or M would be preferable to returning into the SDNP through option Q as this would unnecessarily impact on the ancient woodland and special qualities of the SDNP in that area.

3.2 It is disappointing to note that ESSO have not followed the SDNPA recommendations as above and that the preferred option is corridor G which passes through an area of the National Park to the north of Farringdon and potentially through Chawton House Registered parkscape. The route which is selected within the preferred route corridor will therefore be an important consideration and SDNPA officers will continue to be engaged with ESSO during the final route selection process.

3.3 It is also noted that despite SDNPA asking for a fully mitigated scheme to come forward with the Preferred Route Announcement, ESSO chose not to do so, however this is in line with the DCO process guidelines.

4. Next Steps

4.1 ESSO will be following the National Infrastructure Planning Process, looking to go to Consultation in autumn 2018, with an application for a Development Consent Order to the Planning Inspectorate in 2019 with a view to the project starting in 2021, see page 15 of **Appendix I** Preferred Route Announcement

4.2 The SDNPA will continue to work with ESSO to support the development of a fully mitigated scheme, or where this is not possible identify potential compensatory measures to be applied in time for the public consultation in the Autumn

4.3 The SDNPA reserves the right to challenge the route as part of the consultation period if the mitigation and compensation package is not deemed to be sufficient.

5. Other Implications

Implication	Yes*/No
Will further decisions be required by another committee/full authority?	Yes, NPA for a response to the Consultation in Autumn 2018
Does the proposal raise any Resource implications?	Officer time at present
How does the proposal represent Value for Money?	No VfM issues
Are there any Social Value implications arising from the proposal?	No
Have you taken regard of the South Downs National Park Authority's equality duty as contained within the Equality Act 2010?	Yes
Are there any Human Rights implications arising from the proposal?	No
Are there any Crime & Disorder implications arising from the proposal?	No
Are there any Health & Safety implications arising from the proposal?	No
Are there any Data Protection implications?	No
Are there any Sustainability implications based on the 5 principles set out in the SDNPA Sustainability Strategy:	No

6. Risks Associated with the Proposed Decision

6.1 There are no identified risks associated with the proposed decision

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Appendices
1. ESSO Preferred Route Announcement
2. SDNPA Response to consultation
3. Map of Route options
4. SDNPA Letter to ESSO
SDNPA Consultees
Chief Executive; Director of Countryside Policy and Management;
Director of Planning; Chief Finance Officer; Monitoring Officer; Legal
Services, Business Service Manager
External Consultees
If none state 'none'
Background Documents [NPA April 18 - item 12 plus appendices](#)
[P&R March 18 - item 17 plus appendices](#)

