RAMPION 2

SUBMISSION REVIEW

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Revision P02

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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1. This report sets out a review of the Rampion 2 proposals and the ES, specifically looking at aspects that cover landscape character and visual amenity and the effects of the development on these, as assessed in Chapter 15 Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and Chapter 18 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.

1.2. The report covers a review the methodology for both assessment and specifically concentrates on the proposals and effects that relate to the South Downs National Park and its setting.

1.3. The report does not purport to provide an alternative impact assessment.

2. SDNPA PURPOSES AND SPECIAL QUALITIES

2.1. Statutory purposes

2.1.1. The statutory purposes of the National Park as set out in the set out in the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 Sections 5 and 11A(2)) are:

- ***'Purpose 1:*** *To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area.*
- ***Purpose 2:*** *To promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park by the public.'*

2.1.2. The Statutory Purposes are underpinned in the Overarching National Planning Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1) (para 5.9.9 page 96) which states '*National Parks, the Broads and AONBs have been confirmed by the Government as having the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. Each of these designated areas has specific statutory purposes which help ensure their continued protection and which the IPC should have regard to in its decisions. The conservation of the natural beauty of the landscape and countryside should be given substantial weight by the IPC in deciding on applications for development consent in these areas.*'

2.2. Special Qualities

2.2.1. The SDNP seven special qualities (link to website available from reference list in APP-056) define sense of place, distinctiveness and the characteristics that make this place special and valued. The SDNPA consider that all Special Qualities should be conserved and enhanced. The following are the stated summary descriptions about the qualities that support the statutory purposes

1. '*Diverse, inspirational landscapes and breathtaking views*
2. *A rich variety of wildlife and habitats including rare and internationally important species*
3. *Tranquil and unspoilt places*
4. *An environment shaped by centuries of farming and embracing new enterprise*
5. *Great opportunities for recreational activities and learning experiences*
6. *Well-conserved historical features and a rich cultural heritage*
7. *Distinctive towns and villages, and communities with real pride in their area'*

2.2.2. The SDNPA consider that whilst Special Qualities nos. 1,3, and 5 are of key relevance to this review of the seascape, landscape and visual impacts of the Rampion 2 proposal, the other four are still of equal importance in wider considerations.

3. SUMMARY OF MATTERS OF SIGNIFICANT CONCERN

3.1. Overarching significant concerns

3.1.1. The SDNPA maintain their previously stated position: that the Rampion 2 development proposals give rise to significant seascape, landscape and visual impacts that cause harm to the Statutory Purposes of the SDNP and its Special Qualities, as defined in the original SDNP Partnership Management Plan (PMP), from both off-shore and on-shore development proposals.

3.1.2. It should be noted that the Special Qualities are not defined geographically. Any harm to these cannot be downplayed through the defining of a geographically limited Study Area as set out in Section 1.2.13 of the LVIA methodology (APP-167) which states out that '*The Study Area for the LVIA is illustrated in Figure 18.1* [APP-098] *and extends to a 2km buffer beyond the proposed DCO Order Limits.*' The SDNP maintains that any harm to the Special Qualities, as identified will occur in the ES, will harm the Statutory Purposes of the Designation and is of utmost concern. The SDNPA suggest it is of key importance to note that the Rampion 1 windfarm was not constructed when the SDNP Special Qualities were set out and suggest that Rampion 1 has already provided a significant level of harm to the Special Qualities, which is not taken into consideration in the assessment.

3.1.3. The SDNPA also considers that these limitations on the geographical study area as well as other reasons set out in this report, leads to a substantial understatement in the seascape, landscape and visual impacts set out in the Chapter 15 Seascape, landscape and visual impact assessment (APP-056) and Chapter 18 Landscape and visual impact (APP-059) of the ES.

3.1.4. The SDNPA are also concerned that the ES downplays the effects on the SDNP Landscape Character Areas due to the geographical extents of the Study Area, lack of consideration of some landscape elements and the use of a combined approach to landscape elements that, if considered in isolation, would be significant.

3.2. Incomplete and unevidenced proposals

3.2.1. The Commitments Register (Doc Ref 7.22) has multiple instances of uncertainty and qualification and use of phrases such as *'where practical', 'as far as reasonably practical', 'as far as reasonably possible'* and other similar phrases, that do not allow for a maximum design scenario to be established. The considerable areas of uncertainty imply that new or materially different environmental effects may be missing from the ES and therefore the impacts of the Proposed Development may be considerably understated or even incorrect.

3.3. Viability of HDD:

3.3.1. The SDNPA has a significant concern over the viability of that HDD proposed at Michelgrove Park and Sullington Hill.

3.3.2. It is understood that DCO approval would be given prior to any investigation is undertaken to firmly establish viability of the HDD proposed at Michelgrove Park and Sullington Hill. The SDNPA finds the uncertainty involved in this approach unacceptable; these two areas of HDD are both key embedded mitigation measures relied on heavily in the LVIA to mitigate adverse impacts on these highly sensitive areas.

3.3.3. It should be noted that these two key areas of trenchless crossing are not listed in the Commitment at C-5 and this contributes to SDNPA concerns over the uncertainty of the proposals.

3.3.4. There is also concern that if the HDD is deemed to be unviable after construction the cable corridor has already taken place, then significant harm will already have taken place along the cable corridor route and to the SDNP. The SDNPA strongly suggest that no construction along the cable corridor take place until the viability of all propose works is fully confirmed.

3.3.5. The DCO does not consent open trenching in areas where HDD is proposed and it is not clear what the alternative proposals would be, if the use of HDD is found not to be viable or fails.

3.4. Impact on the LCA I3

3.4.1. During construction, the magnitude of change for LCA I3 Arun to Adur Scarp Down is stated to be '*negligible to zero'*, despite the proposed HDD construction compounds immediately abutting the LCA both above and below scarp. This gives rise to a level of effect on landscape character of *'Minor and Not Significant'* and for landscape elements: '*N/A*'. The LVIA has not considered the nature of the LCA as open access land, the extent of perceptual and indirect effects and the stated assessed impacts. The resultant harm to the SDNP is considered by the SDNPA to be substantially understated.

3.5. Loss of vegetation

3.5.1. The proposed development will lead to loss of considerable area of hedges, tree and woodland and changes to the nature of grassland. Whilst replanting is proposed, trees cannot be replanted over the cable corridor and will bring long term and irreversible harm to the landscape character of the SDNP. This assertion can be reinforced through lessons learnt from the Rampion 1 development (see SDNPA Written Representation Appendix B) where this change of landscape character can be seen.

3.5.2. Considerable reliance is placed on the successful establishment of planting. Whilst the DCO (page 56, section 13) references that works should be carried out in accordance with the LEMP and secures a mechanism for the replanting of removed, dead, damaged or diseased plants, there is no mechanism in the DCO for addressing poor establishment of planting, which brings considerable and unacceptable uncertainty to the long-term effects of the proposed development.

3.5.3. Considerable reliance is placed on reinstatement of vegetation being carried out as soon as possible, which cannot be guaranteed as the detailed works programme is yet to be determined through the development of state specific LEMPs (see Commitments Register C-199). During the construction of Rampion 1 considerable lengths of the cable route, construction haul road and access routes remained in place throughout the construction period to provide access and for cable pulling/jointing activities, preventing prompt reinstatement.

3.6. Viability of hedgerow translocation

3.6.1. The SDNPA has concerns that there is no evidence available to support the assertion that the '*notching*' of hedges is viable and will be successful in the climatic conditions and soil of the SDNP. Whilst there has been acknowledgement of the need to mitigate against hedgerow loss and minimise the period of time for reinstatement, the proposed methods for doing so, in particular the 'notching' technique have not been tested on dry, free-draining chalk soils, or in the climate associated with the South Downs. The examples provided are from the Lake District and Norfolk Broads, both of which are much wetter landscapes than the application proposals.

3.6.2. Despite this lack of testing this key embedded mitigation measure (Commitments Register C-115) is heavily and over-relied on by the LVIA to mitigate impact. The uncertainty of the likely successful establishment, implies that new or materially different environmental effects may be missing from the ES. This in turn does not allow for appropriate mitigation strategies to be developed or allow comprehensive consideration of the proposals by stakeholders.

3.7. Joint bays

3.7.1. It is understood the joint bays are located at regular intervals (typically 600m – 1,000m) (see Commitment Register C-19) along the cable corridor. No detail of the construction of these is provided and it is assumed that there will need to be some form of marking and fencing to enable identification and prevent damage. These will be a frequent feature along the route and will serve to draw attention to this development. This long-term change of landscape character will be particularly evident in the open downland of the SDNP and give rise to significant landscape and visual impacts that do not appear to have been fully considered in the ES.

3.8. Study areas:

3.8.1. The LVIA methodology states (APP-16, section 1.2.14 page 7) that '*IEMA Guidance (IEMA, 2015; 2017) recommends a proportionate assessment focused on the likely significant effects of a development, and a proportionate technical aspect chapter. The LVIA Study Area must therefore be large enough to capture all likely significant effects. However, an overly large LVIA Study Area may be considered disproportionate if it makes understanding the key impacts of the development more difficult by including extraneous baseline information, and hence receptors which are unlikely to be significantly affected by the Proposed Development.*'

3.8.2. The SDNPA understand the need for a proportionate approach, however suggest that the LVIA study area is limited to such a narrow area around the DCO limit that it is likely to fail to assess the full range of landscape and visual receptors likely to be significantly impacted, which will be wide-ranging as indicated by Zones of Theoretical Visibility (ZTVs) in both the SLVIA (APP-090 Figures 15.18- 15.24) and the LVIA (APP-098 Figures 18.4a-18.4d) and have the potential for increased significant and unacceptable effects on the SDNP with its open downland, varied topography and long views.

4. PROJECT INFORMATION

4.1. Design and Access Statement (AS-003)

4.1.1. A DAS is often a primary source of information for interested parties to assist in gaining an overview and summary understanding of the proposals.

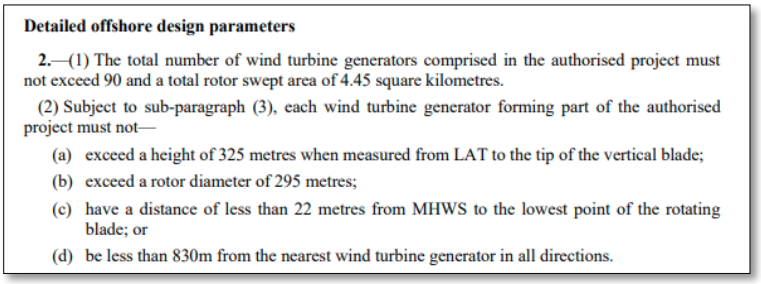
4.1.2. Despite mention of both offshore and onshore elements, including the maximum 38.8km onshore cable route in the ''Overview of the Proposed Development' at section 1.1.4, the submitted DAS only covers the Oakendene substation and National Grid Bolney substation extension works.

4.1.3. Design is not all about built form, and the omission of detail on the other aspects of the proposed development is misleading as it does not provide a complete overview or understanding of the whole proposed development, either offshore or onshore.

4.2. Maximum Design Scenario for WTGs

4.2.1. The DCO Explanatory Memorandum (Doc Ref 3.2) sets out that at section 6.4 that '*The final design of a windfarm depends on a number of factors which include the size, height, and capacity of the chosen turbine type; electrical design; length of cables; areas where development is constrained; and the outcomes of site investigations. All these are considered post-consent at the stage of detailed design and optimisation when the final number and type of turbines and their location will be decided as a function of site constraints and viable layout*'.

4.2.2. Schedule 1, part 3 of the DCO (Doc Ref 3.1) sets out maximum parameters for the WTGs:



Detailed offshore design parameters

2.—(1) The total number of wind turbine generators comprised in the authorised project must not exceed 90 and a total rotor swept area of 4.45 square kilometres.

(2) Subject to sub-paragraph (3), each wind turbine generator forming part of the authorised project must not—

(a) exceed a height of 325 metres when measured from LAT to the tip of the vertical blade;

(b) exceed a rotor diameter of 295 metres;

(c) have a distance of less than 22 metres from MHWS to the lowest point of the rotating blade; or

(d) be less than 830m from the nearest wind turbine generator in all directions.

4.2.3. As set out in the Explanatory Memorandum, '*The PINS Advice Note 9 recognises the need for flexibility to address inherent uncertainties for a proposed development, against which the need to ensure that the significant effects of a proposed development have been properly assessed must be balanced. It acknowledges at paragraph 5.5 of that advice note that an Applicant may choose to include parameters within the DCO as a practical way to address uncertainty and provide the required flexibility before setting out example parameters which include 'maximum/ minimum number of turbines, or maximum turbine blade tip height, associated with an offshore wind farm.*''

4.2.4. .

4.2.5. Also as set out in the Explanatory Memorandum, '*As the size of turbine has not yet been established for the Proposed Development the environmental impact assessment undertaken has considered the impacts of 65 'larger' sized turbines and 90 'smaller' sized turbines in order to establish parameters. Each chapter of the Environmental Statement has assessed the worst-case scenario in respect of the potential final design of the project for the aspect under consideration in that chapter, and has also considered whether these worst-case scenarios also apply to a size and number of turbines falling between these two scenarios. Inclusion of a parameter to constrain the maximum rotor swept area for the turbines ensures that a higher number of larger sized turbines cannot be constructed.*'

4.2.6. Whilst the SDNPA accepts that there is a need for flexibility concerning 'post-consent' decisions regarding the number and size of the turbines, there is still significant concern about the Maximum Design Scenario used as a basis for the ES. (APP-056 Table 15-25 pages 273-279) sets out the '*Maximum parameters and assessment assumptions for impacts on seascape, landscape and visual*' as including '*Maximum number of WTGs: 65*' and '*Minimum spacing: 1130m*'.

4.2.7. The DCO sets maximum parameters and therefore it is permissible and indeed possible that the proposed development might consist of 90 larger sized WTGs, at a minimum spacing of 830m. This is likely to give rise to new or materially different environmental effects arising compared to those assessed in the ES. This in turn does not allow for appropriate mitigation strategies to be developed or allow comprehensive consideration of the proposals by stakeholders.

4.3. Temporary compound information

4.3.1. There appears to be uncertainty in the need for the temporary construction compounds. The Landscape Assessment (APP-169, page 63), states '*The onshore cable corridor and temporary construction compounds (if either are elected)*'. It is unclear whether this uncertainly relates to the number of compounds that will be required or their locations.

4.3.2. The DCO (section 23, page 60) sets out maximum sizes for the landfall construction compound and the HDD compounds, but does not secure the maximum size of the temporary construction compounds, although Chapter 4 Proposed Development (APP-045,Table 4-22, page 71) sets out that the approximate size is 3.91ha and the Outline Construction Code of Practice (APP- 224, section 4.3.5, page 24) sets out that the compound will include facilities for welfare, offices, parking, and plant, materials and waste storage.

4.3.3. There is a lack of information provided about the temporary compound sites, in terms of use, activities, heights of structures etc. which may give rise to the effects currently identified in the ES being understated or missing and cannot be appropriately considered to inform appropriate mitigation strategy or allow comprehensive consideration of the proposals by stakeholders.

4.4. Commitments Register Doc Ref 7.22

4.4.1. The First Statutory Consultation exercise (RED, 2021) included comment from multiple stakeholders setting out that '*The Applicant should endeavour to refine the Rochdale Envelope and provide as much certainty as possible by the DCO application stage to minimise the risk of unforeseen or location specific effects. The parameters associated with the optionality of smaller and larger WTGs vary significantly. These should be accounted for within the ES.*'

4.4.2. The Applicant's response set out in the First Statutory Consultation exercise (RED, 2021) included the statement that '*Where optionality is present, a maximum design scenario is implemented to inform the technical assessments*'.

4.4.3. Despite this the Commitments Register has multiple instances of qualification and use of phrases such as *'where practical', 'as far as reasonably practical', 'as far as reasonably possible'* and other similar phrases, that do not allow for a maximum design scenario to be established.

4.4.4. The considerable areas of uncertainty imply that new or materially different environmental effects may be missing from the ES. This in turn does not allow for appropriate mitigation strategies to be developed or allow comprehensive consideration of the proposals by stakeholders.

4.4.5. Key concerns regarding uncertainties relate to:

- C-1: Burying of the onshore cable
- C-5: HDD trenchless crossings
- C-9: Joint bay locations
- C-37: WTG size
- C-115: Hedgerow notching

4.4.6. It should also be noted that, whilst WTG rotor size is included, there is no reference in the Commitments relating to the number of WTGs.

4.4.7. A full list of concerns in relation to the Commitments Register is set out at Appendix B.

5. SEASCAPE, LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL: METHODLOGY

Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology (APP-158)

5.1. Baseline and Cumulative effects

5.1.1. The Executive Summary of the SLVIA (APP-056, page 6) sets out that '*The existing Rampion 1 offshore wind farm forms a notable visible element in the existing seascape and is part of the baseline for seascape, landscape and visual effects assessments.*'

5.1.2. The South Downs National Park Partnership Management Plan (PMP), which sets out the Statutory Purposes of the SDNP and the Special Qualities that underpin these, was adopted by the National Park Authority in 2013.

5.1.3. The SDNPA suggest it is of key importance to note that the Rampion 1 windfarm was not constructed when the SDNP Special Qualities were set out, and suggest that Rampion 1 has already provided a significant level of harm to the Special Qualities, which is not taken into consideration in the assessment. Table 15-2 of the SLVIA (APP-056, page 15) sets out at that '*In its Scoping Opinion (The Planning Inspectorate, 2020) summarised in Table 15-6, the Planning Inspectorate agreed that cumulative seascape, landscape and visual effects of Rampion 2 with other offshore wind farm projects* ***(with the exception of Rampion 1)*** *can be scoped out of the SLVIA.*' **[SDNPA emphasis in bold].**

5.1.4. Despite this requirement also being also referenced in the SLVIA at Table 15-6 (see below) (APP-056), Rampion 1 is assessed as part of SLVIA baseline and is not considered in terms of cumulative effects.

4.12.4	**Cumulative seascape, landscape and visual effects of the offshore elements of the Proposed Development with other operational, consented and application stage offshore wind farm projects (with the exception of Rampion Wind Farm).** *The Inspectorate is content that there is unlikely to be a significant cumulative seascape, landscape and visual effects of the Proposed Development with other wind farm projects; with the exception of Rampion 1 and therefore agrees that this matter can be scoped out of the seascape, landscape and visual assessment.*	Cumulative seascape, landscape and visual effects of Rampion 2 with other wind farm projects have been scoped out. Rampion 1 is considered as part of the baseline conditions in **Section 15.6** and impact assessments in **Section 15.10**.

5.2. Type, location and range of viewpoints

5.2.1. At the Third Statutory Consultation Exercise the SDNPA advised micro-siting of viewpoints be undertaken in consultation with Stakeholders. The SDNPA accept that micro-siting of viewpoints was agreed for the some of the off-shore views. However, it should be noted that this was not undertaken in relation to the remaining off-shore views or the on-shore views and viewpoint locations have not been adjusted.

5.3. Quality of visualisations

5.3.1. The quality of some of the visualisations, where photos were taken in hazy weather conditions, make consideration of the effects difficult i.e. Viewpoint 17 Devils Dyke (APP-092, Figure 15.42e).

5.4. Offshore substations

5.4.1. The SLVIA (APP-056, page 275) states the maximum design scenario included 3 offshore substations of a substantial size. It is set out in the Commitments Register that *'The exact locations, design and visual appearance will be subject to a structural study and electrical design, which is expected to be completed post consent'.*

5.4.2. Review of the visualisations and associated wire frame images shows that the offshore substations are not included in all the visualisations and not in any of the wire frame images. Despite the terms of C-40, the SDNPA asserts that a likely indication of the substations could have been included to assist with the assessment of a worst-case scenario.

5.4.3. These is likely to lead to missing effects cannot be considered to inform appropriate mitigation strategy or allow comprehensive consideration of the proposals by stakeholders.

5.5. 15.3 Simple Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Doc Ref 6.4.15.3)

5.5.1. SLVIA Section 15.6.15 (APP-056, page 177) states that '*The LCAs within these landscape character assessments that are scoped in to the SLVIA are identified in Table 15-8 and in the simple assessment in Appendix 15.3…as those that define the main coastal associated landscapes of the SLVIA study area that have potential to be significantly affected by the offshore elements of Rampion 2*'

5.5.2. Table 2-1 (APP-159, pages 7-17) sets out a simple assessment of likely visibility from the SDNP Landscape Character Areas, stating various details such as % of areas with ZTV visibility, amount of Rampion 2 visible (no. of WTGs visible) and the 'simple assessment'.

5.5.3. Section 1.1.2 (APP-159, page 3) sets out that '*low visibility would tend to be 1 to 13 WTGs and high visibility 53 to 65 WTGs*'. This gives a range of 13 WTGs in the low category, 40 in the medium category and 10 in the high category. This has the potential to distort the assessed proportions with a far greater chance of visibility falling into the medium range.

5.5.4. The assessment identified the LCTs to either have a '*Potential for significant effects that require detailed assessment'* or *'No potential for significant effects – scoped out of detailed assessment.'*

5.5.5. It is of concern that some LCAs have been scoped out of the full assessment despite having a high percentage of area with ZTV visibility and a range of '*amount of Rampion 2 visible'* that includes high.

5.5.6. The implication is that the SLVIA does not assess the full range of landscape and visual receptors likely to be impacted. The lack of consideration of these imply that new or materially different environmental effects may be missing from the ES. This in turn does not allow for appropriate mitigation strategies to be developed or allow comprehensive consideration of the proposals by stakeholders.

5.6. Rampion 1 decommissioning

5.6.1. Despite being requested at an earlier stage, there is still no separate assessment of effects of Rampion 2 proposals after the decommissioning of Rampion 1.

6. SEASCAPE, LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL: IMPACTS

6.1. Rampion 2 Design Principles

6.1.1. The SLVIA (APP-056, Table 15-26, page 281-285) includes embedded environmental measures adopted to reduce the potential for impacts on seascape, landscape and visual.

6.1.2. These include C-61 that states that *'Due regard will be given to design principles held in Rampion 1 Design Plan and design principles to be developed for Rampion 2, with consideration of the seascape, landscape and visual impacts on the South Downs National Park and Sussex Heritage Coast.'*

6.1.3. The SLVIA also sets out the Rampion 2 design principles (AP-056, Section 15.7.24, page 288-289) and states that the aim of these is to reduce *'the magnitude and geographic extent of seascape, landscape and visual effects of the Proposed Development and minimising harm to the special qualities of nationally designated landscapes, particularly the SDNP and the associated Sussex Heritage Coast.'*

6.1.4. The SDNPA are of the opinion that these principles are key to addressing the potential effects of Rampion 2 on the SDNP and have reviewed them accordingly.

6.2. SDNPA PEIR REVIEW 2021

6.2.1. The SDNPA set out recommendations for five design principles in their August 2021 PEIR Review response to advise on scheme improvements.

- Development should only occur within the Extension Area west of Rampion 1.
- Turbines should not exceed 225m to blade tip in height.
- Clear separation between Rampion 1 and 2 to minimise the horizontal extent.
- Turbine layout is designed in coherent blocks.
- Full north to south extent of the extension area should be utilised to maximise the size of east/west gaps between the arrays.

6.2.2. These were based recommendation in a report commissioned by the SDNPA from White Consultants in January 2021.

6.2.3. This report in turn drew on the findings in the Offshore Energy Strategic Environmental Assessment (OESEA): Review and update of Seascape and Visual Buffer study for Offshore Wind farms commissioned by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS as it was then), undertaken in 2020. In particular, this report advised that the combination of National Park and Heritage Coast is particularly sensitive and needs to be given great weight in the planning balance.

6.3. SLVIA: Design Principles

6.3.1. The SLVIA (APP-056, Section 15.7.8 Page 286) sets out the four design principles:

- '**Field of view'** – reducing the field of view or 'horizontal extent/lateral spread' of Rampion 2 and the visually combined lateral spread of Rampion 1 and Rampion 2.
- '**Proximity**' - increasing the distance of Rampion 2 from most sensitive areas of coastline to reduce the apparent height of WTGs and increase sense of remoteness (with consequential benefits to other design principles).
- '**Wind farm separation zones'** - achieving a separation between Rampion 1 and Rampion 2 arrays, with a clear distinction and clear lines of sight between arrays.
- '**Separation foreground'** - avoiding juxtaposition of larger Rampion 2 WTGs in front of smaller Rampion 1

WTGs, to balance arrays and apparent turbine size, insofar as possible.

6.3.2. The SLVIA (APP-056, Section 15.7.25 Page 286) sets out that '*RED have explored the potential impacts of the array area boundary in respect of these principles and arrived at a project design that responds to these combined principles. The design principles were translated into the array area boundary by exploring the relationship of the spatial extent of WTGs within the array area and the resulting visual impacts with these principles, with the aim of minimising impacts and harm to special qualities of the SDNP, particularly its 'breathtaking views' and showing regard to the statutory purpose of the SDNP*'.

6.4. Commentary on Design Principles

6.4.1. None of the SDNPA recommended Design Principles are reflected in the Proposed Development submitted.

6.4.2. Whilst the stated Design Principles appear to be well reasoned and capable of having a positive effect, they only go so far and need more discussion and review to work towards improving the development proposals.

6.4.3. On this basis the SDNPA are still of the opinion that the significant adverse effects on the SDNP, its Statutory Purposes and its Special Qualities remain.

6.5. Detailed commentary on 'Field of view' principle:

6.5.1. Whilst the area of the turbines and therefore the field of view has been reduced from that indicated at Scoping and PEIR stages, the FOV is still extensive and gives rise to significant adverse seascape, landscape and visual impacts on the SDNP, its Purposes and Special Qualities.

6.5.2. The seascape setting of the SDNP is already adversely affected by the industrialised nature of the seascape provided by the Rampion 1 array. The addition of the Rampion 2 array will cumulatively extend this adverse impact with a considerable number of WTGs extending both westwards and southwards. This does not address the SDNPA recommendations that '*Development should only occur within the Extension Area west of Rampion 1'*.

6.5.3. The adverse effects on views are compounded by the layering effects of the proposed Rampion 2 array behind Rampion 1, clearly visible in views from the SDNP.

6.5.4. The SLVIA (APP-056, section 15.15.8 page 509) sets out that 'Significant seascape, landscape and visual effects of the offshore elements of Rampion 2 are contained within the areas of the SDNP, West Sussex, East Sussex and the City of Brighton & Hove.'

6.5.5. The proposals give rise to a substantial increase in the loss of open and unspoilt views of the seascape, significantly adversely affecting the Statutory Purpose 1 of the SDNP to '*conserve and enhance the natural beauty'* and SDNP Special Qualities '*breathtaking views*' and '*tranquil and unspoilt places*' and are therefore not in line with the requirement of NPS EN-1.

6.6. Detailed commentary on 'Proximity' principle:

6.6.1. Whilst is agreed that the proximity to the most sensitive areas of coastline to the east has been reduced in the development proposals from that set out the PEIR by increasing their distance from the coastline, proximity to other areas remains unchanged, and the substantial height of the proposed WTGs remains a significant effect, particularly in combination with the Rampion 1 array.

6.6.2. The maximum design scenario sets out that the WTGs will be substantially taller in height at 325m than the Rampion 1 turbines at 140m. This is 100m taller that the SDNPA recommendations, and more than double the height of the existing array.

6.6.3. In comparison to the Rampion 1 WTG heights, the proposed WTG height of 325m is too substantial for the reduced proximity to the most sensitive coastline to mitigate the significant effects of the WTGs. This is most clearly illustrated in the following figures (not an exhaustive list):

- Figure 15.26e Viewpoint 1 Beachy Head (APP-091)
- Figure 15.27e Viewpoint 2 Birling Gap (APP-091)
- Figure 15.28e Viewpoint 3 Seven Sisters Country Park (APP-091)
- Figure 15.29e Viewpoint 4 Seaford Head (APP-091)
- Figure 15.51e Viewpoint 28 Cuckmere Haven Beach (APP-093)

6.6.4. In comparison to the Rampion 1 WTG heights, the proposed WTG height of 325m is too substantial for the reduced proximity to the SDNP to mitigate the significant effects of the WTGs. This is most clearly illustrated in the following figures (not an exhaustive list):

- Figure 15.41e Viewpoint 16 Firle Beacon (APP-092)
- Figures 15.43 e and 15.43f Viewpoint 18 Cissbury Ring (APP-093)
- Figure 15.46e Viewpoint 21 Bignor Hill (APP-093)
- Figure 15.50e Viewpoint 27 Hollingbury Golf Course / Hill Fort (APP-093)
- Figure 15.63e Viewpoint 50 The Trundle (APP-094)
- Figure 15.65e Viewpoint 52 Chanctonbury Ring (APP-094)

6.6.5. Other viewpoints within the SDNP are included but without visualisations to assist consideration by stakeholders. Review of these relies on wire frames and in indicative line showing the extent of the Rampion 2 proposed development in comparison to Rampion 1. This is most clearly illustrated in the following figures (not an exhaustive list):

- Figure 15.45b Viewpoint 20 Springhead Hill (APP-093)
- Figure 15.53b Viewpoint 30 Halnaker Windmill North of Chichester [incorrectly described as east of Chichester] (APP-093)

6.6.6. Section 15.7.37 (APP-056, page 291) states that 'The increase in distance offshore and reduction in apparent scale that has been achieved by the revised spatial extent of the array area is evident in the comparative wirelines presented in Figures 15.93 to 15.109 (APP-095). The scale of the Rampion 2 WTGs will appear smaller relative to the scale of the receiving seascape compared with the apparent scale of the PEIR MDS'.

6.6.7. Whilst the SDNPA accept that reductions have been achieved, there are still significant seascape, landscape and visual effects.

6.6.8. The contrast in size with the Rampion 1 WTGs, combined with the close proximity and visual layering of the two arrays leads to visual discord and incoherence, gives rise to significant adverse effects on the Statutory Purpose 1 of the SDNP to '*conserve and enhance the natural beauty'* and SDNP Special Qualities '*breathtaking views*' and '*tranquil and unspoilt places*' and are therefore not in line with the requirement of NPS EN-1.

6.6.9. The close proximity to the coast gives rise to significant adverse effects on the Statutory Purpose 1 of the SDNP to '*conserve and enhance the natural beauty'* and SDNP Special Qualities '*breathtaking views*' and '*tranquil and unspoilt places*' and are therefore not in line with the requirement of NPS EN-1.

6.7. <u>Detailed commentary on 'Wind farm separation zones' principle:</u>

6.7.1. Whilst separation zones are shown between Rampion 1 and the proposed Rampion 2 WTG locations, the separations are only apparent in a small proportion of views; of 69 viewpoints, the separations are visible in 15.

6.7.2. Looking westwards from the heritage coast the north-south separation is clear in Viewpoints 1, 2 (APP-091) and 28 (APP-093) from the heritage coast, with visible separation in Viewpoint 3 (APP-091) present but less pronounced than with the other views.

6.7.3. Looking south from the elevated area of the SDNP the east-west separation is visible in Viewpoints 17 (APP-092), 18, 19 (APP-093), 52, 53, 54, 55 (APP-094) from elevated areas of the SDNP.

6.7.4. It should be noted that:

- Viewpoint 18 (APP-093): both the visualisations and the wireframe images are split across two pages without a clear overlap, so the full extent of the separation is unclear.
- Viewpoint 52 (APP-094): only the wider wireframe image shows the extent of the separation, with the visualisations and corresponding wireframe images again split across two pages.
- Viewpoints 53, 54 and 55 (APP-094): Review of these viewpoints relies on wire frames and in indicative line showing the extent of the proposed Rampion 2 development in comparison to Rampion 1; no

visualisations are provided to assist consideration by stakeholders.

6.7.5. The east-west separation is also clear in Viewpoints 9, 10 (APP-092), E, F (APP-095) from the coastline of West Sussex.

6.7.6. However, it should be also noted that there are no views that show a clear separation of the two wind farms:

- In views where the separation lies south of Rampion 1, the western WTGs of Rampion 2 are visible behind Rampion 1.
- In views where the separation lies west of Rampion 1, the eastern WTGs of Rampion 2 are visible behind Rampion 1.

6.7.7. The lack of separation and overlap of the Rampion 1 and proposed Rampion 2 arrays gives rise to visual incoherence that has significant adverse effects on the Statutory Purpose 1 of the SDNP to '*conserve and enhance the natural beauty'* and SDNP Special Qualities '*breathtaking views*' and '*tranquil and unspoilt places*' and are therefore not in line with the requirement of NPS EN-1.

6.8. Detailed commentary on 'Separation foreground' principle

6.8.1. This principle is welcomed, but there are still adverse effects due to the substantial contrast between the size of the Rampion 2 and Rampion 1 WTGs and the close proximity of the two arrays.

6.8.2. The SLVIA (APP-056, Section 15.7.51, page 300) states that '*In views from central areas of SDNP, such as Viewpoints 17, 18, 19, 52, 53, 54 and 55 the southern Rampion 2 array will be viewed behind Rampion 1, taking advantage of the greater distance offshore and the effects of perspective to reduce the apparent scale differences between Rampion 1 and Rampion 2 WTGs. Rampion 2 WTGs sited behind Rampion 1 have less scale difference than if they were located to the fore of Rampion 1*.'

6.8.3. The effects of perspective may be found to reduce adverse effects where there is less contrast between sizes of the WTGs, however the substantial size difference between the Rampion 1 and 2 WTGs and close proximity of the two arrays give little benefit from perspective effects.

6.8.4. This leads to visual discord and incoherence, gives rise to significant adverse effects on the Statutory Purpose 1 of the SDNP to '*conserve and enhance the natural beauty'* and SDNP Special Qualities '*breathtaking views*' and '*tranquil and unspoilt places*' and are therefore not in line with the requirement of NPS EN-1.

6.9. Size of turbines

6.9.1. The Commitments Register C-37 sets out that the '*maximum blade tip height will be 325m from lowest astronomical tide (LAT) and the maximum rotor diameter will be 295m*.' In comparison the Rampion 1 turbines are substantially smaller, with the tip of the turbine blade reaching 140m above the lowest astronomical tide and the rotor diameter at 112m. The maximum sizes are substantially greater that the Rampion 1 turbines.

6.9.2. Where the proposed turbines are seen in conjunction with the Rampion 1 turbines, the difference in size will be clearly visible, as demonstrated by the visualisations in both Chapter 18 the SLVIA and the layering of Rampion 2 behind Rampion 1 in views gives rise to considerable visual incoherence about distances and heights in views. The juxtaposition of Rampion 1 and proposals will make the bigger Rampion 2 turbines appear to be closer to the viewer.

6.9.3. Should a smaller WTG be used, the SDNP would welcome this, but still consider that this will also result in significant adverse seascape, landscape and visual effects.

7. LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL: METHODOLOGY

Landscape and Visual Assessment Methodology (APP-167)

7.1. Consideration of all adverse effects

7.1.1. NPPF Para 176 sets out that '*Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks 58 Where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, areas of poorer quality land should be preferred to those of a higher quality. The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to* ***avoid or minimise adverse impacts*** *on the designated areas.*' [**SDNPA emphasis in bold**]

7.1.2. SDNP Local Plan 2019 Strategic Policy SD4: Landscape Character sets out that '*1. Development proposals will only be permitted where they conserve and enhance landscape character by demonstrating that: a) They are informed by landscape character, reflecting the context and type of landscape in which the development is located; b) The design, layout and scale of proposals conserve and enhance existing landscape and seascape character features which contribute to the distinctive character, pattern and evolution of the landscape; c) They will safeguard the experiential and amenity qualities of the landscape*'.

7.1.3. The implications of these national and regional policy are that any adverse effects should be avoided, not simply significant effects. The SDNPA understand that a project such as Rampion 2 will inevitably have adverse effects and that the planning balance has to be considered.

7.2. Baseline

7.2.1. The SDNPA suggest it is of key importance to note that the Rampion 1 windfarm was not constructed when the SDNP Special Qualities were set out, and suggest that Rampion 1 has already provided a significant level of harm to the Special Qualities, which is not taken into consideration in the assessment.

7.3. Consideration of Whole Development effects:

7.3.1. The methodology (APP-167, Section 1.2.5, page 5) sets out that '*The assessment has also considered the whole Proposed Development or combined effects of the offshore and onshore elements of the Proposed Development, as well as the cumulative effects likely to result from the Proposed Development and other similar committed developments'*.

7.3.2. The methodology (APP-167, Section 1.2.8, page 6) sets out that '*The LVIA also refers to potential interrelated effects likely to result from any areas where the construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning of the offshore and onshore elements combine, or inter-relate to affect receptors within the LVIA Study Area. An example includes effects on views where both offshore and onshore elements are visible, potentially resulting in whole Proposed Development landscape and visual effects as a result of the construction, operation and decommissioning of the onshore and offshore elements. In those instances, the LVIA provides whole Proposed Development assessment focusing on the onshore elements that will be referenced for consistency in the SLVIA. The SLVIA also provides Whole Proposed Development assessment focusing on the offshore elements*.'

7.3.3. This is also mentioned in the SLVIA at section 15.8.8 (APP-056).

7.3.4. The SLVIA (APP-056, Section 15.6.27, page 179) states that '*The ZTV in Figure 15.22, Volume 3, of the ES (Document Reference: 6.3.15) shows areas where Rampion 2 and the existing Rampion 1 wind farm will be visible in combination (green areas on ZTV); and where they will be visible alone (i.e. without the other). Rampion 2 will often be viewed in combination with the operational Rampion Offshore Wind Farm (green areas), in particular from the main areas of higher theoretical visibility (i.e., from the immediate coastal edges and hinterland of Sussex Bay between Selsey Bill and Beachy Head; the coastal plateau; the white cliffs of the Sussex Heritage Coast and slopes of the South Downs). In views from these areas, Rampion 2 will result in visual effects arising from the appearance of Rampion 2 when viewed in-combination with Rampion 1. The apparent height of the larger Rampion 2 turbines (up to 325m) relative to the smaller operational turbines (140m) is likely to be central to the potential for cumulative visual effects arising from these areas.*'

7.3.5. Given the substantial geographic extent illustrated on Figure 15.22 (APP-090) where Rampion 2 has theoretical visibility from in combination with Rampion 1, the SDNPA considers that the use of the Study Area alone in considering the Whole Proposed Development landscape and visual effects is inadequate. The SDNPA understand the need for a proportionate approach, however suggest that the LVIA study area is limited to such a narrow area around the DCO limit that it is likely to fail to assess the full range of landscape and visual receptors likely to be significantly impacted, which will be wide-ranging as indicated by Zones of Theoretical Visibility (ZTVs) in both the SLVIA (APP-090 Figures 15.18- 15.24) and the LVIA (APP-098 Figures 18.4a-18.4d) and have the potential for increased significant and unacceptable effects on the SDNP with its open downland, varied topography and long views. This lack of consideration implies that new or materially different environmental effects may be missing from the ES. This in turn does not allow for appropriate mitigation strategies to be developed or allow comprehensive consideration of the proposals by stakeholders.

7.4. Landscape effects of the Whole Proposed Development

7.4.1. It should be noted that the effects of the Whole Proposed Development can be both landscape and visual.

7.4.2. The Landscape Assessment (APP-169) does not consider that Whole Proposed Development will give rise to any landscape effects and states in the SDNP LCA tables (Tables 2-9 to 2-13, pages 49-76) that '*The offshore elements of the Proposed Development including the wind turbines and offshore substations will be limited to visual effects as reported in Chapter 15: Seascape, landscape and visual impact assessment, Volume 2 of the ES (Document Reference: 6.2.15).*'

7.4.3. This is a misinterpretation of the SLVIA which does indeed set out effects on landscape character and the SDNP Special Qualities. The landscape effects are summarised (APP-056, Table 15-29 (pages 343-361) showing there are significant effects on LCA A1 Ouse to Eastbourne Open Downs, LCA A2 Adur to Ouse Open Downs, LCA A3 Arun to Adur Open Downs, LCA S1 Seaford to Beachy Head Shoreline and LCA S2 Brighton to Rottingdean. It should be noted that there are other effects states as not significant, however these are still adverse effects on the SDNP.

7.4.4. The Landscape Institute's Technical Guidance Note 02-21 forms part of industry guidance for professionals. Whilst it states it does not apply to national landscape designations, it provides a far more in-depth range of factors for consideration in respect of landscape value, which the SDNPA fee is helpful for explaining the range of perceptual effects that should be also considered when providing assessments that relate to national landscape designations, such as the SDNP.

7.4.5. There is no consideration of scenic perceptual landscape effects, set out in the Landscape Institute's Technical Guidance Note 02-21 as '***Landscape that appeals to the senses, primarily the visual sense****: Distinctive features such as dramatic or striking landform or harmonious combinations of land cover; strong aesthetic qualities such as scale, form, colour, and texture; presence of natural lines in the landscape; visual diversity or contrasts which contribute to appreciation; memorable/ distinctive views and landmarks, or landscape which contributes to such.'*

7.4.6. There is no consideration of perceptual landscape effects (wildness and tranquillity) set out in the Landscape Institute's Technical Guidance Note 02-21 as *'**Landscape with a strong perceptual value notably wildness, tranquillity and/or dark skies:** High levels of tranquillity or perceptions of tranquillity, including perceived links to nature, presence of wildlife / birdsong and relative peace and quiet; presence of wild land and perceptions of relative wildness (resulting from a high degree of perceived naturalness, rugged or otherwise challenging terrain, remoteness from public mechanised access and lack of modern artefacts); sense of particular remoteness, seclusion or openness; dark skies'*.

7.4.7. There is no consideration of the effects of the proposed development on historic landscape character. set out in the Landscape Institute's Technical Guidance Note 02-21 as *'Landscape with clear evidence of archaeological, historical or cultural interest which contribute positively to the landscape. Presence of historic landmark structures or designed landscape elements (e.g., follies, monuments, avenues, tree roundels) Presence of historic parks and gardens, and designed landscapes Landscape which contributes to the significance of heritage assets, for example forming the setting of heritage assets (especially if identified in specialist studies) Landscape which offers a dimension of time depth. This includes natural time depth, e.g. presence of features such as glaciers and peat bogs and cultural time depth e.g. presence of relic farmsteads, ruins, historic field patterns, historic rights of way (e.g. drove roads, salt ways, tracks associated with past industrial activity)'*

7.4.8. The SDNPA considers this to be a substantial omission in the assessment. These are perceptual qualities that underpin the SDNP's Special Qualities that support the SDNP Statutory Purposes. The lack of consideration of these Whole Proposed Development landscape effects implies that new or materially different environmental effects may be missing from the ES. This in turn does not allow for appropriate mitigation strategies to be developed or allow comprehensive consideration of the proposals by stakeholders.

7.5. Visual effects of the Whole Proposed Development

7.5.1. In respect of the SDNP, visual effects would be experienced in areas where both onshore cable route and offshore WTGs can be seen from the same position.

7.5.2. Many of the viewpoint figures in the LVIA include views of the sea, however whilst they show indicative wireframe locations of onshore elements, the location of offshore elements is not shown. This does not give the opportunity to consider the visual effects of the Whole Proposed development.

7.5.3. In addition, a side-by-side comparison of the onshore and off-shore elements from viewpoints is not possible as different viewpoint locations have been used for the SLVIA and the LVIA.

Defining the Study Area:

7.5.4. The SLIVA (APP-056, Sections 15.8.15 and 15.8.16, page 307) states '*The geographic extent over which the seascape/landscape and visual effects will be experienced is also assessed, which is distinct from the size or scale of effect. This evaluation is not combined in the assessment of the level of magnitude, but instead expresses the extent of the receptor that will experience a particular magnitude of change and therefore the geographical extents of the significant and not significant effects'* and *'The extent of the effects varies depending on the specific nature of Rampion 2 and is principally assessed through analysis of the extent of perceived changes through visibility of the Rampion 2 Offshore Wind Farm.*'

7.5.5. The SDNPA would expect the SLVIA and the LVIA to have a jointly considered approach to their Study Areas, however this does not appear to be the case.

7.5.6. The SDNPA accepts that there needs to be a proportional approach to the LVIA, however the LVIA methodology (APP-167, Section 1.2.13, page 7) states out that '*The Study Area for the LVIA is illustrated in Figure 18.1, Volume 3 (Doc. Ref. 6.3.18) and extends to a 2km buffer beyond the proposed DCO Order Limits.*' The LVIA methodology (APP-167, Section 1.2.14, page 7) sets out that a proportional approach has been taken and that the *'study area must be large enough to capture all likely significant effects*'.

7.5.7. GLVIA para 5.2 (page 70) sets out that '*the study area should include the site itself and the **full extent** of the wider landscape around it which the proposed development may influence in a significant manner'* [**SDNPA emphasis in bold]**

7.5.8. The SDNP are concerned that by limiting the LVIA study zone to such an extent prior to assessment is unlikely to '*capture all likely significant effects*'.

7.5.9. The implication of using a 2km buffer for the LVIA is clearly seen when considering the ZTV produced for the SLVIA (SLVIA (APP-090 Figures 15.18- 15.24) where the visibility of Rampion 2 extends across a substantial area of the south coast and the ZTV produced for the LVIA (APP-098 Figures 18.4a-18.4d)) which show that the visibility of the onshore cable corridor extends across a substantial area of the SDNP.

7.5.10. Despite the wide geographical extents shown on the ZTVs, Figure 18.1 (APP-098) which shows a very limited the buffer zone, at 2km, set from the centre of the proposed DCO Order Limits, which appears to form the basis for other figures going forwards.

7.5.11. The limitations of such a restricted Study Area imply that new or materially different environmental effects may be missing from the ES. This in turn does not allow for appropriate mitigation strategies to be developed or allow comprehensive consideration of the proposals by stakeholders.

7.5.12. The DCO Order Limits include areas around all access routes, as well as the cable route, however the indicated buffer zone does not included the full extent required, , for example there are access roads close to Findon that lie outside the 2km buffer zone.

7.5.13. The LVIA methodology (APP-167, Section 1.2.16, page 8) states that '*The LVIA Study Area therefore defines a limit, based on…knowledge of similar projects including East Anglia TWO and THREE, Rampion 1, Norfolk Vanguard and Thanet Extension offshore wind farms.*'

7.5.14. With the exception of Rampion 1, the SDNPA do not consider these other projects to be similar, given the low-lying nature of the topography of these areas compared to the distinctly varied topography and coastline of the SDNP.

7.5.15. The SDNPA understand the need for a proportionate approach, however suggest that the LVIA study area is limited to such a narrow area around the DCO limit that it is likely to fail to assess the full range of landscape and visual receptors likely to be significantly impacted, which will be wide-ranging as indicated by Zones of Theoretical Visibility (ZTVs) in both the SLVIA (APP-090 Figures 15.18- 15.24) and the LVIA (APP-098 Figures 18.4a-18.4d) and have the potential for increased significant and unacceptable effects on the SDNP with its open downland, varied topography and long views

7.6. Definition of timescales

7.6.1. Section 5.51 of GLVIA sets commentary on '*Duration and reversibility of landscape effects'*, and states '*duration can usually be judged on a scale such as short term, medium term or long term, where, for example., short term might be zero to five years, medium term five to ten years and long term ten to twenty five years. There is no fixed rule on these definitions and so in each case it must be made clear how the categories are defined and the reasons for this.*'

7.6.2. Chapter 5 Approach to the EIA (APP-078, Section 5.8.13, page 52) sets out that '*The temporal scope refers to the time periods over which impacts and effects may be experienced by sensitive receptors which may be permanent, temporary, long term or short term. This has been established for each aspect in discussion with relevant consultees.*'

7.6.3. The LVIA Methodology (APP-167, Section 1.5.17, page 22) states '*The duration or time period over which a landscape effect is effect is likely to occur is judged on a scale of 'short', 'medium' or 'long' term and is assessed for the onshore elements of the Proposed Development as follows: long-term – more than 10 years; medium-term – 6 to 10 years; and short-term – 1 to 5 years.*'

7.6.4. The SDNPA have not agreed on the temporal scope to date and there does not appear to be any explanation of the reasoning behind the length of the timescales used.

7.6.5. It is unclear if the short-term period of time allows for the considerable survey and investigation work still required to establish the feasibility of the proposals, particularly the HDD.

7.6.6. The SDNPA consider that the considerable timescale of 5 years is inappropriate to be a short term for a project with such a finite timescale for the construction phase. The SDNPA suggest that the terminology 'short-term' should apply to construction works only on a rolling basis as the construction works are completed, with all establishment phases falling under the terminology 'long-term'. With the inclusion of establishment phases in the short-term assessment,this leads to an understatement of the assessed landscape and visual effects.

7.6.7. Chapter 4 Proposed Development (APP-045, Graphic 4-24, page 83), sets out an indicative construction programme.

7.6.8. The programme shows the construction period for the HDD onshore cable route and commissioning is a period of at least 4 years. The construction compounds are deemed to be 'temporary' but the phasing of the works appears to set out that these would be in place for the duration of the HDD and onshore cable construction work which is a period of 3.5-4 years. If they remain in place during the commissioning works, this extends the duration further.

7.6.9. The SDNPA would suggest that considerable lengths of the cable route, construction haul road and access routes are likely to remain in place throughout the construction period to provide access and for cable pulling/jointing activities, which further extend the duration of the landscape and visual effects.

7.6.10. The SDNPA would suggest that, given previous experience of the construction of Rampion 1, with its shorter length of cable and construction period of 4 years, the indicative programme would appear to be underestimated.

7.7. Range of landscape effects

7.7.1. The LVIA Methodology (APP-167, Section 1.3.3, page 9) sets out that the potential effects include '*effects on landscape character and key characteristics, including perceptual characteristics and qualities'*.

7.7.2. There appears to be no consideration of effects on individual landscape elements in the LVIA. As a result of this combined approach, it is inevitable that some aspects are downplayed, in particular perceptual and indirect effects that, if considered in isolation, would be significant. This is particularly important to be considered in respect of landscape elements, such as tranquillity and openness, which contribute to the SDNP Special Qualities.

7.7.3. The LVIA gives a 'Summary landscape assessment: Part 2: SDNP' (APP-059, Sections 18.11.32 to 18.11.41, page 224-226) which sets out a summary of the effects, however these are focussed purely on effects different types of vegetation, with no consideration of direct or indirect effects on other landscape elements, such perceptual factors, condition, distinctiveness, historic landscape character, lighting and tranquillity or dark skies which all are particularly important in relation to the SDNP and contribute to its Special Qualities.

7.7.4. Industry guidance document 'GLVIA 3' Box 5.1 (page 84) sets out a '*Range of factors that can help in the identification of valued landscapes which include 'Perceptual aspects: a landscape may be valued for its perceptual qualities, notably wildness and / or tranquillity'*.

7.7.5. The Landscape Institute's Technical Guidance Note 02-21 'Assessing landscape value outside national designations' sets out a range of factors that can be considered when identifying landscape value. It states at 2.4.4 '*As with Box 5.1 in GLVIA3, Table 1 is not intended to be an exhaustive list of factors to be considered when determining the value of landscapes, but to provide a range of factors and indicators that could be considered. This TGN is intended to be complementary to GLIVA3*'.

7.7.6. Whilst it is acknowledged that the guidance is for assessment 'outside national designations', the table (page 10-11) provides a useful guide to the different perceptual qualities (reproduced below):

Factor	***Definition*** *(and examples where more clarity is useful)*
Perceptual (scenic)	**Landscape that appeals to the senses, primarily the visual sense**: Distinctive features such as dramatic or striking landform or harmonious combinations of land cover; strong aesthetic qualities such as scale, form, colour, and texture; presence of natural lines in the landscape; visual diversity or contrasts which contribute to appreciation; memorable/ distinctive views and landmarks, or landscape which contributes to such.
Perceptual (wildness and tranquillity)	**Landscape with a strong perceptual value notably wildness, tranquillity and/or dark skies:** High levels of tranquillity or perceptions of tranquillity, including perceived links to nature, presence of wildlife / birdsong and relative peace and quiet; presence of wild land and perceptions of relative wildness (resulting from a high degree of perceived naturalness, rugged or otherwise challenging terrain, remoteness from public mechanised access and lack of modern artefacts); sense of particular remoteness, seclusion or openness; dark skies

7.8. Lack of assessment of effects of ash dieback.

7.8.1. The SDNPA is concerned that the potential for increased landscape and visual effects as a result of ash dieback, a serious and increasing issue in the SDNP, is not considered in the LVIA.

7.9. Type, location and range of viewpoints

7.9.1. At the Third Statutory Consultation Exercise the SDNPA advised micro-siting of viewpoints be undertaken in consultation with Stakeholders. It should be noted that this has not taken place and viewpoint locations have not been adjusted.

7.9.2. The LVIA Methodology (APP-167, Section 1.2.13, page 7) states that states the Study Area is '*supported by a number of elevated, long-distance panoramic viewpoint locations within the wider landscape, beyond 2km, as agreed with consultees, in particular the South Downs National Park to demonstrate any visibility at these distances*'. The SDNPA is not aware of any agreement on these and is of the opinion that there are insufficient views from the Downs, in particular the South Downs Way, and those chosen downplay the wide visibility of the proposed development.

7.9.3. The SDNPA is concerned that sequential testing of viewpoints along the route of the South Downs Way has not been adequately undertaken. The limited number of views illustrated (see APP-103, Figures 18.76 a-c) do not adequately reflect the nature of the continuous views afforded to a visual receptor as they travel along the South Downs Way.

7.9.4. The SDNPA is concerned that there is a lack of range of different views of the Washington Construction Compound from the surrounding area particularly from high ground to the south; only one viewpoint includes a view towards the compound (APP-102, Figure 18.49a).

7.9.5. The SDNPA is concerned that there is a lack of consideration of visual effects of visibility splays.

7.10. Mapping and presentation

7.10.1. Mapping used in LVIA follows the route of cable, however there is insufficient overlap of the sheets leading to the omission of potential areas of cable corridor visibility. For example, Amberley Mount / Rackham Hill omitted in inadequate overlap between Figures 18.4a and 18.4b (APP-098), with potential lack of consideration of effects on the South Downs Way the nationally important trail.

7.11. Residential Visual Amenity Assessment

7.11.1. The RVAA (APP-171, Section 1.4.1 page 5) sets out that a '*Study Area of 1km distance from the Proposed Development has been selected for the RVAA (Figure 18.1, Volume 3 (Document Reference: 6.3.18.1). Only those residential properties within the 1km Study Area, which can be identified on the Ordnance Survey (OS) 1:25,000 scale map, and are overlapped by the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) are included in the assessment.*'

7.11.2. The SDNPA suggest that the reasoning behind this is not explained and that this approach leads to consideration of only these residential properties that are closest and most impacted.

7.11.3. The ZTVs for the LVIA (APP-098, Figures 18.4a- 18.4d) show a far wider range of influence for the onshore cable corridor route than RVAA's 1km distance and includes a large number of residential properties. The baseline for the RVAA cannot, therefore, be considered as the worst-case scenario. The limitation of the Study Area of the RVAA gives considerable cause for concern that without considering the greater number of properties impacted this significantly understates the adverse effects.

7.11.4. It is also unclear why the study area is limited to 1km when the Study Area for the LVIA extends to 2km (which the SDNPA suggest is inadequate. The SDNPA consider this very brief Residential Visual Amenity Assessment to be inadequate.

8. LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL: IMPACTS

8.1. General Comments

8.1.1. The SDNP feel that as a result of a flawed methodology there are likely to substantially more significant adverse effects as a result of the onshore cable corridor route on landscape character and visual receptors that stated in the LVIA.

8.1.2. The LVIA (APP-059) consistently understates the effects on the SDNP Landscape Character Areas (LCA), due to the limited geographical extents of the study area, lack of consideration of a wide range of landscape elements including perceptual effects and the use of a combined approach to landscape elements that, had they been considered as individual elements, effects would be significant.

8.1.3. One of the implications of the limited 2km buffer area is demonstrated through the LVIA Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) (APP-098, Figures 18.4a- 18.4d) where visibility extends across a significant area – much greater than the 2km study area. In particular the nature of the open downland, where openness and expansive views are highly characteristic is one specific area where this limited study area is not appropriate.

8.1.4. Landscape elements such as tranquillity, historic landscape character, condition and dark skies, have not been appropriately considered. The summary of effects instead focusses on types of vegetation, which largely ignores perceptual qualities or draws on any historic character associated with these features or the wider landscape character. By either grouping, or omitting proper assessment of these features, there remains a high probability that effects have been underestimated or missed entirely.

8.2. Whole Proposed Development visual effects

8.2.1. With regards to Whole Proposed Development effects, the Visual Assessment (APP-170) sets out that there will be significant visual effects as a result of both the onshore and offshore elements of the Proposed Development at viewpoints A (outside the SDNP) (APP-168, page 38), H7d (APP-168, page 80), H7h (APP-168, page 84) and LD2 (APP-168, page 114).

8.2.2. However, the Visual Assessment (APP-170, section 1.4.33, page 114), it states that the '*Section 7 of the South Downs Way: Arun to Adur Downs, overlaps with the LVIA Study Area for the onshore cable corridor and the SLVIA reports a Significant (Moderate) effect on the southern views from the tops of the downs between the Adur and Arun Valleys passing Chanctonbury Ring, Chantry Hill and Amberley Mount*.'

8.2.3. The Visual Assessment goes on to state (APP-170, section 1.4.34, page 115), that '*the likelihood of significant visual effects occurring concurrently due to the visibility of the offshore elements of the Proposed Development (installation and commissioning of the offshore substation and wind turbines) and the construction of the onshore cable corridor will be limited to approximately 12 months due to the overlap of the indicative construction programme*'.

8.2.4. The lack of adequate sequential testing viewpoints along the top of the South Downs and the route of the South Downs Way gives rise to a substantial underestimate of the extent of adverse visual effects arising from the Whole Proposed Development in the LVIA, despite this being alluded to in the SLVIA. The SDNPA suggest that had an adequate assessment been undertaken then this was likely to identify a for a far wider range of significant effects.

8.3. Landscape and Visual Effects on the SDNP LCA I3

8.3.1. The SDNPA has substantial concerns over assessment of effects on the LCA I3 Arun to Adur Scarp Down (APP-169, Table 2-9, pages 67-69).

8.3.2. During construction, the magnitude of change for LCA I3 Arun to Adur Scarp Down is state to be '*negligible to zero'*, despite the proposed HDD construction compounds immediately abutting the LCA both above and below scarp. This give rise to a level of effect on landscape character of *'Minor and Not Significant'* and for landscape elements: '*N/A*'. The LVIA has not considered the nature of the LCA as open access land, the extent of perceptual and indirect effects and the stated assessed impacts. The resultant harm to the SDNP are considered by the SDNPA to be substantially understated.

8.3.3. The LVIA has also not considered the nature of the LCA as open access land and any resultant visual effects, which the SDNPA consider is a considerable omission and that the effects are likely to be significant.

8.4. Landscape and Visual Effects of the Construction Compounds

8.4.1. There is a lack of information provided regarding the use and appearance of the compounds.

8.4.2. There are insufficient views and wireframe images provided of the Washington Compound which has the potential to be visible in considerable sequential views as a visual receptor moves along the recreational routes on the Downs.

8.4.3. The construction compounds are stated as being 'temporary' (APP-045, Section 4.5.1, page 60) but it is clear that these would be in place for the duration of the construction work and not removed until the end of the construction activities; this is a period of over 3 years. The period is considered short-term.

8.4.4. The Washington Compound is stated as having a maximum area of 3.91ha (APP-045, Table 4-22, page 71).

8.4.5. Activity stated for the compounds (APP-045, Section 4.5.35, page 71) includes *'logistics; storage of materials and equipment, location of cement bound sand (CBS) batching plant, also includes welfare facilities and office space as appropriate'*

8.4.6. The compound lighting is described (APP-045, Section 4.5.48, page 74) as '*At temporary construction compounds and specific locations where night working is required or in poor light conditions during normal working hours, portable lighting units will be used where necessary to ensure safe working and / or site security*.'

8.4.7. The SDNPA has concerns that, given the lack of information and the long-term duration of their use, the landscape and visual impacts of these compounds are understated in the LVIA, given the close proximity to the SDNP, the considerable size of the compounds, the associated lighting, vehicle movement, structures within the compound and visibility from the downs, that the effects are substantially understated and are likely to be significant.

8.5. Effects of Lighting

8.5.1. The Landscape Assessment (APP-169, Section 3.3.20, page 122) states that '*There would be no effect on the South Downs International Dark Sky Reserve or 'dark skies' within the SDNP due to the implementation of embedded environmental measures within the Commitments Register (Document Reference: 7.22) (C-22, C-66, and C-200)*'.

8.5.2. Commitment C-22 sets out core working hours, which in winter months would extend into periods of darkness, requiring lighting to assist construction work.

8.5.3. Commitment C-66 is an overarching statement and provides no indication of detail regarding lighting.

8.5.4. Whilst Commitment C-200 sets out that '*construction lighting will be limited to directional task lighting'* the SDNPA would suggest that this would not be the case, based on a number of factors. Firstly, the core working hours set out in the Commitments Register include times extending into periods of darkness during winter months, requiring lighting to assist construction work. The areas where trenchless crossing techniques are proposed to be employed (including areas of intrinsic rural darkness) require lighting 24 hours a day when being undertaken. The experience the SDNPA have had in respect of Rampion 1 construction also suggests that work will be taking place during periods of darkness, requiring further lighting.

8.5.5. Lighting is therefore considered to be inevitably required and cannot be considered to be without adverse effects. These therefore need to be properly taken into consideration as a separate landscape effect.

8.5.6. The SDNPA suggest that any additional lighting can affect dark skies and have concerns that the adverse effects of lighting are not considered in the LVIA as a separate effect, which is a substantial omission in the ES in light of the SDNP's status as an International Dark Sky Reserve.

9. LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL: MITIGATION

9.1. Outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (APP-232):

9.1.1. The following points relate to the consideration of landscape and visual effects only and should be read in conjunction with other comments, particularly in relation to Ecology considerations.

9.1.2. The LEMP (APP-232, Section 1.2.5, page 6) sets out that '*The draft DCO requires stage specific LEMPs for areas of habitat creation and reinstatement along the onshore cable corridor, including associated areas such as temporary compounds*.'

9.1.3. The LEMP (APP-232, Sections 2.6.4 and 2.6.5, page 13) sets out that '*A programme of landscape works will be provided setting out the programme according to relevant planting seasons and maximising opportunities for advance planting prior to construction to allow trees to mature during the construction works and in advance of completion of the onshore substation.' and 'Some of the landscaping will be established prior to the beginning of construction (advance planting), with the remainder being delivered following the completion of the substation and the decommissioning of temporary construction compounds.*'

9.1.4. The DCO does not make allowance for advance planting, and there is no reference to this in the Commitments Register. The SDNPA would therefore like to understand how this is to be secured and implemented.

9.1.5. The LEMP (APP-232, Section 4.5.2, Page 23) sets out that hedgerow '*may be removed and reinstated with new plants or temporarily translocated to a pre-prepared planting trench and returned to its original position in the first available planting period.*' This is also referenced in the Commitments Register at C-115.

9.1.6. The SDNPA has significant concerns over likely success of proposed hedge 'notching'. The example of successful notching (APP-063, section 22.9.102, page 166) is not relevant to South Downs; the examples provided are from the Lake District and Norfolk Broads, both of which are much wetter landscapes than the application proposals. There has not been any proven testing in the vicinity of the proposed development in respect of the particular climatic conditions and dry, free-draining soils found in the SDNP undertaken to evidence that the proposals will allow for successful vegetation establishment.

9.1.7. The LEMP places significant reliance on the ability to water reinstated habitat (dense scrub and hedgerows) (APP-232, sections 4.3.3, page 22 and section 4.5.6 page 24) to assist establishment, however it is unclear how this work in practice over such a vast, and in places remote, area along the onshore cable corridor. The SDNPA would therefore like to understand how this is to be secured and implemented.

9.1.8. The LEMP (APP-232, Section 4.4.1, page 23) sets out that '*Where woodland is lost (approximately 0.4ha) the reinstatement will be in the form of scrub to prevent damage to the transmission cables. This scrub will provide visual diversity of landscape character and elements*'.

9.1.9. The SDNPA would suggest that in woodland areas where clearance could be a width of at least 20m to accommodate the 4 trenches (see APP-232, Graphic A-4, Page A6) this cannot be regarded as 'visual diversity of landscape character' and cannot be mitigated and therefore should be regarded as a significant adverse effect.

9.1.10. The LEMP (APP-232, Section 4.5.4, page 24) sets out that '*Landscape plans for hedgerow and treeline reinstatement **may** need to be produced in sensitive areas such as the SDNP and included within the stage specific LEMP.*' **[SDNP emphasis in bold]**

9.1.11. The SDNPA finds this statement to be unacceptable due to the use of the word 'may'. The planting plans are essential, not just for purposes of consultation and approval but also to enable accurate implementation and effective monitoring.

9.2. <u>Outline Soils management plan (APP-226):</u>

9.2.1. THE OSMP (APP-226, Section 1.2.5, page 7) states '*Most of the affected land is within the South Downs National Park where provisional Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) mapping shows mainly Grades 2 and 3, and the likelihood of best and most versatile land is assessed by Natural England (Natural England, 2017) to be moderate or high.*'

9.2.2. The Natural England website states that '*Agricultural Land Classification map London and the South East (ALC007)' forms 'part of a series at 1:250 000 scale derived from the Provisional 1" to one mile ALC maps and is intended for strategic uses. These maps are not sufficiently accurate for use in assessment of individual fields or sites and any enlargement could be misleading. The maps show Grades 1-5, but Grade 3 is not subdivided*.'

9.2.3. The 'Predictive BMV Landscape Assessment' explanatory note sets out that the mapping carries a proviso that '*the map is intended for strategic planning purposes only and is not suitable for use below scale 1:250 000 or for the definitive classification of any local area or site'*.

9.2.4. It will be important to provide a full assessment of the agricultural land classification for the area of the proposed DCO Order Limits to allow review prior to any construction work.

9.2.5. THE OSMP (APP-226, Section 1.2.6, page 7) states that the '*Soils Resource Plan (SRP) – which will be produced during pre-construction to detail the type and volume of soils to be stripped, haul routes and stockpile arrangements and be produced in conjunction with the MMP* [Materials Management Plan] *and will interact with the stage specific SMP* [Soils Management Plan].'

9.2.6. If there are still elements of the proposals to be developed, especially haul routes (which it was assumed were already covered by the DCO Order Limits area) this is likely to lead to missing effects cannot be considered to inform appropriate mitigation strategy or allow comprehensive consideration of the proposals by stakeholders.

9.2.7. THE OSMP (APP-226, Section 2.1.1, page 9)sets out that a '*soil resource survey was carried out in February 2022. It was based on observations at 100m intervals along the cable route corridor and including areas of permanent development (e.g., the onshore substation at Oakendene) within the proposed DCO Order Limits.*'

9.2.8. The Agricultural Quality report summary (APP-226, Appendix A, Page 5) states '*The survey work covers approximately 40% of the proposed DCO Order Limits. The remaining land could not be surveyed due to health and safety risks associated with an elevated (moderate or higher) risk of encountering UXO and land access restrictions*.'

9.2.9. The accompanying plans (APP-226, Appendix A, Map 1A to Map 1G) suggest that the percentage of the proposed DCO Order Limits covered by the survey work may be lower still as many of the auger observations do not lie within the DCO Order Limits.

9.2.10. There is a considerable area of the proposed DCO Order Limits that is missing between (APP-226, Appendix A) Maps 1B and 1C (survey observations), and Maps 2B and 2C (Agricultural land classification) most of which is the section of the DCO Order limits within the SDNP. This is due to the possible presence of UXO

9.2.11. The SDNP would expect that this missing information be fully provided in due course to allow review prior to any construction work.

10. LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL: ENHANCEMENTS

10.1. The SDNPA welcomes the approach to BNG, however will be keen to see further information about the delivery of habitat compensation and enhancement, including how it will be secured.

10.2. Where habitats are lost in the SDNP, the SDNPA expects that any biodiversity net gain provision, landscape enhancements and biodiversity enhancements to be provided within the SDNP.

11. RAMPION 1: LESSONS LEARNT

11.1. 'Lessons Learnt' were discussed at a workshop that included representatives from WSCC, SDNPA and Rampion Offshore Wind Ltd in 2019. Some of the points discussed (in italics) and commentary on these from the SDNPA in relation to the Rampion 2 proposals are as follows:

11.2. Project Scope:

11.2.1. '*Whilst it is recognised that there is a requirement for some flexibility in design, it is helpful to provide authorities with realistic project information e.g. clearer parameters for cable route, number of river crossings, constraints, construction methodologies*'

11.2.2. The Rampion 2 proposals still include a substantial amount of uncertainty and qualification that implies that new or materially different seascape, landscape and visual effects may be missing from the ES.

11.3. More focus on enhancements, not impacts

11.3.1. '*Place greater emphasis on enhancements without appearing to appease the community. Care should be taken to strike the right balance and work within the parameters of the Planning system to ensure that positives are emphasised.*'

11.3.2. The SDNPA feel that there is little indication of enhancement in the submission; opportunities for enhancement are missed, and C-7 sets out that the work area is to be 'reinstated to pre-existing conditions'.

11.4. Targeted enhancements, public visibility

11.4.1. '*Consider enhancements that target the community, rather than broad actions which may not have same impact e.g. target popular or visible areas for enhancement'*

11.4.2. The SDNPA feel that there is little indication of enhancement in the submission.

11.5. After care period

11.5.1. '*The "After Care" period of the project was changed from 5 years to 10 years.*'

11.5.2. The SDNP welcome the proposals for a 10 year aftercare period for the landscape maintenance and monitoring.

11.6. Other points outside Lessons Learnt Workshop

11.6.1. The SDNPA has concern over claims that Rampion 1 was successfully reinstated; this was not the case. In particular areas of the cable corridor across agricultural land remain visible to date and fencing is still in place (see Appendix B).

11.6.2. During the construction of Rampion 1 working hours were extended, giving rise to increased adverse effects from lighting. Commitment C-22 only sets out 'core hours' which implies the possibility for extension, which the SDNPA would suggest has the potential to again increase adverse effects of lighting, given the experience with Rampion 1.

11.6.3. Drainage issues and wet conditions meant working practices for Rampion 1 had to be altered to make areas workable, altering both habitats and landscape character. The potential issues that might arise with Rampion 2 are as yet undetermined and have the potential to again increase adverse effects.

11.6.4. During the construction of Rampion 1 there was alteration to topography that had adverse effects on landscape character, with some sunken lanes infilled and ridges levelled. There are not detailed plans to evidence that Rampion 2 will avoid these types of issues.

11.6.5. During the construction of Rampion 1 considerable lengths of the cable route, construction haul road and access routes remained in place throughout the construction period to provide access and for cable pulling/jointing activities, which further extended the duration of the landscape and visual effects. There is no evidence to suggest that Rampion 2 can be dealt with any differently.

11.6.6. The SDNPA would suggest that, given previous experience of the construction of Rampion 1, with its shorter length of cable and construction period of 4 years, the indicative programme would appear to be underestimated.

12. DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

- 3.1 Draft Development Consent Order
- 3.2 Explanatory Memorandum
- 5.8 Design and Access Statement
- 6.2.1 Non-technical summary
- 6.2.4 Chapter 4 The Proposed Development (incl. figures)
- 6.2.5 Chapter 5 Approach to the EIA
- 6.4.5.4 Appendix 5.4 Cumulative effects assessment shortlisted developments
- 6.2.15 Chapter 15 Seascape, landscape and visual impact assessment.
- 6.3.15 Chapter 15 Seascape, landscape and visual impact assessment – Figures (8 parts)
- 6.4.15.1 Appendix 15.1 Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment consultation responses
- 6.4.15.2 Appendix 15.2 Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment methodology
- 6.4.15.3 Appendix 15.3 Simple Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
- 6.4.15.4 Appendix 15.4 Viewpoint assessment
- 6.4.15.5 Appendix 15.5 Assessment of aviation and navigation night-time lighting
- 6.2.18 Chapter 18 Landscape and visual impact
- 6.3.18 Chapter 18 Landscape and visual impact assessment - Figures (6 parts)
- 6.4.18.1 Appendix 18.1 Landscape and visual impact assessment methodology
- 6.4.18.2 Appendix 18.2 Viewpoint Analysis
- 6.4.18.3 Appendix 18.3 Landscape Assessment
- 6.4.18.4 Appendix 18.4 Visual Assessment
- 6.4.18.5 Appendix 18.5 Residential Visual Amenity Assessment
- 6.4.18.6 Appendix 18.6 Viewpoint directory
- 6.4.22.15 Appendix 22.15 Biodiversity Net Gain information
- 7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice
- 7.2 Vegetation Retention Plan
- 7.4 Outline Soils Management Plan
- 7.10 Outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan
- 7.22 Commitments Register
- 7.23 Outline Construction Method Statement
- Rampion Offshore Wind Farm Joint Consenting Workshop held with South Downs National Park Authority & West Sussex County Council: Lessons Learn
- Landscape Institute's Technical Guidance Note 02-21 'Assessing landscape value outside national designations'

13. COMMENTARY ON COMMITMENTS REGISTER (DOC REF 7.22)

13.1. C-1

13.1.1. '*The onshore cable route will be completely buried underground for its entire length where practicable.*'

13.1.2. The description of the Proposed Development (APP-045) makes no reference to any of the cable route not being buried. Should there be sections of unburied cable, then locations need to be identified and acknowledged as part of the 'worst case scenario'.

13.1.3. The wording for C-1 should be amended to remove the phrase 'where practicable to be acceptable to the SDNPA.

13.2. C-5

13.2.1. '*Main rivers, watercourses, railways and roads that form part of the Strategic Highways Network will be crossed by Horizontal Directional Drill (HDD) or other trenchless technology where this represents the best environment solution and is financially and technically feasible'*.

13.2.2. This commitment omits areas of trenchless crossing in other areas (under woodlands, vegetation and chalk scarp)

13.2.3. The SDNPA also does not consider the financial feasibility of trenchless crossings to be a consideration in this process.

13.2.4. Alternative options for HDD routes and compounds are included in the proposals. It is not clear how these will be decided upon.

13.2.5. The DCO does not consent open trenching methods in areas where HDD is being proposed (should HDD fail additional consent would be required to deliver an alternative solution). This is referenced in the DCO at Item 6 (4) (page 54) *'Trenchless installation techniques must be used to install the transmission cables where identified in the crossings schedule (comprising part of the code of construction practice approved pursuant to requirement 22) for the purpose of passing under a relevant obstruction unless otherwise agreed by the relevant planning authority, following consultation with the lead local flood authority, Natural England, the highway authority or Network Rail as relevant.'*

13.2.6. The description of the Proposed Development (APP-045 Section 4.5.26, page 68) that '*For trenchless crossings, HDD has been assessed in the DCO Application as this is the likely preferred option based on their reduced complexity and relatively low cost compared to other techniques. The detailed methodology and design of the trenchless crossing will be determined following site investigation and confirmed within stage specific Onshore Construction Method Statements including confirmation that there are no new or materially different environmental effects arising compared to those assessed in the ES.*'

13.2.7. It is unclear what the approach will be if '*new or materially different environmental effects'* do arise.

13.2.8. It is not acceptable to the SDNPA that the construction of the onshore cable route should commence prior to the viability of the sections of trenchless crossing HDD being confirmed as possible to implement, due to the extensive landscape and visual effects along the route. If the HDD is not confirmed as possible at any point, and an alternative is sought to be agreed, then the SDNP is of the opinion that effects of the proposed development have the potential to be prolonged and, depending on the alternatives, different and possibly more extensive than those set out in the ES.

13.2.9. For Commitment C-5 to be acceptable to the SDNPA, reference needs to be made to the use of HDD in other areas, particularly under the scarp and prior to construction, a fixed proposal needs to be identified and acknowledged as part of the 'worst case scenario' with an amended ES if appropriate.

13.3. C-7

13.3.1. *'Post construction, the work area will be reinstated to pre-existing conditions as far as reasonably practical'*.

13.3.2. Pre-existing conditions need to be established prior to construction. It may be that an area is in poor condition, badly drained or have some other issue, whereby reinstatement to an equally poor condition would not be desirable and that the opportunity for some form of enhancement would be welcomed.

13.3.3. The wording for C-7 should be amended to remove the phrase '*as far as reasonably practical'* to be acceptable to the SDNPA and further consideration given to opportunities for enhancement in areas where existing conditions are found to be poor and could be improved.

13.4. C-9

13.4.1. '*Joint bays will be completely buried, with the land above reinstated to pre-construction ground level, with the exception of link box chambers where access will be required from ground level (via manholes)*.'

13.4.2. The description of the Proposed Development (APP-045, Section 4.5.45, page 73) states that '*Typically, they are located every 750 to 950m'*, however Commitment C-19 states that '*At regular intervals (typically 600m – 1,000m) along the route joint bays/pits will be installed to enable the cable installation and connection process*.' No plans showing locations of joint bays has been provided.

13.4.3. In agricultural land it is assumed that there will need to be some form of marking or fencing to enable identification land to ensure farming practices, such as ploughing, do not damage manholes, however there is no mention of this in APP-045.

13.4.4. The Soils Management Plan (APP-226, Section 3.1.6, page 12) sets out that '*ALC grades should be used to inform 'micro-siting' in the final design so that where practicable, temporary or permanent development on the best quality agricultural land is avoided. Where there is flexibility for a final joint bay location to be positioned in areas of agricultural land with different ALC grades, consideration will be given in the final design to locating the joint bay in the land with the lowest ALC grade (with the highest being Grade 1)*.'

13.4.5. This is welcomed, but it is suggested that for C-9 to be acceptable to SDNPA this should be taken to a greater level of detail and the micro-siting of joint bays to edges of fields would reduce impact on agricultural land further.

13.5. C-26

13.5.1. *'Where noisy activities are planned and may cause disturbance, the use of mufflers, acoustic barriers (or shrouds) and other suitable solutions will be applied*.'

13.5.2. No identification of location of acoustic barriers has been provided. Should these be required, then the SDNPA suggest that locations need to be identified and acknowledged as part of the 'worst case scenario' to be assessed.

13.6. C-27

13.6.1. '*Following construction, construction compounds will be returned to previous conditions as far as reasonably possible*.'

13.6.2. Pre-existing conditions need to be established prior to construction. It may be that an area is in poor condition, badly drained or have some other issue, whereby reinstatement to an equally poor condition would not be desirable; the SDNP would welcome the opportunity for some form of enhancement.

13.6.3. The wording for C-27 should also be amended to remove the phrase '*as far as reasonably possible*' to be acceptable to the SDNPA.

13.7. C-40

13.7.1. '*There will be up to three offshore substations installed to serve the Proposed Development. The exact locations, design and visual appearance will be subject to a structural study and electrical design, which is expected to be completed post consent. The offshore substations will be installed on multi-leg or monopile foundations, similar to those described for the wind turbine generators (WTGs) themselves'*.

13.7.2. See commentary above in Section 5.4.

13.8. C-61

13.8.1. '*Due regard will be given to design principles held in Rampion 1 Design Plan and design principles to be developed for Rampion 2, with consideration of the seascape, landscape and visual impacts on the South Downs National Park and Sussex Heritage Coast*.'

13.8.2. Rampion Offshore Wind Farm and connection works Examining Authority's Report of Findings and Conclusions and Recommendation to the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change Section 4.357 states '*The Panel considers the offshore design parameters provide an important contribution to reducing the visual effect of the offshore wind farm on the National Park and Heritage Coast.*'

13.8.3. SLVIA Design Principles supplementary document in the above document sets out that the design principles are:

(a) To limit as far as possible the horizontal degree of view of wind turbine generators from the key sensitive visual receptor within the SDNP and the HC through a more compact layout;

(b) To increase as far as possible the distance of the wind turbine generators from the key sensitive visual receptor within the SDNP and the HC;

(c) To locate the largest turbines, in any hybrid scheme, to the south-western portion of the Order limits maximising distance from the key sensitive visual receptor within the SDNP and the HC;

(d) Provide clear sight lines through the wind turbine layout to the open sea horizon from the key sensitive visual receptor within the SDNP and the HC;

(e) Consider use of colour tones to minimise visibility, specifically in relation to the key sensitive visual receptor within the SDNP and the HC;

(f) The key sensitive visual receptor from the SDNP and HC is Beachy Head. Other sensitive visual receptors, which the undertaker should have regard to in applying the design principles, are Birling Gap, Cuckmere Haven and inland sea views from the downs.

13.8.4. It is accepted that the Rampion 2 design principles do not include principle (c) which relates to a hybrid scheme.

13.8.5. Principle (e) is not adopted in the Rampion 2 principles.

13.8.6. Principle (f) is not relevant to Rampion 2.

13.9. C- 67

13.9.1. '*The onshore cable route will avoid the brows of hills as far as is reasonably practical and is likely to follow the established pattern of the landscape i.e. routed to closely follow the line of existing field boundaries as far as is practicable.*'

13.9.2. Study of the aerial mapping of the route of the onshore cable shows that this commitment cannot be met adequately with the current proposed route.

13.10. C-103

13.10.1. '*Areas of temporary habitat loss will begin reinstatement within 2 years of the loss, other than at the temporary construction compounds, cable joint bays, some haul roads, some construction access roads, landfall and substation location where activities may take longer to complete. Habitat restoration (i.e. planting and seeding) will take place at an appropriate time of year dependent on habitat type. In general habitat restoration will seek to deliver the same habitat type as the baseline, unless there is an opportunity to deliver enhancements. Woodland cannot be replaced above the cable ducts and in these situations woodland ride habitats will be delivered'*.

13.10.2. For C-103 to be acceptable to the SDNPA prior to construction, a fixed programme needs to be identified and acknowledged as part of the 'worst case scenario' with an amended ES if appropriate.

13.11. C-115

13.11.1. '*Hedgerows/tree lines crossed by the cable route will be 'notched' to reduce habitat loss and landscape and heritage impacts wherever possible. This is defined as temporarily displacing one or more short sections (i.e. notches) within the same hedgerow/tree line. Hedgerow/tree line losses will thereby be kept to approximately 14m total width at each hedgerow crossing point where notching can take place. Hedgerows deemed "important" under the Hedgerows Regulations 1997 (or where there are other considerations), losses will be reduced to a 6m notch for the temporary construction haul roads only, by trenchless installation of the cable ducts under them. Where appropriate, hedgerows will be temporarily translocated using a tree spade to maintain diversity and structure and result in more rapid reinstatement. Where chances of success are questionable, notches will be made by removal and reinstatement through planting. The ECoW will justify the approach being taken in line with the responsibilities of implementing the vegetation retention plan (see C - 220)*'

13.11.2. See sections 3.6 and 9.15 above.

13.12. C-193

13.12.1. *'Replacement planting will be characteristic of the area and resilient to climate change. Plant species will be selected carefully at detailed design stage with appropriate management and maintenance techniques established to support the development of these species in line with the environmental requirements'*

13.12.2. The SDNPA suggest that plant species that are both characteristic of the area and resilient to climate change will need to be carefully selected and may lead to a smaller range of plants to select from.

13.13. C-286

13.13.1. '*Mitigation planting for the removal of trees and hedgerow will be designed in accordance with the principles set out in the Arboricultural Impact Assessment (Document reference: 6.4.22.16) and Outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (LEMP) (Document Reference: 7.10)*'

13.13.2. The SDNPA suggest that the Commitments Register should also make some reference to the presence of ash dieback and any compensatory measures required.