## EIA Quality Mark Case Study

### Richborough Connection Project

#### Key Issues
A key focus of the engagement with consultees and other stakeholders was how the effects of the proposed development would be avoided/managed such that where they were unavoidable they were suitably mitigated or where necessary compensated for.

Whilst an Environmental Statement (ES) and the technical assessment chapters within it present this information, it can often be found in numerous places such that clarity on what is required, where it will happen and how it will be secured is difficult for consultees to readily identify.

For Richborough, this was compounded by the fact that the route covered a distance of approximately 20km crossing 3 local authority areas (plus a County council). It was identified that in addition to numerous standard/best practice measures, there was also a need for site specific measures relevant to the different environmental assessment topics.

In order to clearly present this detail for the consultees, an Embedded Environmental Measures Schedule was created as an Appendix to the ES. This was a tabular, excel format spreadsheet which enabled searching/filtering on locations or topics.

It was intended that this information would also be a representative basis for further development of that mitigation in the delivery stage by the client (National Grid) and its contractors.

#### Purpose of the project
The Richborough Connection Project is required in order to connect a new subsea interconnector cable (called Nemo Link®) which is being installed between the UK and Belgium with the national electricity transmission system. There is currently no electricity transmission infrastructure in the immediate vicinity of the location of the Nemo Link® at Richborough. Therefore in order to provide a transmission connection, new transmission infrastructure is required between Richborough and the existing transmission system, the nearest point being located some 15-20km away at Canterbury. The connection will play a role in ensuring a continued safe, reliable and secure electricity supply.

#### Description of the project
The Richborough Connection project is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project made up of:
- Construction of a 20km 400kV overhead line and 60 pylons between Canterbury and Richborough.
- The removal of an existing UK Power Networks’ 132kV overhead line and 79 pylons.
- Other works, such as temporary access roads, highway works, scaffold structures and construction compounds.

The area where the proposed development would take place is mostly agricultural land, with marsh land towards the eastern end near Richborough. The only urban areas are the north eastern outskirts of Canterbury at the western end of the route. At Richborough there are several industrial and commercial buildings around the site including solar farms, Sewage Treatment Works and a household waste recycling centre. Villages along the route, but outside the site, include Broad Oak, Sturry, Westbere, Hersden, Hoath, Upstreet, Chislet, Sarre, Monkton and Minster.
EIA Learning Outcomes

Lessons learnt:
The preparation of the Schedule enabled an audit of environmental measures to be completed assisting with internal project QA prior to submission of the Development Consent Order (DCO) application. It also enabled National Grid to fully understand the commitments it was making that would need to be delivered during the construction phase as the measures detailed in the Schedule were to be subject to DCO Requirements or other Consents.

One complication to the Schedule was that some of the biodiversity information was confidential due to the nature of the receptors. This meant that two versions of the Schedule were required so that any confidential information could be kept out of the public domain. The versions submitted with the DCO application had the following column headings:

- Work description;
- Work Ref. number;
- Location;
- Potential effect;
- Measure proposed;
- Topic;
- Purpose/justification;
- Summary description of works;
- Timing (phase of works);
- Delivery mechanism; and
- Draft DCO Requirement.

During the Examination phase of the application, the Examining Authority requested minor edits to the Schedules to include further columns on:

- ES reference; and
- Discharge Authority.

The Examination closed in December 2016 and the DCO was granted in August 2017.

At the National Infrastructure Planning Association Conference in June 2017, speakers from the Planning Inspectorate commented that they prefer to see tabulated information as part of DCO applications for information such as secured mitigation, the Richborough example may have helped inform this view.

Contact details

Caroline Gettinby
Wood
caroline.gettinby@woodplc.com

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