Grand Union Canal Transfer

Appendix 7-PD-1: Consultation

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Appendix 7-PD-1: Consultation

1. Introduction

1.1.1 This Preliminary Environmental Information (PEI) Report appendix consolidates key comments raised in the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping Opinion (**Appendix 5-PD-2** in PEI Report **Volume 4**) from the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) and other consultees, such as the Environment Agency, Natural England, Historic England and local planning authorities in relation to agriculture and soils.

1.2 Scoping Opinion and Additional Consultation

Scoping Opinion

1.2.1 A scoping exercise was undertaken in early 2025 to establish the content of the assessment and the approach and methods to be followed.

1.2.2 The Scoping Report (**Appendix 5-PD-1** in PEI Report **Volume 4**) was issued on 28 March 2025 and records the findings of the scoping exercise and details the technical guidance, standards, best practice and criteria to be applied in the assessment to identify and evaluate the likely significant effects of the Proposed Development on agriculture and soils.

1.2.3 Following receipt of the Scoping Opinion on 08 May 2025 (**Appendix 5-PD-2** in PEI Report **Volume 4**), the requirements summarised in **Table 1** have been identified by consultees in relation to agriculture and soils.

1.2.4 **Table 1** outlines how and where these issues have been addressed within the PEI Report or will be addressed within the Environmental Statement (ES) to ensure they are taken account of as part of the ongoing assessment of effects on agriculture and soils.

Table 1: Scoping Opinion Responses

Consultee	Topic	Summary of comment	How and where addressed
PINS	Loss and disturbance of soil resources related to agricultural land during operation. (Parts 1b, 4a and 4b)	The scoping report explains that there will be no disturbance of soils and agricultural land once the proposed development is complete and operational. Any maintenance or repair works would be ad hoc and limited and managed in accordance with standard industry practice. As such, this potential effect is scoped out of the EIA. Geo-environmental considerations relating to non-agricultural soils are provided within Chapter 14: Ground Conditions. Based on the justification provided in the scoping report, the Inspectorate agrees to scope this matter out from further assessment.	The scope of assessment is established in Section 7.4 of Volume 2 Chapter 7 Agricultural Land and Soils.
PINS	Loss and disturbance of soil resources related to agricultural land during construction and operation. (Parts 1a, 2 and 3)	The scoping report states that no agricultural land is required for these parts of the proposed development. On this basis, the Inspectorate agrees this matter may be scoped out from further assessment.	The scope of assessment is established in Section 7.4 of Volume 2 Chapter 7 Agricultural Land and Soils
PINS	Impacts on agricultural land through restriction to agricultural function within the farm holding during construction and operation (Parts 1b, 4a and 4b)	The scoping report states that restrictions to agricultural function from permanent and temporary use of farmland is a potential socio-economic impact and is captured in Chapter 19: Socio-Economics. Geo-environmental considerations relating to non-agricultural soils are provided within Chapter 14: Ground Conditions. On the basis that this matter is	Cross-referencing between chapters of the ES will be included where necessary

Consultee	Topic	Summary of comment	How and where addressed
		considered in other chapters of the scoping report, the Inspectorate agrees this matter may be scoped out for Chapter 8 Agriculture and soils, though clear cross referencing where necessary should be included in the ES.	
PINS	Impacts on agricultural land through restriction to agricultural function within the farm holding during construction and operation. (Parts 1a, 2 and 3)	The scoping report states that no agricultural land is required for these parts of the proposed development. On this basis, the Inspectorate agrees this matter may be scoped out from further assessment.	The scope of assessment is established in Section 7.4 of Volume 2 Chapter 7 Agricultural Land and Soils.
PINS	Agricultural land	The ES should contain a clear tabulation of the areas of land in each Best Most Versatile (BMV) classification to be temporarily or permanently lost as a result of the proposed development, with reference to accompanying map(s) depicting the grades. Specific justification for the use of the land by grade should be provided. Consideration should be given to the use of BMV land in the applicant's discussion of alternatives.	The assessment methodology is established in Section 7.5 of Volume 2 Chapter 7 Agricultural Land and Soils. Tabulation of data identifying temporary or permanent development, with accompanying maps, will be included in the ES.