

AONB Partnership ExA Questions pt 1

Ref	Also for	Question	AONB Partnership Response
AR.1.	The Applicant, AONB Partnership, ESC, SCC	<p>AONB</p> <p>The AONB Partnership set out detailed concern [RR-1170] with regard to the assessment of and significance of effects on the AONB and its statutory purposes:</p> <p>(i) Can the Applicant please respond in full to these concerns in respect of recreation and amenity?</p> <p>(ii) Can the Applicant also set out the effects on the AONB and its value as a recreational and amenity area through each of the construction, operational and decommissioning phases.</p> <p>(iii) Do the Councils and AONB Partnership consider the ES has fully recognised the benefits of the AONB as a recreational and amenity area and provided for appropriate mitigation?</p>	<p>The AONB Partnership note that the statutory primary purpose of the AONB designation is to conserve and enhance natural beauty. There are two secondary non-statutory purposes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To take account of the needs of agriculture, forestry, fishing and other local rural industries and of the economic and social needs of local communities, paying particular regard to promoting sustainable forms of social and economic development that in themselves conserve and enhance the area's natural beauty; and • To seek to meet the demand for recreation so far as this is consistent with the statutory purpose of conserving and enhancing the area's natural beauty - and which preferably supports this purpose by increasing understanding, valuation and care for the area - and is also consistent with the needs of rural industries. <p>The AONB Partnership consider that the ES does not fully recognise the benefits of the AONB as a recreational and amenity area. Therefore, the AONB Partnership considers that the applicant should identify the existing recreational and amenity benefits of the area. In part this is identified by the AONB commissioned Volume and Value Study in 2020 (with 2019 figures) that notes the tourism industry is worth £228M pa and supports 5,056 jobs. Evidence of the impacts energy coast projects is further identified in the in the Suffolk Coast Destination Management Organisation/AONB study in 2019. The study showed that 29% of those polled would be a lot less or a little less likely to visit the Suffolk coast having been made aware of energy project proposals. The applicant does not appear to concur with these findings.</p> <p>Furthermore, the AONB Partnership considers that the benefits go far beyond the volume and value of tourism and that other recreational and amenity benefits accrue, including health and well-being (physical and mental), reducing demand for travel to and pressures on other naturally beautiful areas and the value of ecosystem services of the amenity</p> <p>The AONB Partnership concur with many of the findings in the Summary of Effects for construction phase (table 15.11) and operational phase (table 15.12) in 6.3 Volume 2</p>

			<p>Main Development Site Chapter 15 Amenity and Recreation document that identifies a series of significant residual effects. The AONB Partnership considers that the value of the recreational and amenity value of the AONB has been downplayed in the Environment Statement and that the value for wider public benefits of the AONB natural beauty and special qualities has not been fully assessed. The AONB Partnership has not been party to the discussions relating to the magnitude of any mitigation proposals that might be contained within a section 106 agreement with the local authorities relating to the AONB as a recreational and amenity area. However, it notes the section 106 agreement for the Sizewell B Dry Fuel Store in relation to that developments impacts on the AONB and findings of the Suffolk Coast Limited study (that was part funded by the AONB Partnership) into the impacts on the visitor economy of the energy projects on the Suffolk Coast.</p>
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