



FAO: Cheshire West and Chester Council,
Hynet Runcorn Spur pipeline representatives

April 2nd, 2025

To all who may be concerned,

RE: Runcorn Spur pipeline consultation

The Cheshire Wildlife Trust (CWT) is the region's leading wildlife charity with over 17,000 local members whose views we seek to represent, particularly those who live in West Cheshire. Following a review of the supporting documents uploaded to the planning portal, CWT would like to register the following consultation response.

Impacts to Cell 3

Following a consultation meeting with representatives of ENI and WSP (24/02/25), as well as a site visit to Frodsham Marshes mid-March, it is our position as a key member of the Local Wildlife Site Partnership that the proposals for the Runcorn Spur Hynet pipeline pose considerable ecological risks to the Frodsham, Helsby, and Ince Local Wildlife Site.

The new route that is being proposed for the Runcorn Spur pipeline now goes through Cell 3. Restoration of the habitat in Cell 3 was legally secured through a planning condition to compensate for the significant impacts caused by the development of the Wind Farm (10/00597/DECC). Cell 3 has been restored to Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh and is in better condition than most of the rest of the site. It is therefore one of the most sensitive areas of Frodsham Marshes, which itself is one of the most sensitive sites in Cheshire. In addition to being designated as a Local Wildlife Site following its deselection as a Site of Special Scientific Interest, Frodsham Marches is also considered Functionally Linked Land (FLL) for the Mersey Estuary SPA as well as a core site for the ecological network identified by Cheshire West and Chester (2016) and the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (imminent).

With past, current, and future developments covering more than 64% of the Local Wildlife Site, and with Cell 3 being one of the few ecological mitigation areas, this new route does not adhere to the mitigation hierarchy, which prioritises **avoiding** above mitigating and compensating. The pipeline proposals are likely to impact the site through disturbance to over-wintering or breeding birds as well as priority habitats, and therefore undermine the functionality of this key piece of land. We strongly advise that the pipeline is re-routed through a less sensitive area, ideally to the south, and avoid impacts to Cell 3 entirely.

We trust you will find these comments helpful, and I am available for further discussion if need be.

Kind regards,

Mélusine Velde
Planning & Advocacy Officer
Cheshire Wildlife Trust