

Necton Parish Council Boreas ExA Q2 Responses 17 February 2020

Q2.5.2.2 Whether work No. 10A should be controlled further

Necton Parish Council are concerned about control of the National Grid extensions. We would like the following words to be included in the DAS:

“The datum for the National Grid extensions will be set as follows:

1. 62 metres for the south east extension. Alternatively, the installation can follow the slope of the ground but cannot exceed 13 metres above ground level at any point.
2. The north west extension will use the same datum level as the Dudgeon substation.

The height of the National Grid extensions will be limited to 13 metres above the applicable datum level.”

We would prefer both the pylons to be of the National Grid ‘T’ design. To screen the new installation (recognising that the new pylon cannot be screened) we would like 10 metre earth banks to be placed along the 65 metre contour line between Necton and the substations. The bank should be run between 20 metres away from the A47 and the sugar beet pad track on Necton Farm that runs from Ivy Tod road and is marked as a double dotted line on the ordinance survey map. This earth bank to be planted with trees.

Q2.7.0.1 Offshore Ring Main

Necton Parish Council believe that the National Grid Electrical Transmissions Business Plan 2021 – 2026, which details the future Near Shore Loop strategy, should be considered by the Examining Authority as well as the Ofgem recent decarbonisation Action Plan dated February 2020. The cost to the consumer is a paramount factor in the UK National Infrastructure Policy. The NG document sets out a 15% saving to the consumer through the near shore loop strategy. This will be diluted and reduced if the current wind farm DCOs are approved using cable corridors across Norfolk. The timescale for these installations are far enough into the future that the alternative connection to the grid should be considered as part of the Examining Authority process to ensure the best value infrastructure is implemented.

Q2.9.6.4 Substation Integration into Local Landscape

Necton Parish Council are concerned about the height of the converter halls with respect to their surroundings. We would like the following wording to be included in the DAS:

“The datum level for the converter halls will be set at the 65 metre contour line. All buildings higher than 13 metres above the datum should be sunk into the ground such that their height above the datum does not exceed 13 metres. Earth banks of 15 metres height should be placed around all exterior sides of the converter hall site (Vanguard and Boreas if both are built) which will hide the lightning conductor towers. Trees will be planted on the earth banks to stabilise them and provide additional screening.”

Communication masts appear to be a material change as they have not been mentioned before the ISH on 21 January 2020. Please could the Examining Authority ask for details on this late addition to the specification.

The Parish Council supports additional planting on earth banks between the converter hall area and both Ivy Todd and Necton villages. This should be a mandatory part of the design process.

Q2.9.6.6 Consultation

Necton Parish Council would welcome additional consultation on the DAS. There is no precedent for buildings of this magnitude and therefore all local authorities including Necton Parish Council should be included in the consultation process. Unfortunately, district councils stand to gain significant income, through untaxed business rates [Non-domestic rating (renewable energy projects) Regulations 2013], from this infrastructure project and are therefore unlikely to apply as rigorous an approach as parish councils who could be left with significant unwelcome effects.

Our concern with Boreas and Vanguard is that it will replicate our experience with the Dudgeon substation. Significant changes were made to the original plans without any consultation (eg datum level).

Unaccompanied Site Visits

At the Accompanied Site Visit on 23 January 2020, Necton Parish Council become aware that Vattenfall are only considering public viewpoints in their DCO. At previous presentations for Vanguard and Boreas in Necton Village Hall and the Green Britain Centre, property owners were shown the view of the substation and converter halls from their own homes. They were given the impression that views from their property were of interest to the applicant and would be taken into account. Now we know that is not the case, we request the addition of some public viewpoints for unaccompanied site visits:

1. Ash Hill Common
2. Necton church tower
3. Green Lane, near Gibbets farm
4. Hale road between Black Drift and Spencer Cottage

Necton Parish Council
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