



## Meeting note

<b>File reference</b>	EN020002
<b>Status</b>	<b>Final</b>
<b>Author</b>	Jolyon Wootton
<b>Date</b>	27 November 2013
<b>Meeting with</b>	National Grid
<b>Venue</b>	The Planning Inspectorate Offices, Bristol
<b>Attendees</b>	Kathryn Powell, Infrastructure Planning Lead (The Planning Inspectorate) Jolyon Wootton, Case Officer (The Planning Inspectorate)  Simon Pepper, Senior Consents Manager (National Grid) Brian Smethurst, Senior Project Manager (National Grid) Stephen Knight-Gregson, Regional External Affairs Manager (National Grid)
<b>Meeting objectives</b>	Project update meeting to discuss the suspension of the Bramford to Twinstead Tee 400kV Connection project at the pre-application stage.
<b>Circulation</b>	Attendees

### Summary of key points discussed and advice given:

National Grid representatives were aware of the Planning Inspectorate's openness policy (that any advice given will be recorded and placed on the Planning Inspectorate's website under section 51 of the Planning Act 2008, as amended by the Localism Act 2011 (PA 2008)). Any advice given does not constitute legal advice upon which applicants (or others) can rely.

Following National Grid's press release of 13 November 2013, stating that the Bramford to Twinstead Tee 400kV Connection project has been put temporarily on hold, National Grid gave the Planning Inspectorate a summary of the current position.

National Grid's pre-application consultation had originally expected to conclude in Autumn 2013 with their final 'statutory' consultation phase, followed by submission of a Development Consent Order application to the Planning Inspectorate in Q2 2014. National Grid's requirement to build a new 27km 400kV electricity transmission connection between Bramford in Suffolk and Twinstead in Essex was based on National Grid's project need case for the East Anglia Region: their assessments of existing and new power generators in the region that will require new electricity line connections and substations to enable grid capacity. Changes in the contracted position with projects such as East Anglia Offshore Windfarm mean that the proposed

new connection is no longer needed by 2017, more likely now being required in the early 2020s.

National Grid's published report, 'The Bramford-Twinstead Need Case 2013', covering these changes can be found on National Grid's project website at [www.bramford-twinstead.co.uk](http://www.bramford-twinstead.co.uk). National Grid pointed to 'Table 4.2 Existing and Future Contracted Generation Connections in East Anglia' and Figure 4.1 in the report to illustrate the forecasted changes in demand and supply based on existing and planned power generation.

National Grid commented that based on these latest forecasts, the existing transmission system will be capable of accommodating current and currently anticipated generation in the East Anglia area up to the year 2022.

National Grid stated that consultation at the pre-application stage to date has been pre-statutory (non-statutory) since 2009, incorporating 2 rounds of consultation with statutory and non-statutory consultees, local authorities, land owners and the local community. Feedback has been collated for each phase by National Grid which has influenced the evolution of the proposal and led to the selection of corridor 2 from their Route Corridor Study, which would involve taking down an existing 132kV UK Power Networks overhead line. Approximately a quarter of the new transmission connection is to be undergrounded around the Stour Valley and Dedham Vale AONB and based on consultation feedback, a further 1km of existing 400kV transmission line can be removed at the western end of the new connection. To maintain local electricity supplies when the UK Power Networks line is removed, a new substation is planned to be built south of Sudbury. Consultation with community forums and thematic groups has been ongoing, including discussions with environmental bodies and other agencies on the environmental surveys and baseline data (including consultation on the historic environment with Babergh District Council and English Heritage).

National Grid confirmed that the last 2 documents uploaded to their website were their documents on the new substation and latest connection options. Their website now informs visitors that the scheme has been temporarily suspended.

National Grid said that, on re-starting, they will consider whether there have been any material changes to the planning and regulatory framework that might impact on their proposals. Assuming no significant change to the baseline over the period the project is on hold, National Grid will reconvene their consultations in the future. On recommencing pre-application work, National Grid noted that they would publish an updated need case and some environmental surveys, in particular biodiversity, would need updating.

Further to the press release, National Grid confirmed that they are holding a final round of meetings with the community forums to brief attendees. Any comments would be recorded on the National Grid website.

The Planning Inspectorate advised that there are no provisions in PA 2008 or DCLG guidance that addresses directly the suspension of pre-application consultation on a proposal. Provisions in PA 2008 set out the duty placed on the applicant to make available documentation on the scheme and consult prescribed persons within the statutory timetables for consultation, together with other duties. DCLG guidance states that applicants are not expected to repeat consultation unless the proposal has changed substantially (post-meeting note: please see paras 55 and 56 of DCLG's

'Planning Act 2008: Guidance on the pre-application process' for further information). The applicant would have to consider whether the proposal has changed to such a degree that it could be considered a new application; which may require the applicant to undertake re-consultation on the new scheme. The Planning Inspectorate advised that applicants should, within the consultation report that accompanies the application, explain the whole consultation process including any pre-statutory consultation and any breaks in continuity and the interrelationship between the different consultation phases.

The Planning Inspectorate recommended that the applicant may consider undertaking a non-statutory round of consultation in respect of the pause, before commencing with the statutory phase. The applicant would also be able to request a new scoping opinion from the Secretary of State, if required. It would also be useful if the applicant considers contacting the local authorities before restarting their consultation.

The Planning Inspectorate said that the applicant would need to conduct new land searches to detect any changes to landowners and occupiers in the intervening period. National Grid was conscience of the need to reevaluate the list of section 44 persons at the appropriate time. National Grid commented that no further pre-statutory consultation is planned.

National Grid said that they would further inform the Planning Inspectorate, other stakeholders, persons with an interest in land and the local community when the project is restarted.

**Specific decisions / follow up required?**

None.