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Customer Services: 0303 444 5000
e-mail: nienquiries@pins.gsi.gov.uk

Mr David Savage
Chair - Parish Council Coordination
Group

Your Ref:

By email

Our Ref: EN020007

Date: 18 October 2016

Dear Mr Savage,

Re Pre application consultation by National Grid - North West Coast Connection Project (NWCC)

Thank you for your letter of 14th October to Sarah Richards (CEO of the Planning Inspectorate) regarding the consultation process that National Grid is undertaking in respect of the North West Coast Connection (NWCC) project. Sarah passed your letter to me as Head of Service for the National Infrastructure Team.

I read with interest the points you raised about the difficulties you say you have experienced in engaging with National Grid about the NWCC project. I understand that this project is currently at the pre application stage and the formal consultation process on this project will commence at the end of October. As such I can assure you that there is still an opportunity for the Parish Council to put forward its views to the statutory consultation that takes place with prescribed consultees under s42 of the Planning Act 2008.

I can also confirm that relevant Parish Councils (ie those in whose area a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) is located) are statutory consultees who need to be included in statutory pre-application consultation. (They are listed in Schedule 1 of the Infrastructure Planning (Applications Prescribed forms and Procedures) Regulations 2009 (as amended)).

We note the contents of your letter and welcome your approach to coordinate your engagement with other Parish Councils as part of the Parish Council Coordination Group. This will certainly help you to share expertise and resources at the pre-application stage and beyond.

I should also highlight that the pre-application stage is only the start of the process and, if the application is accepted, as statutory consultees you will be invited to the Preliminary Meeting, and invited to confirm you would like to participate in the examination. However, we recommend that Parish Councils confirm their interested

party status earlier than this by making a relevant representation during the registration period, which will open following a decision to accept the application for examination. As such, you will have further opportunities to put forward your views about the project to the Examining Authority once it is appointed.

In the meantime, I would encourage you to take up your concerns directly with the applicant in order to enable National Grid to take these into consideration in further developing their proposals. You can also forward any views you have about National Grid's pre-application consultation to your local authority. Once an application is submitted to the Planning Inspectorate we will ask relevant local authorities to provide us with their views on the adequacy of the pre-application consultation.

I understand you have been in correspondence with Mark Wilson who is the lead case officer. Mark will be able to advise you about how best to engage with the Development Consent Order (DCO) process going forward. We also have a dedicated helpline (0303 444 5000) and email enquiries inbox NIEnquiries@pins.gsi.gov.uk.

Yours sincerely

Simone Wilding

Simone Wilding
**Head of National Infrastructure
and Environmental Services Team**

Advice may be given about applying for an order granting development consent or making representations about an application (or a proposed application). This communication does not however constitute legal advice upon which you can rely and you should obtain your own legal advice and professional advice as required.

A record of the advice which is provided will be recorded on the National Infrastructure Planning website together with the name of the person or organisation who asked for the advice. The privacy of any other personal information will be protected in accordance with our Information Charter which you should view before sending information to the Planning Inspectorate.