



Meeting note

Project name	Norwich to Tilbury
File reference	EN020027
Status	Final
Author	The Planning Inspectorate
Date	6 September 2023
Meeting with	National Grid Electricity Transmission (NGET)
Venue	Microsoft Teams
Meeting objectives	Project update meeting
Circulation	All attendees

Summary of key points discussed, and advice given

The Planning Inspectorate (the Inspectorate) advised that a note of the meeting would be taken and published on its website in accordance with section 51 of the Planning Act 2008 (the PA2008). Any advice given under section 51 would not constitute legal advice upon which applicants (or others) could rely.

Project need

The Applicant explained the need for the Proposed Development in light of the 14-18GW of new generation and interconnection that was proposed to be connected in the East Anglia region. The Applicant gave an overview of the existing transmission network in East Anglia and stated that it is anticipated future electricity generation could not be accommodated in the current 400 kV network. The Applicant explained its initial steps it carried out before deciding on a new network, notably by improving the current network through regional re-enforcement projects. The Applicant noted that at present it has contracts with two proposed offshore windfarms (North Falls and Five Estuaries) and one proposed interconnector to connect to the Proposed Development.

2022 and 2023 consultation and overview

The Applicant gave an overview of how the 2022 non-statutory consultation was conducted. This included writing to all properties within 1km of the preferred route corridor, informing all local authorities, and conducting public events, with more than 3,000 people attending. The Applicant summarised its actions following the non-statutory consultation.

The Applicant gave an overview of the 2023 non-statutory consultation on the preferred draft alignment, including a new 400 kV line.

The Applicant summarised the changes it had made following the 2022 non-statutory consultation, including five changes outside the 2022 preferred route corridor, which has resulted in an increase in undergrounding. As a result of the increased undergrounding there is a need for an increased number of cable sealing end compounds and some

additional areas of land take. The Applicant wrote to 55,000 properties and received some 3,300 responses. It listed specific groups that were consulted, including host local authorities and landowners.

The Applicant gave an overview of the emerging themes from the consultation, which included concerns over visual impact, housing supply impacts and compensation.

Post-consultation activity

The Applicant stated that it was in the process of reviewing the feedback received. It was continuing with survey work and continuing to engage with stakeholders. Statutory consultation is expected to commence in spring 2024.

The Applicant noted significant external factors that were being monitored, such as the separate Offshore Coordination Support Scheme (OCSS), Electricity System Operator (ESO), and Essex County Council reviews. The Applicant looked forward to the outcome of these studies. and noted that external factors such as these could potentially influence the Norwich to Tilbury project timeline.

The Inspectorate asked for clarification regarding the timeline of the reviews and the consequence of their outcomes. The Applicant stated it would reflect on them all once published, however there could be potential for them to influence the project timeline.

The Inspectorate queried whether there was a connection between the benefits consultation and the recommendations from the UK's Electricity Networks Commissioner, on how to accelerate the deployment of electricity transmission infrastructure. The Applicant understood that the Networks Commissioner had been aware of the consultation, and that the findings had been generally welcomed.

The Applicant made reference to the Institute of Engineering and Technology (IET) study into the costs of new electricity transmission infrastructure and stated that it had recommissioned the study.

The Applicant noted that the Proposed Development could attract proposals and that it had emphasised the role of the planning system to stakeholders.

The Applicant noted that it was continuing to engage with campaign groups.

Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) and Environmental Statement (ES)

The Applicant advised that it would prepare a PEIR to support its statutory consultation in spring 2024, and provided an overview of progress on the environmental survey work. The Applicant stated its intention of not preparing the PEIR in the form of a draft ES and gave justification for this.

The Inspectorate advised that the PEIR and ES should clearly explain the approach to baseline data collection and assessment of impacts in relation to the changes made to the Proposed Development subsequent to adoption of the Scoping Opinion (as described above).

Other matters

The Applicant reiterated the project timeline and noted that the Development Consent Order (DCO) application was likely to be submitted in 2025.

The Inspectorate asked whether the Applicant intended to submit any draft DCO application documents for review. The Applicant advised that it would consider this and update in future pre-application meetings.

The Inspectorate advised the Applicant to stay abreast of the Inspectorate's ongoing Early Adopters trials, and any resulting 'best practice' which could be incorporated into the Norwich to Tilbury DCO application.

Specific decisions/ follow-up required?

The following actions were agreed:

- The Applicant agreed to advise the Inspectorate once the OCSS review had been completed.
- The Applicant and the Inspectorate agreed to organise the next meeting to discuss the PEIR structure, survey access, Statements of Common Ground, etc.