



## Meeting note

<b>Project name</b>	<b>Grimsby to Walpole</b>
<b>File reference</b>	<b>EN020036</b>
<b>Status</b>	<b>Final</b>
<b>Author</b>	<b>The Planning Inspectorate</b>
<b>Date</b>	<b>28 March 2024</b>
<b>Meeting with</b>	<b>National Grid Electricity Transmission (“The Applicant”)</b>
<b>Venue</b>	<b>Microsoft Teams</b>
<b>Meeting objectives</b>	<b>Project Update Meeting</b>
<b>Circulation</b>	All attendees/ additional contacts to share meeting note

### 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 Update

#### Non-Statutory Consultation

The Applicant recently conducted its first stage of public consultation, which ran from 18 January 2024 to 13 March 2024, with a focus on the emerging preferred corridor and graduated swathe.

The consultation comprised of eleven in-person consultation events and eight webinar sessions. Consultation information was available digitally and in hard copy on request. Responses could be made via multiple means through the interactive map online, email, by post to a Freepost address and over the ‘phone.

#### Emerging preferred corridor

The Applicant split the preferred emerging corridor into eleven sections to simplify feedback for those wishing to give views on a particular area. Consultation events mirrored the sections:

1. Grimsby West to Barnoldbyle Beck
2. Barnoldbyle Beck to North Thoresby
3. North Thoresby to Alvingham and Keddington
4. Alvingham and Keddington to Tothill
5. Tothill and Cumberworth
6. Cumberworth to Burgh le Marsh

7. Burgh le Marsh to Midville
8. Midville to River Witham
9. River Witham to River Welland
10. River Welland to B1165
11. B1165 to Walpole

The Applicant presented the proposed locations of the five substations that include one at section one (near to an existing substation), two at section five, one at section ten and one at section eleven. The precise siting of the substations is likely to be included in the statutory consultation.

### **Response to Non-statutory consultation**

The Applicant confirmed that the consultation events had been well attended with approximately 3,000 people attending in person and 175 persons attending online webinars. The Applicant is now considering the responses and how they will feed into the evolving project design.

The Inspectorate asked about the key issues arising from the feedback received. The Applicant advised of the common themes:

- General agreement in the need for the upgrade
- Request for considering routeing underground or offshore
- Impact on quality of life, tourism, rural landscape
- Urbanisation of rural areas
- Impact on agricultural land and food security
- Impact on National Landscapes (previously known as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty)
- Local opinion that there are too many applications for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) in Lincolnshire
- Impact on a local airfield
- Impact on local Special Educational Needs and Disabilities provision in proximity to proposals

The Applicant is considering how to incorporate feedback and communicate how concerns raised are being addressed.

### **Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping**

The Applicant advised that the timing of its submission of the Scoping Report and a request for a Scoping Opinion from the Inspectorate is anticipated to be end of July 2024, to avoid an overlap with the non-statutory consultation period. Preliminary scoping studies have been based on the preferred corridor that may be narrowed and refined following the processing of feedback. The Applicant intends to take a scoping approach in line with Advice Note 7 whilst drawing on learning from other contemporary projects within Lincolnshire and wider National Grid Electricity Transmission (NGET) projects.

The Applicant advised that pre-scoping discussion are being held with Natural England (NE) and Historic England (HE). Ecology surveys are to commence in April 2024 and will be ongoing through the summer and autumn periods. Subject to land access, the Applicant aims to complete the bulk of surveys to inform the Preliminary Environment Information Report (PEIR) in 2024 with further surveys to respond to design changes and

address any gaps to inform the Environmental Survey (ES) and Development Consent Order (DCO).

## **Project Programme**

The Applicant gave an update on key project dates:

- Request for a Scoping Opinion: July 2024
- Statutory consultation: Summer 2025
- Possible Targeted consultation: Quarter 1(Q1)/Q2 2026
- DCO Application submission: Q2 2027

## **Advice given**

The Inspectorate advised the Applicant to have a clear position on why design options are being sought, to be clear on the evidence they may have support a particular option and to communicate these clearly to all parties. This approach will encourage more meaningful submissions.

With regards to the potential loss of agricultural land, the Inspectorate advised the Applicant to begin addressing this with land agents and individual landowners at the earliest opportunity and prior to Examination. Addressing any agricultural land issues and considering how the project can co-exist with agricultural purpose will be beneficial to all concerned. The Inspectorate advised investing time and effort, and potentially a representative 'on the ground,' such as an informed community liaison, to build relationships with landowners and to access local information about the landscape.

Further, the Inspectorate advised the Applicant to consider community newsletters to summarise issues, next steps and how comments are taken on board. Messaging should be upfront, visible, and easy to locate on the project website. The Applicant committed to doing something of this nature prior to Statutory Consultation commencing and is considering how best to address concerns raised. The Inspectorate also emphasised the importance of the Applicant engaging with any action groups.

The Inspectorate advised of a [recent publication](#) on the Gov.UK website relating to future pre-application services. The Applicant will monitor published information relating to this matter and it is likely to be discussed at future meetings.

## **Specific decisions/ follow-up required?**

The following actions were agreed:

- June 2024 was agreed as appropriate timing for a next Project Update Meeting.