

CABINET

DATE	8 th October 2025
REPORT OF	Councillor Stewart Swinburn, Portfolio Holder for Housing, Infrastructure and Transport
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Carolina Borgstrom, Director for Economy, Environment, and Infrastructure
SUBJECT	Proposed Grimsby to Walpole National Grid Electricity Line
STATUS	Open
FORWARD PLAN REF NO.	CB/10/25/03

CONTRIBUTION TO OUR AIMS

Decisions on planning applications for major infrastructure projects have a significant influence on communities and future investment decisions and links particularly to the Council's priorities of 'Stronger Economy and Stronger Communities'.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The National Grid is proposing 'The Great Grid Upgrade' which they state as the largest overhaul of the electricity grid in generations. Infrastructure projects across England and Wales are proposed to connect more renewable energy to homes and businesses. National Grid state that the upgrade will play a big part in the UK government's plan to boost homegrown power and help the UK switch to clean energy.

The upgrade involves building approximately 140 km of a new 400,000 volt (400kV) overhead electricity transmission line between Grimsby and Walpole in Norfolk. In North East Lincolnshire it will go from the existing 'Grimsby West Substation' past Laceby, Barnoldby Le Beck, Brigsley and Ashby Cum Fenby and then into East Lindsey District at Grainsby. A new substation is proposed at the existing 'Grimsby West Substation' site.

The application is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) and subject to a Development Consent Order (DCO). The national Planning Inspectorate examine the application, and the host Local Planning Authorities are consultees.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Cabinet:

1. Delegates authority to the Director for Economy, Environment, and Infrastructure in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing Infrastructure and Transport to deal with matters arising from the Development Consent Order for this scheme, including all technical

issues, consistently in line with the Council's stated position on the scheme in general.

REASONS FOR DECISION

To enable the Council to respond to the National Grid proposal at both the pre and post DCO submission stage.

1. BACKGROUND AND ISSUES

Development

- 1.1 Grimsby to Walpole is one of 17 network reinforcements identified by National Grid as 'essential' and which need to be accelerated to meet 2030 targets. The upgrade involves building approximately 140 km of a new 400,000 volt (400kV) overhead electricity transmission line. It is envisaged to be fully operational by 2033. It is proposed to run south to Walpole in Norfolk. In North East Lincolnshire it will go from the existing 'Grimsby West Substation' past Laceby, Barnoldby Le Beck, Brigsley and Ashby Cum Fenby and then into East Lindsey District at Grainsby.
- 1.2 There would be a significant expansion to the 'Grimsby West Substation'. Pylons are likely to be around 50 metres in height in the main with approximately three pylons per kilometre on a straight section of the route though height and number will vary depending on topography. It is acknowledged in the latest consultation that a section of the pylons between Barnoldby Le Beck and Waithe will be 'low height pylons'. The heights are proposed to be lowered to 36 metres. These have been lowered in response to the Stage 1 consultation.

Decision making and timeframe

- 1.3 The development is by National Grid the application for consent (DCO) is examined by the Planning Inspectorate and decided by the relevant Secretary of State. The time frame is for the Development Consent Order application to be submitted in summer 2027 with an examination expected in winter 2027. A decision would then be expected in 2028 and if approved, construction would commence in 2029. Thereafter the scheme would be fully operational in 2033.
- 1.4 Following the stage one consultation in spring 2024, the statutory consultation for stage two was launched on the 11th of June 2025 and ended on the 6th of August 2025. By way of a letter dated 5th August, the Leader of the Council wrote to National Grid raising concerns on behalf of North East Lincolnshire Council which reflected the Full Council position from 14th March 2025.
- 1.5 In relation to technical matters Planning Officers have engaged with internal consultees on the consultation and submitted a technical response to National Grid also on 5th August 2025. These comments were in relation to:
 - Highways, access and public rights of way;
 - DCO rights;
 - Ecology;

- Visual and landscape matters
- Utility constraints
- The Grimsby West Strategic Housing Allocation;
- Heritage;
- Drainage;
- Socio economic impacts; and
- Noise and wellbeing.

Consideration

- 1.6 It is important that the Council submits its views and as stated the Council's position is as detailed in the Leader's letter of 5th August 2025. In particular it states;
- 1.7 'Whilst this Council welcomes this much needed upgrading of our electricity transmission infrastructure, it is concerned about the visual and environmental effects of an overhead transmission line and associated pylons and requests National Grid Electricity Transmission to place any new transmission line within the North East Lincolnshire boundary underground and/or re-route it so that it is subsea'.
- 1.8 In terms of the planning considerations officers have raised comment as noted above. There are a number of land use planning issues requiring consideration including environmental, amenity and visual impact, impact on housing delivery and a more in-depth analysis of the socio-economic impacts. These are all important matters relevant to the planning balance which will form part of the decision making process.
- 1.9 Taking the above into account it is considered that a full planning view cannot be established until such matters are responded to and addressed.

Process

- 1.10 In relation to the processing of the DCO application to be submitted, North East Lincolnshire is a host authority and will be requested to provide formal responses on the detail of the application at the pre-examination and examination stages. Activities include:
 - Relevant representation
 - Local impact report
 - Written representation
 - Responses to the Examining Authority's written questions and requests for information
 - Statement of common ground
- 1.11 Other than the 'in-principle' representation of the Council it is recommended that due to the need to work to tight timescales and for general expediency that it is agreed that responses on technical and other matters be delegated to the Director of Environment, Economy & Infrastructure in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing Infrastructure and Transport. Such an approach

accords to national planning advice from the Planning Inspectorate. In particular Government advice contained in the document 'Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects: Advice for Local Authorities. August 2024' which states that:

- 1.12 "Delegations and resourcing -The local authority should set up clear delegations early in the pre-application stage of the process. At the pre-application and acceptance stages there are different activities that are likely to need approval under the local authority's internal governance arrangements, often within tight timescales".
- 1.13 At the examination stage the Council will be expected to attend the DCO hearings and help to answer questions on issues raised and substantiate any position stated. Any planning objection would need to be justified.

2. RISKS, OPPORTUNITIES AND EQUALITY ISSUES

There is limited risk associated with responding to the DCO consultation. Responding provides the Council with the opportunity to express its views on the implications of the proposed development

3. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

As a host Local Authority there are no other reasonable options but to engage with the DCO process. Failure to engage would mean the opportunity to represent the Council's interests and advise on Town and Country Planning matters would be lost. This would not be acceptable.

4. REPUTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATIONS

As addressed under Legal Implications.

5. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

A decision to respond to the consultation has no direct financial or resource implications for the Council.

6. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IMPLICATIONS

There are no impacts on Children and young people as a direct result of this report.

7. CLIMATE CHANGE, NATURE RECOVERY AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

The development looks to respond to climate change by providing the necessary infrastructure to support green energy production. The environmental implications are as noted in the report.

8. CONSULTATION WITH SCRUTINY

A report will be presented to the Transport, Infrastructure and Strategic Housing Scrutiny panel at its meeting on September 16th 2025, and any feedback from that meeting will be reported at the Cabinet meeting.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. In terms of strategic impact, the project could influence housing and business development opportunities within the Borough. Continued engagement with National Grid will ensure alignment with the Council's future economic and housing growth opportunities.
- 9.2. Major Infrastructure developments such as this typically fall under the Valuation Office Agency's central list, meaning the Council will not directly benefit from increased business rates.

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1. The Council is a statutory consultee under the Planning Act 2008 which governs the development consent order process. As such the Council is required to engage with the process, representing local interests, including environmental, heritage and community concerns as set out above. If it does not so engage, then there is a risk that the Council's influence over the final decisions and any mitigation measures is diluted or lost.
- 10.2. The delegations sought are consistent with the government's advice set out in the document 'Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects: Advice for Local Authorities. August 2024'.
- 10.3. For the time being there are limited legal implications as to engage and support is a requirement. Further implications may arise in terms of land use, policy matters and challenges generally. Such matters should be kept under proper review.

11. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct HR implications arising from the contents of this report.

12. WARD IMPLICATIONS

The development sits within the wards of Wolds and Waltham but due to the significance of the project all wards are affected. In particular neighbouring Wards of Freshney, Yarborough, South and Scartho.

13. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Statutory consultation on the project by National Grid: Grimsby to Walpole

14. CONTACT OFFICER(S)

Damien Jaines-White, Assistant Director Regeneration, NELC, Tel; 01472 324674.

Martin Dixon, Head of Development, NELC, Tel; 01472 324262.

COUNCILLOR STEWART SWINBURN
PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR HOUSING INFRASTRUCTURE AND
TRANSPORT