

Visual Impact Provision (VIP) Snowdonia Project Guide to the Application

March 2020



GUIDE TO THE APPLICATION

Ofgem has agreed a set of price controls and incentives for the period from April 2013 to March 2021 which includes a provision of £500 million to mitigate the visual impact of existing electricity infrastructure in nationally protected landscapes in Great Britain. National Grid has referred to this as the Visual Impact Provision (VIP).

The VIP Snowdonia Project (here on referred to as the Proposed Project) represents a major opportunity to mitigate the visual impact of existing electricity infrastructure at Snowdonia National Park near Minffordd and to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and environmental heritage of the area.

The Proposed Project will underground a 3.5km section of the existing 400kV (and 132kV) Overhead Line (OHL) within a cable tunnel from a location close to National Grid's existing Garth Sealing End Compound (SEC) on the western side of the Dwyrdd Estuary to Cilfor on the eastern side of the Dwyrdd Estuary. The Proposed Project briefly comprises:

- A tunnel with a shaft at either end of the tunnel;
- A tunnel head house with a permanent access at either end of the tunnel;
- Electrical infrastructure laid within the tunnel;
- An underground buried cable to connect into the existing Garth SEC from the tunnel head house on the western side of the Dwyrdd Estuary;
- Reconfiguration of equipment at the existing Garth SEC;
- A new SEC adjacent to the proposed tunnel head house on the eastern side of the Dwyrdd Estuary;
- Removal and reinstallation of one pylon adjacent to the proposed new SEC on the eastern side of the Dwyrdd Estuary;
- Removal of the OHL and ten pylons (including foundations to a defined depth);
- Partial removal of the foundations of the previously dismantled pylon 4ZC030 within the Marine Environment (as defined by Mean High Water Springs and agreed with Natural Resources Wales);
- Diversion of third-party assets to enable the above works to proceed; and,
- Temporary access routes (with potential highways improvements) and construction compounds/ laydown areas to facilitate construction activities.

National Grid is seeking to secure full planning permission for specific elements of the Proposed Project by way of a planning application under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to Snowdonia National Park Authority (also acting on behalf of Gwynedd Council) for the tunnel head houses (including a permanent access to these sites) and the proposed new SEC on the eastern side of the Dwyrdd Estuary. The Planning Application will allow for construction compounds associated with these works.

Marine licence applications will be submitted to Natural Resources Wales for works within the marine environment of the Dwyrdd Estuary (as defined by Mean High Water Springs) under the Marine and Coastal Access Act (MCAA) 2009.

National Grid have undertaken an Environmental Appraisal of the Proposed Project as a whole, to support the application for planning permission and the marine licence applications. The Environmental Appraisal has been undertaken following best practice guidance and suggests mitigation and monitoring where deemed appropriate, irrespective of the applicable consenting regime.

Further details of the consenting regimes is provided in Chapter 1 (Introduction) of the Environmental Appraisal. The planning submission is made up of the following documents:

- Planning Application Form and Application Drawings;
- Design and Access Statement;
- Welsh Language Statement;
- Environmental Appraisal Summary;
- Environmental Appraisal Volume 1 Main Text;
- Environmental Appraisal Volume 2 Technical Appendices; and,
- Environmental Appraisal Volume 3 Figures.

Table 1 below provides a summary of the supporting documentation being submitted in support of the planning application.

Table 1: Supporting Documentation

Document Name	Description
Planning Application Form and Application Drawings	An application for Full Planning Permission under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 will be made for the relevant parts of the Proposed Project. Application Form 7 has been completed with the required supporting plans and will be submitted to Snowdonia National Park Authority for the proposals in both Gwynedd Council and Snowdonia National Park Authority planning jurisdiction.
Design and Access Statement	<p>The Design and Access Statement has been prepared (a short, standalone report) to provide a framework to explain how the Proposed Project is suitable in response to the site and its setting and explains the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the Proposed Project.</p> <p>The Design and Access Statement includes plans, elevations, and photographs to demonstrate how the principles of good design have been considered and principles relating to use, amount, layout, scale, landscaping, appearance and access to the Proposed Project.</p>
Welsh Language Statement	In accordance with Policy PS 1 (Welsh Language and Culture) of the Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan (2011 – 2026) and Development Policy 18 (The Welsh Language and the Social and Cultural Fabric of Communities) of the Eryri Local Development Plan (2007 - 2022) a Welsh Language Statement has been prepared and is provided in support of the planning application.
Environmental Appraisal Summary	The Environmental Summary is a concise, standalone document that provides a summary of the results of the Environmental Appraisal in a non-technical language covering all key disciplines. The Environmental Summary is available in both English and Welsh.
Volume 1 - Environmental Appraisal	Environmental Appraisal is the process by which the potential impacts of a Proposed Project upon various aspects of the receiving environment are identified and appraised. This volume presents a concise, systematic

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	<p>and co-ordinated written account of the Proposed Project to clearly document its potential environmental effects. The appraisal is a culmination of a series of studies, surveys and consultations with statutory and non-statutory consultees in order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describe the nature of the existing environment (baseline); • identify the possible impacts of the Proposed Project on the receiving environment; • formulate mitigation measures where required; and, • appraise the scale and nature of the remaining (residual) impacts on the environment. <p>The Environmental Appraisal provides an introduction, project description and appraisal methodology. The subsequent chapters present the findings of the technical studies conducted as part of the Environmental Appraisal. An overview of additional mitigation (i.e. additional mitigation to that initially embedded into the design of the Proposed Project and environmental control measures which it has been assumed will take place as a matter of best practice and in accordance with industry standards and guidance). Embedded mitigation measures and those considered as best practice are not discussed in the Environmental Appraisal but have been included in the Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan which forms a Technical Appendix to the Environmental Appraisal (Volume 2).</p>
Volume 2 – Technical Appendices	<p>The Technical Appendices provide a supplementary volume to the Environmental Appraisal and contains technical supporting information relied on in the main text (Volume 1) in the form of technical detail and study outputs, assessment methodologies and raw data. A key Technical Appendix is Appendix 2A, the Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (see below).</p>
Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (Technical Appendix 2A)	<p>The Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan presents the approach and application of environmental management and control measures and mitigation for the construction of the Proposed Project. The Outline Plan encompasses the mitigation (embedded and additional) relied upon within the Environmental Appraisal and will be developed further and implemented by the construction contractors. The Outline Plan aims to ensure that adverse effects on the environment and local communities, from the construction phase of the Proposed Project, are minimised. The main objectives of the Outline Plan are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide a mechanism for ensuring the delivery of mitigation measures, to reduce environmental

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	<p>effects identified in the Environmental Appraisal;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure compliance with legislation and identify where it will be necessary to obtain authorisation from relevant statutory bodies; • To provide a framework for compliance auditing and inspection to ensure the agreed environmental aims are being met; and • To ensure a prompt response to any non-compliance with legislative and planning conditions, including reporting, remediation and any additional mitigation measures required to prevent a recurrence. <p>The Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan encompasses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Outline Waste Management Plan; • An Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan; • A Biosecurity Risk Assessment; • An Outline Peat Management Plan; • A Dust Risk Assessment; • A Reptile Method Statement; and • Outline Habitat Management Plan.
Volume 3 – Figures	<p>Volume 3 is a supplementary volume to the Environmental Appraisal which provides Figures and drawings relied upon and referenced in the Environmental Appraisal Main Text (Volume 1) and are a visual aid used to enhance the understanding of information set out in the Environmental Appraisal.</p> <p>Figure 2.1 within Volume 3 shows the proposed works boundary during the construction and OHL removal phase</p> <p>Figure 2.2 within Volume 3 shows the proposed permanent development.</p>