

The Great Grid Upgrade

Chesterfield to Willington

Preliminary Environmental Information Report

Volume 1: Chapter 2 Legislative, Regulatory and Planning Policy
Context

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nationalgrid

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2. Legislative, Regulatory and Planning Policy Context

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 This chapter provides a summary of the key legislation and national policy relevant to the Chesterfield to Willington Project (the 'Project'). Additional legislation and policy applicable to specific environmental topics are listed in each relevant topic chapter (**Chapters 6 to 17**) of the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR).
- 2.1.2 A Planning Statement will be produced to support the application for the Development Consent Order (DCO) and will include a full planning policy review and set out how the Project is compliant with and supported by planning policy.

2.2 Key Legislation

Planning Act 2008

- 2.2.1 The Planning Act 2008 (PA 2008) (Ref 2.1) provides the legislative basis for DCO applications. It also sets out the application process under which a DCO is sought. PA 2008 sets out that projects meeting certain defined criteria are classified as Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs). The PA 2008 requires that developers wishing to construct, operate and maintain NSIPs must obtain a DCO from the relevant Secretary of State (SoS) to authorise the carrying out of the project.
- 2.2.2 As the Project consists of the *'installation of an electric line above ground'* of more than 132 kilovolts (kV) and more than 2 kilometres (km) in length, it is classified as an NSIP under section 14(1)(b) of PA 2008.
- 2.2.3 Only the proposed new above ground electricity line would be an NSIP by virtue of the definitions in the PA 2008. Other development, such as underground cables, may be granted development consent as *'associated development'* to an NSIP within the meaning of section 115 of the PA 2008.
- 2.2.4 Section 104(2)(a) of the PA 2008 states that, in deciding an application for development consent, the SoS must have regard to any national policy statement (NPS) which has effect in relation to development of the description to which the application relates. Section 104(3) of the PA 2008 further provides that the SoS must decide the application in accordance with any relevant NPS, except to the extent that certain specified exemptions detailed in paragraphs (4) to (8) apply.
- 2.2.5 The NPSs relevant to this Project are the Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1) (NPS EN-1) (Department for Energy Security & Net Zero (DESNZ), 2024) (Ref 2.2) and the National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (NPS EN-5) (DESNZ, 2024) (Ref 2.3) which are discussed in section 2.3.

- 2.2.6 PA 2008 has been amended through the adoption of chapter 20 of the Localism Act 2011 (Ref 2.5), under which, the Planning Inspectorate is responsible for managing the NSIP planning process and will examine the DCO application for the Project and make a recommendation to the SoS to grant or refuse consent. The SoS will then decide to either grant or refuse consent.

The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017

- 2.2.7 The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)) Regulations 2017 ('the EIA Regulations') (Ref 2.6) govern the EIA process relevant to NSIPs. Schedule 1 of the EIA Regulations lists those projects for which an EIA is required, and these include, in paragraph 20, the construction of '*overhead electrical power lines with a voltage of 220 kV or more and a length of more than 15 km*'.
- 2.2.8 The Project comprises the installation of a 400 kV electricity transmission line over a distance of approximately 60 km, the majority of which is expected to be a new overhead line. It therefore falls under Schedule 1 of the EIA Regulations and requires a statutory EIA.
- 2.2.9 Regulation 5(2) states that the EIA must identify, describe and assess the direct and indirect significant effects of the Project during construction and operation on the environment, and particularly the factors set out in Regulation 5(2)(a)-(e). Schedule 4 of the EIA Regulations sets out the information to be included in an ES.

Electricity Act 1989

- 2.2.10 National Grid Electricity Transmission plc (National Grid) has duties placed upon it by the Electricity Act 1989 (Ref 2.7) ('the Electricity Act') and operates under the terms of its transmission licence. Those duties and terms of relevance to the Project are set out below. Where National Grid develops new infrastructure, such as the Project, it is required to have regard to these statutory duties under the Electricity Act.
- 2.2.11 Section 9(2) of the Electricity Act places general duties on National Grid as a licence holder:
- 'to develop and maintain an efficient, co-ordinated and economical system of electricity transmission [...].'*
- 2.2.12 In addition, Paragraph 1 of Schedule 9 to the Electricity Act requires that National Grid, when formulating proposals for new lines and other works:
- '(a) shall have regard to the desirability of preserving natural beauty, of conserving flora, fauna and geological or physiographical features of special interest and of protecting sites, buildings and objects of architectural, historic or archaeological interest; and*
- (b) shall do what [it] reasonably can to mitigate any effect which the proposals would have on the natural beauty of the countryside or on any such flora, fauna, features, sites, buildings or objects.'*
- 2.2.13 National Grid's Stakeholder, Community and Amenity Policy (Ref 2.8) sets out how the company seeks to meet the Schedule 9 duty placed upon it by the aforementioned legislation.

Environment Act 2021

- 2.2.14 Environment Act 2021 (Ref 2.9) provides a framework for improving environmental management across a wide spectrum of environmental issues including waste and resources, water quality, biodiversity and air quality. It aims to deliver long-term targets to improve environmental conditions and reduce pollution, which would need to be considered by the Project. Section 99 of, and Schedule 15 to the Environment Act 2021 are not yet in force, but include a requirement for NSIPs to deliver biodiversity gain as part of the application and for the areas of biodiversity gain to be maintained for a specified period. DCOs must meet a biodiversity gain objective defined in a biodiversity gain statement.
- 2.2.15 These provisions were originally due to come into force in November 2025; however, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) announced in May 2025 its proposal to introduce Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) for NSIPs from May 2026. National Grid is currently working with other organisations to identify how this can best be implemented, and securing mechanisms for maintaining habitats for the specified period.

Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and National Parks and Access to Countryside Act 1949 as amended by the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023

- 2.2.16 Section 85 of The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (Ref 2.10) and section 11(1A) of The National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 (Ref 2.11) were amended by the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 (Ref 2.12), strengthening certain provisions related to land use and conservation. Relevant authorities must now 'seek to further' the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of designated landscapes when exercising their functions.

2.3 Related Assessments

- 2.3.1 In addition to the EIA, the Project will also be assessed in accordance with other regulatory regimes, where they apply.
- 2.3.2 Information on these is included in the relevant topic chapter of this PEIR. The applicable regulatory regimes are set out below.

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017

- 2.3.3 The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 ('the Habitats Regulations') (Ref 2.13) transposed the requirements of European Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora ('the Habitats Directive') (Ref 2.14) into English law.
- 2.3.4 The Habitats Regulations apply to plans and projects that may have significant effects on the Natura 2000 ecological network (sites designated under the Habitats Directive and the Wild Birds Directive (European Council Directive 2009/147/EC (Ref 2.15)), which codified 79/409/EEC (Ref 2.16). Sites designated in England under the Habitats Regulations include Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs).

- 2.3.5 Following changes made to the Habitats Regulations by the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 (Ref 2.17), SACs and SPAs in the UK no longer form part of the EU's Natura 2000 ecological network and now form part of the UK National Site Network (UK NSN). It is also government policy that Ramsar sites, potential SPAs, candidate SACs, and sites used to compensate for adverse effects on UK NSN sites are considered in the Habitats Regulations assessment process.
- 2.3.6 The Habitats Regulations require an Appropriate Assessment if a project is likely to have a significant effect on a European site. If that Appropriate Assessment concludes that a project will have an adverse effect on a UK NSN site, then a derogation case must be considered.
- 2.3.7 In line with the Planning Inspectorate's Advice on Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) (Ref 2.39), the relevant SoS is the competent authority for the purposes of the Habitats Regulations. The Habitats Regulations require competent authorities, before granting consent for a plan or project, to carry out an Appropriate Assessment in circumstances where the plan or project is likely to have a potentially significant effect on a Habitats site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects).
- 2.3.8 As a precursor to the production of an anticipated HRA Report, an HRA Screening will be undertaken and in accordance with the Planning Inspectorate's Advice on HRA, the screening will determine whether the Project may result in Likely Significant Effects on any Habitats site and if so, a shadow Appropriate Assessment will be prepared. The HRA Report will be provided as a standalone document alongside the ES.

Flood Risk Assessment

- 2.3.9 The Flood Risk Regulations 2009 (Ref 2.18) transpose the European Council Directive 2007/60/EC on the assessment and management of flood risks (Ref 2.19) into law in England and Wales and implement its provisions. The key objective is to coordinate the assessment and management of flood risks within Europe.
- 2.3.10 The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 (Ref 2.20) places a series of responsibilities on flood risk management authorities with the primary aim of improving flood risk management. Development and land use planning has a key role in achieving the aims of the Flood Risk Regulations. Accordingly, paragraph 5.8.13 of NPS EN-1 (Ref 2.2) requires a site-specific flood risk assessment (FRA) for all energy projects in Flood Zones 2 and 3 in England.
- 2.3.11 An FRA will therefore be submitted as part of the DCO application. The FRA will assess the flood risk both to and from the Project and demonstrate how that flood risk will be managed over the Project's lifetime. The FRA will give due regard to climate change.

The Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) Regulations 2017

- 2.3.12 The Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) Regulations 2017 (Ref 2.21) impose duties on the SoS and the Environment Agency (EA) to carry out certain functions, in particular when deciding whether to grant, vary or revoke certain permits and licences which affect water quality.

- 2.3.13 Part 2 of the Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) Regulations 2017 requires the identification of River Basin Districts (RBD), and several other assessments to be carried out by the EA to characterise and classify the status of water bodies in those districts and assess the economic aspects of water use. River Basin Management Plans must be established for each RBD.
- 2.3.14 The regulations require several types of areas which are protected by other European Union legislation (for example, protected habitats and bird sites) to be included on registers of protected areas.
- 2.3.15 Based on this, a Water Framework Directive (WFD) assessment will be submitted as part of the DCO application. The WFD assessment will identify and assess water bodies and protected areas within the vicinity of the Project, and identify impacts associated with the Project.

2.4 National Policy

- 2.4.1 The Project is an NSIP which requires development consent under PA 2008. Section 104 of PA 2008 outlines the centrality of NPSs to the decision-making process which applications for development consent are subject to. Section 104(2) states, among other things:

‘In deciding the application, the Secretary of State must have regard to –

 - a) any national policy statement which has effect in relation to development of the description to which the application relates (a “relevant national policy statement”)*

[...]

 - d) any other matters which the Secretary of State thinks are both important and relevant to the Secretary of State’s decision’.*
- 2.4.2 In addition, Section 104(3) states:

‘The Secretary of State must decide the application in accordance with any relevant national policy statement, except to the extent that one or more of subsections (4) to (8) applies’.
- 2.4.3 The NPS EN-1 (Ref 2.2) and NPS EN-5 (Ref 2.3) set the regulatory context within which the routing and siting for electricity infrastructure networks is undertaken. Taken together, these statements provide the primary national policy context for decisions on applications for electricity transmission projects classified as NSIPs. Reference is also made to NPS EN-3 (Ref 2.4) which includes support for the onshore infrastructure required to deliver new renewable energy projects.
- 2.4.4 The revised NPSs (NPS EN-1 and NPS EN-5) were published on 22 November 2023 and were designated by Parliament on 17 January 2024.
- 2.4.5 The updated NPSs came into force on 6 January 2026; however, this post-dated the drafting and assessment work within this PEIR and so are not reflected within the relevant policy descriptions in this PEIR, which are instead based on the 2023 versions of the NPSs that were in force at the time of preparing the PEIR. These sections will be updated in the ES as part of the Application.

Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (NPS EN-1)

- 2.4.6 The NPS EN-1 (Ref 2.2) sets out the need for new nationally significant infrastructure which includes meeting energy security and carbon reduction strategies, the need for more electricity capacity to support increased supply from renewables, and the need to meet future increases in electricity demand.
- 2.4.7 The NPS EN-1 Section 4.2 (Ref 2.2) sets out the Government's commitments to prioritise low carbon infrastructure. Paragraph 4.2.1 of the NPS EN-1 states:
'Government has committed to fully decarbonising the power system by 2035, subject to security of supply, to underpin its 2050 net zero ambitions. More than half of final energy demand in 2050 could be met by electricity, as transport and heating in particular shift from fossil fuel to electrical technology.'
- 2.4.8 Paragraph 4.2.4 of the NPS EN-1 goes on to say:
'Government has therefore concluded that there is a critical national priority (CNP) for the provision of nationally significant low carbon infrastructure.'
- 2.4.9 Paragraph 4.2.5 of NPS EN-1 (Ref 2.2) lists the types of infrastructure which meet the definition of nationally significant infrastructure, which includes electricity grid infrastructure in the scope of NPS EN-5 (Ref 2.3), including network reinforcement, upgrade works and associated infrastructure such as substations.
- 2.4.10 NPS EN-1 sets out the impacts and means of mitigation that are anticipated to arise most frequently from energy projects.
- 2.4.11 Each topic chapter of this PEIR has identified the policy tests set out in the NPS EN-1 and demonstrated how these requirements have been considered in the assessment scope.

National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (NPS EN-5)

- 2.4.12 NPS EN-5 (Ref 2.3) covers electricity networks and focuses on policies and considerations that are specific to this type of energy infrastructure. It sets out how the SoS should consider NPS EN-5 (Ref 2.3) and NPS EN-1 (Ref 2.2) in tandem when evaluating applications relating to electricity networks infrastructure.
- 2.4.13 Part 2 of NPS EN-5 (Ref 2.3) provides general assessment principles and technology-specific policies relating to matters including climate change adaptation, consideration of good design, biodiversity and geological conservation, landscape and visual, and noise and vibration.
- 2.4.14 Paragraph 2.2.10 of NPS EN-5 (Ref 2.3) reiterates the duties on developers under Section 9 and Schedule 9 of the Electricity Act 1989 (Ref 2.7), both in relation to developing and maintaining an economical and efficient network and in formulating proposals for new electricity networks infrastructure, to:
'have regard to the desirability of preserving natural beauty, of conserving flora, fauna and geological or physiographical features of special interest...'
- 2.4.15 These policies have been considered in the relevant PEIR chapters.

National Planning Policy Framework

- 2.4.16 The revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Ref 2.22) was most recently substantively updated in February 2025. Paragraph 5 of the NPPF sets out that it does not contain specific policies for NSIPs and states that:
- ‘The Framework does not contain specific policies for nationally significant infrastructure projects. These are determined in accordance with the decision-making framework in the Planning Act 2008 (as amended) and relevant national policy statements for major infrastructure, as well as any other matters that are relevant (which may include the National Planning Policy Framework). National policy statements form part of the overall framework of national planning policy, and may be a material consideration in preparing plans and making decisions on planning applications’.*
- 2.4.17 While the NPS EN-1 (Ref 2.2) and NPS EN-5 (Ref 2.3) remain the central decision-making documents, where they do not provide guidance, each technical chapter of this PEIR has considered whether there is important and relevant policy in the NPPF that may require consideration by the decision-making authority. It is not possible to confirm if such secondary guidance will be considered important or relevant by the SoS, and it is therefore included for completeness to allow the SoS to make such a determination.
- 2.4.18 The NPPF is supported by Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) (Ref 2.23) which was first published in March 2012. This guidance is updated on a regular basis and provides advice on a range of topics related to the implementation of NPPF policies. PPG has been considered in the relevant chapters of this PEIR where applicable. The key PPG topics considered relevant to the Project at this stage are as follows:
- Air quality;
 - BNG;
 - Climate change;
 - Environmental Impact Assessment;
 - Flood risk;
 - Historic environment;
 - Land affected by contamination;
 - Natural environment;
 - Noise;
 - Open space, sports and recreation facilities, public rights of way and local green space;
 - Travel Plans, Transport Assessments and Statements; and
 - Water supply, wastewater, and water quality.

2.5 Local Planning Policies

- 2.5.1 The NPSs are the primary basis for decision-making, but the SoS must also have regard to any other matters considered both important and relevant to the decision, and these could include local planning policies.
- 2.5.2 Notwithstanding the above, local planning policy has been considered in the development of the PEIR. The currently adopted local planning policy documents relevant to the Project include:
- North East Derbyshire Local Plan (2014-2034), adopted 2021 (Ref 2.24);
 - Bolsover District Council Local Plan, adopted in March 2020 (Ref 2.25);
 - Amber Valley Borough Local Plan, adopted in April 2006 (Ref 2.26);
 - Erewash Core Strategy, adopted March 2014 (Ref 2.27);
 - South Derbyshire Local Plan Part 1, adopted June 2016 (Ref 2.28) and Part 2, adopted November 2017 (Ref 2.29);
 - Derbyshire and Derby Minerals Local Plan (amended 2002), adopted in 2000 (Ref 2.30); and
 - Derbyshire and Derby Waste Local Plan, adopted in 2005 (Ref 2.31).
- 2.5.3 It is noted that the following local policy documents are in development and expected to be adopted within the timeframe of the Project. Although not formally adopted at this stage, the emerging policy documents are considered relevant to the Project.
- Amber Valley Local Plan (2022-2040), currently at Local Plan Examination Ref 2.32);
 - Derbyshire and Derby Minerals Local Plan (2022-2038), currently at Local Plan Examination (Ref 2.33); and
 - Derbyshire and Derby draft Local Waste Plan, currently in development prior to being examined (2022-2038) (Ref 2.34).
- 2.5.4 In addition to the local plans identified above, the developing designs would have appropriate regard to relevant neighbourhood plans.

2.6 Statutory Guidance

- 2.6.1 In April 2024, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government published new guidance for the pre-application stage for NSIPs. It outlines the requirements of applicants during the pre-application stage and introduces new requirements. The guidance:
- advise users of the PA 2008 regime on the processes involved in the pre-application stage;
 - guide applicants as to how the pre-application requirements of PA 2008 should be fulfilled and provide some advice on best practice;
 - inform other users of the regime, including consultees, of their roles in the pre-application process and let them know what is expected of applicants at this stage;

- help ensure that the regime is transparent and accessible to all;
- provide a guide to the pre-application stage, statutory requirements and timescales;
- introduce new requirements for the inception meeting with the Planning Inspectorate and the preparation of the Programme Document by the Applicant; and
- outline the key requirements and considerations when preparing an application for Development Consent.

2.7 Non-Statutory Guidance

Planning Inspectorate Advice Notes and Advice Pages

- 2.7.1 In accordance with section 51 of PA 2008, the Planning Inspectorate has published a series of non-statutory advice notes and pages to inform developers, consultees, the public and other interested parties about a range of procedural matters in relation to the PA 2008 process. Not all these Advice Notes are applicable to the PEIR, although those that have informed the environmental assessment process for the Project are discussed further below.
- 2.7.2 Advice Note Seven: Environmental Impact Assessment: Process, Preliminary Environmental Information and Environmental Statements (Ref 2.35) outlines the procedural requirements for NSIPs which are EIA developments. Specifically, it provides clarity on the role and purpose of the PEIR. Advice Note Seven recognises that the degree of information that is available within a PEIR is dependent upon the stage in the design process at which statutory consultation takes place. Within this PEIR, National Grid has presented information on the likely significant effects associated with the development of the Project, that are available at this stage of design development. National Grid has also set out where further studies and assessments still need to be undertaken prior to production of the Environmental Statement (ES). These have been clearly identified in the PEIR.
- 2.7.3 Advice Note Nine: Rochdale Envelope (Ref 2.36) provides guidance on the use of the '*Rochdale Envelope*'; a term used to describe those elements of a scheme that have not yet been finalised but can be constrained within certain limits and parameters, hence allowing a determination of likely significant effects to be presented in the ES. When using the Rochdale Envelope to apply for flexibility within a DCO application, the Advice Note advises that the developer should use a worst-case approach to identifying likely significant effects and should incorporate mitigation accordingly within the parameters of their scheme. Further information is included within **Chapter 5 Approach to Preliminary Environmental Information Report** relating to how National Grid intends to make use of the Rochdale Envelope in the consenting process for the Project.
- 2.7.4 Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects: Advice on Preparing Applications for Linear Projects (Ref 2.37) provides advice for electrical lines, gas transporters and other pipelines, the transfer of water resources and onshore transmission works associated with offshore wind. It provides examples and good practice to assist in preparing applications to a standard which will be accepted for examination. It also sets out guidance for Interested Parties in understanding the areas where pre-application engagement and agreement is needed. It also assists persons with rights over land (affected persons), including statutory undertakers.

- 2.7.5 Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects: Advice on Good Design (Ref 2.38) explains why good design is important, how success might be achieved and ways in which it might be delivered in applications for NSIPs. It states that achieving good design requires a holistic approach to deliver high quality, sustainable infrastructure that responds to its local, often complex environment.
- 2.7.6 Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects: Advice on Habitats Regulations Assessment (Ref 2.39) identifies the stages of the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) process and clarifies the information to be provided with a DCO application with respect to HRA at each stage of the PA 2008 process.
- 2.7.7 Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects: Advice on Cumulative Effects Assessment (Ref 2.40) sets out the recommended approach to Cumulative Effects Assessment (CEA) for NSIP projects including guidance on the relative weight to be applied to other developments depending upon how far they have progressed through the consenting process. Further information on the CEA is included within **Chapter 17 Cumulative Effects**.
- 2.7.8 Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects: Advice on the Water Framework Directive (Ref 2.41) sets out the approach to coordinating the requirements of the Water Framework Directive with the EIA process. Greater information is included within **Chapter 9 Hydrology and Land Drainage**.
- 2.7.9 Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects: Advice EIA Notification and Consultation (Ref 2.42) explains how the Planning Inspectorate notifies and consults prescribed bodies on the scope of the ES.
- 2.7.10 Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects: Commitments Register (Ref 2.43) defines what a Commitments Register is, stating that from scoping to the end of examination, several commitments will likely be required to ensure good design objectives are secured and subsequently implemented. All these commitments need to be recorded in the '*Commitments Register*'. The Planning Inspectorate provides a template which should be used for all applications.

2.8 National Grid Policy and Guidance

- 2.8.1 National Grid has its own policies and processes that are followed when developing projects. The policies and guidance that are applicable to this Project are as follows:
- National Grid's approach to options appraisal is set out in **Chapter 3 Main Alternatives Considered** of this PEIR and describes the options appraisal process that is followed when developing new electricity infrastructure projects. It follows a staged approach to the assessment and sets out the considerations when making decisions as to which option should be taken forward.
 - National Grid's Stakeholder, Community and Amenity Policy (Ref 2.8): This document describes the ten commitments that National Grid has made to the way electricity and gas works are carried out in the UK. This includes setting out how National Grid will meet its amenity responsibilities and how stakeholders and communities are involved on projects.
 - National Grid's Approach to Consenting (Ref 2.44): This document outlines National Grid's approach to developing and delivering new infrastructure and applies to projects across their whole regulated electricity transmission business.
- 2.8.2 National Grid also has an extensive range of process and guidance documents that govern how projects are designed and implemented to ensure operational safety.

Holford Rules

- 2.8.3 Guidelines on overhead line routeing were first formulated in 1959 by Sir William, later Lord, Holford, as advisor to the Central Electricity Generating Board. Holford developed a series of planning guidelines in relation to amenity issues, which were reviewed and amended in the 1990s and have subsequently become known as the Holford Rules (Ref 2.45). These remain a valuable tool in selecting and assessing potential overhead line route options as part of the options appraisal process.
- 2.8.4 Paragraph 2.9.16 of NPS EN-5 makes clear that the Holford Rules are:
‘common-sense approach to overhead line route design’ and ‘should be embodied in the applicants’ proposals for new overhead lines’.
- 2.8.5 A summary of the Holford Rules can be found in **Table 2.1**. These have been an important consideration during the development of the draft Order Limits and whether certain sections should be considered for undergrounding. The principles of the Holford Rules are being considered during the development of the Project and will be incorporated within the DCO application.

Table 2.1: Summary of the Holford Rules

Rule	Description
Rule 1	Avoid altogether, if possible, the major areas of highest amenity value, by so planning the general route of the line in the first place, even if the total mileage is somewhat increased in consequence.
Rule 2	Avoid smaller areas of high amenity value, or scientific interests by deviation; provided that this can be done without using too many angle towers, i.e., the more massive structures which are used when lines change direction.
Rule 3	Other things being equal, choose the most direct line, with no sharp changes of direction and thus with fewer angle towers.
Rule 4	Choose tree and hill backgrounds in preference to sky backgrounds wherever possible; and when the line has to cross a ridge, secure this opaque background as long as possible and cross obliquely when a dip in the ridge provides an opportunity. Where it does not, cross directly, preferably between belts of trees.
Rule 5	Prefer moderately open valleys with woods where the apparent height of towers will be reduced, and views of the line will be broken by trees.
Rule 6	In country which is flat and sparsely planted, keep the high voltage lines as far as possible independent of smaller lines, converging routes, distribution poles and other masts, wires and cables, so as to avoid a concentration or ‘wirescape’.
Rule 7	Approach urban areas through industrial zones, where they exist; and when pleasant residential and recreational land intervenes between the approach line and the substation, go carefully into the comparative costs of the undergrounding, for lines other than those of the highest voltage.

Horlock Rules

- 2.8.6 National Grid devised the Horlock Rules in 2003 (Ref 2.46), and these were subsequently updated in 2006. The Horlock Rules provide guidelines for the siting and design of new substations, or substation extensions, to avoid or reduce the environmental effects of such developments. In summary, like the Holford Rules, they facilitate consideration of environment and amenities within the design and siting of new substation infrastructure.
- 2.8.7 The Horlock Rules apply predominantly to the siting of substations and line approaches. The general underlying principle - the avoidance of areas of high amenity - applies equally to the siting of Sealing End Compounds, although the balance of impacts and constraints will often be different. The Horlock Rules contain the following guidelines in relation to siting:
- in the development of system options, consideration must be given to environmental issues from the earliest stage to balance the technical benefits and capital cost requirements against the consequential environmental impacts, in order to avoid as far as possible adverse impacts;
 - siting should seek to avoid areas of the highest amenity, cultural or scientific value by the overall planning of the system connections;
 - areas of local amenity value, important existing habitats and landscape features should be protected as far as reasonably practicable;
 - siting should take advantage of the screening provided by landform and existing features and the potential use of site layout and levels;
 - proposals should keep visual, noise and other environmental impacts to a minimum;
 - land use impacts of the proposal should be considered when planning siting;
 - early consideration should be given to the options available for pylons and ancillary equipment appropriate to individual locations;
 - in the design of new substations or line entries, early consideration should be given to the options available for terminal pylons, equipment, buildings, and ancillary development appropriate to individual locations, seeking to keep effects to a reasonably practicable minimum;
 - space should be used effectively to limit the area required for the Project consistent with appropriate mitigation measures and to minimise the adverse impacts on existing land use and rights of way, whilst also having regard to the potential for any future extension;
 - for the design of access roads, perimeter fencing, earth shaping, planting and ancillary development should form an integral part of the site layout and design to fit in with the surroundings;
 - in open landscape especially, high voltage line entries should be kept, as far as possible, visually separate from low voltage lines and other overhead lines so as to avoid a confusing appearance; and
 - the inter-relationship between pylons, ancillary structures and background and foreground features should be studied to reduce the prominence of structures from main viewpoints. Where practicable, the exposure of terminal pylons on prominent ridges should be minimised by siting pylons against a background of trees rather than open skylines.
- 2.8.8 Paragraph 2.9.18 of NPS EN-5 (Ref 2.3) makes clear that the Horlock Rules: *'should be embodied in applicants' proposals for the infrastructure associated with new overhead lines'*.

References

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