



**The Great Grid Upgrade**

Eastern Green Link 5 (EGL 5)

# Preliminary Environmental Information Report

Volume 1

Part 1

Chapter 1 Introduction

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nationalgrid

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Introduction to this Preliminary Environmental Information Report

- 1.1.1 This Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) is the written output of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) undertaken to date for the English components of Eastern Green Link (EGL) 5 (referred to as the 'Project'). Although preliminary, the findings of the assessment are set out within this PEIR; allowing for an informed view to be developed of the Project that is being promoted. The assessment approach that has been undertaken draws preliminary conclusions on the likely significant effects of the Project and proposed preliminary environmental measures.
- 1.1.2 The requirement to consult on Preliminary Environmental Information (PEI) is set out in The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations (2017) (hereafter referred to as the 'EIA Regulations') (Ref 1.1). Regulation 12(1)(b) requires the applicant to set out in a statement of community consultation (SoCC) prepared under section 47 of the Planning Act (2008) (PA 2008) (Ref 1.2), how it 'intends to publicise and consult on preliminary environmental information' (where the proposed development is 'EIA development'). In accordance with section 47(7) of the PA 2008 the applicant is required to carry out consultation in accordance with the SoCC. The SoCC sets out how National Grid Electricity Transmission plc (NGET) (the 'Applicant') intends to consult statutory consultees, stakeholders, affected residents, businesses and local communities ahead of its application for development consent for the Project.
- 1.1.3 The Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025 (PIA 2025) (Ref 1.3) received Royal Assent on 18 December 2025. Section 5 of the PIA 2025 introduces provision for the removal of section 42 consultation. However, s118(1)(c) provides that this will not be in force until further regulations are introduced by secondary legislation, therefore NGET will still need to abide by the current regime and a statutory consultation will run from 29 May to 24 July 2026. Preliminary environmental information is defined in Regulation 12(2) of the EIA Regulations (2017) (Ref 1.1) as:
- “Information referred to in regulation 14(2) which (a) has been compiled by the applicant; and (b) is reasonably required for the consultation bodies to develop an informed view of the likely significant environmental effects of the development (and of any associated development)”.*
- 1.1.4 By providing a preliminary view of the assessment's findings, the PEIR allows an informed view to be made of the Project's likely significant effects identified to date, to support statutory consultation. The PEIR has regard to the preliminary stage in the design process and has taken into account the complexities of the Project and the receiving environment.
- 1.1.5 This PEIR has been prepared for the purposes of statutory consultation prior to submission of an application for development consent which will include an Environmental Statement (ES). The ES will present the final results of the EIA undertaken for the Project. The purpose of the PEIR is to enable members of the public, consultation bodies and other stakeholders to develop an informed view of the likely significant effects, as identified at this stage, and comment on particular aspects of interest.

- 1.1.6 Consultation feedback will inform the ongoing development of the Project. The design of the Project and therefore the assessment of its effects will continue to evolve in response to consultation, and as further baseline information becomes available. As such, information on the likely significant effects (material to the decision-making process) may change between the point of preparing the PEIR and the point of finalising the ES for submission of the application for development consent. However, the baseline information presented in the PEIR is considered to be sufficient to inform the preliminary assessment of the Project and is further informed by the judgement of specialists undertaking the environmental studies.

## 1.2 Overview of Eastern Green Link 5

- 1.2.1 EGL 5 is a joint venture between NGET and Scottish and Southern Electricity Network Transmission (SSEN-T). NGET is responsible for all onshore infrastructure in England, and offshore infrastructure in English waters. SSEN-T are responsible for the onshore infrastructure in Scotland and offshore infrastructure in Scottish waters.
- 1.2.2 EGL 5 is a proposed new primarily marine high voltage electricity link, with associated onshore infrastructure, between Scotland and England. This PEIR is written with specific regard to the English components of EGL 5 i.e., where the Project falls within England or English waters. Therefore, as the Transmission Operator (TO) in England and Wales, NGET is the sole Applicant for the Development Consent Order (DCO) application to which this PEIR applies. As noted in Section 1.1 above, the English components of EGL 5 i.e., those which are the subject of this PEIR, are referred to as the 'Project'. For context purposes only, details of the entire extent of EGL 5 are outlined below.
- 1.2.3 EGL 5 is being proposed by NGET and comprises 2-Gigawatt (GW) High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) system linking Peterhead, Aberdeenshire (connecting into Netherton Hub) and Anderby Creek, Lincolnshire (connecting into LCS-B substation). The entire extent between both connection points onshore in Scotland and the connection points onshore in England, are referred to as 'EGL 5'.
- 1.2.4 EGL 5 would transport enough clean energy from Scotland to power up to two million homes in parts of the North, Midlands and South of England. By doing so it would play an important role in building a more secure and resilient future energy system and support decarbonising the UK.
- 1.2.5 EGL 5 forms part of NGET's 'The Great Grid Upgrade'<sup>1</sup>, which is building the significant new electricity network infrastructure required to reduce the UK's reliance on fossil fuels by connecting 50GW of offshore wind by 2030. The Great Grid Upgrade is the largest overhaul of the electricity grid in generations and will play a big part in the UK government's plan to boost homegrown power.
- 1.2.6 EGL 5 is also proposed by NGET to be considered as EIA development under the criteria in Schedule 3 as defined in the EIA Regulations (Ref 1.1). Consequently, an assessment of the impacts of the Project on the environment is required.

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<sup>1</sup> National Grid (2026) The Great Grid Upgrade. Information available at: <https://www.nationalgrid.com/the-great-grid-upgrade>

Plate 1-1 Overview of EGL 5

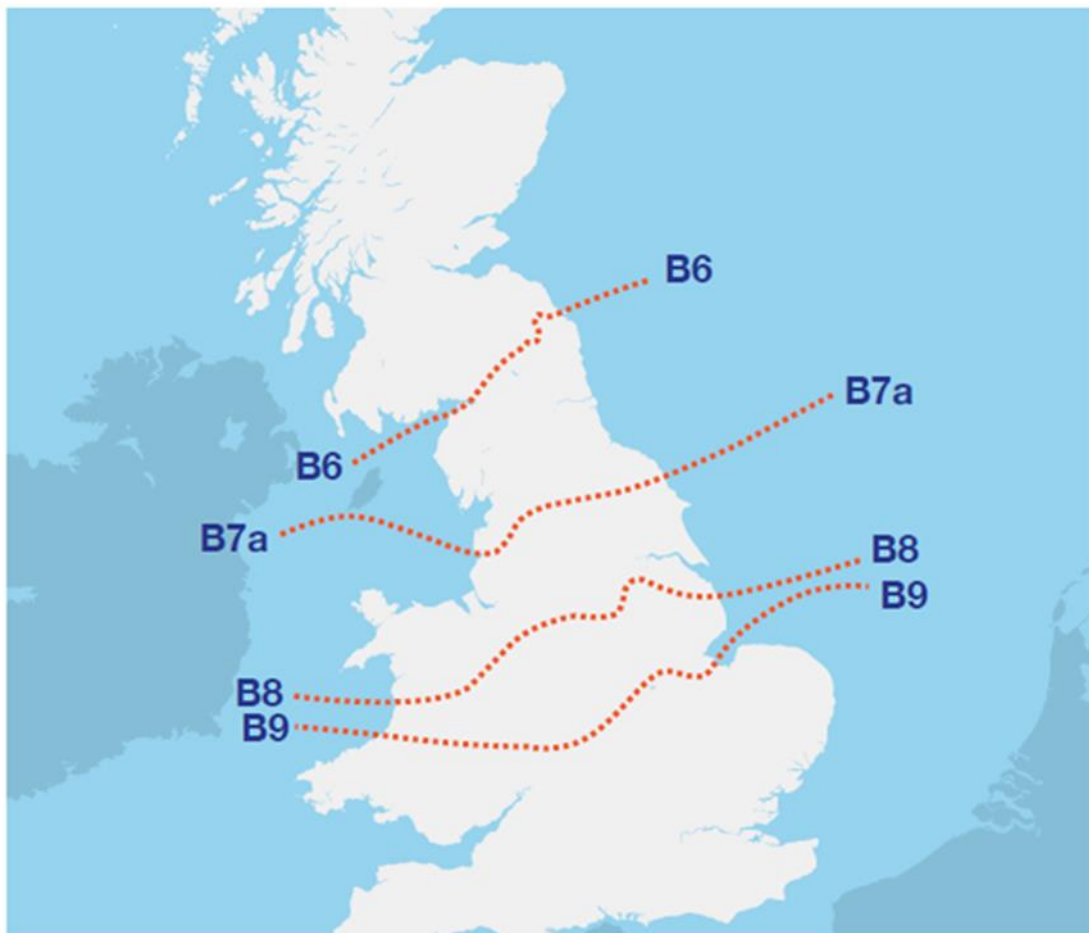


## 1.3 Background to and need for the Project

- 1.3.1 The electricity industry in Great Britain is undergoing unprecedented change. The Climate Change Act 2008 (as amended) (Ref 1.4) now commits the UK Government by law to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 100% from the 1990 baseline by 2050. This 2050 target is commonly known as 'Net Zero'. The Scottish Government's target is to become Net Zero by 2045, five years ahead of the rest of the UK.
- 1.3.2 To achieve Net Zero, there will need to be a substantial shift away from the use of fossil fuel burning generation and towards new generating and interconnection capacity. The UK Government has set clear targets of 50 Gigawatt (GW) of offshore wind generation by 2030 (Ref 1.5) and up to 140 GW by 2050 (Ref 1.6). There is particular growth forecast in offshore wind capacity in Scotland (Ref 1.7) and the northeast of England, as well as subsea 'offshore' transmission or 'bootstraps' to and from Scotland and interconnectors to and from European power grids. This will put pressure on the existing network such that reinforcement of the network in the East Midlands area has been identified as necessary to ensure optimal operation of the transmission system and reliable economic long-term supply.

- 1.3.3 The existing electricity transmission and distribution networks in Great Britain both operate using predominantly High Voltage Alternating Current (HVAC) systems. However, High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) technology allows electricity to be transmitted from point to point in much larger volumes, over greater distances, with fewer transmission losses compared to an equivalent HVAC system. This flexibility brings operational benefits; however, to transmit electricity in Direct Current (DC) form, specialist electrical equipment contained within converter stations is required at either end of the transmission line to convert the power from Alternating Current (AC) to DC, or vice versa.
- 1.3.4 The electricity network system in Great Britain is split into boundaries. Each boundary has a limit to the amount of electricity that can flow through it. As more electricity is needed and is being generated in Great Britain, we can assess where the power flows between these boundaries will need to increase. The boundaries as shown in **Plate 1-2** through the north and the midlands (B6, B7a, B8 and B9). EGL 5 is required to reinforce and increase the capacity of the B6 and B7a boundaries, and it also provides additional capacity to the B8 boundary.

Plate 1-2 Network Transmission Boundaries



- 1.3.5 In response to concerns over the security, affordability, and sustainability of the UK's energy supply, the UK Government published its British Energy Security Strategy (Ref 1.8) in July 2022. The British Energy Security Strategy outlines the ambition to increase generation of energy from offshore wind to 50 GW by 2030 – more than enough to power every home in the UK. The British Energy Security Strategy was followed in 2024 by the Labour Government's Clean Power 2030 Action Plan (Ref 1.9), which outlines an accelerated timeframe for decarbonisation of the energy and power sectors compared to

previous targets, and defines what is meant by a clean power system (with energy generated from renewables and nuclear, alongside the decarbonisation of industrial processes through the use of CCUS and hydrogen). Additionally, in May 2025, the Great British Energy Act (Ref 1.10) received Royal Assent. Its focus was creating a publicly owned energy company, focussing investment in new renewable and clean energy projects across the UK. These policies and strategies have led to a shift towards offshore renewable generation of power, away from coal power generation in the north and Midlands. The UK is also transporting more power between countries across the North Sea, using interconnectors. These factors have driven a change in the energy landscape across the UK, in particular the East of England including the Yorkshire and Humber, East Midlands, Lincolnshire and Norfolk regions of England where reinforcement of the network (overhead lines, pylons, cables and other infrastructure that transports electricity around the country) is required to deliver this change.

- 1.3.6 As the volume of renewable energy generation connecting to the transmission system in Scotland continues to grow there is a need to increase cross-border transmission capability to ensure this energy is economically and efficiently transmitted from where it is generated to where it is needed. EGL 5 is part of the continued co-ordinated development of significant cross-border transmission routes that are needed due to the significant and increasing levels of North-South power flows. As noted above EGL 5 is part of The Great Grid Upgrade and along with a number of other projects will support the UK's Net Zero target by reinforcing the electricity transmission network and facilitating the connection of sources of electricity, allowing clean energy generated in the UK to be carried on the network.
- 1.3.7 Other projects include the EGL 3 and EGL 4 Projects, each comprising offshore HVDC cabling, onshore HVDC cabling, new converter stations and onshore HVAC cabling, with both EGL 3 and EGL 4 connecting at a new Walpole substation, and the Grimsby to Walpole Project expected to comprise the construction and operation of approximately 140 km of new 400 kV overhead electricity transmission line and five new 400 kV substations.
- 1.3.8 In 2022, the Energy System Operator (ESO) (formally known as National Energy System Operator (NESO)) published the Pathway to 2030 Holistic Network Design (HND) report (Ref 1.11) setting out an integrated approach to transmission network design that supports the large-scale delivery of electricity generated from offshore wind by 2030. As it stands, the HND recommendations are not sufficient by themselves to reinforce the transmission system, as more electricity will be generated than the network can efficiently support and transport. Therefore, the UK Government requested ESO to further develop the HND and enable a set of recommendations to allow a greater amount of offshore wind generation to connect to the network. The further development of the HND, known as HND FUE (HND Follow Up Exercise), was published by ESO in 2024, in a report titled 'Beyond 2030' (Ref 1.10).
- 1.3.9 Within the HND report (Ref 1.11) and included as background to the Beyond 2030 report (Ref 1.12), the ESO recommended multiple East Coast onshore and offshore reinforcements, including SW\_E1A\_3 also known as AC4, which has now been refined to a link between Scotland and England known as EGL 5 (this Project).

## The role of National Grid Electricity Transmission plc

- 1.3.10 NGET owns, builds and maintains the national high voltage electricity transmission system throughout England and Wales. The licence areas for NGET are shown on **Plate 1-3**. NGET is responsible for making sure electricity is transported safely and efficiently

from where it is produced (such as wind farms, solar farms and power stations) to the local Distribution Network Operators (DNO) and for developing upgrades to the network as agreed with the industry regulator, the Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (Ofgem). The DNO boundary relevant to the Project is National Grid Electricity Distribution (NGED) (East).

1.3.11 Under the Electricity Act 1989 (Ref 1.13), NGET holds a transmission licence, under which it has a legal duty to develop and maintain an efficient, coordinated and economical electricity system. NGET's transmission system in England and Wales consists of approximately 7,250 km of overhead lines and a further 1,450 km of underground cables, operating at 400 kV and 275 kV. The 275 kV grid was developed in the 1950s to provide a national electricity transmission system, and then developed further from the mid-1960s, at 400 kV to increase its power carrying capacity. The overhead lines and underground cables connect over 300 substations to form a highly interconnected network. The substations provide points of connection to the local distribution networks, which operate at voltages from 132 kV down to 240 V (the voltage at which electrical power is distributed to domestic consumers). The distribution networks are owned by DNOs, including Northern Power Grid (NPG) and NGED in the East Midlands region of England.

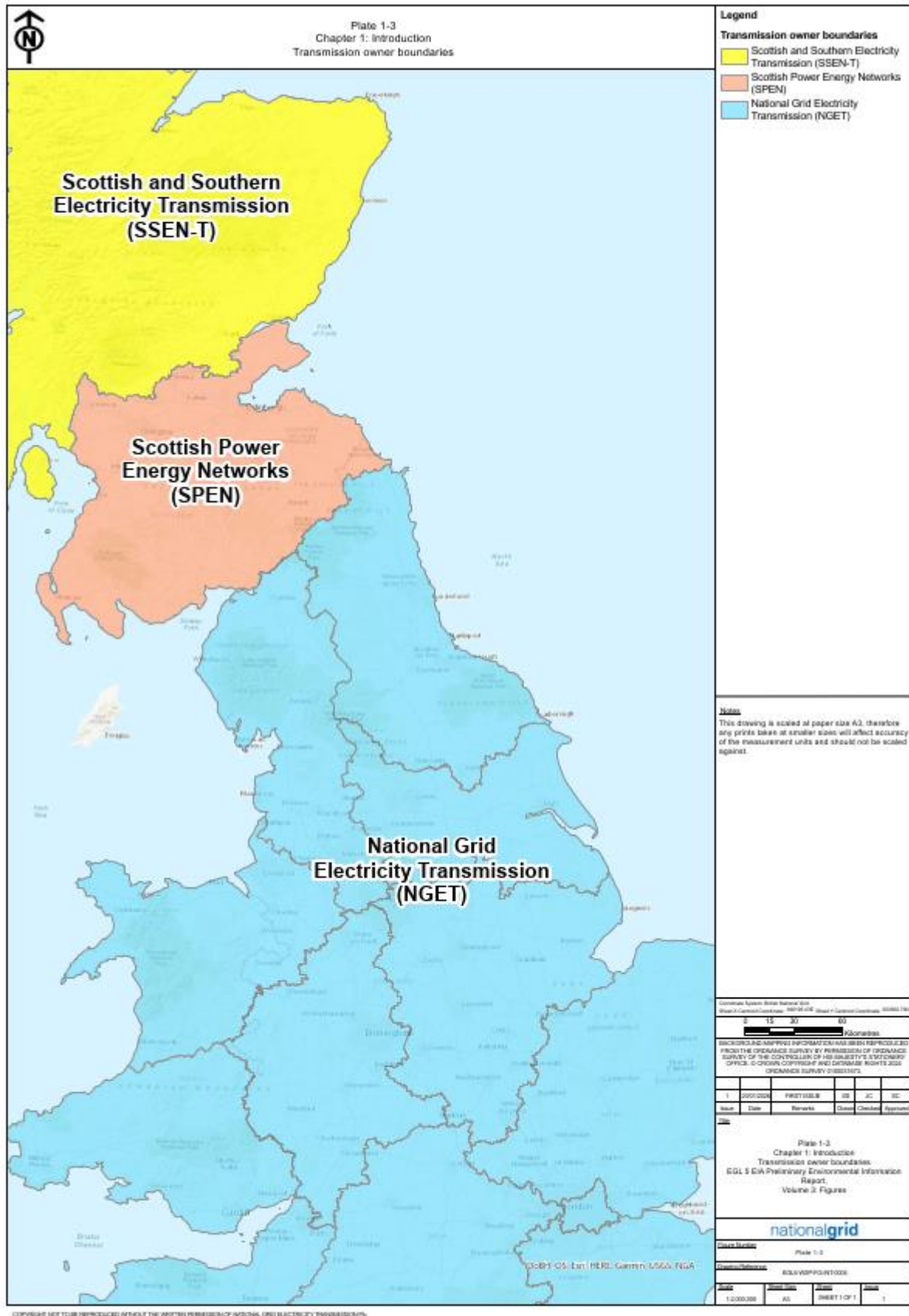
1.3.12 NGET is also required, under section 38 of the Electricity Act 1989 (Ref 1.13), to comply with the provisions of Schedule 9 of the Act. Schedule 9 requires licence holders such as NGET, in developing proposals to transmit electricity to:

*Schedule 9(1)(a) '...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*

*Schedule 9(1)(b) '...do what [it] reasonably can 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'.*

1.3.13 SSEN-T is the TO for northern Scotland and responsible for the Scottish components of EGL 5 (shown in **Plate 1-3**). Similar to NGET, SSEN-T is responsible for ensuring electricity is transmitted safely and efficiently from generation to user. As transmission license holders under the Electricity Act 1989, SSEN-T also has a number of statutory duties to comply with the provisions of Schedule 9 of the Electricity Act 1989 including those outlined above.

Plate 1-3 Transmission owner boundaries



## 1.4 Terminology in this Preliminary Environmental Information Report

### The Project

- 1.4.1 This PEIR is written with specific regard to the English Onshore Scheme and the English Offshore Scheme (i.e., the 'Project'). The following definitions are relevant to this report:
- “English Onshore Scheme” – All components of EGL 5 between the electricity transmission connection point in England and the Mean Low Water Springs (MLWS) in England.
  - “English Offshore Scheme” – All components of EGL 5 within the English marine environment up to the Mean High-Water Springs (MHWS) in England.
  - “the Project” – is the term used to refer all elements of EGL 5 which are the subject of this PEIR i.e., the English Onshore Scheme and the English Offshore Scheme. More specifically, the Project comprises the ‘Authorised’ development and ‘Associated’ development for EGL 5 that will be subject to an application for Development Consent.
  - “Intertidal Zone” – The area between MLWS and MHWS where the English Offshore Scheme and English Onshore Scheme overlap and transition from subsea cables to land cables. The intertidal zone is described and primarily assessed within **Volume 1, Part 3, English Offshore Scheme**; however, appropriate references are made within the **Volume 1, Part 2, English Onshore Scheme** to ensure that both offshore and onshore considerations are taken into account to prevent duplication of assessments and reporting of potential effects.
  - “EGL 5” – EGL 5 comprises a 2 GW HVDC system linking Peterhead, Aberdeenshire and Anderby Creek, Lincolnshire. EGL 5 comprises the following Schemes: Scottish Onshore; Scottish Offshore; English Offshore; and English Onshore.
  - “Scottish Onshore Scheme” - All components of EGL 5 between the electricity transmission connection point in Scotland (at Netherton Hub) and the MLWS in Scotland, which fall under the responsibility of SSEN-T. These include a proposed converter station located in Scotland, from which an underground HVDC cable would route to a proposed landfall on the Scottish coastline. The proposed converter station would be connected to a substation by underground HVAC cables. The substation connects EGL 5 to the existing Scottish transmission system.
  - “Scottish Offshore Scheme” - All components of EGL 5 within the Scottish marine environment up to the MHWS in Scotland, which fall under the responsibility of SSEN-T. These include up to 185 km of subsea HVDC cable from the intersection with the EGL 5 Offshore Elements, at the marine boundary between English and Scottish adjacent waters, to the MHWS mark at Scotstown Beach South in Scotland. The subsea cable system would consist of two HVDC cables.
- 1.4.2 The English Onshore Scheme and English Offshore Scheme draft Order Limits of EGL 5 to be consented by DCO and Deemed Marine Licence are illustrated in **Volume 3, Part 1, Figure 1-2: English Onshore Scheme draft Order Limits** and **Figure 1-3: English Offshore Scheme draft Order Limits**. The Project draft Order Limits are shown in **Volume 3, Part 1, Figure 1-1: Project Location and draft Order Limits**.

## 1.5 Summary of the English Onshore Scheme

- 1.5.1 The English Onshore Scheme is sited within Lincolnshire, with all elements located in East Lindsey. The location of the English Onshore Scheme is illustrated in **Volume 3, Part 1, Figure 1-2**.
- 1.5.2 The key elements of the English Onshore Scheme are summarised below. A detailed breakdown of the Project is provided within **Volume 1, Part 1, Chapter 4: Description of the Project**, with accompanying figures provided in **Volume 3, Part 1**. The English Onshore Scheme is sited within the English terrestrial and intertidal environments, down to MLWS in England.
- 1.5.3 These principal elements of the Project have been determined by the Secretary of State to be nationally significant, and as such have been directed (under Section 35 of the Planning Act (2008)) (Ref 1.2) to be development for which a DCO is required. See further information in Section 1.7 below.

### Elements of English Onshore Scheme

- 1.5.4 The principal elements of the Project i.e., those which would constitute the ‘authorised development’ in a DCO and for which development consent is now sought, comprise a new converter station in the East Lindsey area of Lincolnshire, which will connect to the proposed 400 kV Lincolnshire Connection Substation B (LCS-B), considered as part of the NGET Grimsby to Walpole Project.
- 1.5.5 The remaining elements of the Project would be considered to constitute ‘associated development’ under section 115 of the PA 2008 and under the current ‘Guidance on associated development applications for major infrastructure projects’ (DCLG 2013) (Ref 1.14). These elements of the Project comprise:
- Anderby Creek Landfall:
    - A new Transition Joint Bay (TJB) at Anderby Creek, located approximately 1.8 km north of Anderby Creek in East Lindsey, ending at MLWS, located on the Lincolnshire coast. This will join the Offshore HVDC cable to the Onshore HVDC cable.
  - HVDC underground cables:
    - Up to 8 km of new underground HVDC cable, from the landfall point (at Anderby Creek) to the proposed EGL 5 converter station in the vicinity of the proposed 400 kV LCS-B considered as part of the NGET Grimsby to Walpole Project.
  - HVAC underground cables:
    - Up to 1 km of new underground HVAC cable, between the proposed EGL 5 converter station and the proposed 400 kV LCS-B considered as part of the NGET Grimsby to Walpole Project.
  - Construction Traffic Route:
    - A temporary construction traffic route or routes departing from the public highway to access the English Onshore Scheme during construction;
    - Public Highway modifications:

- A number of modifications and widenings have been identified on the public highway to enable delivery of site components. These modifications would be permanent in nature.

## Terms of the English Onshore Scheme

- 1.5.6 For the purposes of describing the English Onshore Scheme in this PEIR, the following terms are used:

### **Anderby Creek Landfall**

- 1.5.7 This term is used to refer to the area along the Lincolnshire coast which contains the interface between the EGL 5 offshore elements and onshore elements. It is an area where the subsea cables transition from the marine environment and connect to the onshore underground cables at a buried Transition Joint Bay (TJB). The landfall area for Anderby Creek has been captured within the eastern extent of the English Onshore Scheme.

### **HVDC Underground Cable**

- 1.5.8 This is the term used to refer to the elements of the Project (underground HVDC cables) located within the English Onshore Scheme between the landfall area and the proposed EGL 5 converter station.

### **EGL 5 Converter Station**

- 1.5.9 This is the term used to refer to the elements of the Project (EGL 5 converter station) into which the HVDC underground cables will connect from landfall. It will then subsequently be connected to the proposed 400 kV LCS-B proposed as part of the Grimsby to Walpole Project in East Lindsey, via HVAC underground cables.

### **HVAC Underground Cable**

- 1.5.10 This is the term used to refer to the elements of the Project (underground HVAC cables) located within the English Onshore Scheme between the proposed EGL 5 converter station and the proposed 400 kV LCS-B proposed as part of the Grimsby to Walpole Project in East Lindsey.

### **Construction Traffic and Haul Routes**

- 1.5.11 The Alford Construction Route would consist of enabling works required to facilitate the construction and installation of the permanent assets of EGL 5. Its requirement was identified due to a potential constraint for abnormal indivisible loads (AIL) to reach the Anderby Creek Landfall and the potential converter station site.
- 1.5.12 The Shared Grimsby to Walpole Haul Route would consist of a temporary construction traffic route departing from the road network, using the same haul route proposed as part of the Grimsby to Walpole project to the LCS-B substation.
- 1.5.13 It is proposed that construction traffic will use either the Alford Construction Route or Shared Grimsby to Walpole Haul Route to access the Project, once leaving the public highway. Further work as part of the EIA is required to understand whether one or both of these routes will be used during construction.
- 1.5.14 These areas above are also shown in **Volume 3, Part 1, Figure 1-2** with further information provided in **Volume 3, Part 1, Figure 4-1: English Onshore Scheme**

**Components, Figure 4-2: English Onshore Scheme Temporary Components, and Figure 4-3: English Onshore Scheme Permanent Components.**

## **1.6 Summary of the English Offshore Scheme**

- 1.6.1 The English Offshore Scheme is sited within the English marine environment, through inshore (<12 nautical miles (NM) from the coast) and offshore waters (>12 NM from the coast), and up to MHWS in England. The most northerly elements of the English Offshore Scheme would be located at the boundary of English Waters where it meets Scottish Waters, and the most southerly elements would be located at MHWS at the proposed Anderby Creek Landfall area. The location of the English Offshore Scheme is illustrated in **Volume 3, Part 1, Figure 1-3**.
- 1.6.2 The key elements of the English Offshore Scheme are up to 423 km of subsea HVDC cable from the landfall at Anderby Creek, Lincolnshire to where it meets the boundary between English and Scottish waters. The subsea cable system would consist of two HVDC cables and a fibre optic cable for control and monitoring purposes. A detailed breakdown of the English Offshore Scheme is provided within **Volume 1, Part 1, Chapter 4: Description of the Project**.

## **1.7 Intention to Apply for Development Consent**

- 1.7.1 As an electricity transmission licence holder in relation to transmission of electricity in England and Wales, NGET has specific duties to uphold in relation to the desirability of preserving amenity of certain aspects of the environment and to mitigate the effects of its activities on the environment under section 38 and Schedule 9 of the Electricity Act 1989 (Ref 1.13).
- 1.7.2 NGET is responsible for gaining consent for both the English Onshore and English Offshore Schemes.
- 1.7.3 Whilst none of the components of the Project fall within the definition or thresholds of a 'Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project' (NSIP) defined under Part 3 of the PA 2008, NGET considers elements of the Project to be of national significance. As such, following engagement with the relevant Local Planning Authorities (LPA) in Lincolnshire, NGET sought and have been granted a direction under section 35 of the PA 2008 from the Secretary of State (SoS) for elements of the Project to be treated as a development for which development consent under the PA 2008 is required. The aspects of the Project which would constitute the 'authorised development' in the DCO, and for which development consent is sought, comprise:
- A new converter station in the East Lindsey area of Lincolnshire, in the vicinity of the proposed 400 kV LCS-B, proposed by the Grimsby to Walpole Project.
- 1.7.4 Of the remaining elements of the Project:
- The Scottish Onshore and Offshore works will be consented through Scotland's town and country planning and marine licensing legislation;
  - The English Offshore works will be dealt with via a Deemed Marine Licence (DML) under the PA 2008; and
  - The other English onshore works are necessary to support both the operation of the Proposed Development and the Project and will include significant underground

onshore HVDC and HVAC cables, transition joint bays where the HVDC cables make landfall, together with works necessary to provide environmental mitigation.

- 1.7.5 NGET intends to submit an application for a DCO under section 37 of the PA 2008 to the SoS. The application will comprise details of all development proposals and will be accompanied by an Environmental Statement (ES) conforming to Regulation 14 of the EIA Regulations and other relevant policies and legislation (see **Volume 1, Part 1, Chapter 2: Regulatory and Policy Overview**).
- 1.7.6 A DML will be sought under the DCO. In accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Laws of the Sea (UNCLOS) (Ref 1.15) and section 81 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (MCAA 2009) (Ref 1.16) cable installation and some associated activities beyond 12 NM and emergency repairs of the installed cable within the draft Order Limits are exempt from requiring a Marine Licence. There are certain activities, however, associated with cable laying that an exemption does not apply to, including the placement of external cable protection and dredging activities associated with sandwave clearance. Therefore, the Applicant intends to structure the Deemed Marine Licence to reflect the licensable activities within and outside 12 NM.

## 1.8 The Need for Environmental Impact Assessment

- 1.8.1 EIA is a process required by UK law which brings together information about the likely significant effects of a development. The legal basis for EIA originated with European Council Directive 85/337/EEC (the 'EIA Directive'). The EIA Directive was transposed into UK law through several pieces of legislation.
- 1.8.2 In relation to NSIPs, EIA is required for certain developments under the EIA Regulations (Ref 1.1).
- 1.8.3 The four stages of the DCO EIA process include:
1. Screening (discretionary);
  2. Scoping (discretionary);
  3. Preparation of Preliminary Environmental Information (this stage); and
  4. Preparation of an ES.
- 1.8.4 Under the EIA Regulations, EIA is mandatory for development projects defined under Schedule 1. Development projects defined in Schedule 2 only require EIA if they are likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of their nature, size or location.
- 1.8.5 It is not considered that any individual component of the Project explicitly falls under Schedule 1 or 2 of the EIA Regulations. Schedule 3 of the EIA Regulations sets out the selection criteria for screening Schedule 2 development and thereby determining whether a project is likely to have significant effects, for which an EIA would subsequently be required. Having considered the criteria in Schedule 3, NGET proposes to undertake an EIA having given regard to the whole of Schedule 3 but specifically:

*“Characteristics of development*

1. *The characteristics of development must be considered with particular regard to—*
  - (a) the size and design of the whole development;*
  - (b) cumulation with other existing development and/or approved development;*

*and*

*Location of development*

2. *The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by development, must be considered with particular regard to—*

*(a) the existing and approved land use;*

*(b) the relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground;*

*(c) the absorption capacity of the natural environment, in particular:*

*(i) Wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths;*

*(ii) Coastal zone and the marine environment;*

*(iii) Nature reserves and parks;*

*(iv) European sites and other areas classified or protected under national legislation; and*

*(v) Landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance.”*

1.8.6 Considering the nature and size of the Project, an EIA will be undertaken and therefore in line with Regulation 8(1)(b) of the EIA Regulations, NGET hereby provides notice that the application for a DCO will be accompanied by an ES. The potential for likely significant effects that NGET considers the EIA will need to address were identified in the Scoping Report (Ref 1.17) submitted to the Planning Inspectorate on 2 September 2025 and a Scoping Opinion (Ref 1.18) was received from the SoS on 13 October 2025. Issues raised in the Scoping Opinion by the Planning Inspectorate are summarised and responded to in the technical aspect chapters (**Volume 1, Parts 2, 3 and 4**) and in **Volume 2, Part 1, Appendix 1.A: Scoping Opinion Responses**.

## **1.9 Purpose of the Preliminary Environmental Information Report**

1.9.1 Regulation 12(2) of the EIA Regulations (Ref 1.1) defines PEI as information that “has been compiled by the applicant” and “is reasonably required for the consultation bodies to develop an informed view of the likely significant environmental effects of the development (and of any associated development).”

1.9.2 The Planning Inspectorate’s Advice Note 7 (Ref 1.19), paragraph 8.4 states that: “There is no prescribed format as to what PEI should comprise and it is not expected to replicate or be a draft of the ES. A good PEI document is one that enables consultees (both specialist and non-specialist) to understand the likely environmental effects of the Proposed Development and helps to inform their consultation responses on the Proposed Development during the pre-application stage.”

1.9.3 The PEIR has been prepared in accordance with Advice Note 7 by competent experts. It reflects the current design position of the Project and the status of the individual environmental assessments undertaken by each of the environmental disciplines (as presented in **Volume 1, Parts 2, 3 and 4**). The findings of the assessments are set out within this report to allow an informed view to be developed of the Project that are being promoted and the assessment approach that has been undertaken; to draw preliminary

conclusions on the likely significant effects of the Project; and the environmental measures currently proposed to mitigate or reduce the potential associated impacts.

- 1.9.4 This PEIR has been informed by the EIA Scoping Opinion published by the SoS on 13 October 2025 (Ref 1.18) and is intended to give consultees an understanding of the potential likely significant effects to enable them to prepare well informed responses to the statutory consultation. All conclusions and assessments are by their nature preliminary and are based on the Project design and assumptions described within this PEIR. All assessment work has and continues to apply a precautionary principle, in that where limited information is available (in terms of the proposals for the Project and environmental information available at this stage), a realistic worst-case scenario is assessed. The final assessment will be presented within the ES to be submitted with the application for development consent. This will take into account the representations made during statutory consultation and ongoing design informed by the EIA process.
- 1.9.5 This PEIR identifies which effects may be potentially significant and the environmental measures which should be implemented to mitigate these potential effects. Further consideration of these potential effects will continue as part of the EIA process and the EIA will continue to influence the design, whereby environmental measures may be embedded into the design, to help avoid and reduce potential significant effects arising from the Project. Therefore, likely significant effects provisionally identified at this preliminary stage may later be found to be not significant when reported in the ES. As consent for the Project will be sought through a DCO, the environmental measures identified will be the subject of a DCO requirement and will therefore be secured and there will be a legal requirement to implement them. As such, in this PEIR no assessment of likely significant effects has been undertaken prior to the application of environmental measures, as delivery of all measures will be a legal requirement.

## 1.10 Structure of the PEIR

- 1.10.1 The structure of this PEIR is outlined in **Table 1-1**. The PEIR has been presented in three volumes; Volume 1 (main text), Volume 2 (appendices) and Volume 3 (figures). The PEIR is also accompanied by a Non-Technical Summary. For ease of presentation, Volume 1 has been split into four Parts.
- 1.10.2 **Volume 1, Part 1** sets out an overview of the Project, an overview of the regulatory and planning context, an overview of the main alternatives considered, a description of the Project and it also sets out the proposed PEIR approach and method.
- 1.10.3 **Volume 1, Parts 2 and 3** provide the technical aspect chapters for the English Onshore Scheme and English Offshore Scheme.
- 1.10.4 **Volume 1, Part 4** of the PEIR presents potential effects which are project wide (e.g. greenhouse gas and cumulative effects).
- 1.10.5 Each technical aspect chapter presents the preliminary environmental information for the receptors relevant to that aspect. Each chapter details the assessment scope and provides a description of the preliminary environmental information comprising; baseline, an initial view on the environmental measures required to mitigate potential effects and a description of the likely significant effects.

Table 1-1 Structure of the PEIR

<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Content</b>
<b>Non-Technical Summary (NTS)</b>	
Non-Technical Summary	The NTS provides a concise description of the Project. Its purpose is to provide succinct information of the Project, the considered alternatives, environmental baseline, assessment methodology, mitigation and preliminary environmental effects.
<b>Volume 1, Part 1 - Introduction</b>	
Chapter 1 Introduction	An introduction to the Project and the purpose and structure of this PEIR.
Chapter 2 Regulatory and Policy Overview	Sets out an overview of the legislation and policy relevant to the Project.
Chapter 3 Reasonable Alternatives Considered	An outline of the reasonable alternatives considered for the Project.
Chapter 4 Description of the Project	A description of the Project including permanent components and associated temporary works. It describes the general characteristics of the Project and outlines areas of flexibility in relation to design parameters.
Chapter 5 PEIR Approach and Methodology	A description of the EIA methodology that is proposed for the Project including description of temporal scope, methodology that has been applied within this PEIR and approach to environmental mitigation.
<b>Volume 1, Part 2 - English Onshore Scheme</b>	
Chapter 6 Biodiversity	<p>Each chapter (6-16) provides a description of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The technical guidance specific to the topic area.</li> <li>● Responses to the Scoping Opinion and consultation.</li> <li>● The approach, scope and methodology.</li> <li>● The basis of assessment.</li> <li>● The study area and the relevant baseline environment.</li> <li>● Environmental measures.</li> <li>● Preliminary assessment of effects.</li> </ul>
Chapter 7 Cultural Heritage	
Chapter 8 Landscape and Visual Amenity	
Chapter 9 Water Environment	
Chapter 10 Geology and Hydrogeology	
Chapter 11 Agriculture and Soils	
Chapter 12 Traffic and Transport	
Chapter 13 Noise and Vibration	
Chapter 14 Air Quality	

Chapter	Content
Chapter 15 Socio-economics, Recreation and Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A brief conclusion and next steps.</li> </ul>
Chapter 16 Health and Wellbeing	
<b>Volume 1, Part 3 - English Offshore Scheme</b>	
Chapter 17 Coastal and Marine Physical Processes	Each chapter (17-25) provides a description of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The technical guidance specific to the topic area.</li> </ul>
Chapter 18 Intertidal and Subtidal Benthic Ecology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responses to the Scoping Opinion and consultation.</li> </ul>
Chapter 19 Fish and Shellfish	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The approach, scope and methodology.</li> </ul>
Chapter 20 Intertidal and Offshore Ornithology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The basis of assessment.</li> </ul>
Chapter 21 Marine Mammals and Marine Reptiles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The study area and the relevant baseline environment.</li> </ul>
Chapter 22 Shipping and Navigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental measures.</li> </ul>
Chapter 23 Commercial Fisheries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preliminary assessment of effects.</li> </ul>
Chapter 24 Other Marine Users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A brief conclusion and next steps.</li> </ul>
Chapter 25 Marine Archaeology	
<b>Volume 1, Part 4 - Project Wide</b>	
Chapter 26 Greenhouse Gas	A preliminary assessment of the Project on Greenhouse Gas.
Chapter 27 Cumulative Effects	Presents the methodology for assessing inter-project cumulative effects and intra-project cumulative effects associated with the Project.

## 1.11 Net Gain Commitments

- 1.11.1 NGET has committed to 10% Net Gain in Environmental value including as a minimum 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) across all its construction projects' terrestrial elements. The Environment Act 2021 (Ref 1.20) is the basis for the EGL 5 projects' ambition to achieve BNG objectives.
- 1.11.2 This commitment is underpinned by the delivery of quantifiable enhancements for biodiversity measures from a baseline using the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Biodiversity Calculator (Ref 1.21) with actions formalised and secured by long term management arrangements with external organisations and partners.

- 1.11.3 Wider environmental benefits such as carbon capture and storage, air quality and recreation and associated financial values are also considered and quantified using variation tools and emerging methodologies.
- 1.11.4 These commitments ensure that NGET can deliver long term environmental improvements as part of our works. The commitments will align and make a positive contribution to regional and national strategies and facilitate collaboration and partnerships with our communities and stakeholders.

## **1.12 Competence**

- 1.12.1 Regulation 14(4) of the EIA Regulations (Ref 1.1) requires that an ES is prepared by 'competent experts' and that the ES is accompanied by a statement outlining the relevant expertise or qualifications of such experts.
- 1.12.2 Competent experts have prepared this PEIR and will undertake the EIA and prepare the ES. All experts are accredited at a Company level by the Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals (ISEP; formerly IEMA) EIA Quality Mark Scheme. The scheme allows organisations that lead the co-ordination of EIAs in the UK to make a commitment to excellence in their EIA activities and have this commitment independently reviewed.
- 1.12.3 Details of the expertise and qualifications of the competent experts who have been responsible for preparing the topic specific chapters will be provided in the ES.

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